



(Top) Deb's original thumbnail sketch of the concept for the exterior of the new brewery. (Top Left to Right) The original brewery; two views of the new brewery under construction; a close-up of one of the massive copper kettles used for brewing.

# Ode to a Spotted Cow

by Henry Verden

Sometimes you look out across Wisconsin and you can see the future. There are high-tech businesses, cutting-edge research groups, and college campuses dotting the landscape. Other times when you look out the window you see the past. The bones of the communities show through. They are visible in the culture built by the founders and in the people who carry on the stubborn spirit of those ancestors, who share their fierce loyalty, quick smiles, and helping hands. Sometimes, if you're really lucky, you see both in the same place.

New Glarus, Wisconsin, is just such a place. The Swiss heritage is evident wherever you look. It looks more like a Swiss village than a Wisconsin farm town. Crowning a hill overlooking the town is what looks like another Swiss village and a farm. But looks are deceiving. The village is really a marriage of high tech and tradition. It's the new \$21 million home of the New Glarus Brewing Company due to open this spring.

New Glarus was not Deb and Dan Carey's only option when they decided to build a brewery. Deb Carey, founder and president, explained



Deb Carey, owner of the New Glarus Brewing Company, is the artist behind all the labels and other designs and is passionately involved in her company.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CYNTHIA STALKER-CYNTHIA'S PORTRAIT ART

how they ended up there. "I looked at a number of different areas around the country, but I wanted to get back to Madison and the demographics were good. So I drew a 30-mile circle around Madison and told my husband to go have a look—in February. He's from California and I figured if he found a place he liked in February, he'd like it year-round."

Dan Carey, co-owner and brew master, served a brewing apprenticeship in Germany and had spent years building breweries for other people. Driving through New Glarus, he saw a warehouse with a For Sale sign on it and knew he had found the spot.

New Glarus Brewing Company opened its doors in 1993, producing 3,000 barrels the first year. From day one, quality was Deb and Dan's primary focus. Their passion shows. "In the brewing business, small doesn't necessarily correlate to quality," says Deb, "and that's unfortunate. If you're sloppy with your process, things can easily go awry. People expect consistency, quality, and fairness. If you can't provide those things, you won't last long."



(ABOVE) Kettle used in the first stage of brewing, called lautering and sparging, is stirred to assist in draining off a liquid that is then boiled. (BELOW) Some of the miles of stainless steel pipe running through the new brewery. (BOTTOM) Fermentation tanks where yeast is added to wort, the liquid produced by boiling. The yeast converts sugars in the wort to ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide gas. The result is beer.



New Glarus Brewing Company sells beer only in Wisconsin. "I'm annoyingly proud of my state," says Deb. "We started to market in Illinois and could not keep up with demand. Wisconsin businesses have supported us and if they ran out of our beer, we'd be letting them down. Something had to go, so we pulled out of Illinois."

The original brewery reached its maximum output of 55,000 barrels and, because of ever-increasing demand, the Careys started looking at land on which to build a bigger state-of-the-art facility, finally settling on a hill at the edge of town.

The architecture of the new brewery was designed by Deb, who is an accomplished artist, while all the equipment was designed by Dan. Divided into two sections, the first section holds offices, the retail shop, a tasting room, a beer garden, a museum of brewing ephemera, and more. The other section is the production facility housing the brew house, fermentation tanks, and bottling. The new brewery is a study of the past meeting the future. The brew house holds three enormous copper kettles sunk into a slate floor. Here, the process basically remains the same as it has for hundreds of years.

## Unplugging the Brewmaster

One thing that New Glarus Brewing Company does that few, if any, other breweries do is turn their brew master loose three or four times a year to do whatever he feels like. It's called the Unplugged Series. "I pretty much let Dan do whatever he wants," explained Deb Carey. "He really loves cellar beers and Belgians, and he's been dying to make a smoked beer. They're beers we may not sell a lot of in general distribution so we don't make a huge quantity, generally about 120 barrels." The beers Dan handcrafts for this series are limited editions and may never be made again.

The newest brew was released in November 2007 and is called Smoke on the Porter. This creamy smooth porter is made with Wisconsin barley that is locally cold smoked with apple wood at Hoesly's meats in New Glarus. When combined with dark smoked malts, the result is something truly extraordinary. Check their website for the next creation.



Walking down a hallway takes you into what looks like a huge piece of abstract modern art. Miles of stainless steel pipe run in every direction, and huge, sparkling steel tanks rise almost to the ceiling two stories above. It seems chaotic but is, in reality, ideally designed to move beer effectively and efficiently from the kettles to the tanks to the bottles waiting to be filled. The capacity is twice that of the old facility.

The facility also is as eco-friendly as the Careys could make it. They built an on-site sewage treatment plant that uses advanced technology most cities don't have. Water leaving the brewery is actually cleaner than the water coming in.

Deb says the old brewery is far from a thing of the past. "The old brewery is where we will continue to make our proof beers like our Unplugged Series, the barrel-aged, spontaneous fermentation beers, and some of the really long lagers like Uff-Da Bock. The beers like Fat Squirrel and Spotted Cow will go up the hill to the new brewery."

Deb and Dan Carey have created a unique entity in the New Glarus Brewing Company. They have chosen to limit distribution to ensure quality and out of dedication to their customers. They've arranged a truly successful marriage of tradition and technology, crafting beers of distinction, and they're having a great time doing it. Their logo says "Drink Indigenous." With beers from New Glarus Brewing Company, that's not only easy, it's a delight.



(ABOVE) The barrel-filling line in the new brewery is already in full operation. The bottling line should be up and running within a couple of weeks. (BELOW) New Glarus Brewing Company's store in the original brewery sells souvenirs and, of course, their beers. The new brewery will have a much larger store, a beer garden, and a beer memorabilia collection/museum.



## • IF YOU GO •

New Glarus Brewing Company  
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New Glarus, WI 53574  
(608) 527-5850  
[www.newglarusbrewing.com](http://www.newglarusbrewing.com)

Self-guided audio tours and tasting room open  
Monday–Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Gift shop open  
Monday–Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

