

# 10,600,000 bottles of beer



10.6 million bottles of beer on the wall, 10.6 million bottles of beer. Take one down and pass it around 10,599,000 bottles of beer on the wall...

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How much beer does it take to fill 10.6 million bottles? More than 1 million gallons. Any way you do the math, that's one heck of a lot of brewskies.

But that's exactly how much the Atlantic Brewing Company of Town Hill has produced in the 20 or so years it has been in business. And, with production now topping 100,000 gallons annually, it should take only half as long to hit the second million.

Today's operation, which includes the brewery, gift shop and restaurant in Town Hill as well as a winery on Route 3, is a long way from where it all started in Bar Harbor with two students fresh out of Colby College. That's when Doug Maffucci and business partner Jon Hubbard started a bicycle rental business with less than \$2,000.

That eventually led to the opening of the Lompoc Café. It was while running the café that Mr. Maffucci and his wife Barbara Patten took a birthing class with Todd and Suzie Foster of Bar Harbor. After class one evening the Fosters invited their friends over and Mr. Maffucci tasted some of Mr. Foster's homemade beer. "It was delicious," Mr. Maffucci said.

Eventually Mr. Foster brought his brew to the restaurant and began making beer in earnest. "I guess it is fair to say it was procreation that led to fermentation,"

Mr. Maffucci quipped. Eventually the things drifted apart with the Fosters starting up the Bar Harbor Brewing Company and the Maffuccis founding Atlantic Brewing.

Several years ago, the Fosters sold Bar Harbor Brewing to a Florida man. Things came full circle when Mr. Maffucci bought the company from that owner in the spring of 2009.

Atlantic Brewing now markets nine kinds of beer for 23 different products. The company also sells homemade root beer and blueberry soda. The beer ranges from standards such as Bar Harbor Real Ale, Cole Porter and even Blueberry Ale, to seasonal offerings like Summer Ale. The flavors range from light to fruity to dark and rich.

The Town Hill location, which offers tours and tastings, sports a barbecue restaurant as well. The beers are brewed in spotless stainless steel equipment, emulating a facility Mr. Maffucci toured in Europe. The large, modern, well-insulated brewing facility keeps the products at just the right temperature year round, with no need for artificial refrigeration.

Mr. Maffucci is currently in the permitting process for another building on the property, to be used for aging products. He also wants to add a grassed-over area for summer parking to keep cars off the town road out front.

Because the company's specialty brews have a shelf life of only three months, the brewing operation runs most of the year. It may slow down in January, but by February things are ramping up. As stores, pubs and restaur-

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— Doug Maffucci

rants across the Northeast have become aware of Atlantic Brewing Company's products, sales have increased.

For now, the business helps support 20 local families, Mr. Maffucci noted.

Recently, the company has added a line of higher end products, including its "Manly Men" line "that we can make, age, and sell year round," Mr. Maffucci said. "My vision is to steadily

grow and become a long-established New England brewery," he said. As business has increased, the number of months when people are working has increased. "We've grown at a steady pace," Mr. Maffucci said. Ideally he'd like to be busy enough to eliminate the seasonal activity swings. "I'm trying to get it so it's year round."

So far, Mr. Maffucci has taken pride in the fact that his company

seems to fit in well in the village of Town Hill. "The area is a good example of mixed use working well. We are a manufacturing facility, a retail establishment and a restaurant. I think it shows that every zone doesn't have to have one use exclusively."

As the company's products gain higher distribution rates, its reputation for quality has increased as well. And Oct. 27, it was named the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce's Business of the Year.

For Mr. Maffucci, the 1 million gallon milestone is impressive, but he realizes that his operation is still considered a microbrewery. "The way I figured it out, we'd have to make beer for 1,600 years to equal what Anheuser-Busch makes in one."



Doug Maffucci is dwarfed by the cavernous warehouse at Atlantic Brewing Company in Town Hill. Below, cases of Bar Harbor Lighthouse Ale are ready to ship.



**ISLANDER PHOTOS BY EARL BRECHLIN**



Doug Maffucci stands in front of brewing tanks at Atlantic Brewing.

