

Issue 67

Autumn 2004



# MINIIZ

**THE NEWSLETTER OF PORT NICHOLSON MINIATURE BOTTLE CLUB**



*Australasia's only Miniature Bottle Club*



## EDITORIAL & AGM

This edition of miNiZ is late, very very late. Most of you reading this are to blame, although this time I too must take some of it as I have been exceedingly busy the past few months. In issue 66 I wrote "I need, repeat need, articles to put a newsletter together. I have now exhausted my supply of articles and must have some contributions from other members if the news letter is to be more than half a dozen pages. Over to you then as to when miNiZ is next published." A few members have responded, as you will see, but I need much more if another miNiZ is to be produced within three months.

What may have been our last Patea weekend, due to Dianne's personal circumstances, was enjoyable but unfortunately a wash-out. It was the weekend of the disastrous floods in the lower North Island. We had about three hours of sunshine on the Saturday (where we did manage to get in a game of Petanque) then rain, wind rain and more rain and wind. Both barbecues were done in the garage but, what the heck, a good time was had by all. Those of us who stayed until Monday were lucky to get home – Colin, Di and Caroline Ryder didn't!



There were roads closed all over due to flooding and trees across them, including the main route back to Wellington. This re-opened for a short time and Rosie and I got through. I was in touch with Colin by cellphone, who was only 10 minutes behind us but they got stopped in Wanganui and finally made it home by Tuesday evening. Ian Butcher, who had Gary Carvey with him, went to visit his ageing mother in Feilding and got within hailing distance of her. They had a shouted conversation across the flood waters! Ian and Gary got back to Wellington using back roads through the Manawatu, but it was touch and go.

I will let Frank Wynn tell you his story in his own words "Can you please forward my apology for my abrupt departure from the Patea Weekend. After loading the club's bottles into my car (Frank was taking them to Auckland on behalf of Erica



our new supplies officer – Ed) I was sitting in it as it rocked up and down. I thought if I get out of the car now I will not get back in, so off I went. I feel the club bottles helped keep the car on the road.

It was like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. I had planned to spend the night at my daughters and ended up staying three days as we were cut off by the floods. When I moved the car to the highest ground on the farm I mentioned to the farmer's family that it was full of miniature bottles (glad you got your priorities right and saved the club stock Frank! – Ed). They said they may have to use them as emergency medical supplies to fight off hypothermia. In fact my daughter did get hypothermia as she was swept off her horse and had to be rescued by the helicopter team as she hung onto a tree branch with the torrent flowing around her. Not a good day for her as her cottage was flooded and they have not decided whether to condemn her house or not."

The AGM produced the usual suspects for the committee, with the exception of a new Supplies Officer, although even this position was filled by our re-cycled Northern Vice President. We really could do with some new blood on the committee and we desperately need some more members in the Wellington area to keep the meetings going. Any suggestions would be gratefully received.

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The AGM expressed votes of thanks to Pam Fowler who has held the position of Supplies Officer for a number of years and to Dianne Opie who has hosted us in Patea for over 20 years. There may or may not be another Patea weekend next year. Do try to attend if there is as this institution will finish then, if it has not already done so.

The New Zealand and Australian membership fees remain the same but, due to the current high exchange rate, overseas membership fees have been increased.

US, Canada, South America	US\$18 or equivalent
Europe, Africa, Asia	£12 or equivalent

These will be reviewed again at the next AGM if the exchange rate comes back significantly from where it is now.



# LILLIPUT BOTTLES



Lilliput bottlers are based in Ireland and we have tried on a number of occasions to get them to deal with the club direct so that we could offer you these mini beers but they refuse to even reply. I have found where to buy them on the Internet but only in sets. This is at:

<http://www.irishop.com/irishop/lilbot.html>

On the left we have a stand full of mini beer bottles. This is sold with 36 beers, not all of which are shown as it is obvious that the stand will only hold 33! This particular stand is the best value, working out at about NZ\$5.40 per bottle, inclusive of postage. It costs US\$84.98 plus US\$20 postage.

