

PACKAGE DESIGN BY COLOR-LOGIC BRAND SERVICES

Wold Top Brewery

Hunmanby Grange, Yorkshire Wolds, UK



By Dennis Mason

Tom and Gill Mellor met at Wye College, London University, a British school noted for excellence in rural business management, biological sciences, the environment, and agriculture. In 1983, Gill, a horticulture major, and Tom, an agriculture major, married and moved to the 600-acre Mellor family farm, where Tom was the third generation to till his family's land in the Yorkshire Wolds, an area of rolling hills and dales overlying chalk, just a few miles from the eastern coast of northern England.

By the early 1990s, arable farm incomes in England were falling, and farmers were looking to diversify. Some farmers sold land to developers for housing tracts, while others converted old farm buildings into holiday accommodation. These options, however, were not open at Hunmanby Grange, the Mellor farm. Gill and Tom sought to maintain the Mellor farming heritage, and a number of factors came into play. Says Gill Mellor: "It happened that Wye College was noted for hops research, and the Mellor farm had a

source of pure water and grew high-quality barley, so we elected to jump on the craft brewing bandwagon and brew beer as a means of maintaining our lifestyle and taking advantage of our education, the Mellor land, and the natural assets around us.

In 2003, the Mellors brewed their first beer and Wold Top Brewery—so named because Hunmanby Grange, the Mellor farm, sits high up on the Yorkshire Wolds near the coast—was born. In the nearly ten years since the first beer was brewed, Wold Top Brewery has rapidly gained recognition in the British craft brewing culture, and has garnered awards both locally and across Great Britain.

At its inception, Wold Top Brewery produced ten brewer's barrels each week—a rate that has grown tenfold today. Initially, production was entirely cask beer, for sale in local pubs. Then, Wold Top moved to bottling and finally installed their own bottling line, rated at 2500 bottles per hour. Today, the brewery bottles not only their own production, but does contract bottling for other nearby craft brewers. Wold Top production is currently shipped 65 percent in casks and 35 percent in bottles, but the Mellor's business plan calls for well over half of their brewing production to be bottled in the near future. With the growth of the brewery, a Mellor daughter has joined the workforce, making Kate Mellor the fourth generation on the farm—the first girl following three Tom Mellors!

Moving to bottles—which unlike casks, require packaging—forced the Mellors to face new issues. Suddenly, Wold Top needed not only labels, but also cartons in which to



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Tom and Gill Mellor.

ship the bottled beer, which is now available not just in Great Britain but in Canada, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, and Italy. Says Gill Mellor: “It happened that a Smurfit Kappa salesman liked our beer, and he wanted to use Wold Top beer as a means of demonstrating that his packaging material is ‘strong, but light.’ He did two labels, created the outer wrap, and gave our beer away to packaging prospects. He then encouraged us to adopt the MirriNor material in our own packaging. We were in the process of rebranding the Wold Top product range, and finally settled on a variation of our original design, with lots of toning and metallic special effects in the colour. Just looking at the pack, everyone assumes we have a gold foil box.”

She continues: “A very important element in our new box was the work of the Brand Services group at Color-Logic, which makes the software necessary to create the metallic special effects. Not only did the Color-Logic graphic designer know how to achieve just the right tones in the metallic areas, but he suggested a box construction that reduced the package footprint and enables us to get more bottles on a pallet. He also designed the box so that the bottles do not turn in shipment, thus letting our labels become an essential element in the overall package design. We ended up with an absolutely superb box—and a big hit which increased our gift sales by one-third in the 2012 Christmas season and elicited favorable comments from retailers and end customers alike. Using the Color-Logic software lets us achieve a dramatic effect at a very low cost,



Wold Top Brewery packaging, designed by Color-Logic Brand Services

using the same lithographic printing process we have always used. For the next holiday season, we are looking at a simpler and less costly box, but by using an outer wrap we will retain the metallic effects that distinguish our beer on the retailer’s shelf. This idea was only made possible by the use of MirriNor and Color-Logic, which give us the flexibility to change the box design easily and often without huge cost.”

Moving from traditional farming to becoming a major factor in the craft brewing industry required significant changes. Not only have Gill and Tom Mellor maintained the financial viability of the family farm, they are pioneers in responsible farming techniques and enthusiastic supporters of the local low-transport food movement. Wind turbines on the farm generate all the electrical power necessary for the brewery, with power to spare that is sold back to the grid for others. Although Wold Top Brewery has no tasting room and does not sell beer directly to consumers, the Mellor farm has become a popular venue for charity events. From time to time the farm and the brewery are open to visitors for a fee which goes entirely to a local charity. Based on the success of an annual folk festival—Moonbeams at Wold Top—the Mellors have formed an events company which will let the farm become a destination for weddings and other celebrations.

Wold Top Brewery and the entire venture headed by Tom and Gill Mellor are testimony to how focus and dedication can produce outstanding results. Wold Top produces a widely varied range of craft beers, and looks forward to continued success with eventual distribution in the United States. Gill Mellor says: “While Wold Top beers have an excellent reputation for craft beer quality and taste, our Color-Logic packaging is a definite factor in getting consumers to try them initially and identify them on the shelf for further purchase.”



Gill Mellor continues her dedication to horticulture. She says: “My garden opens annually under the National Garden Scheme, and all the garden planning has been developed to cope with our fantastic hilltop location. At Hunmanby Grange, the westerly prevailing wind, although not cold, can be extremely damaging and destructive to plant life. Our shelter belts, hedges and fences were all designed to protect against the cold from the north and east, and the prevailing westerlies, whilst importantly preserving the views and still letting the sunshine and light in from the south. These hedges and fences shape the area into a series of smaller gardens, each with its own distinctive features and protection from the winds on the Wolds. A series of five- and ten-year plans have produced outstanding gardens, which are well established with a diversity of planting and character.”



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