

Introduction

The Beer Hunters are:

John White;	Chris Marchbanks;
Graham & Gladys Pearson;	David Mummery & Mary Jane Lewis;
Geoff Lowis;	Paul Wells; and
Lee Lawrence.	

The trip will be covered in the White Beer Travels Web page, www.whitebeertravels.com/belgtrips3.html#2006b, although this already exists and currently provides preliminary information, some of which is also to be found in these itinerary notes. Our trip base on the first night is Florenville, a small town, close to Orval, in Wallonia, the French-speaking, essentially southern half of Belgium. For the remaining three nights we are based in the Belgian Capital of Brussels.

The feature events of the Beer Hunt are: the Bruxellensis Beer Festival (www.festivalbruxellensis.be, www.whitebeertravels.com/bruxellensis), in the Brussels suburb of Saint-Gilles/Sint-Gillis (this being given in French and Dutch, since Brussels (Bruxelles/Brussel) is officially bi-lingual, although it is surrounded by the Dutch-speaking Province of Flemish Brabant (Vlaams-Brabant); and a visit to the Orval Trappist Brewery (www.orval.be, www.whitebeertravels.com/orval), in the Province of Luxembourg (which should not be confused with the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which is a separate country).

Other visits include: the Cantillon Brewery (www.cantillon.be, www.whitebeertravels.com/cantillon), in the Brussels suburb of Anderlecht; L'Imprimerie Brew Pub (www.limprimerie.be), in the Brussels suburb of Uccle/Ukkel; the Restobières beer cuisine restaurant (www.restobieres.be), in Brussels; and a number of bars in Brussels. You have been given the password to download/print the sixty-four page White Beer Travels guide to Brussels, which is obtainable from www.whitebeertravels.com/downloads. An A4 map to accompany the guide can also be downloaded from this page, but a trip handout will be an easier-to-read A3 version of it.

I quote various times for trains, etc in these notes; I summarise them all at the end of the document.

The majority of White Beer Travels Beer Hunters are not smokers, and genuinely can't stand people smoking in their presence. In Belgium, in particular, if one missed out establishments, such as famous bars, that do not have no-smoking areas, one would essentially end up with nowhere to go! Sadly and most ignorantly, a good proportion of Belgians that are stupid enough to smoke, also have an appalling habit of ignoring any smoking restrictions, particularly in bars; in most bars there will probably be ashtrays on the tables in no-smoking areas, and these areas will be full of pathetic, don't-give-a-sod, smokers! I once asked a very well known pub proprietor why he allowed this, and he looked at me with complete disdain, saying that the ashtrays were for general rubbish; he did not explain away the rubbishy people putting fag ends in them after smoking so inconsiderately. Even where smoking is allowed, if you have joined a White Beer Travels Beer Hunt, and you are unfortunate/daft enough to be a smoker, it is a requirement that you do not smoke amongst the group.

Thursday, September the 7th, 2006
Journey to Florenville, close to Orval

John, Graham and Glad, and Geoff & Paul are travelling together on the 07.24 train from Grimsby (07.16 from Cleethorpes) to London King's Cross Station, via Doncaster, the connection from the latter being at 08.36 (we are scheduled to arrive there at 08.29); arrival in Doncaster is typically on platform 3, with departure on platform 4, which is reached via the underpass. In London, the Grimsby/Cleethorpes contingent meets up with David, Mary Jane and Chris. Lee, from the State of Pennsylvania, in the USA, will already be in Brussels, where he will meet up with us, and travel with us to Florenville, the town nearest to Orval. Lee is a keen homebrewer, and a member of the PA-Alers, www.pa-alers.com. For those from Grimsby/Cleethorpes, on arrival at King's Cross (scheduled for 10.27), the best option on the Underground, to get to London Waterloo, for the Eurostar to Brussels, is to take the Victoria Line in a Southerly direction to Oxford Circus, and change there onto the Bakerloo Line, again heading South, getting off at Waterloo. The lines on this option are not deep, and the change is a very simple, cross-platform one, in both directions (i.e. also on the return from Waterloo to King's Cross). Note that the cross-platform change from one line to the other is not signed along most of the platform, if at all, but have faith: it works! Should you want any sandwiches or whatever for the Eurostar, Marks & Spencer and Boots both have food departments on Waterloo Station.

Subject to no delays, the Grimsby/Cleethorpes contingent, prior to checking in for the Eurostar, can go to a local hostelry, **The Wellington** [at Waterloo], (81-83 Waterloo Road, SE1 8UD). On handpump, there is Fuller's London Pride, Young's Bitter (£2.70 in September, 2005, when it was in excellent condition) and Marston's Pedigree. The place is adorned with [Wellington] Boots, and above the servery, and extending onto the ceiling, there is a splendid Battle of Waterloo scene. There is a no-smoking area by the door nearest to the place's hotel entrance. To get to The Wellington, leave the main Waterloo station by the Waterloo Road exit (opposite platforms 5 and 6), and go down the escalator to reach Waterloo Road. On the other side of this road, to the left, The Wellington can be seen, on the corner of Sandell Street. A little further away, the marvellous **King's Arms** (GBG 2005, GBG 2006 page 293), at 25 Roupell Street (corner Windmill Walk) is reached by going down the short Sandell Street, alongside The Wellington, and then turning left into Cornwall Road, going under railway arches, and then taking the second quick right into the required Roupell Street (after Brad Street).

