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Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 9
at 7 pm. At

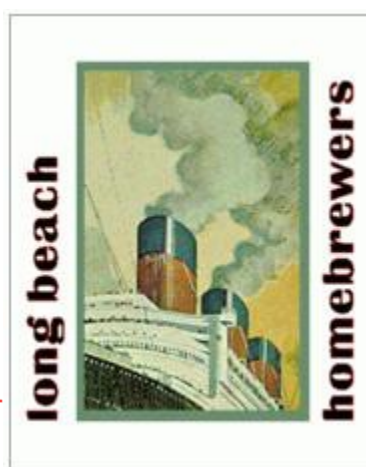
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The Brews Telegram

The Newsletter of the
Long Beach Homebrewers



President's Message

My fellow Long Beach Homebrewers,

This time of the year is when people start to think about Oktoberfest. For those that do not know the history of Oktoberfest, Prince Ludwig (later King Ludwig I) and Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen were married on October 12, 1810 and all of the citizens of Munich were invited for the occasion. The celebration was continued every year, and was officially made an annual event in 1819. In the over 200 year history, the festival has only been canceled 24 times due to disease or war.

Traditionally the event is only 16 days long, running from late September to the first weekend in October. In America, we will take any excuse to party, so we have extended our celebrations through the end of October. We are lucky enough to have several locations that host Oktoberfest celebrations nearby: Phoenix Club (Anaheim), Old World (Huntington Beach), and Alpine Village (Torrance). Last year there were a few of us that attended the celebrations one Sunday afternoon in Anaheim, and we had a wonderful time. I would be happy to help organize something similar this year as well. We can discuss our options at the club meeting.

As always, Happy Brewing!

Josh

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2014 Monthly Style Schedule

Here are the styles for each month.

September: Belgian Triple (cat. 18c)

October: Scottish & Irish (cat. 9)

November: Barleywine (cat. 19B-c)

December: Winter Specialty (cat. 21b)

Tastings at the August meeting (IPA)

Homebrewer Of The Year Competition:

Randy Weber	IPA
Dave Gansen	IPA
Joshua Parsons	IPA (2 nd Place)
Derek Johnstone	IPA (3 rd Place)
Adam Widera	IPA (1 st Place)

Homebrewer Of The Year: (tie)

Randy Weber (17 points) & Adam Widera (17 points)

Other beers:

Justin N	Nelson DIPA
Justin M	American Pilsner
Brad N	IPA
Enrique P	IPA
Julian S	IPA & DIPA
Thomas H	East Coast IPA
Calvin N	Mango Pale Ale
Moises	IPA
Dick E	IPA Pliny the Cranky Septuagenarian

The Barrel Project: Barrel Fill at Timeless Pints





An Island and a Beer

By David Gansen

It was a welcome surprise as we slipped into a dark blue sedan after having arrived at the International Airport on the Caribbean island of St. Lucia in the lower Antilles. Our driver, Hyginus (Hi-gén-iss) advised it was a 90 minute ride to Smuggler's Cove resort on the northern tip of the island and we would have to cut through the hills in the middle.

There were refreshments in the center console he let us know, some water and a couple of beers. Perfect. I reached into the console and pulled out a curious looking 12 ounce clear bottle of what looked, in just my immediate observation, like an enticing island pilsner with an equally curious name on the label: Piton Beer.

As we wound our way up the coast of St. Lucia and on into the small, lush green topped mountains, Hyginus kept us entertained with profile sketches of St. Lucia culture while I sucked down my refreshing Piton and demanded more information about this beer I'd never heard of before. I learned this beer was what they drink in St. Lucia because it was brewed right here on the island and isn't sold anywhere else. Named for the two rocky volcanic plugs that seem to jut right out of the ocean on the southwestern shore of the island, I became fascinated by this tiny little island and the singular beer they produced and consumed themselves. How self-contained, I thought to myself.



The majestic landmark Pitons, after which the island beer of St. Lucia is named, dominate the landscape over the sleepy fishing village of Soufriere.

Winding through the hilly tropical rainforest, Hyginus pulled us over at a stop he said we had to experience. On the side of the road was a woman in front of her home baking bread in a stone oven



Peggy with our Guide and Driver, Hyginus

carved into the hillside underneath a leaning shanty scraped together with whatever they appeared to have on hand. The tiny "loaves" were the shape of small sweet potatoes, pointy at the ends, and our driver picked up the tab for a loaf for each of us. Still steaming hot, the woman slathered it with butter, and was doing quite a brisk business with the neighborhood locals. A lovely island woman actually looked at us with the biggest sincere smile and said, "Welcome to the island!" I asked, "How did you know we weren't from the island?" Well, I didn't really ask that but I should have. I never think of the right things to say until it's too late. For the remainder of the trip that crisp and creamy style of bread became a main staple of our diet, and the warm, friendly demeanor of the woman at the roadside stand we soon would learn was common to all St. Lucians.

