Name of Interviewee: Dan Carey
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Name of Interviewer: Theresa McCulla
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Theresa McCulla: It's June 15, 2018. [This is Theresa McCulla of the National Museum of American History. I am speaking with] Dan Carey, brewmaster of New Glarus Brewing Company. And we're meeting at the brewery in New Glarus, Wisconsin. This interview is part of the American Brewing History Initiative, a project to document and collect the history of beer and brewing in America. So, Dan, when and where were you born?

Dan Carey: I was born in 1960, in the city of San Francisco.

McCulla: And, what were your parents' names?

Carey: Daniel and Elizabeth Carey.

McCulla: And what did they do?

Carey: My mother was a, a nurse and a homemaker. And my father was a ambulance driver.

McCulla: And what was the neighborhood in San Francisco where you grew up?

Carey: I grew up in the Ingleside district.

00:42 McCulla: And what do you remember about growing up in that place?

Carey: [Chuckles] I grew up on a street that was literally the cross between an African American neighborhood and a Irish and Italian neighborhood. And, the, the farther you went one way the more affluent it got, and the farther you went the other way the more, more poor it got. So, I grew up seeing both sides of, literally, both sides of the fence. So, San Francisco in the 1960s, like many large cities, was a, it was a angry time. As a historian you're well aware of what was happening, particularly in the mid to late, in the late eighty, late sixties. So, I, I lived, I lived in a, in a world that was very, very fluid. I, I saw, I, I saw lots of different points of view. I was educated by, by nuns and then by Jesuit priests, which gave me a very unique perspective. Plus, seeing the effects of affluence and the effects of poverty gave me a unique perspective on the world, I'm sure. My upbringing, my education, and my neighborhood shaped my opinion and view of the world. And how I, how I, how I view business.

02:10 McCulla: And I'll, I'll ask about that in a moment. But, where did you go to school and what did you study?

Carey: I went to a college preparatory high school in San Francisco called St. Ignatius. It was, I was, come from, say a lower middle-class family, so, I was, I had full scholarships. I studied at the University of California at Davis. I studied food science, mainly brewing. A little bit of cheese and, and, dairy science and also winemaking. Also, again, at that time, at that time the California government valued education, so, I was given a, and, I had scholarships and, and grants. So, school was pretty much paid for.

02:56 McCulla: Do you, growing up, what do you recall eating and drinking at home?

Carey: Well, you know, it was the 1960s, so, we were pretty much kind of run-of-the-mill food that people ate at that time. You know, the standard American fare. T.V. dinners and, you know, hot dogs. And, I remember drinking Tang, which I thought was a actual, actually a real abomination, when I was a kid. And living in Wisconsin nowadays, it seems a little bit weird, but drinking powdered milk, which is also an abomination. So, I did not grow up in a family of foodies, that's for sure.

03:35 McCulla: And so, what, what drew you to study food and brewing at Davis?

Carey: You know, that's funny. I was somewhat athletic when I was in high school, and so nutrition was important to me. And, I think that was one thing. I, I was fascinated by science and chemistry. And I was also fascinated by breweries. We had, we would travel a lot when I was a kid. We'd go what was in those days called car camping. People didn't really normally stay in hotels, you know? We'd load up a station wagon and drive, start driving north from San Francisco and camp in various national parks. And there, we would, part of our vacation we would maybe visit breweries and I just thought they were fascinating.

04:23 McCulla: Which breweries did you visit?

Carey: Well, probably the most interesting one would've been the Olympia Brewery in Olympia, Washington. It, it, they had a beautiful garden around their brewery and manicured lawns and when you walk into the brewery, there was a beautiful copper kettle, and then the running brewery was shiny, stainless, and quarry tile floor, and whitewashed walls and, it was very clean and orderly and scientific and, the smells, even when I was young, I loved the smells of breweries. And I, I, my dad would let me have a sip of his beer and I just thought beer just tasted wonderful. That juxtaposition of sweetness and bitterness. And its sparkle was a, magical.

McCulla: What kind of beer did your dad drink, do you remember?

Carey: Mostly Olympia. There was a lot of good beers on the west coast. Lucky Lager was a beer that was popular in San Francisco, that was a San Francisco brewery. Hamm's had a brewery in San Francisco. But, he was not really a huge

beer drinker. But, I think the beer that was most popular at that point was Olympia.

05:37 McCulla: And, your time at UC Davis, I would love to hear a bit more about that. We've visited Michael Lewis as part of this project.

Carey: Okay.

McCulla: Did you study with him?

Carey: I studied under Michael Lewis.

McCulla: What, what was that experience like? What, what was his classroom like?