I will return to the station for 12.00 (Noon) and wait for David, Mary Jane and Chris at the top of the escalator that leads from the domestic part of the station (near the entrance to Platform 19, where there are seats) down to the Eurostar area, where I will hand out their tickets for the Eurostar to and from Brussels.

We are booked on the 12.40 train from Waterloo, which gets into the Gare du Midi (Zuidstation), in Brussels, at 16.10, local time (one hour ahead of the UK); all times quoted in this document are local time. Check in should be made at least thirty minutes before the departure time, i.e. by 12.10 (ten minutes after Noon). Beyond the check-in at Waterloo, there are quite a few shops and snack places, including, for example, a Costa Coffee place that is less crowded than the one in the main station; this has items such as Panini, including, for example, a Brie and Cranberry one. Unlike other parts of Waterloo, there is some seating in the vicinity of the Eurostar ticket office. Instructions state that luggage carried on the Eurostar must have a label with your name and seat number on it.

On the Eurostar, approximately twelve minutes after emerging from the Channel Tunnel, in France, after a small hill, fairly close to the track, can be seen two hills, further away from the track; these are Mont Cassel and the Mont des Recollets. Soon after, a third hill beer, the Mont des Cats, can be seen, ~fifteen minutes into France. These are the three hills (3 Monts, Trois Monts) that are shown on the label of 3 Monts, a beer brewed by the Brasserie (Brewery) Saint Sylvestre, in Saint Sylvestre-Cappel (www.brasserie-st-sylvestre.com).

The third hill, the Mont des Cats, is easy to spot, since it has the Sainte-Marie-du-Mont Abbey (www.abbaye-montdescats.com), established in 1826 as a Trappist Monastery, on the top of it, and, unfortunately a radio mast, or whatever. The abbey is more commonly known as the Mont des Cats Monastery or Katsberg Monastery in Dutch. Its name derives from a Germanic tribe who settled in the area in the 5th Century, the Cattes. It is the Monastery from which monks fled to escape political persecution, in 1881. In the same year, they set up the Koningshoeven Trappist Monastery (www.latrappe.nl, www.whitebeertravels.com/schaapskooi), in the Netherlands, near Tilburg. This produces the La Trappe range of Trappist Beers. Unfortunately, although the French Monastery produced beer within a few years of re-establishing itself as a Trappist Monastery, only a few years after the 1881 flight to Tilburg, by the early 1900s it had ceased brewing, although its recipes are said to be used in the Het Kapittel range of abbey-style beers, brewed in nearby Watou, in Belgium, which is home to a well-known beer cuisine restaurant, 't Hommelhof (www.hommelhof.be). Watou is covered in the following White Beer Travels Web page: www.whitebeertravels.com/watou.

Earlier, in 1831, the Mont des Cats monks had formed another Monastery close by, but across the Belgian border, in Westvleteren. Belgium, itself had only come into existence in 1830, the year in which it broke away from The Netherlands. The Monastery is called St.-Sixtus. It is one of the most hallowed names in Speciality Beer. The St.-Sixtus Monastery has a superb café opposite, called "In de Vrede" (www.indevrede.be and www.whitebeertravels.com/sixtus), where all the Monastery's superb beers can be sampled. It truly is one of the Meccas of the Speciality Beer world.

The Mont des Cats Monastery produces a cheese of the Port Salut type. This was itself a Trappist cheese, since until 1959 it was solely produced at an abbey called Trappe-du-Port-du-Salut, just South of Laval in the NW of France. The commercial version is now made at a factory, close to the Monastery, under licence. Most Trappist Cheeses are similar to Port Salut. Parts of the Mont des Cats Monastery can be visited; there are videos on monastic life, etc. Close to the Monastery, there is a shop selling its Trappist Cheese, and La Trappe beers from the already mentioned De Koningshoeven Brewery, in The Netherlands.

It is worth going up to the top of the Mont des Cats just for the view; there is also a good restaurant, L'Hostellerie du Mont des Cats (3, route de Berthen). It has one or two interesting beers.

Soon after passing these three hills, the train stops, or goes through, the famous French beer city of Lille. Shortly before arriving in Brussels, the train goes through stations in the Payottenland, the area that is famous for the Lambic style of beer; see if you can spot Lembeek and Halle. Very close to the station, the former **Wielemans-Ceuppens Brewery**, 366, avenue van Volxem Laan, which stopped brewing in 1986, can be spotted; the brewery's main building, La Tour Wielemans (The Wielemans Tower), is being developed into a tourist attraction/local amenity. It is on the right; it has "Wiel's" (c.f. Wiel's Pils) in large letters on its side.

As already stated, the Grimsby/Cleethorpes/London group arrive in Brussels on the Eurostar at 16.10. We are all in coach 3, seated close together, but should we get separated getting off the train, we will meet up just beyond the customs post (which is usually unmanned, but be prepared to show your passport and ticket), at the top end of the platform (front of train end).

