

## Brewing up business

Garrison's move to Pier 21 will allow it to pump up production

By **BRUCE ERSKINE**  
Business Reporter

Cruise ship passengers visiting Halifax will soon be able to quaff authentic Nova Scotia brew when they disembark.

"I'm very positive about where we're going," Brian Titus, president of Halifax's Garrison Brewing Co., said Tuesday in an interview. "It opens a new sector of the market."

Garrison, a boutique brewery founded eight years ago, plans to move to the Halifax waterfront in September from Lady Hammond Road.

The brewery will be relocated to the Ports Police site in the Immigration Annex near Pier 21, Mr. Titus said, as part of the Halifax Port Authority's ambitious 10-year plan to make over the seawall lands.

The seawall plan, still under development, includes possible performance art and convention spaces, restaurants, high-end retail outlets and the previously announced proposal to locate a second NSCAD University campus in Shed 21.

We've been looking around for a new location for 1½ years," Mr. Titus said.

"The biggest issue is in the summer, (when demand and production peak) we're too small. We have a hard time keeping up," he said, adding the brewery's 3,400-square-foot space in a commercial strip mall lacks the retail visibility that a boutique brewery needs.

The new 5,000-square-foot location, which includes an additional 1,000 square feet

of loft space, should solve both those problems.

"It's nice if people can see it, smell it, experience it," Mr. Titus said. "That's the plan—to establish a storefront presence to cater to the cruise ship market and the local market."

The new space will include a brewing area that will be visible via windows from a retail-merchandise area and from separate tap and hospitality rooms. Both rooms will be used to host different kinds of events.

"It will be very visual," Mr. Titus said, adding he plans to install a seven-metre steel malt silo outside the building that will act as a beacon for tourists and area residents.

"It's almost an icon," he said. "It's a great graphic element."

Garrison produces about 250,000 bottles a year and employs seven people.

Mr. Titus said the new space will allow the business to produce 350,000 bottles of beer yearly using the existing equipment.

It would also allow the business to increase its production, with some added equipment, to 500,000 bottles a year, he

said, adding that new features will require additional staff.

"It should jump to 10 or 12 (staff) with clerks, et cetera," he said.

Mr. Titus said the new space has 8.5-metre ceilings, and he plans to retain its open look.

"It's brick on the inside with (exposed) steel girders—it's very dramatic," he said.

He also plans to use lots of roughly hewn timber for interior decoration.

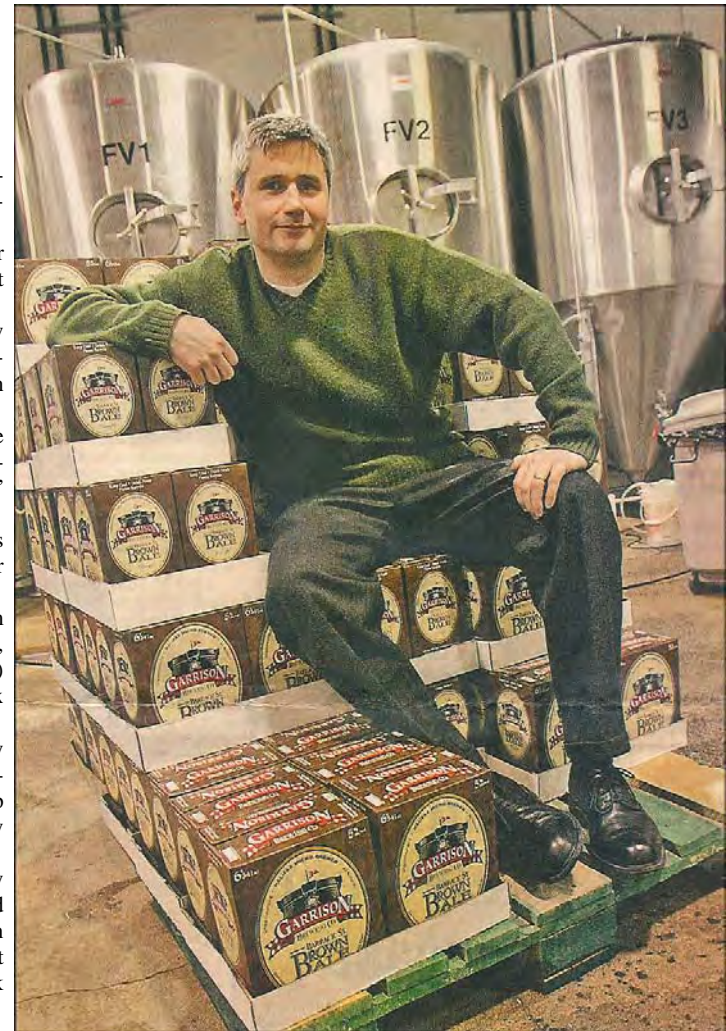
"The hospitality room will have an industrial feel, while the retail (section) will have an old Halifax feel."

Mr. Titus said he's ready to move now, but the proposal still has to jump through some regulatory hurdles.

"We're hoping that by late July, the thing should be a go," he said. "Then we and NSCAD can start making plans to break ground in September."

Mr. Titus noted cruise ship travel picks up in September and October, and he hopes to have his retail operation open by then.

"We're prepared to put in a temporary retail store



Garrison Brewing Co. president Brian Titus sits Tuesday in his overcrowded Lady Hammond Road Brewery, which will soon be moving to Pier 21 and a much larger location this fall.

almost immediately," he said, adding that the move will cost about \$250,000.

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