



Mark Marnell's Beer Blog

Crossroads Brewing:

An Ale-Cropolis in Athens

Athens New York, March 2015

BREW STATS



History: First Batch Brewed September 2010, First kegs shipped October 1, 2010

System Size: 7 BBL , 4 7BBL Fermenters, 1 15 BBL Fermenter, 1 7 BBL Brite Tank and 1 10 BBL Brite Tank

Founders Owners: Ken Landin and Janine Bennett

Brew Crew:

Head Brewers: Hutch Kugeman

Assistant Brewers: Adam Krawczak



Production Stats:

Initial Approx. Barrel (bbl) Output 2010: 615 bbl, 2015: 850 bbls

Packaging: Sixtels, Halves and limited distribution of 750 ML Bottles

Distribution: In New York : Hudson Valley and Capital District, Albany & Troy to Kingston & Poughkeepsie

Biggest Selling Beer - Outrage IPA

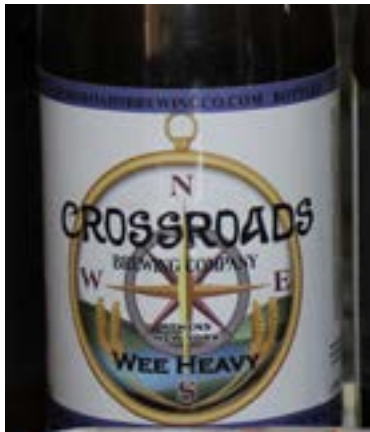
Brewery Movie - Once Upon A Time In America

Brewery Song - Remedy by The Black Crows

Hutch's favorite Craft Beer - Orval



The Brooks Opera House is back and so are the beards, but they have traded in the arias for ales



I crossed roads like Rte 209, the NY State Thruway, and route 23 on my way to the Crossroads Brewing Company, located at the (yes I am taking liberties here) cross-roads of 2nd and South Franklin Streets in the small Hudson River-side town of Athens NY. I probably should have played the lottery that day because as I pulled up across the street from the brewery, XM Radio's Deep Tracks station had Eric Clapton belting out his version of Robert Johnson's Mississippi Blues tune, "Cross-roads", and at the part



where he sings "You can still barrelhouse, baby, On the river-side". A Barrelhouse by the riverside? Yup! There it was across the street, the old Brooks Opera House, built in the 1890s and after several interim lives, purchased rundown by Ken Landin and Janine Bennett in 2009. With a good solid year of very hard work by Ken, Janine and Janine's brother Jimmy, it was now a reborn brewery; resurrected with ten taps and now pouring out new life to a new kind of audience. The facial hair is back but the tuxes

are long gone and they have traded in the arias for ales.

The location was originally slated to be across the Hudson River in Austerlitz until they ultimately decided to open up, in stages, right here in a town that they were already familiar with. The Brewery portion opened with a small taproom on October 1st 2010, the Pub opened in mid 2011 and eventually it became a full all out bona fide Brewpub with a new kitchen and a grand opening on July 4th, 2012. Musically, it will eventually turn full circle when



the upstairs is eventually converted back into a music venue. At first glance one is struck by the prominent bell tower that watches over the street and the Tyvek wrap that reminds us that this business continues to grow. The building retains all of its old charm and then some, updated with beautiful woodwork-ing, a ton of elbow grease, a hell of a lot of brewers electricity and the solar panels it sports on the roof to help with preheating the brewing water to around 140 degrees.



Bottom Left Corner and Top Left Corner Bell Tower of what was the Brooks Opera House opened in the 1890s

Cast of Characters



Head Brewer Hutch Kugeman in front of his Mash Tun

Each Craft Brewery has its own unique culture with a cast of characters who act in their very own impassioned play and here it might as well be called “Ale The Right Moves”. The cast includes two main characters; owners Janine Bennett with a background in Special Education and a knack for the business end of things and Ken Landin, a General Contractor who began working as a Salesman for Butternuts where he ultimately got bit by the beer yeast. After Ken developed a large enough beer network that included meeting Brewer Hutch Kugeman in 2007, he decided to take the beer plunge. It all started with a beer he had Butternuts contract brew for him up in Garratstown NY in 2008 that he called Outrage Ale, a name that ultimately would be reused for Crossroads Brewery’s

most popular selling beer. A Brewpub was the obvious next step and with the addition of Brewer Hutch Kugeman, the endeavor was to become a nice tourist attraction for the small town. The Connecticut native did not go straight into Brewing and ironically, he was turned off by the taste of beer the first time he ever tried it. After graduating from the University of Virginia, he dabbled in homebrewing while teaching for a while at a Middle School in Lewisburg NC and engaging in a 2 year gig for Teach For America. Since his new found love for beer overrode his teaching ambitions, he headed out to Portland Oregon where the west coast beer scene was in full boil. He continued to homebrew and eventually, after several rejections, obtained a brewing internship for the Summer and



