

A heady spot

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Buffalo Brewpub

6861 Main St., Williamsville
632-0552

Scene: Mostly mellow

Music: Not of too much importance here; you chat up your friends here or make new ones.

Drinks: It's a brewpub! What do you think? (Wine and mixed drinks are also available.)

Dress code: Polo shirts, khakis, jeans. Dressed up and dressed down.

Twenty years. Where does the time go?

When the **Buffalo Brewpub** opened its doors in 1986 on Main Street near Transit Road, I was still in high school, hanging out at the nearby Eastern Hills Mall.

Then the college years came, and the Brewpub became the place to go with friends, grab a bite to eat, watch the game and drink good beer.

Yes, it's always about the beer. I guess I was destined to love it, being of Polish, Irish and German descent. I was the kid always sneaking a sip out of Grandpa's mug. I was the one who scoffed at those at parties who went for cheap, tasteless quantity versus delicious, hoppy quality.

So it's no surprise that the Brewpub is one of my favorite places to frequent, with its 34 taps of not-so-ordinary beers, including four to five of those (depending on season) being brewed in-house. There's a flavor for every taste here -- light, dark, bitter, smooth -- all mapped out on a handy table-tent chart. But if that's too complicated, the knowledgeable staff will guide your taste buds to the proper brew for you.

Another unique feature of what's billed as "New York State's oldest and friendliest brewpub" is its Mug Club (visit the bar or www.buffalobrewpub.com for details).

I visited on a recent Saturday with two Mug Club members who are no strangers to the bartenders or the beer, and both greeted them with a smile. They retrieved their mugs and began filling them with choice selections: Great Lakes Edmund Fitzgerald Porter (Cleveland), Brooklyn Pennant Ale 55 (Brooklyn), Victory Hop Ale (Downington, Pa.), Cascazilla (Ithaca), the House Oatmeal Stout and more (yes, I was the designated driver). Pints run \$3.50 to \$4.25, and for those wondering, bottles and mixed drinks are \$3.50 and up.

Happy hour here is always packed with a mix of regulars, out-of-towners and a wide range of professional types (think of the bar's location). And did I mention the complimentary popcorn and peanuts to keep you good and thirsty?

As luck would have it, Monday starts the Brewpub's 20th anniversary celebration week. The revelry continues through Sept. 17, featuring \$1.75 house beers daily and music by Gregg Sansone on Wednesday, a Karaoke night Thursday and the Not Quite Right Revival from 5 to 9 p.m. Sept. 17.

Stop on in. If you love beer like I do, you won't regret it.