On the right we have one of the framed collections, "Lilliput Collection." I bought "The Guinness Collection" from an advert in Miniature Bottle Collector a couple of years ago and it looks really good. There is glass to the front and the frame is well made of dark stained and 'antiqued' wood. The Lilliput Collection sells for US\$89.98

There are various other sets available, some framed, some just in boxes. The boxed sets of 6 sell for US\$21.98 each.



On the left is the most unusual of the minis on offer. This one forms the pendulum of the Guinness clock. The clock is about 180mm (7") in diameter. It sells for US\$39.98

*David Smith*



# NEW NEW ZEALAND

Not quite so many for you this time but some goodies none-the-less. On the cover we have one old and one new bottle. The old one was found by Erica Mulder who writes "DRY GINGER ALE XLO EXTRA SPECIAL Bottled by Westbury's Ltd Auckland. CORK Top, Green Bottle. Cant find any history of the company, I do know that it doesn't exist any more." Nice one Erica. Erica also proved that she reads miNiZ thoroughly. In edition 65 we featured a Janneau Eagle. She points out that the two versions differ in height, the Limoge one is slightly smaller at 135mm compared with the other one which is 140mm tall. She is lucky (industrious? acquisitive? tenacious?) enough to have both in her collection.

Also from Erica is Vin Alto Limoncello. This is a very different shape from most NZ bottles. It is also very tall for a miniature as it is 200mm (8") high but it only contains 40ml at 31% and so is a true mini by anyone's definition. The bottle is square, widens out towards the top and has a wider base. The glass is clear and it has a clip on top.



Milford is a familiar name in New Zealand whisky but here we have three new versions that are currently in the bottle stores.

The middle one is very similar to the previous version but is glass not plastic. On the left we have a new 10 year old single malt and on the right a 12 year old single malt. Both are very plain labels with a big red M and the writing in black and red. The exception is the 10 and 12. The 10 is in gold and the 12 in silver.

You won't find them in the shops but a mistake was made with the first batch

of 12 year old and the 12 is in red. My thanks once again to Erica for providing the photo and getting all four for me.

Next up is one that I found at the duty free in Wellington airport. Chesnique is an attractive addition to my collection. It was produced and bottled by Cheswood





Estate NZ Ltd of Waitara, Taranaki. The bottle is clear glass with a clip-on top and brown labels front and back. It is 40ml at 21%.

To the right of the Cheswood is a tiny bottle that I found recently in Nelson. I am showing you this mainly as it is on the same photo but it really is a gem of a micro. It stands a mere 55mm (just over 2") tall and is a fully sealed vial, hence the pristine colour of the beer in it. I can make out VB Ale on the label but nothing else. This makes it an Australian bottle and one the likes of which I have never seen before. I wonder if there are any more like it out there? I also wonder how old it is? Any information will be gratefully received – and shared with you all.

I think that I have a few more new ones to show you but currently they are all packed away, as is all my collection until I can get my new bottle room built. Oh well, more for edition 68.

## WA PLUM PORT



I'm not generally a fan of fruit wines but I can thoroughly recommend these two.

These Ports (Pink Plum and Dark Plum) were made by The Berry Farm in the Margaret River area of Western Australia. I was in Perth on business recently and stayed with an old friend and colleague. These two bottles were given to each of the guests at his daughter's wedding. They were so impressed that they laid in a supply of somewhat larger bottles and, of course, we imbibed a little.

Both are in round clear glass bottles with clip-on tops. The labels look like parchment. Both of them are 40ml at 19%.

*David*



## NEW SCOTCH MINIS IN NZ

*Note that there is a bit of duplication between this and Frank Wynn's article (see later) but I am not going to discourage Ken or Frank from writing more articles by over editing as we need all the articles we can get - Ed*



Several Scotch whisky miniatures appeared in New Zealand over the Christmas and New Year period.

