

BEER CANS & Brewery Collectibles

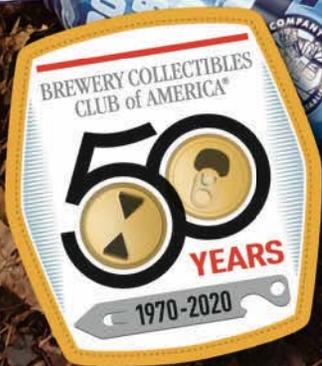
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the Brewery
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of America®



CRAFTING FOR STOUT WINTERS



P. 12

Also inside: Oertels Crowntainers | Beer Can Artists | BCCA in the 1970s

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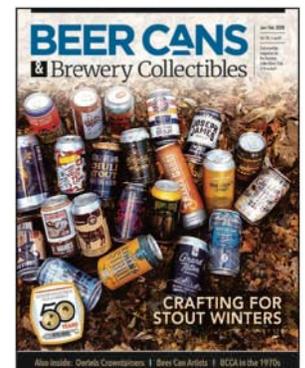
50TH ANNIVERSARY: MEMORABLE MOMENTS



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OERTELS CROWNTAINERS

ON THE COVER:



IPAs, move over. Here come craft stouts in cans—nearly 400 of them in 2019 alone! Craft can pioneer Oskar Blue's rich, robust, roasty Ten Fidy rolled out in 2007, much to the delight of lovers of big-boy dark brews. Read T.K. Reinke's rollicking rundown of the rapid rise of canned stouts, bless their dark and delectable little hearts, beginning on page 12.

Cover Photo by Joe Prin

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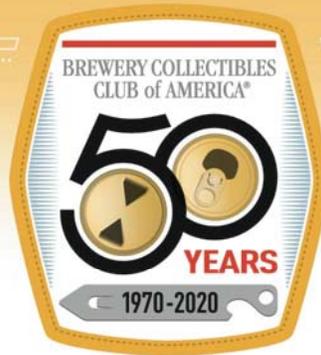
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Chicha Expert

How John Janusek turned collecting into a career.

BY SCOTT R. MERTIE #28310

Here is a brief story on the life and legacy of my friend and fellow beer can collector, John Janusek. John truly spent his life focusing on brewing history. Tragically, he passed away on October 22, 2019.

Like many of us, John started collecting beer cans as a kid. His collection officially started when he found some rusty Yusa cans near his home outside of Chicago. He continued to add to his collection during family vacations throughout the country. One of those memorable trips was in 1977, when, as the family was on its way to Nova Scotia, John discovered a 1940s dump in Maine. He found so many cans that they ended up having to ship them back to Chicago!

As John grew up, he became fascinated with Chicago's brewing heritage. His interest in beer can digs ultimately led him to a career in archeology. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in Anthropology from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He then received his doctorate in philosophy from the University of Chicago. John later moved to Nashville, where he was a professor of archeological anthropology at Vanderbilt University. He went on to spend much of his career specializing in the ancient culture of Bolivia, about which he published four books.

John's fascination with ancient South American civilizations and brewing history came together when he started "digging"



John and Scott at a local BCCA chapter event in 2004.

into ancient brewing techniques and the rise of human civilization. He became recognized as an expert on "Chicha," a South American corn beer that was critical in fostering the expansion and prestige of the Incan Empire.

I first met John in the early 2000s when he reached out to me through our local BCCA chapter, and we quickly hit it off. It was fascinating to hear about his trips to Bolivia, where he would find ancient brewing vessels and drink Chicha with local tribes that essentially made it the same way they did centuries ago. I would jokingly call him the "Indiana Jones" of the brewing industry!

In 2017, John co-developed a course at

Vanderbilt titled "The History and Science of Brewing." Students learned the science behind fermentation and how beer was brewed thousands of years ago. I was fortunate to have been a guest lecturer during John's course to cover Nashville's brewing history with his students.

Several years ago I resurrected the Nashville Brewing Company, which originally operated from 1859-1890. This later became the William Gerst Brewing Company, which operated in the same location until 1954. While the brewery buildings are long gone, I mentioned to John that I had old maps showing the beer cellars adjacent to the brewery, which were dug out in the 1860s. He said that it would be a fun project to see if those cellars were still there. I agreed but honestly thought it to be an impossible task.

That's when John said he had access to ground penetrating radar equipment through Vanderbilt. Once I realized he was serious, we quickly developed a game plan and got permission from the city and property owners to start scanning the area. Sure enough, evidence of cellars and tunnels from the brewery were found.

Sadly, John passed away just a few months before he was to lead a Vanderbilt course in the spring of 2020 to dig where the cellars are located. Not only was he a fellow collector and breweriana aficionado, but also a true friend.