

## MICHIGAN “DID YOU KNOW” – GEYER BROTHERS TAB TOPS By Randy Karasek

I know, you read the word “tab tops” and immediately lost interest. Sorry. Michigan is not blessed with an abundance of OI cans. However, if you collect minor variations the following may be of interest.

While Geyer Brothers Brewing Company of Frankenmuth, Michigan brewed beer until 1986, and produced some interesting bottle labels, their experience filling beer cans didn't seem to fare very well. Only three known beer can designs ever made it to the printed sheet stage, with only one of these ever actually filled with beer.



**BCU 70-13**

**BCU 70-12**

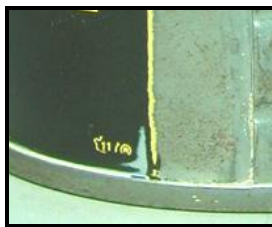
**BCU 72-21**

First is BCU 70-13, “Frankenmuth Bavarian Light”. This is the only Geyer can to have ever been filled with beer, even if most are found air filled. Per long time Frankenmuth resident Dave Van Hine and his conversation with former Geyer brewmaster, the canning line for this brand could not handle the carbonation, regularly blowing out seams, and the product was pulled after just 368 cases released to the public. It was only sold locally in Frankenmuth, and able to be purchased by six-pack at the local IGA as late as April 1974, price of \$1.29 per six. There are however many, many air-filled examples.

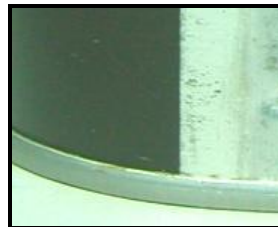
Next are BCU 70-12, “Frankenmuth Bavarian Dark” and BCU 72-21, “Geyer’s Lager”, both never holding beer. It does appear that the yellow Dark was intended to follow the white Light, but due to canning problems likely the entire beer cans venture dropped.

However, I have seen a number of the Frankenmuth Dark cans “bottom opened” instead of air filled. Why? Was someone thinking holes in the bottom made the can look more valuable than air filled? Also, while the Dark never made it to final production there are two more interesting pieces of information:

- Many of the Dark sheets were painted over, with the most common being the white Iroquois Draft Beer, USBC 86-03. If you see a Bavarian Dark with lots of rub marks the top layer of some other brand has likely been removed.
- There are actually **TWO** canning code variations of the Dark can! One has the familiar Crown 11 logo; the other has no canning code information. Both examples in my collection are very on-grade and definitely not a rubout possibly removing canning info.



**Crown 11**



**No canning info**

And finally there is a “Boyne Falls” test design Al Cambridge brought to Dearborn convention for MBC photographs. This is a paper test label wrapped around some unknown can. Item of most interest is the American Can Company sticker on the bottom lid. Note the 1971 date (Frankenmuth Light didn’t appear until 1973) and American Can prototype, with all three of the above Geyer cans from Crown.

