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Wiedemann beer comes back to Newport

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NEWPORT — For years, a part of Newport’s history, the Wiedemann Brewery, has been missing.

Now, local beer enthusiast Jon Newberry is bringing the name, and the beer, back to Newport.

Newberry recently launched the new Geo. Wiedemann Brewing Co. in Northern Kentucky, offering its first beer, the Wiedemann Special Lager.

The Wiedemann Brewery was founded in Newport in 1870 and was run in the city for decades until it was sold to an out-of-town brewer 45 years ago.

Newberry, a long-time business reporter in the area and fan of Wiedemann beer, said he was disappointed when the out-of-town brewing company who bought the brewery stopped making beer in 2007.

“I thought it would be nice for someone to bring it back,” Newberry said. “I always thought Wiedemann was such a great local, Newport beer and that Newport needed Wiedemann back.”

After finding out that the Wiedemann trademark was available, Newberry decided to be the one to bring it back to the area.

Newberry said he contacted Cincinnati’s Chas. Seligman Distributing Co., who helped him come up with the recipe for the Wiedemann Special Lager, a light-bodied, Bohemian-style beer, similar to the beer created by the Wiedemann Brewery for so many years.

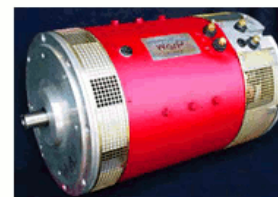
Jon Newberry (left), owner of the new Geo. Wiedemann Brewing Company and Tyler Hill, craft brand manager for Chas. Seligman Distributing Co., watch as Richard Wagner (right), great great grandson of George Wiedemann, taps a keg of the new Wiedemann Special Lager at Pompilio’s in Newport Friday, Aug. 3. / Amanda Joering Alley/Community Recorder

Written by **Amanda Joering Alley**

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Pompilio's bartender Cheryl Grome pours pints of the new Wiedemann Special Lager during the keg tapping celebration. / Amanda Joering Alley/Community Recorder



A sign from the original Wiedemann brewery still hangs in Pompilio's. / Amanda Joering Alley/Community Recorder



A soap box car made by Jon Newberry's brother, Doug Newberry, advertises the new beer. / Amanda Joering Alley/Community Recorder

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To kick-off the new company and beer, Newberry and his wife Betsy Newberry held a keg tapping celebration at Pompilio's in Newport Friday, Aug. 3.

"We chose Pompilio's because it has a real history with the brewery," Betsy Newberry said. "We thought this would be a great place to have this event."

Betsy said George Wiedemann, founder of Wiedemann Brewery, provided one of the bars that is still in use at Pompilio's today.

Pompilio's owner Mike Mazzei, said he is excited to be part of the resurgence of Wiedemann beer.

"It is an honor to be chosen to host this event," Mazzei said. "I remember the brewery from when I was kid and it's a big part of Newport's history."

Newport Mayor Jerry Peluso said the Wiedemann Brewery is part of Newport's rich heritage that needs to be celebrated.

Peluso said he's happy to see the Wiedemann name brought back the area.

"This is making Newport and the Wiedemann family very proud," Peluso said.

In attendance at the event was Richard Wagner, great-great grandson of George Wiedemann, who said he is glad to see the beer come back.

"Wiedemann beer, like Pompilio's, is a Newport tradition," Wagner said.

Tyler Hill, craft brand manager with Chas. Seligamn, said the beer is currently only available in draft at Pompilio's, Party Town and the distributor but will soon be available at Cock and Bull and Keystone Bar in Covington.

Newberry said he plans to offer the beer in more places, and in cans and bottles, before the end of the year.

"My dream goal is to get the Wiedemann brewery back in Newport," Newberry said.

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