

THE JOURNAL OF

The Scottish Brewing Archive Association



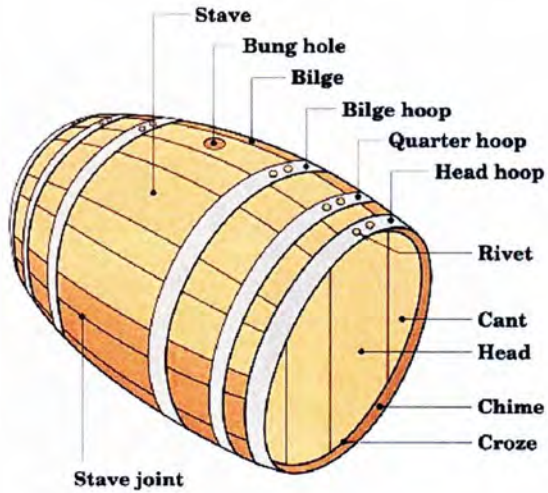
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Coopers' craft: still associated with whisky and wine but which once played a vital role in the brewing trade. We reveal fascinating living history as a Scots ale barrel cooper recalls the past.



Roll out the barrel: the naming of parts in the days of wood

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If you plan to visit the search room at Thurso Street and to see the transformation of the facilities of the University of Glasgow Archive Services at first hand, please remember to book by contacting the Duty Archivist by E mail or to phone 0141 330 5515.

Watch out for our new website on the way:

www.scottishbrewingarchive.co.uk

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The Scottish Brewing Archive Association: Its History and Activities

Before considering erudite technical papers, delegates at the **European Brewing Convention Congress** at the SECC in Glasgow heard about the role of the archive and the association from the Chairman of the SBAA, Harvey L Milne, in an illustrated talk on 23 May. He told the international visitors that he wanted to give them a flavour of the SBAA and the Scottish Brewing Archives held within the Glasgow University Archive Services (GUAS). Here is what he had to say, accompanied by some of the illustrations.



Objectives

The SBAA exists in Scotland today to promote the history of brewing in Scotland and the Scottish Brewing Archive within Glasgow University Archive Services.

We assist GUAS with SBA matters.

We produce newsletters and journals and organise various events related to the SBA.

But before we talk any more about the SBAA, I want to go back to our roots and all will become clear!

Origins of the Scottish Brewing Archives

Scotland has a long and very significant history of brewing. The first significant mention of ale in Scotland was in 1488. Belhaven in Dunbar dates back to 1550 and the Tennent's name in brewing can be traced back to 1556. We make Guinness in 1759 the baby on the block! Hops were even grown in Scotland at one time for commercial use! In 1900 we had a population of around 4 million people and around 120 breweries in Scotland. Compare that with Germany, with 40 million people and 2000 breweries!

1885 saw the first lager brewed commercially in Scotland and we have been exporting ales and lagers to Europe, Russia, India, USA Australia and New Zealand since the late 1800s. At Heriot Watt we have been conducting education, research and training in Brewing for over 100 years. Louis Pasteur came to Scotland and was a friend of the Younger and Usher families and his work also led to work on various Scottish Public Health Issues. Tennents were also responsible for innovations like the first draught lager in 1924, canned lager in 1935 and in 1955, the first 16oz flat topped can.

Let me take you back to 1977, to one of the most famous doyens of the brewing industry.



There are no prizes for recognizing the redoubtable Professor Anna MacLeod. She and others including another weel kent figure namely one Geoff Palmer were sinking a beer or two when they started to list all the breweries in Scotland that were closed, taken over, merged or were otherwise in decline and they realised that unless something was done rapidly, an enormous amount of material, records, artefacts, documents, recipes and all sorts of other ephemera (a good word for a Monday!)

would be lost forever. To be blunt, it would end up in a skip! Our heritage and history would be lost forever.

So if you will pardon the pun an idea germinated!