Owners/Founders Janine Bennett and Ken Landin

Fall at Pelican Pub and Brewing in Pacific City under the tutelage of Brew Master Darron Welch. When the internship ended, he was offered a Sales job which he refused and instead headed to Great Adirondack Brewing in Lake Placid NY in Dec 2002, where he worked with great freedom under Head Brewer Rob Davis. He graduated from the American Brewer’s Guild program in Brewing Science & Engineering in 2004 and took over the reins as Head Brewer from Feb 2004 through April of 2010. After a 6 month gig as Lead Brewer under Head Brewer Jeff O’Neil at Ithaca Brewery, he took the job at Crossroads with full reign over the beers and their direction. He brought with him his award winning talent as well as a love for music and movies, evident in some of his beer names. He has since won medals for Crossroads Brewing in some of the same categories that he won medals for Great Adirondack Brewing and then some. He is very active in the local beer community, evidenced by his many collaboration beers and his

stewardship of the first wide reaching Collaboration beer “Too Many Cooks” that involved 12 Hudson Valley Breweries. His assistant, since early 2014, is Adam Krawczak an avid homebrewer and former member of the Albany Brew Crafters who interned one summer and jumped on board. Completing the brewpub crew is Executive Chef Paul Parillo, a NYC Culinary School grad and former Chef at DeNiro’s Tribeca Grill and his assistant, Sous Chef Nick Ferrier. Paul has built a menu based on local products from nearby farms within a 30 mile radius of the kitchen. The grub is as farm to table as possible with a seasonal menu that changes every 3 months. All stocks and sauces are made from scratch and because it is a Brewpub, he is quick to use beer in certain dishes that include spent grain in the veggie Greene Burger, Brady’s Bay Cream Ale Sauce used on his Fish, Mussels Steamed in Brady’s Bay Cream Ale, Black Rock Stout BBQ Sauce, Outraged Cheese Sauce, Black Rock Stout reductions for meat dishes and a Stout Brownie Sundae.



Asst Brewer Adam Krawczak and Hutch in Albany

A small Brewery with a Big Impact



7 BBL Brew House

The pub has a 7BBL Brewhouse with a configuration that includes 4 7BBL Fermenters, 1 15 BBL Fermenter, 1 7 BBL Brite Tank and 1 10 BBL Brite Tank. Outrage IPA was the first beer brewed on September 11th and the first keg of it rolled off the line on October 1st 2010. Just six months after the brewery opened, it won TAPSMNew York's Matthew Vassar Cup for Best Brewery in the Hudson Valley and also took home

TAPSMNew York's John Calen Award for the Best IPA in New York State. The Brewpub has also pulled down the most Hudson Valley Magazine's reader votes for Best Brewery in the Hudson Valley and the Best Restaurant in Greene County. The beer is self distributed, from Albany and Troy down to Kingston and Poughkeepsie with several NYC accounts. Demand is high and the Brewery is currently operating at full capacity. The beer is pack-



4 7BBL Fermenters

aged in sixtels, halves, growlers and limited 750 ml bottles of Select Brewers Reserve barrel and bottle aged bigger beers released monthly and only available at the pub. In the interests of being green, they use solar panels on the roof, recycle frying oil for biofuel conversion and ship out their spent grain to a local farm to feed farm animals. The pub is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 4 to 9 pm, Fridays from 4pm to midnight, Saturday

1pm to midnight and Sunday from 1 to 9 pm. On Mondays, if you order 12 wings, you get a beer for a buck; on Wednesday if you order a bowl of chili, you get a beer for a buck, and Thursday is Meet the Brewer Night where you can often get a special cask. You will find both hip locals and knowledgeable tourists drinking up great five dollar pints of beers, taking in beer geek discussions and eating up some great farm to table fare.