As will be seen below, it is a lot more problematic getting to Orval by public transport, when compared to highly populated places in the North of the country, such as Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp, etc; trains and buses, are far less frequent, and, buses often do not run in the evening, and taxis can be very difficult to book. However, we will get there, and I am certain that the very special nature of the place, for which visits are quite difficult to arrange, will make the travel inconveniences worth it.

The first train from the Gare du Midi (Zuidstation) to Florenville after our arrival in Brussels is at 17.37. This is a train with a final destination of Luxembourg, which, after passing through Namur on the River Meuse (Maas in Dutch), gets into Libramont at 19.44, where we get a train to Florenville at 19.51 (final destination Virton), which gets into Florenville at 20.15. Even if the Eurostar is quite late, we should get this pair of trains, but, if not, the next pair (with the same end destination stations, which are used to quickly find the required platform number) are the 19.36 from Brussels, which arrives in Libramont at 21.44, for the 21.51 train to Florenville, which arrives there at 22.15. The train from Libramont is typically waiting for the train from Brussels; it will have Virton on its front indicator board; the tracks can be crossed over with or without using the underpass.

If the Eurostar arrives in Brussels on time or thereabouts, there will be time for a beer in a local hostelry. There are a number of atmospheric ones on the far side of the street reached from the high platform number exit of the station: Avenue Fonsny Laan. Examples include the close together **Le Charlemagne** (at number 27) and **Le Saint Raphael** (at number 23 (on the corner of rue d'Angleterre (Engelandstraat), on the opposite corner to the "**Ibis Brussels Centre Gare Midi**" Hotel, at 2-20 rue d'Angleterre). These two bars can easily be spotted, if one looks across the road to the left on leaving the station. They both have one or two well-known beers of interest in bottle, such as Duvel (€3 in the St. Raphael) and Orval (€2.50 in Le Charlemagne) (September, 2006). In the same block, the **Café Zottegem** (at number 28) is a little noisy for some. Slightly further afield is the oft visited **Au Laboureur**, at 3, Place de la Constitution (Grondwetsplaats), which is reached from the low platform number end of the station (Tour Midi-Zuidertoren exit). At the Gare du Midi, or in one of the Avenue Fonsny pubs, or on the train to Libramont, we meet up with Lee.

I got the above train times, and others quoted in this document, from the Belgian Railways website, www.b-rail.be. This is extremely easy to use and has English pages. If, for example, you enter, in English, "Antwerp" as a destination or starting point, as there is more than one railway station in Antwerp, you will be provided with a pull-down menu, from which you would select the station required, most likely, the offered Antwerpen-Centraal, the city's main railway station. There is a useful anomaly if you enter "Brussels", as it only offers Bruxelles-Midi, which happens to be the one we want on this trip, but one often wants to also use the Central or the North Station; if you enter Brussels in French or Dutch (Bruxelles or Brussel), on the English pages, a pull-down menu is offered, from which these other stations in Brussels can be selected.

One can also book tickets on the Belgian Railways website, this, again being very easy. These are produced as Adobe pdf documents, which can be printed from the site, and they are also e-mailed to the purchaser. I have purchased such tickets for this trip for everyone, for the journey on Friday from Florenville to Brussels, after the Orval visit (I have also purchased a ticket for Lee for the journey on Thursday from Brussels to Florenville, this not being necessary for those travelling on the Eurostar, as Eurostar tickets give "free" onward travel to any station in Belgium).

Although Florenville is South of Midi station, the train does a loop north, stopping at a number of stations in Brussels: Centraal, Nord-Noord, Luxembourg-Luxemburg and Schuman. The latter two have metro connections.

The trip hotel on the first night in Florenville is the **Hôtel de France**, rue Généraux Cuvelier 26-28, ☎ 061 31 10 32, users.skynet.be/hoteldefrance. Should someone need to ring the latter number from the UK and other parts of Europe, this number should be preceded by 00 32 and the leading zero of the national number dropped, i.e. dial: 00 32 61 31 10 32. From the USA, one dials 011 32 61 31 10 32. If one enters the number into, say a mobile phone, it will work from any country, if entered as follows: +32 61 31 10 32.

The Hôtel de France is positioned on a map of Florenville that will be a trip handout. It is a 1.9 kilometre (1.2 mile) walk from Florenville railway station to the hotel. There are number 22 and 24 buses from the station, with a stop close by the hotel, but they will have stopped running well before we get to Florenville; bus timetables and route maps can be obtained from namur-luxembourg.tec-wl.be, as downloadable pdf files. Note that the 24 bus goes on to a stop near Orval, so we will be using it on Friday to get to and from Orval, unless a taxi is possible. I will try to get a taxi; they do not normally wait at the station, but I have the contact details for one, which I will ring (Pierre Stevenin, 22 rue de la Station, ☎ 061 31 23 91, Mobile 0495 57 71 02), but we will have to be prepared to walk, should it not be possible to contact Pierre.