And so the Scottish Brewing Archive was formed, originally within the Brewing School in Heriot Watt in Chamber Street in Edinburgh, and largely under the auspices of the librarian, a Mr Alex Anderson. It was set up with the help of the Manpower Services Commission (does anyone remember them?) and with sponsorship from most of the major breweries in Scotland, and to a lesser financial extent, with donations from individuals who became loyal and enthusiastic Friends of the Scottish Brewing Archive. Once we had enough support we were able to employ through the University, an archivist, and we have records showing our intention to engage a research assistant at that time.

We published our first newsletter in 1981 and we had our first ever exhibition and our opening ceremony on 5th March 1982 in Chambers Street to coincide with the weekend of the Heriot Watt Former Brewing Students Association Dinner. We were registered as a charity in 1985

Achievements and Core Activities

The main aim of the SBA was and still is to collect and preserve in a professional manner the records, documents, advertising and audio – visual material, artefacts etc. - from former Scottish breweries. These items can be in two categories – there are items still owned by the existing companies, brand owners etc and which are being preserved in the Archives on behalf of the owners, and there are other items which have become the property of the SBA by donation from companies and / or individuals.

We certainly bridged the gap between the history and the industry in the shape of various breweries and associated companies. We received support and encouragement from the marketing and brands departments who wanted to use or update their material for books, adverts, pamphlets and other publications e.g. the recent Tennent's advertising campaign. We made companies who were closing breweries aware that their material could and would be preserved for posterity and would be available to future owners and interested parties. There is absolutely no doubt that had we not founded the SBA a huge

amount of valuable, indeed priceless material would have been lost for ever. We have kept our heritage alive!

The SBA continued to raise annual sponsorship to support the work of the Archive and the archivist. The archivist would answer queries on Scottish Brewing History – often from people who had a former relative in the industry and who wanted to know more about their employment, working conditions etc. The archivist would also be on hand to help with research for books etc. We also continued to publish newsletters and journals. We organised Open Days and other appropriate events for the Friends of the SBA.

By this time we had seen the closure of many famous Scottish Breweries. No doubt many of you will recognise some familiar names on the slide.

On the plus side, the microbreweries were beginning to emerge, notably Traquair, Broughton and Harviestoun in the late seventies and early eighties.



The Collection

Content

At this point I would like to give you some idea of what is in the collection.

A 19th Century George Younger's stock book

An Alloa Brewer's sales ledger from 1849

Belhaven Brewery records from 1871 to 1950 and some more recent records

S. & N. and McEwans records from 1850 to 1960

Dryboroughs and J.R. Tennents records from 1770

The Brewers Association of Scotland first minutes book.

Books, board meeting minutes, diaries, letters, and a gallimaufry (another good word for a Monday!) of other documents

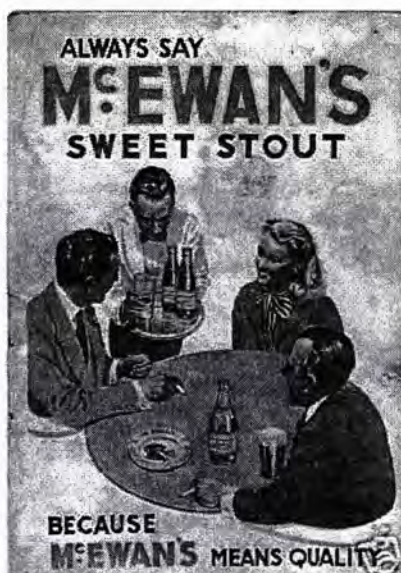
Brewing Recipes for former ales e.g. heather ale and oat malt stout.

Brewing ledgers, stock books and accounts, invoices etc.

Audio-visual advertising material, some digitised.

Bottles, labels, drip-mats, glasses, tankards, trays and cans – the most famous being the Tennent's Lager Lovelies!

Beer engines, pub mirrors etc.



Location

In the early days the Archive entered a nomadic period!

When the Heriot Watt moved out to Riccarton in 1983, the Archive went also but it was housed in a totally unsuitable area adjacent to the boiler house and after a while it was moved back into premises in the Grassmarket in Edinburgh. It remained there till 1991 when it became homeless like some of the other occupants of the Grassmarket!