Continuing down the road toward our destination I became more and more intrigued by this tiny island that brews its own beer. Where do they get their ingredients from? Their grain? Their hops? Are they imported in from stateside, or maybe from Europe? They certainly don't grow them here on the island; there's nothing growing here but bananas, coconuts and other tropical fruits. I became inquisitive but our driver, as pleasant as he was, had no answers for these critical questions. Not that I was entirely enthralled by the beer, because, as premium lagers go, this was well, certainly one of them. But my keen journalistic sixth sense began to hatch an idea. I must learn of this quaint little brewery. I must have these questions answered! And the charming story that develops from this research about a tiny island with a tiny brewery can become the basis of my next article for the Long Beach Home Brewers newsletter! The sky is the limit when I aspire big!



The Piton labels we enjoyed, including the 2012 Carnival label, my personal preference

I must get to this Piton brewery to take a tour... conduct an interview! Of course they'll be delighted to talk to me once they learn I'll be writing an article that will be published in the US! How can this be arranged? Hyginus advised that the brewery was near the airport, a long drive for a day trip, but perhaps something could be arranged on the day we board our return trip home. Brilliant! Let's plan to make that happen then!

The trip was a vacation to celebrate our tenth wedding anniversary, and was really wonderful! It was either cocktails or Piton beer, both of which, of course, had an unending supply at Smuggler's Cove. The



Smuggler's Cove, where many Piton Beers were consumed, largely due the fact they it was the only beer served next to Heineken!

local population everywhere we went were extremely friendly and we always felt very welcome. We engaged the services of Hyginus once again for a tour down the west coast of the island where we visited an actual smoldering volcano and slathered the therapeutic ash mud all over our bodies. I'm sure many in the Long Beach Home Brewers have commented on the velvety smooth texture my skin now has as a result of this treatment!

of Soufriere (Soo-free), and became our stop for lunch where we enjoyed incredible fresh red snapper tacos and, go figure, a couple of Pitons! The highlight of the vacation was ziplining through a tropical

Nestled in the shadow of the Pitons is the very cool little fishing village

rainforest with a guide nicknamed “Rambo”, a very special and wonderfully entertaining man, with such a contagious and deep rooted passion for every leaf, bird and flower in “his” forest, his descriptions had you mesmerized at every platform stop along the cable runs. “Ya, mon!” is still ringing warmly in my ears as the expression surfaced in each and every one of his engaging reports. And it was in the gift shop of this attraction that I fully committed to the Piton phenomena and purchased my Piton Beer hat and T-shirt.

Finally at the end of an eventful week travel day arrived as we packed our bags and headed toward the airport with Hyginus at the helm. Proudly boasting my Piton Beer T-shirt, I was ready to deluge the brewery with my dogged and hard-hitting brewing questions. Oh sure, the questions may have still just been in my head, but the entire week was spent developing each and every question and I was already beginning to formulate the earth shattering article that will introduce Piton Beer to the world.

Our vehicle slowly approached the Windward and Leeward Brewery, where Piton is bottled, and what we saw appeared more like a compound than a brewery with a pretty serious guard gate and an ominous steel fence surrounding the entire facility. No problem. We have our driver and all will be okay. We explained to the guard at the gate our purpose. We wished to take a tour of this magnificent facility and ask some questions for an article I will be writing for publication in the United States. She smiled and replied of course, then sent us forward to the next stop... the Guard Office. Then things got a little sketchy. One of the Guards scurried off to find the Manager in charge of tours while we waited and gave a visual scan of the property. The tin warehouse in front of us housed sacks upon sacks of grains stacked to the ceiling. To the right I noticed the fermentation building with rows of massive stainless steel fermenters in a temperature controlled environment. Ah! After several minutes, here approaches the young Guard who was sent off to find our Guide. But he didn't look happy.



Standing in front of the guard gate at the Windward and Leeward Brewery after the tour that never was. The grain house stands in the background.

“I’m sorry, Sir, but she is in a training class and will not be available for another two hours.”

Ouch. We’re catching a plane in three. What progressed all week long as a lovely vacation was rapidly denigrating to crash and burn status. I knew now how Dorothy felt when the Guard at the Emerald City gate said, “The Wizard says, ‘go away!’” I thought, well okay, I can still make this work. I can just snap a few photos of the facility and find the answers to my questions on the internet like everyone else. I poised my camera to capture a shot of the grain house when suddenly from behind me a seemingly rather large person in a foul mood was pounding on the window and yelling at me. Great. I think I’d just met the only pissed off person on the island.

“You cannot take photographs inside the facility! You are not authorized!”

Really? Did they actually have so many unauthorized people wanting to take pictures inside this dump that they needed to make a rule about it? Do you really think your beer is that good? Did these people even know who they were talking to? I could put this brewery on the map!!! I could make them famous throughout the entire membership of the Long Beach Home Brewers! I AM WEARING THEIR T-SHIRT DAMMIT!!!

In an instant my plans were dashed, all my dreams and ambitions shattered. “Ya, mon,” I thought to myself as me and my bruised ego limped slowly back to the airport with a stupid Piton Beer logo emblazoned on my shirt. It’s a good thing for them that I didn’t get that Piton Beer tattoo. Then things would have gotten ugly. ♦