Florenville- & Brussels-Based September 2006 Beer Hunt: Itinerary

We are booked in the Florenville hotel and the one in Brussels on a Bed & Breakfast basis, so, if you incur any other expense on your room, could you please settle this up with the hotel(s) direct. After checking in to the hotel, an option for a drink is the **Taverne "L'Actuel"**, in Florenville's main square, i.e. at 22 Place Albert 1er. This is the town's only entry in Tim Webb's *Good Beer Guide to Belgium* (page 265), but in an on-line update, Tim stated that its beer range has diminished such that it will not be an entry in the next edition. It does basic bar snacks, but not full meals. Our hotel has a good reputation for its regional cuisine, using local ingredients, and, like most places in Florenville, has Orval. Indeed, on the last White Beer Travels group visit to Orval, as the tap was closed on the day of our visit, our host brought us to Florenville for the traditional after-brewery-visit beers, in the Hôtel de France's bar. With a group of over thirty at my heels, we entered the hotel, to be "greeted" by the owner, who was laid out in an open coffin in the entrance! We returned to the square and had our Orvals in the Actuel.

Friday, September the 8th

Visit to the Orval Trappist Brewery & its Tap, before returning to Brussels

We have a visit to the Orval Trappist Brewery booked for 10.00. Orval is a very special place indeed to visit. I cover it in detail on my Web page, www.whitebeertravels.com/orval. The monastery's own website, www.orval.be, has English pages, and has some excellent photos of the monastery, which is a stunning place, in a magnificent setting.

Our host for the Orval visit, the brewery's commercial director, François de Harenne, will pick six of us up from the hotel at 09.30, and the rest of us will go by taxi at the same time. We will take our luggage with us to the monastery. For speed, I have left the bus instructions that follow, for the forward and return journey, in. As it states in my Orval page, François is the grandson of the man who gave the land on which the destroyed monastery stood, so they could build the present new one on this most historic of Cistercian/Trappist sites. Of course, he is no ordinary brewery visit host.

We should be able to leave our luggage at the hotel, so after the Orval visit, we will get the bus back to Florenville, to pick up our luggage and then go to the station, by bus or taxi, should the latter be available, from Orval.

There is a number 24 bus from the Place du Miroir (Quai 2 (Stand 2)), near the hotel in Florenville, to Orval (direction indicator is probably Virton) at 08.55, which gets to the required stop near Orval (it is called Orval (Carrefour), Orval (Crossroads)), at 9.04 (a bar/hotel called "La Nouvelle Hostellerie d'Orval", at 14, rue d'Orval is on the right, by the crossroads). It is a short walk to the monastery from the Crossroads, so we will have some spare time, before the visit, for photos or whatever.

After the brewery visit, we will have lunch and some beers in the monastery's tap, **L'Auberge de L'Ange Gardien** (The Guardian Angel Inn), at 3, rue d'Orval (we will pass this on the left on the short walk from the Orval (Carrefour) bus stop to the monastery). The Guardian Angel is an outlet for the very rare beer that is drunk by the monks: Le Petit-Orval (3.5%) (Orval Verte (Orval Green)). The "normal" Orval (6.2%) is also, of course, available. Food and drinks in The Guardian Angel is included in the trip cost, as is any beer made available in the monastery itself (not guaranteed). Details of the food available in The Guardian Angel are given in the White Beer Travels Orval Web page quoted above.

There is a marvellous shop open to the general public in the monastery, and it is also worth visiting the ruins of the old Monastery, which can be preceded by a Video in English. If there is time, and we have not done them on the main visit to the brewery, we can do some or all of these things.

Florenville- & Brussels-Based September 2006 Beer Hunt: Itinerary

There is a train from Florenville at 16.45, which gets to its final destination of Libramont at 17.09. This connects with the 17.16 train to Bruxelles-Midi, its final destination, where it arrives, at 19.24. Earlier and later trains, which run every two hours, follow this pattern, i.e. there is a 14.45, 15.09, 15.16, 17.24 combination, and an 18.45, 19.09, 19.16, 21.24 one. We will get whatever train is appropriate to our departure time from Orval. The platform (Quai) for the Brussels train is usually number 2, but this should be checked with a railway official (platform indicator boards or whatever are not readily apparent). There are buses back to Florenville, from Orval (Carrefour) at 13.57, 16.54, 17.29 and 17.58, the latter being the last one. Note that the first three listed arrive at the stop eight minutes earlier, but then go into the village of Villers-devant-Orval (where Orval's first modern-day brewer is buried, see the Orval White Beer Travels Web page), before returning to the Orval (Carrefour) stop. I will target the 13.57, but failing that we can get the 16.54 or a taxi. From Florenville, as we are picking up luggage at the hotel, we should be able to get to the station by taxi. Should we get a bus to Florenville (Gare) (Railway Station), there are number 22 buses from the Place du Miroir (Quai 3), in Florenville at 14.09, 15.25, 17.30 and 18.54 (the last one); and there are number 24 buses from the Place du Miroir (Quai 2), in Florenville at 14.06, 17.03, 17.41 and 18.10 (the last one). These buses take four minutes to get to the Station.