Carey: Well, Michael Lewis is a, is a very good lecturer. His, his lectures were always engaging and succinct and crisp. He probably told you he comes out of cancer research. And, so he's a good scientist. He's also a very forceful personality. He's older now, so, maybe he's slowed down a little bit. But, he's, he's physically in, he, he's a big person in more than one way. So, he, he always referred to us by our last name, so I was, he referred to me as Mr. Carey and we called him Professor Lewis until the day you graduated. And then you would call him Michael. I felt that he gave a really good basic understanding of the science of brewing. Not a technical person. He's not an engineer, but he, we got a good idea of the science of brewing, which was a good first step as a brewer to understand not necessarily the hows, but the whys of brewing. I enjoyed my time with him.

07:01 McCulla: And, do you recall, when you were there, your fellow students, did they go on to other breweries in the area? Or elsewhere in the country?

Carey: I graduated in December of '82. At that time, nearly all of my classmates, there was probably, oh, in the low twenties, nearly all of them went to work for Anheuser Busch. At that point, Anheuser Busch was switching from being run by German brewmasters, to, Weihenstephan graduates, to UC Davis graduates. So, most of the brewers, most of the, most of my classmates went on to be brewmasters at, at Anheuser Busch. In fact, I, I actually did end up at Anheuser Busch for a time. They were growing so quickly that they were hiring lots and lots of people. Some people went to Pabst, but, or Miller, but mostly Anheuser Busch.

07:57 McCulla: And where was that brewing facility located?

Carey: That I worked at?

McCulla: What, well, where did, where were students going from the Davis program?

Carey: Well, at that point, there were, I believe there were twelve breweries. So, they were going, they were going to all the plants. So, when you worked for Anheuser Busch, you generally would go to a given plant as a entry-level supervisor. In a lot of ways, it was like being a first lieutenant in the army. And you would do your time, which might be three years or so. If you were successful, or if the business was growing, maybe it would be more quickly. Or, or not. But, they went everywhere. Houston, Newark, Los Angeles. All over the country.

08:37 McCulla: And I would love to hear about your time at Anheuser Busch. And also, I believe you, you studied in Munich.

Carey: Yes. Near Munich. Yup.

McCulla: Okay. Which order did that happen in? What came first?

Carey: I, when I graduated from school, from UC Davis, I went to work for a small brewery in Montana. Start, a start-up. And, I was there for three years. I built the brewery, started up the brewery, worked for a group of investors there. And, I really liked living in Montana, but it was, it was a little bit too early in the craft brewing business. And like many craft breweries at that point, they were under-capitalized. And so, I felt like I needed a depth, more depth of practical brewing knowledge because the science of brewing, the, understanding chemical pathways is one thing. But, knowing how to run a pump and actually make beers and other things. So, I had met a, a beer importer, Charles Finkel of Merchant du Vin, and I began an ongoing conversation with him. I would send him beer and he had the owner of the Ayinger Brewery in Munich was one of his people that he imported beer for. So, they tasted my beer and, and, and the owner of the Ayinger Brewery said, "Oh, that's good beer. You know, if he ever comes to Germany, have him look me up." And so, I, I asked Charles to write me a letter of introduction and if I could do an apprenticeship. And the owner of the Ayinger Brewery, Franz Inselkammer, had said, "Oh, when I was young, I, this, I did this in Switzerland and some, a brewery was kind enough to allow me to do an apprenticeship. So, I will return the favor." So, Deb and I and our two young daughters, they were, I think, maybe one and three years old at that time, we packed up and moved to, to Aying, which is a small village near Munich. And, they just thought we were nuts. And this was like 1986. And, just, people in Germany at that time, especially in a small village in Bavari-, Bavaria, they thought we were basically from Mars to do something that crazy. Because my language skills, German language skills were very poor and the Bavarian language is not the same as, as normal high German. So, that was a, a obstacle, but I, I, my German's good, good enough that I can follow, follow orders to make beer. So, that was a really good education. They were very kind to, to do that for me.

11:18 McCulla: And what did you learn in particular from that experience?

Carey: Well, it was a small brewery, and about half the size of this brewery. They made their own malt, so I started in the malt house. So, it was good to learn how to make malt. I learned the traditional way of making be-, German beer, the old way of making German beer that's still pretty much done today. But, times are changing. So, it was a time when beer was very, still made in the old way. So, I learned how to make beer in the old way, and saw a really, how a successful brewery was run.

11:55 McCulla: And, during this era when you were beginning your career and as you were leaving Davis, the, what we now know as craft beer, was beginning.

Carey: Yeah.

McCulla: Were you.

Carey: Yeah.

McCulla: To what extent were you aware of it as a movement or something new on the horizon?

Carey: Oh yeah. I mean, that's, the brewery that I went to in Montana was part of that movement. They were probably a more or less, maybe like the sixth brewery to start in the country.

McCulla: What was their name?