The chairman, David Johnston managed to find a home for it in Glasgow University Archive Services along with other collections relating to banking, shipbuilding, railways, and tobacco etc., in the industrial archives. GUAS has material dating back to 1451 and has one of the largest collections of business records in Europe.

By this time the breweries were contracting and with them the income of the SBA, while the collection was expanding. Grants from people like the Craignish Trust supported projects for students who were studying to become archivists. But it was becoming more and more time consuming for the Board of Trustees to raise the sponsorship to pay the archivist. It was also becoming impossible for the archivist to keep up with the cataloguing etc. etc.

We were starting to lose sight of the other core activities. However we did continue with the annual journals, the occasional visits to breweries and mainly, the Annual Open Days with a Guest Speaker. The Open Days gave the Friends of the Archive a chance to come along and see the material and have a tour of the archive.

Towards the end of the 1990s there were even more closures including Carlsberg Tetley and Maclays in Alloa and even more recently Fountain Brewery in Edinburgh. We struggled on despite the pressures of supporting the archivists into the 21st century. However we had to progressively reduce the hours of the archivist and in 2008 we very reluctantly decided we could no longer continue and we had to release the archivist altogether. We would have to de-register as a charity, and we would disband the Scottish Brewing Archive.

But what would we do with all the items in the archive? Some as we said, we owned, some on deposit and owned by others?

One of the conditions for de-registration as a charity is that all the assets, financial or otherwise must go to another organisation with similar and suitable aims. We could not just hire a Transit van, take

some items back to their original owners, sell our own items on e-Bay and divide the proceeds among the trustees!

We were extremely fortunate at this point that Lesley Richmond and her team in GUAS stepped in to take on all the items in the archive whether owned or on deposit so the Archive itself did not have to move even one metre! We were able to transfer the items and the majority of the remaining funds to GUAS and the remainder of the funds went to the formation of the SBAA.



The formation of the Scottish Brewing Archive Association

The Scottish Brewing Archive Association was formed in 2008, because the committee did not want to lose sight of all the previous work of the SBA and we wanted to continue to help GUAS with Scottish brewing matters and to continue with the objectives I mentioned at the beginning of the talk.

Without the financial pressures of funding the archivist, the committee of the SBAA can enjoy and focus on promoting the history of brewing in Scotland. Our core activities are very similar to those of the former SBA.

Visits have included Belhaven, Harviestoun and the Clockwork Breweries, and the Diageo Archive in Menstrie. We have continued with our Open Days with Guest Speakers. And one of our highlights was the

organisation of a half day seminar entitled ' A Pint o' Yill in Glasgow last year when we had three guest speakers. Yill is an old Scottish word for ale and has similar various European equivalents.

The secretary and I also attended the launch of the Scottish Strategy for Business Archives.

We will continue with similar events in future and we have our Open day here in Glasgow tomorrow. Our theme is **Scottish Beer Exports** and I would like to invite you to come along and see us between 4.30 and 6.30. There is information on how to find us in your conference pack. We hope to repeat the seminar in 2012, and if any of you are interested in sponsorship of the event I am all ears!

We also have plans for other visits, a beer tasting and the second half of a guided walk round Edinburgh's famous pubs and alehouses.

So that brings us up to date. But what is our future strategy? How we will fit in with the Industry here in Scotland and elsewhere?

Future Strategy

We have talked about exploring possible links with other related industries e.g., distilling. The World Wide Spirits Conference later this year may give us an opening.

We must enhance and safeguard our relationship with GUAS.

We will continue to promote Scottish beer history.

We must focus on the positives in the industry – In the alcohol market the fastest growing sector especially here in Scotland is cask ale. Some micro breweries are now about 30 years old and like Harviestoun and Inveralmond have moved and expanded. Others are expanding as we speak. We must ensure that we reach these sources of valuable material. Our primary objective must be to ensure that nothing vital is lost!

And what of Europe?

We are already establishing links with the Brewery History Society and the Bass Brewing Museum south of Hadrian's Wall. Are there any similar organisations in European Brewing or indeed anywhere else in the world?

