

## Redemption, a decade with local fans

For most of us, 2020 has not gone to plan but that is doubly so for Redemption Brewing, in Tottenham. 2020 was meant to be a year of celebrating their tenth birthday! So CAMRA London couldn't let the year go by without speaking to one of London's longer running breweries.



The brewery's history began when Andy Moffat, a bond trader and home brewer, decided he wanted to do something for himself. Sam Rigby, his partner, said: "It all came to a head when we were on holiday and Andy seemed to spend a fair portion of it walking up and down the beach on the telephone with work".

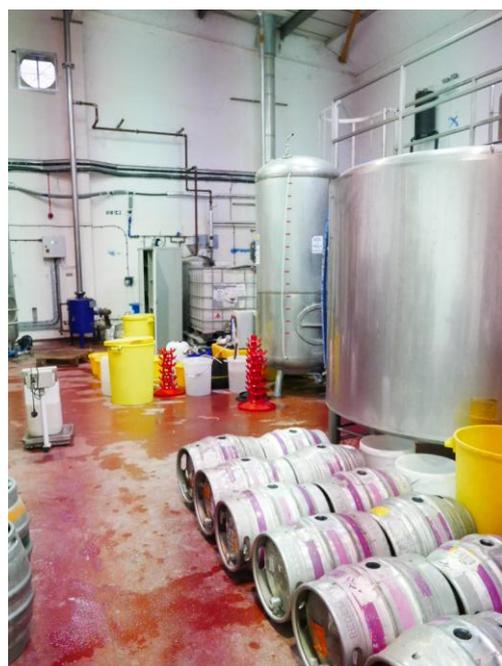
Andy's way out was to think about setting up a brewery but although Andy was keen, Sam was less so. They agreed that he should spend time researching the market and particularly the reasons to say no. After many months, Andy was still of the opinion that there was a market for another micro brewery in London; at that time there were just ten. Sam said "Despite Andy's enthusiasm, I was not convinced. I had a good job with the BBC, which I enjoyed and didn't want to give it up".

Andy went ahead and set up a 12 barrel brewery, using second hand kit from Staffordshire brewers, Slaters. Based on the Compass West Industrial Estate, Andy was helped by David Smith, who owns Brewing Services Ltd, and who has worked with some 200 different breweries. From the beginning, Andy was working 5am to midnight and although Sam helped at weekends doing the accounts, she felt she was never seeing him. After 18 months, she agreed a 6 months leave of absence from the BBC but she never went back.

After five years, bigger premises were needed and they moved around the corner and put in a 30 barrel plant; One Mile End moved into their old premises. Further investment meant the installation of seven fermenters of various sizes, which enables a flexible approach to brewing. Sam commented: "If I want to remind myself where we have come from, I just look at one of the original small fermenters".

The new premises include a tap room, meeting room and a micro lab. This has become essential to determining how often they use their yeast before refreshing it. Their house yeast, which they have always used, was originally from S&N and had then been used by York Brewery. They store their original yeast sample at Brew Lab's yeast bank, from which they got a new sample after reopening post lockdown.

Covid has had an impact on sales. They would normally have up to ten staff including two brewers; at the moment, they have six and just one brewer, Jacob Hobbs. Jacob's background is less than usual, he started as a home brewer but he trained in contemporary dance! Jacob commented " I freelanced for a while and then got a 'proper job' in bank sales, a comic book store and then off shore, landing helicopters where I trained in health and safety and ISO processes".





Jacob was made redundant and that's when life completely changed: "I saw a Brew Lab advert saying 'Quit your job and do this course to become a brewer', so I did. It was three months long and when I finished I started to apply for brewing jobs whilst working in bars, such as Mother Kelly's. I was really fortunate that Redemption took a chance on me".

The first beer that Redemption brewed was their Pale Ale, followed by Urban Dusk. This cask beer was joined by Trinity (brewed first for the London Drinker Beer & Cider Festival in 2011), Rock the Kazbek, Big Chief, Fellowship Porter and their best seller, Hopspur. Latterly, they have been joined by two keg beers: Solar (American hopped pale ale) and Rhinelander, which is a Kolsch. The Kolsch is lagered for five weeks. Before the lockdown, cask represented 70% of their production with 20% keg and the rest cans, bottles and mini kegs. Although most of the bottling is done off site, the Porter is done by hand at the brewery.

Jacob said "We are lucky to be part of the beer business. We brew good beer and we want our keg to be of the quality of our cask". Sam added, "Our commitment to quality is at the core of a Redemption pint. For that reason we still call on David Smith. Cask beer is our English heritage and we like to do our bit at Redemption to keep it alive".

When thinking about the current situation, Sam said "My view is that 2021 is going to be a tough year. Let's get over Covid and support pubs again; they are the fabric of the community and Redemption needs to play its part to get people back in pubs".

And what about the birthday celebrations? Sam replied "Eventually, we want to have an enormous party to say thank you to pubs, people and drinkers who have supported us. I think we have the most loyal fans in the whole wide world. One said to us 'You don't own Redemption. We own Redemption. This is our North London Brewery'".

And to summarise the situation, Sam said "We started in a recession. These are rocky seas and we are holding on to the lifeboat but we will survive".

And that is likely to be the case and it will no doubt be helped by Jacob, after all, he has a certificate to drive lifeboats!



## TASTING NOTES

### **Trinity 3.0% ABV**

Thirst quenching golden ale with strong hoppy character and fruity flavours of lemon and grapefruit. A little honey biscuit provides a balance to the building dry bitterness and the pithy citrus notes.

Hops: Columbus, Cascade, Chinook



### **Rock the Kazbek 4.0% ABV**

Easy drinking blonde beer with citrus and earthy hoppy notes and a faint note of honey. There is a gentle dryish bitterness in the lingering aftertaste where the hops become spicier.

Hops: Kazbek

### **Solar 4.2% ABV**

Smooth golden ale with tropical fruit and lemon complementing the biscuity sweetness and spicy hops, which is also in the finish and pleasantly dry. There is a slightly fruity aroma.

Hops: Eldorado, Amarillo, Motueka.

### **Hotspur 4.5% ABV**

Dark Amber balanced Premium Bitter with caramelised citrus and hazelnuts on the nose and palate where a spicy hoppiness is present, which grows in the bitter finish where maltiness remains.

Malts: Pale, Crystal, Munich

Hops: Cascade, Liberty, WGV

### **Big Chief 5.5% ABV**

Sweet New World IPA with biscuit and hops throughout. Grapefruit and lemon on the palate and a growing bitterness that remains in the dry, sweet finish where the hops are earthy and spicy.

Malts: Pale, Wheat, Cara

Hops: Nelson Sauvin, Cascade, Motueka

### **Fellowship Porter 5.5% ABV**

Dark brown smooth soft strong porter full of chocolaty roast flavours. Damsons and raisins are noticeable with just a touch of black treacle. Bittersweet aftertaste overlaid with faint spicy hops.

Malts: Pale, Chocolate, Crystal

Hops: Bramling Cross, WGV