The first is a The Famous Grouse miniature. The bottle has been re-designed and comes in a very attractive tall clear glass, semi-flask 50ml bottle. It is labelled "Gold Reserve", 50ml, aged 12 years, 43%. The mini came free with the purchase of a large bottle of Famous Grouse whisky and could not be bought on its own.

Also available are two Grant whisky minis in their traditional rounded triangular shaped clear glass bottles. One is Grant's whisky matured in "ale cask" barrels and the other in "sherry cask" barrels. Both are 50ml at 40%. Again these minis could not be bought separately but were free when purchasing a standard-size bottle of Grants whisky.

Over Christmas I came across a Talisker mini with a newly designed label on a clear glass bottle. Talisker minis usually came in a dark green bottle. This mini is 50ml at 45.8% and is a 10yr single malt Scotch whisky.





The next bottle (shown on the last page) is a new Baileys original Irish cream mini in a tall plastic bottle, 17% alcohol, 70ml in volume. The bottle is attractively presented in a gold-brown colour and labelled Baileys "Minis". It is widely available.



Shown on the left are two plastic Johnnie Walker minis which are in more streamlined, squared and slightly narrower but taller bottles than the ones we have become used to. Both are embossed with the familiar Johnnie Walker symbol. The labels are essentially the same. Both the Red Label and the Black Label are 50ml at 40% by volume. (my apologies for the poor photo of these)



This 15yr Glenfiddich mini has been around for some time. It comes in an attractive deep burgundy canister. The whisky has been aged in solero (Sherry) barrels and is labelled "Solera Reserve" single malt Scotch whisky. The mini is 50ml and 40% alcohol by volume.

There are also several new New Zealand whiskies by Milford but I will leave this to David Smith to tell you about them.

*Ken Chin*



# ***IT WAS FOR SALE***

## ***BUT WENT TO US\$15,300 AND FAILED TO SELL***

What did, I feel sure you are asking. A collection of 15,000+ mini bottles, that's what.

The problem with large collections is that they are very difficult to sell, as a whole, at anything like what they are really worth. This collection was for sale on Ebay. As well as the 15,000+ of the collection there was also approximately 4,500 swaps. US\$15,300 was less than US\$1 per bottle – a somewhat pitiful result for all of us.

The collection was offered on a 'Buy It Now' option for US\$125,000, including packing and delivery in the USA – there were no takers!

The collection is the property of Kermit McFadden of California. Kermit accumulated it over 25 years but has now decided it is time to give up the hobby.



I will let the photos largely speak for themselves but some of the highlights of the collection were the inclusion of 53 Dug's Brothel Collection mini decanters, 93 Ski Country mini decanters, complete set of series 1, 3 and 4 Wild Turkey, as well as Mini decanters from Ezra Brooks, Barenfang, Jim Beam, Beneagles, Burgermeister, Canadian Mist, Carioca, Chequers, Collectors Art, Cyrus Noble,



Dorville, Early Times, Famous Firsts, Giffard, Grenadier, Hoffman, Irish Mist, Alpa etc. etc..... In addition there are thousands of straight glass bottles of all types.







## ***WHAT A FINISH***

It is well known that whisky matures in oak casks and generally these are casks that have contained some other wine or spirit. The most common are former Sherry and Port casks. The reason for this is that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century much Port and Sherry was imported into Scotland and then bottled there, resulting in a lot of empty casks. The Scots being of the "waste not, want not" variety used these to mature their whisky.

Any cask that contained alcohol can be used as shown by the Grants Ale Cask bottle (a good New Zealand mini). The Balvenie Double Wood is unusual in that the whisky has been matured in two different types of cask during its maturation period.

In the mid 1990's Glenmorangie added a new dimension with their wood finish whiskies. The difference is that it is a fully mature whisky that is put into the type of cask mentioned on the label, giving the whisky added complexity. The regulation states that the barrel must be empty when the whisky is put into it, however the staves of a 500 litre sherry cask can retain up to 10 litres of sherry.