Carey: It was called Kessler Brewing Company. Also known as Montana Beverage. It was started by a man who was a, a wine distributor in Montana. He actually had really good wine at that time. But, yeah, we were part of that, that new wave of, of beer that started with a, really started with New Albion and Jack McAuliffe. Although at that point, everybody, including the owners of this brewery, made a pilgrimage to Anchor, and Fritz Maytag would receive everybody and explain to them the pluses and minuses of working in a brewery.

12:51 McCulla: And I, I would love also, if you don't mind, to describe your visit to Anchor and your conversation with Fritz. What was it like to visit his brewery and talk to him?

Carey: Unfortunately, I wasn't part of that conversation. That was before I came on board to the, to the brewery. But, I, I know Fritz Maytag, but really I know his right-hand brewer, Mark Carpenter. I don't know if, did you meet, did you interview Mark Carpenter?

McCulla: Yes, I met, met them both.

Carey: Okay. So, I know Mark better than I know Fritz. But, and, Deb has probably talked to Fritz Maytag more than I have. But, Fritz was always very, very kind and very gentle. And, always had unique perspectives and was able to-, like, like Deb, he's a, I think he's just generally an entrepreneur, and entrepreneurs in my experience are able, I always say that they can see around the corner. So, he, he could sense when, what was gonna happen before other people did. And I think Deb is, is similar to that.

13:54 McCulla: And so, after your time in Germany, then, where did you work after that?

Carey: I went to work at a company in Oregon building breweries. A company called JV Northwest. At that time, they were in Wilsonville, Oregon, which is south of Portland. Now they're in Canby. But, they, they were one of the original manufacturers of, of breweries. They, craft breweries. They were a stainless steel fabricator. At that time, in the late eighties, the wine business was taking off in Oregon. And they were building stainless steel tanks for the wine business. So, they actually, when there was an interest in people wanting to build craft breweries rather than throwing them together from used dairy equipment, which is what everybody had done up to that point, JV Northwest was probably the first company, as far as I know, if not the first, one of the first companies to start building custom-built breweries. So, they, they coupled with Michael Lewis as their consultant and they, the first brewery they built was Triple Rock which was, used to be called Roaring Rock, I think. But, it's, it was, it, turned out to be Triple Rock in Berkeley. That was their first project that they did. So, I went to work for them. First project that I worked on was Goose Island Brewery. And then I went on to manage the construction of about forty-eight breweries. So, now I'm going from somebody who was educated in the science of brewing and have some practical experience, and now I'm starting to learn engineering. And so, I became very good at brewery engineering through that time.

15:32 McCulla: And at what point then did you move to Anheuser Busch?

Carey: Well, at that point, I was, I was on the road a lot, building breweries. And, I, I guess I didn't like the direction that craft brewing was going. There was a lot of people that were money-centric, and that's never really a good-, I know, that's not my temperament. So, I thought, you know what, I'm tired of this uncertainty and chaos and unprofessionalism of the craft brewing industry. I wanna go to work for a real brewery, so I, I, I went to work for Anheuser Busch. And I went, went to work in Fort Collins, Colorado, at their newest brewery at that time.

16:23 McCulla: I'm, I'm curious about that experience, about brewing at a very large scale, with a large and historic brewery.

Carey: Working, well, Anheuser Busch was a very interesting company. They were, August Busch III was the, ran that business. And he ran the business, I, I

say that, to me, Anheuser Busch was a really, really large, small, family-run brewery, because he was, was very sharp and in tune to everything that was going on. Totally in control. And very passionate about making really great beer as, as he saw it. So, in the modern world, maybe people would disagree with, that Budweiser was really great beer, but it's neither here nor there. It's what his vision was. They were buying the best raw materials and they were investing in research and technology and also, marketing, obviously, hence the frogs and the silly dogs and things. But, they, they were very much a quality-led company. They were growing very quickly. But, they had some, they had, in my opinion, some fatal flaws. There was a lot of animosity, like most large companies, between the union rank and file and the management. And so, on one hand you got the Teamsters, and on the other hand you had the, the, the upper management. And I was a, a, a supervisor. So, I would, once again, there I am between both worlds having empathy for both because my father was, had been a shop steward. I, growing up in a, as we talked about before, Irish Catholic union family, so, a Democrat, almost socialist. So, to be in the middle of that was not so comfortable for me. And I, I saw flaws on both sides of the fence. And I didn't like the way that the union worked, nor did I like the way that the management worked. So, it was a little bit uncomfortable. They say, Anheuser Busch said they were a family, family business. But, really you had to, you, you had to choose between your family or the, the brewery. You, you couldn't really do both. So, even, even in those days, which was the early nineties, it was still a time that, time that, that primary, at that point, a male primary breadwinner would, would devote everything to work. And, just disappear at work. And, I, I literally did not sign my paychecks. I think if I, if I signed the paycheck and took it to the bank, Deb would tease me. They, she said, they wouldn't recognize your signature. So, I just basically worked. That's all I did. And it was not a pleasant place to work because of this union animosity. So, it was a great place to learn, to learn really, that's, I learned more about brewing in those three years than I did the rest, rest of my career because it's very intense because you're making lots and lots and lots of beer. And, very quickly. And, many things happening at once. And a lot of really smart people. So, it was a great education for me. I learned a lot about the discipline of brewing.

