Jennings to return to brewing in Cockermouth

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Industry

The historic Jennings brewery in Cockermouth, Cumbria, has been acquired by two local entrepreneurs who plan to restart brewing at the site, which closed in 2022. The purchase of the brewery, for an undisclosed sum, will see Kurt Canfield (CEO of specialist engineering business Delkia) and Rebecca Canfield (proprietor of wine and spirits company Wine and the Wood), take ownership of the site plus rights to the Jennings brand, including all trademarks, intellectual property and recipes. Bottled beer under the Jennings brand will continue to be sold by Carlsberg Britvic until March 2025, when beer production will transfer to the new company – Jennings Brewery Ltd. Rebecca said: “As lifelong residents of West Cumbria, we have cherished Jennings brewery and its beer for many years. Preserving the heritage of the brewery and the maltings building, which are integral to our community, is of utmost importance to us. “We are delighted to bring Jennings back to the area and to have it once again run by a family-owned business. “The brewery has almost 200 years of brewing history and one element that really attracted us to the project was the fact that it has its own well. This is what makes it so beautiful and unique – an authentic Jennings beer can only be brewed with local water.” Kurt, who will continue as CEO of Delkia, added: “This project is a remarkable and ambitious endeavour, which we are taking on to benefit the entire community. The maltings building is an historic landmark, and we have extensive plans to enhance the site while respecting its heritage. However, critical repairs are necessary and will take time before we can get back to brewing the great beer that Jennings is known for.” Carlsberg Britvic head of properties and facilities David Bodily said: “We’re pleased to have completed the sale of Jennings brewery to new, local owners who are looking to preserve the site’s brewing heritage. “The brewery is a unique location in Cockermouth, and we wish Kurt and Rebecca every success for the future.” The project is expected to create several new jobs in the area, including the appointment of a head brewer, a brewing team, and a sales and marketing force. Some appointments have already been made for the new business, with Chris France, founder of speciality beer retailer Beer Hawk, joining as MD. Chris said: “Jennings was hugely influential as I developed my love for this industry, and the idea of bringing a great beer back to the heart of this town is an exciting prospect. “There’s a rich brewing history here and we’d love to hear from anyone in the community who wants to join the team or be part of bringing it back.” Pictured, from left, Rebecca Wilson, Chris France and Rebecca Canfield.