The mature whisky stays in the cask between 6 and 30 months depending on the style required. The Port finish was introduced in 1994 with the Madeira and Sherry following in 1996. I have two examples of the Port finish so there are still a few (lots and lots) of bottles to collect out there.



The concept has proved popular resulting in other companies releasing examples. Can members tell us if miniatures have been produced of the following that have appeared in the full size bottles:

Glenfiddich Havanna Reserve 21yr old (Cuban rum cask)  
Glenmorangie 1981 (Sauterne wood finish)  
Glenmorangie Cote de Beaune wood finish (French burgundy)  
The Glenlivet french oak finish  
The Balvenie Islay cask 17 yr old

*Frank Wynn*

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## **DEATH OF A FRIEND**

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Dick Cotton in January. Dick was one of our first overseas members and a regular contributor to miNiZ.

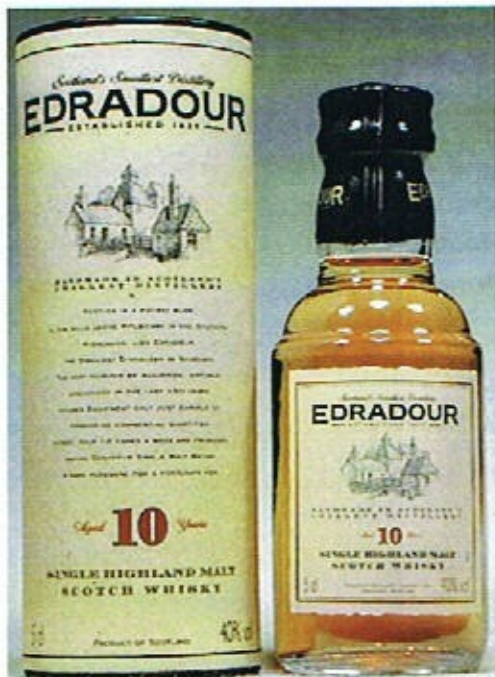
We met up on two occasions. I shall always remember him as a humble man but one that was passionate about being a fireman and collecting bottles. I shall especially remember the humorous stories about him asking people he didn't know who were going overseas to get some minis for him. It is easier to celebrate his life than mourn his death.

I have asked former member, Nancy Clayton, to write a full obituary celebrating his life. It will appear in the next miNiZ.



## WHISKY GALORE: IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

On a recent trip to Christchurch, my solicitor who is also a very close friend, brought me back a very lovely mini Scotch whisky of Edradour. It was a complete new version which I had not seen before.



My solicitor friend is himself is an avid Scotch malt whisky fan and belongs to the local Scotch whisky club. He approves of my pastime of collecting Scotch whisky minis and is very supportive to my need to add to my collection.

On enquiring as to where he obtained the mini, he told me that there was a new shop in Christchurch which exclusively sold fine whisky and had a fair collection of whisky miniatures in stock. I rang the owner, who was a most helpful and obliging fellow, and he faxed through his list of minis for sale. Naturally an order ensued and this was promptly mailed to me.

The name of this shop is "WHISKY GALORE" It can be found at 810 Colombo St,

Christchurch. The shop is on the web for online shopping: [www.whiskygalore.co.nz](http://www.whiskygalore.co.nz) and there is also an information line at: [info@whiskygalore.co.nz](mailto:info@whiskygalore.co.nz)

The Edradour mini that was given to me came in an attractive canister. It is labelled 10yrs single highland malt Scotch whisky. The bottle is a new design, being a shorter stubbier clear glass bottle. It is 5cl and 40% by volume.







I purchased a set of malt minis (shown on the last page) which were an independent bottling through Murray McDavid. These were Arderg 1991, Caol Ila 1989, Highland Park 1988, Isle of Jura 1989, Linkwood 1990, and Macallan 1990. All were 46% by volume.

Other minis I purchased were a 10yr old Springbank (5cl, 46%) which came in a canister, Ferintosh speyside malt (5cl, 40%), and this plastic 8yr old Greenore single grain Irish whisky (5cl, 40%).



Inverarity comes as a 10yr single malt (5cl, 40%), and as blended whisky.