19:40 McCulla: Okay. Could you elaborate on that a bit? What, what were some of these specific things you took from that time?

Carey: The discipline of quality. And consistency. And how to choose good raw materials. Brewing is a, is a very simple thing. You choose really good raw materials. Water, malt, hops, and yeast. And you take care of those through the process. And you take care of your yeast and, out-, the outcome will be good beer. But, the nuances of the, the details are where the, the devil is, so to speak. So, I learned a lot about quality control and discipline.

McCulla: And, so that.

Carey: In a lot of ways it's like the army. It's similar type of a situation. And that's why Deb didn't like it. She, she did not like working there because, like in the army, if you are a lieutenant, your spouse is then also a lieutenant. So, in her case, the, the wives of the upper management would, you know, require her to have tea, or… And who you aligned with politically would, might dictate the future of your career at the company. So, like all big companies, politics. And politics are, it was more about how politically astute you were. If you could read a room, if you could know who to align yourself with, if you can, if you know when to speak up and when to shut up, you can be really, really successful. And that's not really my expertise. I'm a results-orientated person. I like to get things done. And I'm not so good at reading a room. Deb is, but I'm not. I'm not good at the politics.

21:22 McCulla: Do you think this culture was specific to Anheuser Busch due to its size, or, or was it some part of the large brewing industry at the time?

Carey: I think it's part of a, part of a factory environment. It's part of an old school brewery environment. And it's part of a large corporation that's bottom line-driven.

McCulla: I see.

Carey: And Anheuser Busch is unique in that August Busch is a, was a very, very intense person. So, if you walked through the brewery and, I remember, one of, one of my fellow supervisors was, was a heavyset, big guy, and August Busch walked up to him and said, "What's your name?" And, told him. And he went and whispered to him, 'cause he always had a entourage of nervous guys with suits and, and, briefcases following him. And about a week later, a, a diet plan showed up in the mail. Which of course in this modern age would not fly. So, those were the kind of things that, that he would do. People became very nervous when he visited the brewery. Sometimes people would take their vacation when they knew he was coming, because he was so intense. But if he likes you, you were, that was great. He had a tendency to know the answers before he asked the questions. So, if, if you lied or you bullshitted him, he would come down hard.

22:49 McCulla: So, at what point did you leave Anheuser Busch?

Carey: We left in '93. At that point, I was not happy. I was working rotating shifts, because it was a twenty-four-hour-seven operation. So, I was working all the time. And, all kinds of different shifts. And, so, I had been being very successful, particularly now that I was becoming strong in the engineering section, that I was asked to become part of the engineering group, which would mean that I would travel a lot to brewery to brewery, problem-solving all of the various problems that, as you can see, walking around a brewery there's many opportunities for, for issues related to machinery. And so, I was offered this job. And the one thing about Anheuser Busch, like all corporations, you're offered a promotion twice. And if you turn down, then they'll never ask you again. There

you stay. So, this was my first offer, and it would require traveling probably seventy-five percent of the time. At that point, Deb said, "You know what, I'm not happy being a corporate wife. There's no way that I'm…," 'cause we were in Fort Collins, Colorado, which was the best brewery. Two young, you know, blonde-haired, blue-eyed daughters that, and they were starting to get into junior high by now. The last thing she wanted to do was move to Newark or Houston or L.A. and, and, and have them start at public school in one of these cities. She said, "I wanna go home to Wisconsin. So, I'm hoping that you'll come with me and I'll build you a brewery. So that we can be together." So, Deb's not really passionate about beer. Beer's not her thing. She's an artist. So, she did it, really she did it for me. She did it for the family. Which is kind of unique.

24:32 McCulla: And I will, I'll talk with her about that, but, but, please I'd love to hear from you, too, how, how did that work?

Carey: Wow...

McCulla: Coming together at New Glarus?