The hotel for tonight and the rest of the Beer Hunt is in the Sainte-Catherine (Sint-Katelijne) area of Brussels, which is walking distance of the city's famous, impressive square, the Grand'Place (Grote Markt). The hotel is the **Ibis, Brussels Ste Catherine**, 2 rue Joseph Plateau Straat, which is off Place Ste Catherine (St-Katelijneplein). The hotel's telephone number is 02 513 76 20 (0032 2 513 76 20 from England, or +32 2 513 76 20 from any mobile phone). The Ibis is not marked on the trip hand-out Beer Map of Brussels, but is close to **La Paon Royal** (6, rue du Vieux March (Oude Graanmarkt), www.paonroyal.com), which is located on the map. The Ste-Catherine area is full of excellent eating places, but The Royal Peacock is a very good option for an evening meal, since, as well as having very good food, it also has an above average beer list. Lee has his own accommodation arranged in Brussels, but is, of course, most welcome to join us this evening and for the rest of the itinerary; meet up arrangements will be made each day. Should you want to have a nightcap in the Ibis, it has a few decent bottles, all at €3.50 (September, 2006): Duvel, Orval and Rochefort 8°.

Across the street from the Ibis is **Novotel Brussels Centre Tour Noire**, which is so named as it has the Tour Noire (Zwarte Toren) incorporated into its walls, the "Black Tower" or "Black Gate" being part of the 12th Century city walls.

Also close to our hotel, is a famous and elegant hotel, which is of interest to the Belgian Beer completist, the **Hotel Métropole** (31, place de Brouckère Plein (www.metropolehotel.be)). It is still owned by a famous former Brussels brewing family, Wielemans-Ceuppens; there are some decent beers (all at €4.50 (September, 2006)) in its very smart bar, **Le 19^{ième} Bar**, i.e. The 19th Century Bar.

To get to the Ibis, Brussels Ste Catherine, we get off the train from Libramont at the Schumann station, in Brussels, and transfer to the Brussels Metro station of the same name (signed with a large White "M" on a blue background). We take an underground train in the direction of Roi Baudouin-Koning Boudewijn (line 1A) or Erasme-Erasmus (line 1B), getting off at the stop called Sainte-Catherine (Sint-Katelijne), the one after De Brouckère. The hotel is very close by, on the other side of the church that can be seen on emerging from the Sainte-Catherine underground station, i.e. just South of the Eastern end of the church.

Florenville- & Brussels-Based September 2006 Beer Hunt: Itinerary

I have tickets for everyone for this journey, and other group journeys throughout the weekend. They are not group tickets for a particular journey, but tickets for ten journeys that can be used by one person for ten journeys (with changes) of up to an hour on buses, trams and the full metro. They can also be used for five such journeys for two people, or one journey for ten people, etc. They represent a significant saving over the purchase of single journey tickets. Some example options, with September, 2006 prices (obtained from www.stib.be/www.mivb.be) are: Single Journey Ticket (Carte Jump d'un Voyage, Dagkaart Jump) at €1.50; Ten Journey Ticket (Carte Jump de 10 Voyages, Tienrittenkaart Jump) at €10.50; and Day Ticket (Carte Jump d'un Jour, Dagkaart Jump) at €4. Note that on Friday, Saturday and on [National Holidays](#) that Day Tickets cover travel for two people, but even with just one person using them, if you are using the transport system a lot they represent a very good option.

Saturday, September the 9th

Visit the Bruxellensis Beer Festival & L'Imprimerie Brew Pub

The Bruxellensis Beer Festival is a top-class event, held in a no-smoking venue. It takes place in a former warehouse for storing ice, Les Glacières de Saint-Gilles, 16-18, rue de la Glacière-Ijskelderstraat, in the Brussels suburb of Saint-Gilles/Sint-Gillis. The brewers present and the beers that they will be presenting are given on the festival's website, which has English pages, www.festivalbruxellensis.be. There is also a White Beer Travels Web page covering the festival, www.whitebeertravels.com/bruxellensis.

On the first day, I suggest that we get there fairly early, to establish a base, i.e. get a table, since there are only two or three inside. The festival opens at 11.00 each day, so I suggest that today, we leave from the hotel reception at 10.00. There are some very good eating options within the festival itself, and there are other options close by that are mentioned in my Bruxellensis Web page. When one arrives just before 11.00, there will probably be much setting up still going on, but it will soon be sorted out, and some stalls will have beer available from the start, so, to get a table, it is worth the minor hassle, if any.

Note that, I have a policy of leaving on time for all the activities detailed in itineraries such as this, so, for example, today, if you are not in the reception area at 10.00, I will assume that you are making your own way to the festival or doing your own thing. As stated before, such times are summarised on the last page of this document. It is well worth reading the itinerary in advance for each day's activities.

There is a tram from De Brouckère, a Pré-Metro station near the hotel. The Pré-Metro is the name given to Trams when they travel underground. When their station is underground, such as the De Brouckère and the Bourse-Beurs ones, they have the same large White "M" on a blue background sign as normal Underground trains, the Brussels Metro proper. The tram which gets one to within walking distance of the beer festival venue, this being the number 81, travelling in the direction of Montgomery. Once on the tram, try to sit on the right, so that you can see the names of the tram stops; the one required is called "Moris". After the tram reaches the Gare du Midi (Zuidstation) it travels above ground, i.e. "Moris" is the stop after the one named "Horta". From the "Moris" tram stop, on rue Antoine Bréart Straat, turn quick right, onto the Chaussée de Waterloo (Waterloosesteenweg); the required rue de la Glacière-Ijskelderstraat is the second on the right. For the return journey back to the Gare du Midi (Zuidstation), the "Moris" stop is on rue Moris Straat, which joins the Chaussée de Waterloo (Waterloosesteenweg) at the opposite side to rue Antoine Bréart Straat, although I do not plan to go back this way, see the next paragraph.