We need the help, knowledge and expertise both of individuals and the industry through sponsorship. We are therefore seeking to expand our individual membership. We have also recently written to over 50

companies in the industry in Scotland to offer corporate membership and have already had some success. We have here in Glasgow a fantastic resource which we can offer and we must make this resource as widely available as possible.



I am delighted to announce the imminent launch of our website :

www.scottishbrewingarchive.co.uk

Now is your chance to join us!

The motto of Alloa, the former Burton on Trent of Scotland is "In the Forefront".

We will be there! Cheers!



Thanks

Harvey thanked the Conference Committee for allowing him to make the presentation and the delegates for listening. He also thanked John Martin, Forbes Gibb, and other members of the SBAA committee for their valuable assistance in preparing the talk.



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The Life and Times of a Cooper

Traditionally, a cooper is someone who makes wooden staved vessels that are conical or barrel shaped, bound together with metal hoops and sealed top and bottom with flat ends or heads. The cooper can produce a wide range of varying size casks to a standard specification.

The word is derived from the Dutch word *kūpe*, “basket, wood, tub” and may ultimately stem from *cupa*, the Latin word for vat.

John Perry tells Bill Brown the living history of a cooper. John worked on casks that were essential to the Scottish brewing trade in the years before wooden barrels were replaced as bulk containers for ale.

Bill began his working career in 1959 with Robert Deuchar, Duddingston Brewery in Edinburgh. At that time Deuchars was part of Newcastle Breweries and in 1961 merged with Scottish Brewers to form Scottish & Newcastle, which later was to become the largest brewing company in the UK.

Bill worked with S&N in a variety of roles; Customer Services at McEwans Fountain Brewery, Tax Accountant and Deputy Capital Controller at the S&N Head Office at Holyrood, progressing within Finance at both Newcastle and Edinburgh. Bill was promoted to the role of Financial Accountant for Scottish Brewers and then Finance Manager responsible for the UK, in the selling side of the business, when Scottish Courage was formed.

Bill retired after 45 years service with S&N and experienced many changes to the company and the beer industry during that time. Bill has always shown a passion for his work and proud to have worked for S&N.

Bill's favourite beer is McEwans Champion Ale – none better.

John Perry's Forty Years as a Cooper

By Bill Brown

Bill: In 1959 I joined Robert Deuchar's Duddingston Brewery, as an apprentice clerk and the following year, John Perry joined as an apprentice cooper. On John's first day I remember taking down his details for the payroll. Following the merger of Scottish Brewers Ltd and Newcastle Breweries Ltd the Duddingston brewery ceased brewing in 1962 and after this I had no further contact with John.

Fast forward, to June 2009: holiday coach trip to Torquay.

Our first evening at the hotel, after dinner, a few of us talked about the local beers on offer, comparing these to some of the beers brewed in Scotland, in particular Deuchars IPA brewed at the Caledonian Brewery in Edinburgh.

I happened to mention that the "real" Deuchars Ale had been brewed at Duddingston. At that point one of the company spoke up and said "I know all about that, my first job was an apprentice cooper at Deuchar's Brewery!"

The penny dropped and I recalled the name of John Perry and I could see in my mind's eye, the youth of some 50 years ago. This led on to a most enjoyable evening as we reminisced over our early years at Deuchars.

Another "twist of fate" occurred in April 2010 when, out of the blue, I "bumped" into John at Ocean Terminal in Leith. After a brief "chinwag" it occurred to me that John's life as a cooper might make an interesting article for the SBAA Journal.

I asked John if he was up for this and he agreed.

This is John's story about his 40 years with the coopering craft.

Bill: John, tell us about your early years before you started work.

John: I was born and raised in Rothesay, on the Isle of Bute and attended St Andrews Primary School and Rothesay Academy. When I was 14 the family moved to Station Road, Duddingston when I attended St John's School, Portobello and as an "incomer" and with a West of Scotland accent I had a bit of a rough time there. However at that time, a friend of the family introduced me to the boxing club at Newcraighall Miners Club, which I thoroughly enjoyed. After this I had no further trouble at school with my fellow pupils. Looking back I don't think it was really to do with boxing. I think that as time moved on we just got used to each other.

Bill: Why did you want to become a cooper?