Carey: Well, you know, Deb is a very forceful personality. Persuasive. She missed home. She missed Wisconsin. She missed this environment. So, she very much wanted to go back. And, she said I'm going and I hope you come with me. And, she meant it. So, and I wasn't happy. I was not happy at Anheuser Busch. So, I thought that the brewery would last three years and then we'd go out of business. And, but we were thirty-three years old at that time, and I figured, if we're gonna do this, we should do it now. With all of my education and my experience, having built breweries, having worked in a large brewery and small breweries and building breweries, I had worked with a lot of different people. A lot of famous people in the brewing industry. And, some people that nobody remembers because I could see why people were successful and why they were not successful. And Deb and I had actually met when she was doing, helping with marketing at the first brewery that I had worked at. So, she had a whole lifetime of entrepreneurial work. She had started her first business when she was, more or less, sixteen. She had done brewery marketing. We had observed the industry and so, when we wrote our business plan, it was a really good business plan. We, it was a, a really strong plan. So, we felt that we were very well positioned because we understood the industry. We understood what worked and what didn't work. So, we were able to hit the ground running. And, Deb said to me, "Look, I'll, I'll help for three years to get this going, but then I'm gonna, I'm gonna go do my own thing." And here she is twenty-five years later, still here at the brewery.

McCulla: And so, is she from this part of Wisconsin originally?

Carey: No, she was born in, born in Milwaukee and she was raised in, mainly in Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls. Her father was a insurance salesman, and he was a little bit shifty, so they moved around a lot.

26:53 McCulla: And so, how did the brewery come to be in New Glarus?

Carey: When we decided that we're gonna build a brewery, we, first thing we did was we talked about what our suc-, where are successful breweries built? So, Deb had some very definitive, definite ideas. It was, required a, a well-educated, parochial customer base. People that particularly had traveled in Europe. People with disposable income. And, there were, at that point, we looked at places like, Deb was considering, and, and places that didn't have a lot of breweries. So, we looked at, thought about Bell, Belleville, Bellevue, Washington. We thought about Atlanta, Georgia, and Madison, Wisconsin. But, Madison, Wisconsin was where she wanted to move to. So, she said that, you know, we don't wanna be in Madison because Madison is not particularly business-friendly. A lot of red tape. And we didn't have a lot of money, so we didn't have the time to fight city hall for two years. I mean, if we were gonna do this, we had to, we had, we had to get moving and be done quickly. So, she took a map of Wisconsin and she took a, literally took a compass and drew a thirty-mile radius around Madison and, and I had a bunch of frequent flier miles from my previous life as a, building breweries, and I got on a plane, came out here. It was February and she said, "If you're comfortable with Wisconsin in February, then we'll be okay." So, there was a brewery in Monroe, Huber Brewery, which is now Minhas. And I was friends with the brewmaster there. Sweet guy. And I thought, "I'm gonna go visit him while I'm out here." And I drove through New Glarus and stopped for, for gas. And I, I said, "Hey Deb." I called Deb on a payphone. And said, "Hey, this is a really nice little town. It kinda feels like Germany. We should think about this town." And so, she was able to find a warehouse and negotiate a rent. And, one thing led to another and we packed up and moved here. And we moved very quickly, within three months. When we arrived with the U-Haul van, we were brewing beer. Which I think, I don't think anybody has done it faster.

29:17 McCulla: When you opened, what was the brewing world like at the time nationally and in Wisconsin?

Carey: That would've been in, we sold our first beer in October of '93. So, at that point, nationally, craft breweries, I don't know how many craft breweries there were at that point, but there must have been, say, you know, less than a hundred or somewhere in that neighborhood. They were still a west coast, mainly a west coast phenomenon. Oregon, Portland, as it is now, was probably the biggest. Seattle also had some. Redhook was doing well. Widmer was, was just getting going and, BridgePort was getting going. So, so things were starting to look bright on the coast. When we built this brewery here, though, I had hired some farmers to help me move, we bought second-hand brewing equipment, and to move it down here it's, and, and get it moved into the building. And, at that point there was, here in Wisconsin, there was Sprecher and Capital and Lakefront, and a few others. But, most people drank Miller Light. And, I remember one of the farmers saying to me, "Oh, you're gonna build a brewery. That's neat. What kinda beer are

you gonna make?" So, I, you know, I started to explain it to him. He says, "No, no, no, no, no. I, I mean, are you, is it gonna taste like Miller, Bud, or Coors? Because I can't drink Bud. It gives me a headache. So, brew a beer that's more like Miller." So, that was the milieu. That was the, that, that's what we started with.

30:56 McCulla: Well, and what kind of vision did you have in terms of what you wanted to brew?

Carey: Well, it's funny because I was, ale, ale brewing at that point in my career was, ale brewing is relatively rudimentary. And it's simple and fast. And lager brewing was more sophisticated, and in my opinion, I liked lager beer better. So, we started out as a lager beer brewery. And that's what we were gonna make. Ale brewing is a, is, as I said, it's easier and cheaper to make, so, most, most craft brewers started out making ale, because it was different. It was differentiated. And, it was simpler and took less level of sophistication. But I was perfectly comfortable being a lager brewery. But, we, we don't push, we're, we're, we, we exist solely on the graces of our customers. And so, they, they, when we made ales, they drank more of it. So, we slowly. We still make lagers, but we, we moved slowly over to ales. Because ales in general have more, maybe more complexity of flavor.