Two other blended scotch whiskies purchased were these attractive ones which came in multi-faceted perfume type bottles: Glendarroch 10yrs (5cl, 40%), and the shop's name sake "Whisky Galore" 10yrs (5cl, 40%).



*Ken Chin*



# SNAKES ALIVE! OR MAYBE NOT

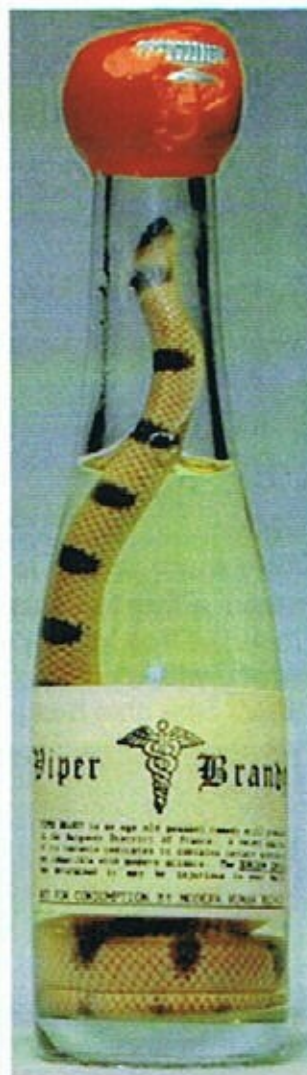


Two items in recent issues of miNiZ prompt me to write and send along two photos.

The first was the display of minis from Alan Low of Singapore – the minis containing creatures such as a scorpion and a bee. I have those minis in my collection, and they rate highly in the "unusual" category, but I recently acquired one that is even better (in my opinion).

About three years ago a large bottle of brandy containing a viper was auctioned off at the MMBC convention in St. Louis, and I've often wondered if a miniature of that bottle existed. I still don't know (it does and I have included a photo of mine – Ed), but I recently acquired a similar item: a mini containing a small cobra!

According to the seller, who deals in Asian collectibles, it is a cobra in "Asian whisky" from



Vietnam. Unfortunately there is no label on the bottle, which is a recycled Campari bottle, but it certainly appears legitimate.



The other item is a little friendly dig at our former Supplies Officer. I have to say that Pam Fowler has been very kind to me in shipping many minis the long distance to America. We all know the perils of shipping minis, but because of her good packaging none have been damaged in transit, despite the devious efforts of the shipping/postal personnel along the way. I hope she



doesn't mind if I tease her about setting some sort of record with her last shipment to me, shown in the photo – I have never seen so many stamps on one parcel – 127 to be exact. That had to raise eyebrows at the post office, and makes me wonder whether New Zealand has no stamps denominated larger than 40 cents! Good luck to her successor.

I thoroughly enjoy the club magazine, and hope to see some of the club members in St. Louis in April

*Harland Johnson*

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## **FROGGIES**

My partner, Rosie, is a frog nut. We have frog things everywhere. A frog umbrella stand, a frog loo brush holder, frog picture frames, froggie pyjamas (hers not mine), a frog hot water bottle (at this point I am beginning to wonder what is wrong with me if she needs the last 2 items!), frog paperweights ..... You get the idea. She also has a frog collection and, hey, who am I to criticise a collection?



The real problem with her collection is that she keeps nicking my frog bottles!

Shown at left are two that were purloined, the MAB and Luxado frogs. I only have one more frog in my collection, a Wynand Fokkink blown glass one. I have included that also for the sake of completeness.



The final picture shows

a surfing frog, holding a Coke bottle, that we bought

as a cross collection item. It is part of the Coca Cola Bottle Buddies series from 2000 and is entitled "Catch The Wave."



We need more frog bottles. Got any for sale?

*David Smith*





FROM NEW SCIENTIST MAGAZINE

**Q**

I was sitting with a group of friends in the pub last night and, as we contemplated our pints of bitter, we wondered why does beer go flat when it gets warm? Not only that, but the effect seems more pronounced with lager than with bitter.