John: My Uncle Bill, (who was a sergeant in the Scots Guards) worked in the Tun Room at Deuchars. He enthralled me with his description of the skills and craftsmanship of coopering and suggested that I should apply for an apprenticeship, but he forewarned me that coopering apprenticeships were difficult to come by. Thankfully my application was successful.

My Uncle Bill's older brother, Johnny Wilchar worked in the cellars where Jimmy Bertram was the Head Cellarman (as had his father before him) and his brothers, Bobby (Coppersmith) and Adam (Hop Store) also worked in the brewery.

Family "dynasties" were then quite common in brewing circles and it worked well!

Bill: Tell us about your 2 years at Deuchars learning the trade and some of the characters you met in the cooperage and brewery.

John: Firstly, I would point out that coopering is not a trade; it is a craft- the ancient craft of coopering! Also, coopers do not refer to the cooperage; they refer to it as the shop!

For some reason in my early days in the shop I got the impression that the coopers seemed to set themselves apart from the other brewery workers. I was never sure if this was because of their status as

craftsmen, or maybe because of the physical location of the shop at the far corner of the brewery. It was probably the latter.

My first wage was £2. 17sh. 1p for a 44 hour week, including 4 hours on Saturdays . My journeyman was Willie Beaton who was an excellent craftsman. The very first task given to me was to collect a bucket of steam from the boiler house- I fell for it. On my way I got lost and ended up in the stables, can't remember the horse's name but the stableman was Wull Watt.

One of my first jobs was taking out staves from old casks and breaking them up for firewood. Note that I use the word cask and not barrel, this is because the term barrel is specific to its 36 gallon capacity.

Other cask sizes in use were,

Hogshead = 54 gallons

Kilderkin = 18 gallons

Firkin = 9 gallons

Pin = 4.5 gallons,

and within the whisky trade,

Puncheon = 72 gallons

Butt = 108 gallons



In Deuchars every single cask was branded with a unique number and was booked out, and booked in when returned from the customer.

(Archie Bell was the clerk in the office whose full time job was to keep these records up to date).

First thing every morning I had to collect beer from the pundy house and for this used a sort of watering can made of stainless steel. This

container held about 20 pints and was taken to the shop for consumption by the coopers. If required, more often the case! I had to go back for refills. Leftovers were either bottled, for later consumption, or used for washing down the shop floor at the end of the day, this would probably have depended upon the quality of the pundy available on the day! I wonder what Health & Safety would have made of this today?

In the first year of my apprenticeship I attended day release at New Street School in Edinburgh and in my second year, two evenings a week at Broughton Street School, Edinburgh. To confirm my attendance at school, my card was stamped and on presentation of this to Mr Buchanan, the Brewer, my bus fares were reimbursed. Attendance at these classes was compulsory being an integral part of the apprenticeship.

At school we were taught the tools of the trade and we made a variety of miniature casks and flowerpots. It was explained that the shape of a cask enabled ease of handling and that the bulge (shape) of the cask allowed iron-binding hoops of fixed sizes to be driven towards the widest part of the cask squeezing the staves tightly together thereby giving the cask its strength. Another endearing feature of a wooden cask is that if properly maintained would last for many, many years.

On one occasion we made a cocktail bar out of a barrel but it was too big to get it through the door. On a more sober note, classes also included Maths and English.

On one occasion Willie Beaton and I were summoned to see the Managing Director, Mr Robert Allan, (nicknamed The Big Fella or Big Bob- he was fearsome) when he told me in no uncertain terms that I had to pull my socks up. Why? Because he expected apprentices from Deuchars to gain prizes at day school, he went on to say that not winning prizes was bad for the Company's image! The following term I gained a 3rd prize.

With the exception of a circular saw, which, incidentally was only used for cutting up old staves for firewood, all tools used in the shop were for hand use. To demonstrate the "old world" nature of this, if a cooper from the early 19th century were to have time travelled into the Deuchars shop in the 1960's, he would have felt quite at ease with the work. Holidays only comprised of 2 weeks in the summer, 2 days at Christmas and 1 day at New Year, this was because the firm was English based.