31:59 McCulla: And so, could you describe the kinds of beers that you brew now? And how those evolved over time?

Carey: We started out, the first beer we made was called Edel-Pils, which is a German style of beer. Edel, Edel as you may know, means noble, or true. So, Edel-Pils would be a noble pilsner. Usually it refers to like the best that a brewery—you see it in, in, in mostly in Bavaria—but it's the best beer that a brewery can make. To a German, particularly a Bavarian brewer, pils, pilsner is the, the consummate beer. Sophisticated. And so, Edel-Pils is the best of the best. So, that's the first beer that we came out with. And it was loosely based on the beer of the Czech town of Budweis, Budvar, Budweiser. The original Budweiser. Of Czech Republic. Malty, rich, somewhat malty, sweet, aromatic beer. And then we came out with a beer called Uff-da bock, which was a traditional bock beer, Germany-style bock beer. And an uff-da was a, is a, sort of a Norwegian expletive. Like if you stub your toe, you say, "Uff-da." Or if you go outside and it's really cold, you say, "Uff-da." So, it's kind of a joke and it was, it came about because New Glarus is a Swiss town, and the Swiss are very, very Swiss. And there are a lot of Norwegians around here, and the Norwegians were considered lesser than the Swiss. A little bit. So, Deb named the beer Uff-da as sort of a little bit of a, she's of Norwegian descent, so, that was, they, they, that was kind of funny. Then we came out with Belgian Red, which was a beer made with Door County of cherries. And that did really well for us. But, Edel-Pils never really took off. Number one, because the name. Edel-Pils. People didn't know what it meant or couldn't pronounce it. So, it didn't, it didn't have the resonance that it say, it would have had, say, in Germany. So, some years later, we made lots of

different beers. We made, the first ale we made was called Jesters, and I called it that because I thought that making ales was a joke. So, I called it Jesters. But, we made a beer called Spotted Cow and that, for whatever reason, resonated with people, and they kind of took us along their, on their journey.

34:25 McCulla: Do you think people responded to that beer in particular for, from a flavor perspective or the label art? Or, what do you think?

Carey: I think everything. Because a, a, a, an entity, a food, a beer, a person is the personification of all things. We always say that the, the flavor is the table stake. People drink with their mind and their eyes, but the beer has to taste good. And Spotted Cow has a very, very unique flavor that no one else, many, many people have tried to copy it. Almost every brewery in Wisconsin has made a, a, a copy, their, Stevens Point had a beer called White Bull. Huber had a beer, or Minhas had a beer called Lazy Mutt. [Goose Island] 312 is a, is a really brilliant co-opting of the style, because, 312 for Chicago is a, it's like Spotted Cow in Wisconsin. So, yeah.

35:34 McCulla: How would you describe the flavor profile of Spotted Cow?

Carey: Took me a long time to really say it, to really articulate it, because Deb was the one, Deb has a really good palate, so she was able to really help me define what the beer is, because at first, I had a hard time understanding. But, what it is is it's very fruity and it's, it's a complex bend-, blend of fruit. There's, there's banana, there's apricot, sometimes there's melon, sometimes there's strawberry. It's a little bit hazy. It's, obviously leans sweet, but not too sweet. It's slightly lactic, which gives a snap to it. I grew up, grew up, as you know, in San Francisco. So, I grew up eating sourdough bread, so that juxtaposition of wheat and lactic acidity is very pleasant to me. So, I think it's the combination of that almost, almost reminiscent of a ripe fruit, because it's sweet, it's sour, and it's fruity aromatic.

36:44 McCulla: And, I'm curious how customers responded to your beers over time, at the, at the very start of this, the consumer you met, he, you know, requested that you not brew something like Bud. Did you have people like that trying your beers originally? Or, and, and, how did your consumer base change over time?

Carey: Well, we've grown year by year, anywhere from four to fifty percent, but probably an average, a compounding average of ten or fifteen percent year by year. I don't really know. That would probably be more of a question for Deb. I don't really get out much. So, I don't really know what, I'm not, don't know if I can really articulate a good answer except to say that we are unique in, in the craft brewing business in that we attract people from all groups, customer groups, from the beer geeks who are almost militant in the way they view beer, which I find unappetizing, and just to people who, most people who don't, who just wanna go out and have a nice dinner and maybe they'll have a beer and, socialize and, and

they'll have a beer that's enjoyable. And those are the people that, that really enjoy Spotted Cow.

38:07 McCulla: As you've mentioned, you have grown a lot over time as a brewery. How would you characterize your strategy in terms of expansion and growth?