Fermenters and Brite Tanks



15BBL Fermenter and Kegs

A Small Pub With Big Flavored Beers



Beer Name	Description	ABV	IBU	Release Date
OUTRAGE IPA	BOLD AMERICAN HOP FLAVORS + AROMAS, CRUDDY	7.0	90	4/23
BRADY'S BAY CREAM ALE	SUBTLE MALT + HOPS, LIGHT-BODIED	5.0	10	4/20
BRICK ROW RED	SMOOTH, MALTY + MEDIUM BODIED	5.0	16	3/17
LIGHTHOUSE WHEAT	CLEAN, CRISP AMERICAN WHEAT	4.2	9	1/24
BLACK ROCK STOUT	ROBUST, ROASTY + FULL BODIED	6.8	55	3/21
FIRST PITCH PILS	GERMAN-STYLE PILSENER w/ CZECH SAZ HOPS	4.9	33	4/6
NY COMMON	"STEAM" LAGER, CLEAN + CRISP, LIGHTLY FRUITY	5.5	33	3/12
ANGRY PETE'S PALE	SINGLE HOPPED PALE ALE w/ NELSON SAUVIN	5.5	35	1/11
UP AND AT 'EM!	PALE ALE FRUITY HOPS + TB PEELS COFFEE BEANS	5.9	45	2/17
HOMEWRECKER	DOUBLE IPA, SPONGY + HOPPY	9.6	95	4/27

Many of the beers here are classics, clean and delicious. Beyond the "classics", there are others that are satyr like hybrids transcending stylistic restrictions. The beers cross styles, colors, strengths and flavors going from British to Belgian to American, sessionable to strong, and strong & spicy to light & mild. The above board is exemplary of the scope of the ten taps, with alcohol varying from 4.2 to 9.6%, IBUs spanning from 9 to 95 and as a first for me, a list of the actual racking dates. The list offers a great variety of suds going

from a very hoppy IPA to a classic Saaz hopped Pilsner, from a Coffee Pale Ale to a single Nelson Sauvin hopped Pale Ale, from a Cream Ale to a NY styled California Common, and from a 9.6% 95 IBUed Double IPA to an alcoholic, chocolaty, and deeply robust Stout. Sitting on top of the slate is their top seller, a distinct and hearty 7% American IPA called "Outrage IPA" made with Maris Otter Pale and Crystal Malts with a little Wheat and hopped with 90 IBUs of American hops that include Simcoe, Cascade, Centen-

nial, Amarillo and Citra hops. This beer earned the 2011 TAP NY John Calen Award for Best IPA in New York State, 2 other tap awards, (bronze and silver) and a second place overall finish at the Hudson River Craft Beer Festival. The other year round offerings are 2014 World Beer Cup Gold Medal Winning 6.8% "Black Rock Stout", loaded with alcohol, roasted barley and chocolate malt, and lighter bodied, lighter hopped beers like 5% "Brady's Bay" Cream Ale made with German Pilsner, German Caramel Pilsner and Honey

Malts, 5% "Brick Row Red" Ale made with English malts and lightly hopped with German Hallertauer and sessionable 4.2% "Lighthouse Wheat", made with German Pilsner and Wheat malts and lightly hopped with Czech Saaz hops. In order to fill up all ten taps all the time, there are many repeating annual seasonals that include his dry and fruity 2013 GABF Bronze Medal Winning 6.7% "Maggie's Farmhouse" Ale crafted with German Pilsner and English Pale malts, moderate amounts of hops and a Belgian



Barrel aging Stout



Brewers Reserve Bottle Series of Big Beers, some barrel aged

A Formidable Family of Fragrant Fall Pumpkin Beers Help Keep the Autumn Taps Full



Saison yeast strain, “Outrage IPA’s bigger sibling on steroids, 9.6 “Homewrecker” Double IPA made with an English Maris Otter Malt backbone and 95 IBUs of Centennial, Mosaic, Cascade and Simcoe hops and then dry hopped with the same medley, 7.5 “Abbey Road” Belgian Dubbel, 6.7% HOPera House Belgian IPA, 5.5% “Angry Pete’s Pale Ale”, a singly hopped Pale Ale series featuring a different hop each time showcased over a base of English Maris Otter and Pale Crystal Malts, classic 5% “First Pitch” Pilsner hopped with Saaz and made for Opening Day each year, 4.4 % sessionable “White Dog Wit”

made with orange zest, chamomile and toasted coriander, 5.5% “Fat Boy” Breakfast Porter made with oatmeal and locally roasted coffee and his 5.5% local honey-rye, “Athens Mill Amber”.