Many of the coopers had nicknames. Billy Law was called Moses- jokingly the coopers said that he had been found in the bulrushes! He was a great guy; his father was a cellar-man in the Brewery.

The shop's gaffer Geordie McLaren was an excellent cooper. He costed out every job right down to the smallest detail e.g. how many staves were used, what was done to an "end", how many rivets were used, nothing wasted, nothing missed and he was concerned if a job took too long to complete. Deuchars had 2 gaffers, 11 bench coopers and 2 apprentices.

One of Geordie's passions was feeding the birds. Every morning he sent me over the railway line to Thomson's general store at Station Road, for 6 rolls (formerly owned by big Tam McKenzie the former Hearts right back- before leaving I delivered newspapers for Tam). At 12 noon on the dot, Geordie would walk out into the yard with arms outstretched and palms laden with the broken up rolls. The birds would perch on his head, shoulders and outstretched arms waiting their turn to feed. As a result, Geordie was known as the "Bird Man of Deuchars".

Geordie's brother, Jock, also a master cooper, was the gaffer in charge of the cask washing shed. Casks has to be in tip-top condition before racking and the final check by Jock was to sniff the bunghole of every cask before it was rolled in to the racking cellar. If a cask had the slightest hint of sourness it was rejected. (For some reason Geordie and Jock never seemed to talk to each other, not sure why). Looking back there were so many unique characters in Deuchars. There was one man, who had a dreadful stutter, but he had a great voice and boy could he sing and he did without a single stutter.

There was one very sad occasion when a wagon full of empty barrels was being unloaded at the railway siding. When the wagon door was opened, a barrel came tumbling out and killed the operative outright. The barrels had been incorrectly loaded into the wagon.

Following the merger to form Scottish & Newcastle Breweries Ltd the Duddingston Brewery closed in 1962 and for many of us this marked the end of an era.

I was then transferred to Moray Park, Edinburgh, where I continued my apprenticeship for the next 2 years. (I enjoyed all the firms I worked with, but I would say that my best times were with Deuchars and Lindsays).

Bill: On transferring to Moray Park what were your first reactions and how different was it from Deuchars?

John: As explained there was no machinery at Deuchars, apart from the circular saw, but the Moray Park shop had the most up to date machinery. It was much bigger than Deuchars and employed 4 gaffers, 25 bench coopers, 2 end coopers and 9 apprentices. My journeyman was Willie Church (Churchie) and he was a very good teacher. During my 2 years at Moray Park I gained a great deal of experience using the up to date techniques with the equipment and machinery. At this time 4 of my 5 years apprenticeship had been within the brewery side and to complete my apprenticeship it was necessary to gain a years experience and training within the whisky side, so I moved on to Lindsay's Cooperage at Cannonmills, Edinburgh.

Bill: Now nearing the end of your apprenticeship and with your move to Lindsay's, tell me about your thoughts at that time and also the prospect of your impending "initiation" ceremony.

John: As explained, I had to make this move to gain the experience on the whisky side, but also, as at that time it was becoming obvious that with the introduction of metal casks and 5 barrel tanks, the days of coopering within brewing were numbered.

Work within the shops at Deuchars and Moray Park mainly consisted of repair work (in coopering jargon called "fresh work") but in Lindsay's new casks were also made from scratch (called "new work"). So with the combination of new work, fresh work and the most up to date machinery covering both brewing and whisky, Lindsay's was best placed for me to complete the final year of my apprenticeship.

Turning to my "initiation" ceremony, as the final days of my apprenticeship were drawing to a close and I started to think about what they do to me on my last day. I had heard weird stories about apprentices being "tarred and feathered" or rolled in a barrel full of finings. On the appointed day I was hauled into the centre of the shop floor and buckets of mud were thrown over me. I think I got off quite lightly. Shortly after this I received an offer of employment from Grants Distillery in Girvin, as a bench cooper at the rate of £20 per week. I declined as I had thoughts about going to Winnipeg in Canada where coopers were much in demand. However these plans were changed when Grants came back with an improved offer of £20. 10/- per week, which I accepted.

Bill: So it was back to the west coast with your future looking good.