Carey: Well, again, that'd be a good question for Deb, because we used to sell, we didn't have the Wisconsin-only idea until some years after we started up. In other words, we did at one point sell beer in Portland. We used to sell beer in New York. I mean, I remember going to Manhattan to sell beer. We sold beer in Illinois. In fact, we were very successful in northern Illinois. But as we grew, and the idea of traveling to these places, especially with young children and Deb being the one doing most of the sales, she did 99.99 percent of the sales, it was, she hated going to Chicago. And Chicago, at that point, was a awful place to sell beer because it's the second biggest market in the country and all of the brewers just give away beer there. So, it's expected that you give away beer. And, and still, I mean, even in Wisconsin, people expect you to give them beer, which is crazy. So, she, at some point she said, "You know what, I'm tired of selling beer in Illinois. Let's just pull back to Wisconsin." And at that point, it was absolutely, there are so many things that she has done that were just completely unheard of, and, for a brewery to pull back from markets, it was, was crazy and there was a lot of backlash. There was angry phone calls from wholesalers. Although most phone calls from wholesalers are angry. But, particularly angry. And, of course, the, at that point, there was starting to be the internet chattering class and they were, there was a lot of gnashing of teeth that, “What a, how could you guys be so stupid? Because you're burning all these bridges." And, of course, it worried Deb, but she stuck to her guns and it's become somewhat iconic that we're a Wisconsin brewery.

40:14 McCulla: What time were, what year was that, when that decision was made, do you?

Carey: That would've been probably in the mid, mid, mid-nineties. So, we started in ‘93. I, I, you'd have to ask Deb, but I think it was probably '96ish. '97. So, not too far into our business.

McCulla: You, you both have traveled throughout the country, if not the world.

Carey: Sure. Sure.

40:39 McCulla: And have been involved in the brewery industry for several decades. To what extent does Wisconsin have a unique culture when it comes to beer and brewing?

Carey: Yeah. Wisconsin is very unique in many ways. When you travel the world, whether you're in Bangkok, Thailand, or, or anywhere in the world, you will find

Irish pubs. And there's always Guinness on tap, and etcetera, etcetera. And when you travel around the country, you find Wisconsin ex-pat bars where you can get cheese curds and watch the Packers and the Badgers play football. There, which is unique, because I've never heard of a ex-pat Nebraska bar, or an ex-pat Iowa bar or, god help us, a California bar. So, Wisconsin, people from Wisconsin, as I said before, are, are very parochial. They're very proud. There's the whole idea of the Green Bay Packers, which is an underdog, community-owned football team. So the idea of people being from Wisconsin, it's almost like an inside joke that people are proud. It is, so, that's one thing—that, that pride of being from Wisconsin. And the sense of humor that goes along with that, because, you know, we know that this is not a, it's not Honolulu or San Diego, so, everybody knows that it has its unique pluses and minuses. But that's part of the charm. Deb always says it's the, the cold winters that keeps the whiners out. Which is actually on one of our beer labels. The second thing is is, as you know, Wisconsin has a strong German heritage. And that, that heritage, that, that beer culture, that tavern culture, goes, comes through to, to this day. So, you have that combination of a, a beer culture and I think a relatively—although State Street is a maybe an anomaly—a responsible beer culture. And agriculture. Agriculture is another important attribute. Don't, don't ever underestimate the importance of the, the mythos of the family farm in Wisconsin, hence the Spotted Cow.

42:59 McCulla: A moment ago you mentioned the idea of, of ownership, you know, whether it be employee ownership or the Packers being owned by, by fans, and that carries into the New Glarus business model.

Carey: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

McCulla: How did you and Deb make the decision to make New Glarus a, an employee-owned company?

Carey: Well, we're, we're both fifty-eight years old, and we've been doing this for twenty-five years, and I don't think we'll ever stop being involved, but when you start to reach a, a certain age, you have to start thinking about, you know, I, I'm gonna die sooner than later. [Chuckles] Which is true. And, you have to start thinking about what to do next, and at that point, for example, the Ballast Point Brewery, which was smaller than us, sold for a billion dollars, which is crazy. And we have a lot of pent up, or we have a lot of potential for profitability. We only sell in one state, if, I mean, and we could sell in China—I'm sure Spotted Cow would do well in China—we could sell all around the country, we could open up a restaurant. So, there's potential to make a, a lot of money if someone really wanted to. So, the, the, I think that, and the company was, is growing, and growing, and growing, so the, the company is very valuable. So, we probably could've sold the, the brewery for a, a really big number. And as basically fifty-percent shareholders, we would've ended up with a obscene amount of money. But then, what, what happens? If you think about it, that sounds grand. But, so, you buy some nice clothes, you travel around the world, you buy a nice car, and

then you start to get bored and you say, "Well, you know, maybe we should do something. I'm tired of sitting on the beach." And. [Knocking Noises] Hi.

