

Chemical Engineering brew their own beer

The University's Chemical Engineering Department recently established a microbrewery thanks to a generous donation of R31 000 from SAB Miller.

This brewing technology laboratory will be used for a brewing practical that Chemical Engineering students will do as part of their undergraduate curriculum. The facility will also be used for research projects.

Prof Mike Heydenrych, an associate professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering, Malcolm du Toit, senior trade brewer with SAB Miller, and Moritz Kallmeyer, owner of Drayman's Brewery in Silverton, designed the brewery. It has been designed to produce batches of 50 litres of beer – the perfect volume to fill a standard keg. Prof Heydenrych prepared the laboratory infrastructure with the help of two chemical engineering students, as part of their vacation training work.

The laboratory was commissioned late in January and an American pale ale was brewed and served at the official opening ceremony.

The construction of this microbrewery is just part of a greater thrust by the Department of Chemical Engineering into the field of biochemical engineering. The Department has long been a leader in the field of water utilisation, with chairs from Erwat and Rand Water. Prof Lew Christopher, a well-known researcher in the field of biotechnology in the paper and pulp industry, has also been appointed as extraordinary professor. This appointment strengthens the link between the Department and Sappi.

Prof Philip de Vaal, Head of the Department, is strongly supportive of multi-disciplinary cooperation. "Biochemical applications in chemical engineering are increasing, and know-how in this field should be transferred across disciplines," he says.



Prof Heydenrych was invited to share a glass of ale with Jacaranda FM's morning team. From left (back): Antovan Nothling, Prof Mike Heydenrych and Mhairi Thornton; (front): Michelle Constant and Martin Bester.

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