John: Yes it was a good move and the icing on the cake was that with this job came a brand new "key" workers house.

Grants had 16 warehouses each holding 20 thousand casks. In the shop 150 casks were serviced and repaired each day. The firm employed 2 gaffers, 9 bench coopers and 2 apprentices. At that time Grants operated a production line and because of this the only hand tools used by the coopers were the hammer and driver, to tighten up the hoops before the casks were placed on the production line for final preparation. With the warehouses becoming fully stocked (3 year minimum storage cycle), there emerged a surplus of casks and this, coupled with the amount of empty casks returning from the trade for "fresh" work, resulted in the closure of the production line.

During this time I became involved with the management of the Union and eventually became a shop steward. Although I enjoyed my time there I decided for various reasons that it was time to move on.

Bill: With 15 years experience in the craft and at the age of 31, I would imagine that your skills would have been much in demand?

John: I wouldn't say that, but I was always ambitious and keen to do better and because of this in 1975 I accepted a position at Eddie McLaughlins Cooperage in the Broomielaw (they subsequently moved to High Blantyre).

Bill: Why Eddie McLaughlins?

John: I moved there with the opportunity to earn more because McLaughlins operated a system of payment by results. Being fit, experienced and willing to work under pressure, this move suited me at that time. McLaughlins took in all types of work from a variety of distillers and all of this made this job attractive from my point of view. There were 10 coopers there and the gaffer was Harry Woods.

You talked about my skills being in demand, well here in McLaughlins our shop steward was Jimmy Ross. Now when we talk of skills in demand here in Jimmy was a cooper of truly outstanding ability. In fact he was brilliant and I have no hesitation to say that Jimmy to coopering was like what Pele was to football. No matter what difficulties or

problems arose Jimmy would always come up with a solution and to top all of this he was so helpful to all of his fellow coopers in the shop. Although I enjoyed my time at McLaughlins and after 4 years I decided that, yet again, it was time to move on and I secured a position with Bells at Broxburn.

Bill: At this point you had been with quiet a few companies. Was this movement of coopers from shop to shop, widespread with the craft?

John: Yes and no, many did and many didn't. As I already mentioned I like to take on board new challenges and moving about enabled me to achieve this, also with every move there was also the prospect of higher wages.

Bells was a big concern, they employed 2 gaffers, 30 bench coopers and 3 apprentices. They took in all work, "fresh" and "new" and the equipment and machinery there was state of the art, it had to be, to deal with such a large throughput. In 1994 the Broxburn shop was taken over by Glenmorangie, who then subsequently sold on to Speyside Coopering. I happily stayed on for a further 5 years but after 40 years in the craft I decided that the time had come to leave and pursue a change of direction for the years of my active working life.

I then joined a company called Hertel, based in Cumbernauld, where they handled a variety of work including joinery, pipe lagging and scaffolding. I enjoyed my time there where I remained until my formal retirement.

Bill: How would you summarise your career in the craft of coopering?

John: Over the many years in the various shops where I worked, there was always banter, laughter and comradeship among the coopers. It was great. On the other hand, when a cooper got down to his work, the laughter and banter ceased and concentration and hand graft took over. At his bench, with his tools, knowledge and skills, coopers took pride in their work where responsibility and ownership of their output was the order of the day and for me all of this together summed up the craft of coopering. It was more than just a job it was really a way of life.

Bill: John, thank you so much for telling us about your life as a cooper and I am sure the readers of the SBAA Journal will enjoy reading your story with as much pleasure as I have had in hearing about it.

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Timeless: the tools of the cooper



Tradition: cooper at work



Out of the past a present for the future: as well as an historic tradition that is treasured in the Scottish Brewing Archive, Scots brewing is alive and well.

Two highly respected representatives of today's brewing industry in Scotland recently became corporate members of the Scottish Brewing Archive Association, which already enjoys the corporate support of longer established businesses as well as many individuals.

The Inveralmond Brewery is flourishing at Perth, a city long associated with the drinks trade.

Stewart Brewing is also thriving, helping promote Edinburgh's international renown for capital ale.



The Incorporation of Coopers