In the early evening, I plan to pay my first visit to **L'Imprimerie** Brew Pub (www.limprimerie.be), at Chaussée de St-Job 666 (Sint-Jobsesteenweg), in the suburb of Uccle/Ukkel. The tram stop "Saint-Job-Sint-Job", on line 92, is very close to it. A tram stop close to the beer festival venue, called "Ma Campagne" is served by the required tram. From the beer festival venue, the Ma Campagne crossroads are soon reached by rejoining the Chaussée de Waterloo (Waterloosesteenweg) and turning right. The 92 tram runs at right angles to this street, down Avenue Brugmann Laan; the tram stop in both directions is on an island in the middle of the road, just after turning right onto Avenue Brugmann.

The required 92 tram has the final destination indicator of Fort Jaco; the required tram stop, "Saint-Job-Sint-Job", is essentially in Place de St.-Job (St.-Jobplaats) (St.-Job Square); the stop before it is called "Latérale-Zijlaan", this being close to the St.-Job Railway Station. It is best for Beer Hunters to get to L'Imprimerie fairly early, as it gets very crowded later. It opens at 17.30, with food available from 18.30. Two of the house beers are included in the trip cost, or one of the taster trays with all four of their beers. I suggest that we leave the beer festival at 17.15 for L'Imprimerie.

For the return to the city centre from L'Imprimerie, the 92 tram goes in the direction of Schaerbeek-Schaarbeek, when returning in the direction of the city centre. The number 92 tram does not go to the heart of the city, but has stops close to some Metro stations, i.e. Botanique-Kruidtuin and Louise-Louiza on line 2, and Parc-Park on lines 1A/1B. From the latter, one can get the Metro in the direction of Roi Baudouin-Koning Boudewijn (line 1A) or Erasme-Erasmus (line 1B), getting off at the third stop, Sainte-Catherine (Sint-Katelijne), the one after De Brouckère. Alternatively, one can walk back to the hotel through the city centre, stopping at a bar or two en route. With a little detour, this could be via one of the city's very best Belgian Beer Bars, **Le Bier Circus**, at 57, rue de l'Enseignement (Onderrichtsstraat (Onderwijsstraat on the NE - rue du Congrès (Congresstraat) - end)). The Beer Circus is on the corner of rue de la Tribune (Tribunestraat).

Sunday, the 10th of September
Optional Return Visit to the Bruxellensis Beer Festival
& Evening Meal in Restobières

People can do their own thing during the day, before the evening meal in the beer cuisine restaurant, **Restobières**, but before this I plan to pay a second visit to the beer festival, but precede it with a visit to an atmospheric pub nearby, with its own beer from Cantillon, the **Brasserie Verschueren**, 11/13, Parvis St. Gilles-Gillis Voorplein. The nearest Tram Stop is "Parvis St. Gilles-Gillis Voorplein", on lines 3, 55 & 90, so this can be reached from De Brouckère, near our hotel, on a tram number 55, going in the direction of Silence-Stilte, which is the stop after Porte de Hal (Hallepoort), this coming after Gare du Midi (Zuidstation). For this option, I shall leave from the hotel reception at 10.00. For those who want to do their own thing in the centre of Brussels, it is quite feasible to walk to the area where Restobières is. If you get there between 07.00 and 14.00, there is a well-known Flea Market close by, see the last paragraph of this section.

The meal in Restobières (32, rue des Renards (Vossenstraat), www.restobieres.be) is booked for 19.30. The meal is not included in the trip cost. We will be meeting up with American beer writer, Chuck Cook, his friend Craig Somers, and Gunter Mertens, who is one of the main people behind the O.B.E.R.'s Christmas Beer Festival (www.kerstbierfestival.be, www.whitebeertravels.com/essen), in Essen, in Antwerp Province, which, like Bruxellensis, is featured in an annual group Beer Hunt.

The nearest Metro station to Restobières, is "Louise-Louiza", on line 2. If getting here by this Metro station, leave it by its Boulevard de Waterloo Laan/rue des 4 Bras (Vier Armenstraat) exit, and turn right, onto rue des 4 Bras (Vier Armenstraat). At the soon reached square, called Place Poelaert Plein, which has the Palais de Justice (Justitiepaleis) on the left, carry on straight until one is overlooking the city below you. To the left, you will see a glass-sided lift, which is taken to get to the lower level (or one can take the zig-zag road alongside the Palais de Justice). At the bottom, head West alongside the bottom of the Palais de Justice, on rue des Minimes (Minimenstraat). At the Tee with rue du Faucon (Valkstraat), turn right and one quickly crosses rue Haute (Hoogstraat), to join the required street for Restobières, which is soon reached on the right, after passing **Het Warm Water** (it has some interesting beers), a little up the hill from it, on the left. On the corner, of Hoogstraat, you will note a pub called the **Renard**, at 233 rue Haute, which, on a Sunday afternoon, is usually full of people dancing.

