Pottsville PA: Yuengling, America's Oldest Operating Brewery

Pottsville is a city in, and the county seat of, Schuylkill County Pennsylvania. It is a third-class city with a population of nearly 15,000 that was once part of Lancaster and then Berks counties. In 1811, Pottsville became part of Schuylkill County, the county seat in 1851 and a city in 1911.

Necho Allen, a hunter, discovered coal in the area in 1779 when his campfire ignited an outcrop of anthracite coal. By 1875, anthracite iron furnaces were found along the Schuylkill River. The city got its name from John Potts who purchased a furnace and founded the town.



This photo program deals specifically with the D.G. Yuengling Brewing Company and its stamina and growth since it began in the late 1820s. According to mentalitch.com, David G. Jüngling was a German brewer from Aldingen, a suburb of Stuttgart, in the Kingdom of Wurttemberg, Germany in 1828. D.G. Jüngling was the son of a German brewer but set off for America to start his own brewery.



Jüngling began brewing beer under his anglicized name from Jüngling to Yuengling and started "Eagle Brewery." He chose the eagle, which still is part of the company's logo, because it represented strength and pride. The original brewery was on North Centre Street, but was destroyed by fire. The company built a new brewery and the company changed its company name to D.G. Yuengling & Son on Mahantongo Street, where it continues today.

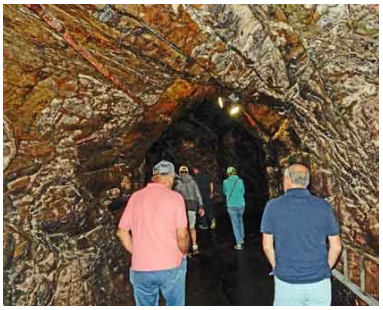




The Schuylkill Canal was used in early days to transport the malt from Philadelphia. Malt used for their Lager beer comes from Washington State.

D.G.'s son Frederick and later Frederick's son Frank managed the business from 1873 through 1963. During that period, the company had many challenges. Prohibition of alcohol in 1919, legislated by Congress, forced many breweries to shutdown throughout the United States. To stay in business Yuengling used many business techniques such as producing "Near-beer." It was brewed under the titles, "Yuengling Special," "Yuengling Por-Tor," and "Yuengling Juvo." They also sold ice cream and other dairy products. Prohibition ended in 1933.

Prior to Prohibition, Yuengling used local coal miners to create a cave that would have a cool constant temperature to help age beer during the Lager process. During the tour we saw the brick wall that was ordered by the federal government to close off the cave during the Prohibition era. One could also see the original lightbulb that was made by Thomas Edison to light the underground area and the ladder that took brewery workers and barrels of beer from the above floors to the storage cave, as well as the water source for their beer brewing. The cave was something that would not be seen in other modern breweries that use electrified coolers.









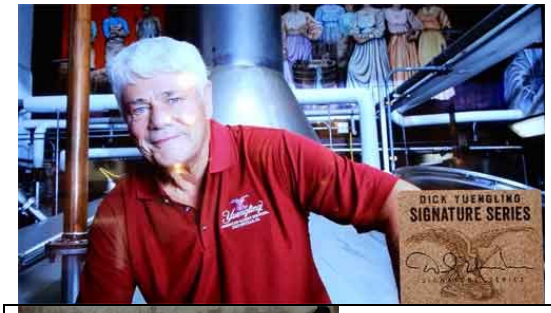
Today Yuengling has become a "National Tradition." Though not in every state, it has been expanding westward and into the south. There are two plants in Pottsville and one in Tampa, FL. The company's headquarters has moved from downtown Pottsville to their new plant which has many times the capacity to brew Yuengling beers.








Richard (Dick) L. Yuengling Jr., fifth generation Yuengling, bought the company from his father in 1985 and boosted the sales tremendously. In 1973, Dick Yuengling encouraged his father to invest and expand the business, but his father refused. Prior to his purchase of the family brewery, Dick spent 11 years in the wholesale beer distributing business. Dick Yuengling had no sons, but four daughters. One of the daughter's husband changed his name legally to Yuengling to continue the family name.








The "Government Cellar" was the place where the taxes were paid by the company for the privilege of selling their beer. Amounted to twenty-five percent of the cost of producing beer represents taxes paid in the past. (Sorry, no other details.) (Tour)

Pennsylvania ranks 46th in state beer excise tax rates (dollars per gallon), 2018. It amounts to $.08 per gallon. Tennessee ranks #1 in that category at $1.29 per gallon. A US barrel of beer equals 31 gallons.

- The federal excise tax has changed recently due to a 2017 law that reduced the tax from $7/barrel ($0.225 per gallon) to $3.50/per gallon ($0.112 per gallon). Reduced the federal excise tax to $3.50 per barrel on the first 60,000 barrels for domestic brewers producing fewer than 2 million barrels annually; Reduced the federal excise tax to $16 per barrel on the first 6 million barrels for all other brewers and all beer importers; and kept the excise tax at the current $18 per barrel rate for barrelage over 6 million barrels. Sources: According to files.taxfoundation.org and beerinstitute.org

In the historical Pottsville brewery, cans and bottles of beer are processed on separate days.










Beer trivia: Beer is 90% water. The water in the Pottsville area suited the Lager process of brew making. Lager beer is brewed in every brewing country in the world. "Barley malt (malt) is the most frequent used cereal grain. It provides essential starches, enzymes, flavor, sweetness, body, color and foam and it also balances hop bitterness" (Guide to Beer). Once brewed, it takes 24-28 days, depending on the type, to be aged. Brewing, aging, bottling/canning beer at Yuengling takes at a minimum 30 days. At room temperature, beer will last six months on a shelf. If you immediately and continually cool that beer, it has no problem in terms of storage but, make sure you do one or the other in terms of storage. So, Bottoms up! Not really, cans are filled upside down to ensure no head. Over 200 brewing companies failed during the 1930s due to prohibition. Lagers and other types of beers are measured by the following characteristics: Appearance, aroma, taste and mouth feel. There are multiple styles: Old World Lager Beer and New World Lager Beer.














The filling station and size of kegs was how it was done in the past. Today automation can fill many more kegs





The Brewing Kettle





Wall history: Cooperage/barrel-makers; Seven angrywomen who washed the bottles; Post-Prohibition happiness







More photos of the cave









acuri.net John R. Vincenti Pottsville PA: Yuengling, America's Oldest Operating Brewery

Sources: Tour of D.G. Yuengling & Son Brewery, http://www.city.pottsville.pa.us/html/history.htm, http://schuylkill.org/, https://www.yuengling.com/, https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/9781467120296/DG-Yuengling--Son-Inc, http://www.beerhistory.com/library/holdings/yuengling.shtml, https://mentalitch.com/the-history-of-yuengling-beer/, http://www.beerinstitute.org/beer-policy/legislative-policy/excise-tax/, https://www.traditionaloven.com/culinary-arts/volume/convert-barrel-beer-bl-us-to-galon-gal-us.html, https://taxfoundation.org/state-beer-taxes-2018/, https://pabook.libraries.psu.edu/literary-cultural-heritage-map-pa/feature-articles/yuengling-american-tradition and Total Wine & More, "Guide to Beer" Third Edition.