Deborah Carey: [Unintelligible] showed up. Do you want me to go away?

Carey: No, no, come on in. Come on in, please. 'Cause I think we're, we're probably winding down.

McCulla: Yeah. Five, five minutes left.

Carey: So. So.

Deborah: Okay, well, then I'll come back.

McCulla: Okay.

Deborah Carey: Let me know when you're done.

Carey: Okay. So, we, we said, you know, this is not, and what would we do? Start a brewery? So, and, and then, so, so the money was never, really, honestly, as crazy as it sounds, was never that important to us. As long as, I always say, as long as your feet are dry, your back is strong, and your stomach is full, then you're okay. Health insurance is a big thing, but, that's another story. But in any event, we decided that we have all of these wonderful people, a hundred and twenty plus employees that pour their heart and soul into the business. And, we would be better served by taking care of them. Okay, we could've sold the brewery and cut them all a check, but, mmm, we decided that this is part of the community. It's, it, it serves a large value to the community of south central Wisconsin. So, what are we gonna do? Well, let's start selling it slowly to the employees and, that's how that came about. Seemed like a better, overall, a better solution.

46:25 McCulla: Just a couple questions to end on. You mentioned earlier something very interesting, that you've never considered yourself a craft brewery.

Carey: Right.

McCulla: And I, please explain what you mean by that.

Carey: Well, maybe I would flip it and say all brewers are craft brewers. I don't like the exclusiveness of the idea that's, just because you're small you're better. Because having worked in a large brewery, I worked with a lot of people who poured their heart and soul into it and were really incredibly talented craftspeople. So, I think it does a disservice to a whole group of people that, for centuries, have done what we have done and, all brewers started out as small brewers. Every brewery was somebody's idea and they sold a couple hundred of barrels and they just kept growing and growing and growing. They got really big. So, there's no

difference between the new microbreweries and the, the existing legacy breweries, except time. So, the other problem is is that beer is a business. What we, we are more European in our view of business and we view this business in terms of centuries. Whereas modern business views in profit in the next quarter. And that this is, that's a huge dis-, destructive. Very destructive to the economy, to society, and to people. So, we think that that's sinful, actually. So, the idea of trying to build a business that's sustainable over the, over the decades, and God willing, the centuries, is more interesting to us. So, we don't wanna be seen as gimmicky or faddish, because fads change. Gimmicks change. And what's cool today will not be cool tomorrow. That's for sure.

48:19 McCulla: You also mentioned at the start of the conversation your, your origins in San Francisco, living with a foot in two worlds, in some sense.

Carey: Yeah.

McCulla: Now looking back over your career, how do you feel like that has impacted the course of events?

Carey: All the things in my upbringing and my education, the Jesuits are very unique in how they view the world. The idea of Christianity has been co-opted by a lot of people that's, it's now, it's all about thou shall nots, and stupid things like the world was invented, or the world was created five thousand years ago, which to any rational person is just nuts. It's about intolerance. And so, a lot of people are alienated by the whole idea, which is completely against the teachings of the Christ that most of us know, or, or studied at least. So, what the Jesuits taught was a healthy respect for, for science and the value of science as a tool, and the realities of where science leads you, and also to understand that true Christian ethos is in the value of taking care of your fellow person. For, not to be trite, but the Bible says you are your brother's keeper. So, that is kind of, business then is about my responsibility to my employees. And If I take care of my employees, they will take care of the shareholders. That's not my job to take care of the shareholders, 'cause they're the ones who are making the beer. If they, if they, if we work all together, we will be successful. So, and it also, seeing both sides of the fence, so to speak, it gave me more of a healthy fear of affluence because I, I think I've seen the destructive nature of sometimes of, and, and the false sense of security that comes from affluence. Whereas the other side of the fence, I saw the need of community and how people work together to overcome obstacles. So, it’s made me personally very much, I'm probably unique as a business owner, of, a successful business owner, relatively wealthy successful business owner, but I would consider myself a socialist, and I feel that I don't pay enough taxes. As a wealthy person, I feel that it's my responsibility to pay more taxes. So, I will say that's somewhat unique. And my wealthy friends think I'm nuts.

50:50 McCulla: Last question, and you might have actually just answered it. I, I like to end by asking people what you value most about what you do?

Carey: Taking care of people, by far. Creating an environment where people can buy homes and have families and have children and send them to, to, for a proper education. Education and health, health care are, are the fundamentals of, of a society, of a strong what it, I, there, to paraphrase something I think Benjamin Franklin said, that only a virtuous, only a virtuous people deserve, or can properly operate a democracy. So.

McCulla: Well said.

Carey: Maybe you know it better than I do, but.

McCulla: No. No. I don't.

Carey: Okay.

McCulla: Alright, well thank you so much for your time.

Carey: Sure.

McCulla: Thank you.