If we come to Restobières direct from the beer festival, we will arrive at the "Louise-Louiza" Metro area by number 92 tram, travelling in the direction of Schaerbeek-Schaerbeek, on the Chaussée de Charleroi (Charleroise Steenweg), see the travel instructions for getting to L'Imprimerie, except that we would be travelling in the opposite direction to this Brew Pub; the 92 tram actually stops in Place Poelaert (stop called Poelaert), the one after "Louise-Louiza". The number 91 tram, "Louise-Louiza", from the Ma Campagne crossroads, also goes along this route, with its end destination being "Louise-Louiza".

To get back to the hotel, from the "Louise-Louiza" Metro, one can a Line 2 Metro (direction Simonis) to Arts-Loi-Kunst-Wet, changing there onto line 1A (direction Roi Baudouin-Koning Boudewijn) or line 1B (direction Erasme-Erasmus), getting off at the third stop, Sainte-Catherine (Sint-Katelijne), the one after De Brouckère. Alternatively, the 48 bus, on rue Haute goes to the Beurse-Bours, which is a short walk from the hotel; the 48 stop at the Bourse, in both directions is on the rue Henri Maus (Henri Mausstraat) side of the Bourse. Once again, it is also not a bad walk back to the hotel from Restobières, with the odd bar two again being on the route.

Note that going further down the hill from Restobières, one quickly reaches a square called the Place du Jeu de Balle (Vossenplein or Kaatspelplaats, depending on which sign you look at). On it, there is a famous and atmospheric Flea Market (Marché aux Pucés), which is a good place to pick up Breweriana. The Flea Market takes place every day from 07.00 to 14.00, but is at its most extensive on Sundays.

Monday, the 11th of September

Return to England after a visit to the Cantillon Brewery and Pub Visits

The Grimsby/London participants are getting the 17.01 Eurostar from Brussels, which is scheduled to arrive at London Waterloo at 18.27, but before this there are a number of optional activities in Brussels.

We leave the hotel at 09.30 to take our luggage to the Gare du Midi (Zuidstation). There is a kiosk where you can hand in luggage in the area of the entrance to platform 7, and just beyond this, there are lockers, costing €2.60, €3.10 or €3.60, depending on size; the exact amount must be tendered. Note that these can be quite temperamental to get both luggage in or out (a barcode on the ticket is read), but the person in the kiosk will help you if you have problems.

We then go to the nearby Cantillon Brewery. After Cantillon, we can visit a few bars in the city; the last one could be **Au Laboureur** (3, Place de la Constitution (Grondwetsplaats)), which is close to the Gare du Midi. Note that should you wish to do your own thing on this day, it will also be possible to leave your luggage at the hotel for later collection.

To get to the Gare du Midi, we will take a Pré-Metro (Tram) from De Brouckère. For this one can take any of the following trams: 3 (direction indicator Churchill); 52 (direction Drogenbos); 55 (direction Silence-Stilte); 56 (direction Marius Renard); 81 (direction Montgomery); and 90 (direction Gare du Midi-Zuidstation). The stop before the Gare du Midi is called Lemonnier.

It is a short walk from the low platform end of the Gare du Midi (Tour Midi-Zuidertoren exit) to the world-class and life-enhancing Cantillon Brewery (www.cantillon.be), which is fully described in the White Beer Travels Cantillon Web page, which is a trip handout: www.whitebeertravels.com/cantillon.

After the visit to Cantillon, where two drinks are included in the trip price, and a brewery tour, for anyone who wants one, we can go to the city centre (walk, or by getting a tram from Lemonnier, in the same direction as the Friday journey to De Brouckère, but getting off at the stop before, Bourse-Beurs) and visit a few bars and have lunch. For those returning to London on the Eurostar, a good place to end up is a really atmospheric locals' bar, with some decent beers: **Au Laboureur**, at 3, Place de la Constitution (Grondwetsplaats). To get to Au Laboureur from Bourse/Beurs, we would take the Pré-Metro, Line 3 (direction Churchill), Line 52 (direction Drogenbos), Line 55 (direction Silence/Stilte), Line 56 (direction Marius Renard), Line 81 (direction Montgomery), or Line 90 (direction Gare du Midi/Zuidstation), getting off at Lemonnier, the stop after Anneessens. These also all go to the Gare du Midi/Zuidstation (the stop after Lemonnier), if missing out Au Laboureur.

In Au Laboureur, the draught Lambic (Timmermanns Lambic Doux) is a little sweet and sparkling for my taste, but they have a rarity in bottle "Gueuse Artisanale (Bouchon)", at €3.50 (September, 2006), Bouchon meaning Cork. This is the rare Alken-Maes's Mort Subite Oude Gueuze (7%) (formerly Fond Tradition (6%)), from their Mort Subite (formerly called De Keersmaeker) brewery. The Rochefort 10°, at €3.20, is the cheapest that I have seen it in a bar. Food is available, the Mezze (Houmous, Dolmades, Feta Cheese, etc, etc) at €7.50, being excellent. Note that the beer menu Kriek Extra (Bouchon) at €3.50 is not the also-rare Mort Subite Oude Kriek; should you want to try it, is available, along with draught Oude Gueuze, in the magnificent **À la Mort Subite** bar/restaurant (7, rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères (Warmoesbergstraat)), which we should try to visit during the weekend (close by is another very impressive bar/restaurant (with the emphasis on the restaurant), the **Brasserie Belga Queen**, 32, rue Fossé aux Loups (Wolvengrachtstraat), www.belgaqueen.be). In fact, we could target the latter for lunch; it has very good food, and some decent beers. It can be expensive, but the two course, plus coffee, Business Lunch is exceptional value at €15 (September, 2006).