**A**

The answer lies in the behaviour of gases, and their solubility in water. Most beers are dilute solutions of sugars, gases, organic acids and other complex compounds, and (hopefully) alcohols.

The gas which gives fizzy drinks their distinctive fizz is carbon dioxide. In the case of British style real ales, the CO<sub>2</sub> is generated by the action of yeasts on residual sugars in the drink, whereas in most beers, including British made lagers, the conditioning gas is added artificially at the brewery or at the point of sale.

The problem arises because the solubility of CO<sub>2</sub> is related to the temperature of the solvent in which it is dissolved, in this case the beer. More gas can dissolve in cold beer than in warm beer. This is also why fish such as trout and salmon, which need a lot of oxygen, live in cold mountain streams and rivers, because the amount of oxygen dissolved in these environments is so much higher.

When the beer is served from the pump it will contain a certain concentration of dissolved CO<sub>2</sub>, but, as the drink heats up under the influence of a sweaty hand in a warm room, its ability to hold its CO<sub>2</sub> in solution decreases.

This excess gas is then released into the atmosphere through the bubbles that you see rising in the beer and the drink consequently goes flat. Other volatile compounds from the malt and the hops vaporise faster and you may notice that the beer also smells different.

The difference your correspondent observes between lager and bitter is mainly caused by two factors. The first is that lagers are generally served much colder than bitters, to disguise the fact that they have less taste (this is because they contain fewer fruity esters and longer chain alcohols, as a result of the lower fermentation temperatures and different yeast strains that are employed in their manufacture). The bigger temperature difference between the beer and the air means lagers warm up faster than bitters. Their rate of loss of CO<sub>2</sub> is consequently much higher, and they go flat faster.

Secondly, lagers are generally more carbonated than bitters, so are fizzier at the point of purchase and therefore have more CO<sub>2</sub> to lose in the first place. This extra carbonation, like the lower serving temperature, is usually used to camouflage the lack of flavour that is found in most British brewed lagers.

The answer to the problem, of course, is to drink your beer faster, or sit in cooler pubs.



## DATE, TIME & PLACE

May 1 <sup>st</sup>	SI	2.00pm	Trevor Harvey's, 44 Basingstoke Street, Wainoni, Christchurch 7
June 13 <sup>th</sup> (note change of date)		2.00pm	David Smith's, 11 Trevor Terrace, Paremata
July 11 <sup>th</sup>	SI	2.00pm	Eric Sutton's, 14C Michigan Place, Westhaven, Christchurch
July 18 <sup>th</sup>		12.30pm	Pot Luck Lunch, Ken Chin's, 29 Norton Park Avenue, Lower Hutt
September 19 <sup>th</sup>	SI	2.00pm	Robin Mellish's, 66 Rudds Road, Christchurch (a number of North Island members regularly make a weekend of this meeting)
September 26 <sup>th</sup> (note change of date)		12.30pm	Pot Luck Lunch, Marj Lynch's, 51 Maxwell Avenue, Wanganui
November 6 <sup>th</sup>	SI	2.00pm	David Fretwell's, 61 Port Hills Road, Heathcote, Christchurch
November 21 <sup>st</sup>		12.30pm	Pot Luck Lunch, Ian Butcher's, 5 Sunburst Court, Paraparaumu Beach
January 16 <sup>th</sup>		12.30pm	Barbecue, David Smith's, 11 Trevor Terrace, Paremata
February			AGM to be arranged (maybe Patea)

As we have no secretary, the person who is holding the meeting should phone or email all the local members a week in advance to remind them.



Above is David Fretwell and Trevor Harvey in Robin's bottle room. On the right is Eric Sutton, Val & David Fretwell, Pam Fowler, Jess Mellish, Cheryl Sutton and Robin Mellish.



## SOUTH ISLAND MEETING

We don't have a lot of South Island members but those we do have are keen. The photos are from the meeting last September at Robin and Jess Mellish's house in Christchurch.