You will also see some very big and burley seasonal beers that you can either find on tap, aged in oak liquor barrels or in Special Brewers Reserve Bottles. A few include Bronze Medal winning 9% Barley Wine, 8% “Yukon Cornelius” Christmas Ale that is spiced differently each year, 8.5% “Albertus” Imperial Stout, 9% “Audacity” Belgian Dark Strong Ale, 8.9% “Winterizer” Wheat Wine, 8% Wee Heavy

Scotch Ale, 7.5% “Clifford the Big Red Ale” and previously mentioned “Maggie’s Farmhouse” and “Abbey Road”.

The fall is an interesting season for the pub when you’ll find some pretty cool “Harvest” brews like “Hammerstone Pale Ale” and others that feature locally grown hops and “Farm” brews like “Homegrown IPA” and others made with 100% NY ingredients. Perhaps the biggest Autumn standout is a series of mostly spiced pumpkin beers that Hutch crafts featuring roasted sugar pumpkins locally grown at Black Horse Farms. This is the first place that I have seen ,with

multiple pumpkin beers on at the same time; where I was able to sit at the bar and compare notes on 2 or 3 of the following pumpkin beers at the same time: 5% “Dr Loomis” Pumpkin Spiced Brown Ale, 5.7% “Father Mer-rin Pumpkin Saison, 6.2% “Franken Stout” Imperial Pumpkin Stout, Pumpkin Spiced Dark Amber, Belgian Pumpkin Golden Ale and, well you get the picture, others.



Bar Area



Number One Outrage IPA Fan, 85 year old beer aficionado Rex Reeve

My 2 Ounces: An Ale-Cropolis in Athens

As I left the brewery that day I reflected on how awesome the place was; the building the beers, and the people. It is a Colossus of a place in a tiny town, firmly taking root in a place where so many others before them could not, and becoming for many a place where it is hip to sip. In sleepy Athens NY, they have taken what Hutch calls a small “HOPera House” and have built it into a veritable Ale-Cropolis. Like the Acropolis in Athens Greece, this place too attracts tourists, in a similar way but in a different place and time. The Ancient Greeks once had their Classical Age and now the American Craft Beer World is having its. Theirs had to do with Philosophers, Architects and Artists and so does today’s. Theirs had to do with sophisticated methods

of artistic expression and scientific advancement, so does today’s. For their art, it was all about the heads and the bodies, the same goes for today’s beers. American Brewers are like the Greeks of the Classical Period, forever striving for new artistic heights. Some subjects have changed, like the wine to beer, but some things are the same, like the beards and new found sophistication.

In a small slice of Americana, Hutch has built his very own Ale-Cropolis in a small little city state with a diverse democracy of beers that he makes with authority. Each beer, an individual work of art, a monolith in its own small way; a canvas full of grain and grist, full of color, and accentuated texture. Here there are plenty of them to evaluate.

All you need is some curiosity and a discerning palate that’s wide open.

This Brewpub is like the Athenian amphitheater of old, a meeting place where the beer drinkers take the stage to philosophize. They come to tell a story, the story is epic yet small, inventive yet classic and there is always a hoppy ending. Long gone are the lutes, enter the guitars, and the urns have given way to pint glasses. Like the urns, the pints are full of pungent aromas, full of floral and spice notes, each a canvas of color and life. And so it makes sense that this place pulls in many curious sophisticates just like the Acropolis in the other Athens.

For many however, it still remains a hidden archeological gem, buried in a small sleepy Hudson River town

awaiting discovery. My advice to those who have not yet studied this beer, cross as many roads as you need to get to this place. It is easily accessible, just 5 short miles away from the NY State Thruway Exit 21 and a short ferry ride over from Hudson. Go by chariot, by car, by foot, by personal boat or pay the Ferryman his 12 bucks (as long as it is not Charon). Just get there. Discover the art of brewing. But be careful, the beers have siren like qualities that tend to suck you in.

As I pulled away, I purposely put in Melissa by the Allman Brothers and listened to rich art, spicy guitar and Greg belting out, “Crossroads, will you ever let him go? (Lord, Lord)”