To get to the tram stop De Brouckere, for the Belga Queen, the nearest tram stop to Cantillon is Lemonnier. The tram numbers that one can get from here are (with the end station, as displayed on the front of the tram in brackets): 3 ([Gare du Nord-Noord [Station]); 52 (Esplanade); 55 (Bordet); 56 (Gare de Schaerbeek-Schaarbeek Station); 81 (Heizel-Heysel); and 90 (Rogier). Note that to get on the correct platform for these, one has to cross the tracks.

After checking in for the 17.01 Eurostar, there is a snack bar beyond the check-in area, but not much else, but if you have forgot to buy someone Belgian Chocolates, "The Belgian Chocolate Corner", has them from Godiva, and Neuhaus, but also from the more exclusive Galler. They also have the excellent Destrooper biscuits. The beers are ordinary and expensive. At Waterloo, it is hit and miss whether there is any checking of documents, but be prepared to show both your passport and Eurostar ticket.

The Grimsby participants are booked on the 20.30 train from London King's Cross. With our scheduled arrival time in Waterloo of 18.27, once we get to King's Cross on the tube (the reverse sequence of lines and change method as the forward route), we can have a few beers somewhere close by. A good option is North London CAMRA's 2006 Pub of the Year, **Mabel's Tavern** (GBG 2006 page 283), 9 Mabledon Place, WC1H 9AZ, ☎ 020 7387 7739, *Mini A-Z*: page 6, square 2C. This is a 2004 acquisition by Kent Brewers, Shepherd Neame (www.shepherd-neame.co.uk). Mabledon Place is off the South side of Euston road, the turn being opposite the Novotel Hotel, just beyond St. Pancras Station and the British Library, when walking in the direction of Euston Station. After entering Mabledon Place, the tavern is very prominent on the right, on the far corner of Flaxman Terrace. If you double back on yourself on entering, you will be in the place's small no-smoking room (ten people max, I would say), where its good-value food can be enjoyed. Example dishes include: Grilled Chicken Supreme at £5.95 (it was very good on my November, 2005 visit); Soup of the Day at £3.25; and Sausage Selection at £6.95. On the same visit, Shepherd Neame Master Brew was £2.40 and their Spitfire was £2.70; my Master Brew was excellent.

Summary Times for Trains, Meeting Up, etc

Thursday, the 7th of September

Those travelling from Grimsby get the 07.24 train (07.16 from Cleethorpes).

The UK contingents get the 12.40 train to Brussels from Waterloo; check-in time is no later than thirty minutes before this. I will be at the top of escalator leading down to the Eurostar terminal, at Noon, to give those joining at London, the Eurostar tickets for the journey to Bruges, via Brussels (If for some reason, you can't make this time, I will leave your tickets at the Eurostar ticket office). Arrival time in Brussels (Gare du Midi/Zuidstation) is 16.10.

From the Gare du Midi, we get a train at 17.37 for Libramont (final destination Luxembourg), which gets to Libramont at 19.44, where we get a train to Florenville at 19.51 (final destination Virton), which gets to Florenville at 20.15. If the train from London is on time, before getting the train to Libramont/Florenville, we can go to a pub near the station, such as **La Jonction**, opposite the low platform end of the station, on Avenue Fonsny Laan.

Friday, the 8th of September

We have a visit to the **Orval Trappist Brewery** booked for 10.00. We will leave the hotel at 09.30 by private car/taxi, taking our luggage with us.

Saturday, the 9th of September

We will leave the hotel reception at 10.00 for the Bruxellensis Beer Festival.

At 17.15, we leave the festival for the visit to **L'Imprimerie** Brew Pub. For those making their way independently, aim to get there around 18.00 (it opens at 17.30).

Sunday, the 10th of September

For those wishing to spend another day at the Beer Festival, we will leave the hotel reception at 10.00. The meal in Restobières (32, rue des Renards (Vossenstraat), is booked for 19.30.

Monday, the 11th of September

Leave the hotel at 09.30 to take our luggage to the Gare du Midi (Zuidstation), and then go to the nearby Cantillon Brewery. After Cantillon, visit a few bars in the city; the last one could be **Au Laboureur** (3, Place de la Constitution (Grondwetsplaats)), which is close to the Gare du Midi.

For those returning to London on the Eurostar, we need to be at the Eurostar check-in area, with our luggage, at least half an hour before the train departure time of 17.01. Therefore, as we have to retrieve luggage, I suggest we leave Au Laboureur, should we be there, at 15.45 for the short walk to the station.

Once in London (scheduled for 18.27), the Grimsby contingent will go straight to King's Cross, and, assuming there is time, can go to **Mabel's Tavern**, leaving there around 20.00 for the 20.30 train to Grimsby, via Doncaster.

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