



Hudson Valley Home Brewers, inc

Established 1989

Incorporated 1994

JANUARY 2007 NEWS

El Preso's Forum

By Frankie Flynn

I have written this last column now four times. The first two times read like a novel. The third time was too emotional. This is for the record. I have made it shorter even though it misses the whole feeling.

I would like to greatly thank all of those who supported me and my whims during the five years I held the title of president.

I still feel that one person in charge with support from secondary officers is the best way to run the club. Barring that, the steering committee will have to do. They will be listed somewhere in each newsletter. Please give the committee all the support you showed to me and volunteer to get involved when you can. I will see those of who will attend the January meeting to say my good-byes.

As for my future, I have not committed myself yet, but am leaning toward bariatric surgery to lose the weight I have gained. The lifestyle change that comes with this is not temporary — it is forever. The ensuing diet will deny most of the foods

and drinks we/I now love.

I'll chair the monthly meeting until my pre-operative diet and try to stay in touch with my friends. After that my presence will be little. I will write up something when that happens. I have not yet given up the Cidernationals and do not plan on doing so, at least not at this time.

I love you all and will miss most of you, okay!, even Schwartz.

The January Meeting will be held Wednesday 1/10 at 96 Main

Our meeting location moves in January up Main St. a couple of blocks to 96 Main, at the corner of South Clover. Same time: 8 PM

The style of the month will be Braggot. If you have one, please bring it!

Craftsman Brewing, Port Brewing / The Lost Abbey, and Stone Brewing By David Sherfey

Every December the Sherfeys head to Southern CA to spend the holidays with our family there. This year Dan and I went to visit these three breweries, two of which I had not seen previously. Craftsman Brewing is owned by a long time friend, Mark Jilg, and some of you have heard me talk

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NYCHG Homebrew Alley Competition set for 02/10/07

The NYCHG is proud to announce that we will be hosting **Homebrew Alley**, the **first homebrewing competition to be held in Manhattan in the 21st century!** The date is set for **February 10, 2007** (a Saturday) at Chelsea Brewing Company, Pier 59 on the West Side in Chelsea Piers. We are in heavy negotiations to secure a **Brewer's Choice** award for the competition, the lucky winner of which will see his or her creation brewed at Chelsea Brewing Company!

Stay tuned for developments, including a name and other prizes! And of course we'll need volunteers, BJCP judges, and stewards for that glorious day, the weekend after the Super Bowl.

Website: www.hbd.org/nychg/

UNYHA 2007 COMPETITION DATE

The **Upstate New York Homebrewers Association 2007 Home Brew Competition** date has been set. Get brewing for **March 3, 2007**. Entry forms and details coming soon. -- Alan Mack, President

Check their website early and often for updates as the date approaches;

<http://www.unyha.com>

HVHB 2007 COMPETITION DATE AND LOCATION

The upcoming HVHB Competition will take place at the **Gilded Otter in New Paltz** on **March 24, 2007**.

Stay tuned to these pages for more exciting news next month.

**Support the shop that supports our
Club!**

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So CA Brewery Tour...

about this brewery before. Craftsman, located in Pasadena, has been brewing for 10+ years, primarily concentrating on draft sales in the So. CA area. Mark has relied mostly on self distribution - with a little bit of help from a wine distributor who previously was his next door neighbor, delivering kegs to locations further south in San Diego County. The brewery now has three full-time employees, including Mark.



Mark Jilg, Owner/Brewer of Craftsman Brewing, in front of the brewery with the original brewery delivery truck

The current brewhouse is a 7 barrel system that Mark built for the brewery. In February, they plan to replace the existing system with a 17 barrel 3 vessel system. You would think that a brewery that has been around that long would have grown bigger over that time, but not Craftsman. They have tried to avoid the microbrewery mainstream and have created beers that are, for the most part, somewhat different than what anyone else is doing.

This is not to say that all of their beers are unusual. They have as part of their year-round lineup a Pale Ale, an IPA, and a Hefeweizen, and while you might think that in California the Pale Ale or IPA would be their flagship beer, that is not the case.

The beer that represents 40% of their sales and is essentially their flagship is 1903, a Pre-Prohibition Lager. This is a 5.7% alcohol, 15% corn, moderately hopped beer that is brewed with a German Lager yeast at cold temperatures but is not lagered, yielding a fermentation-forward flavor profile. Outside of 1903, Mark says that the Pale, IPA and hefe contribute about 10% each to sales,



and the rest goes to the monthly specialties.

Triple White Sage, Orange Grove Ale (made with whole oranges, Chicha, Smoked Black Lager, Saison, Roggen Rauch Bock, Holiday Spruce Beer (Christmas tree-in-a-glass), and Cabernale (49% cabernet grapes and very saison-like) are some of the beers you will find on tap over the year.

Some of these beers and others will be given the barrel or blend treatment, oak, whiskey, Brettanomyces and beyond. Call it the slow-beer movement, somewhat like the slow food thing, only the time scale is much longer, and the value much higher. Beer that takes longer to develop, like months more - is most often more complex and better tasting than the quick-turn beers.

There are no hop-monster or "imperial" beers coming from this brewery, outside of perhaps a real Imperial Stout. They do have a bottling line that is used on occasion for special projects, and they are experimenting with bottle conditioning for some of their beers.

They have recently taken over the space next door and plan to license it as a winery, so they can add mead to their lineup. Just prior to decommissioning their 7 barrel system in February, they will do as a send-off brew a "barleywine." I suspect that this won't be an ordinary one....

If you find yourself in Southern California and in need of some real beer, find a bar with the Craftsman natural wood handles and have a go at it. Since their website is not too full of current news, just call the brewery, tell them where you are going to be and they will help you to the best locations; 845-296-ALES (2537).

We went down to San Marcos, North San Diego County, to visit The Lost Abbey (Port Brewing Company), Wednesday, 12/27.

Port Brewing Company is a sister company to the Pizza Port Brewpubs in Solana Beach, Carlsbad, and San Clemente, where they are brewing some of the Pizza Port high volume beers. It is also the home of The Lost Abbey, which specializes in the Belgian influenced beers that Director of Brewing

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THE SMALL PRINT

The HVHB News is a publication of the Hudson Valley Homebrewers, Inc., (HVHB). The HVHB is an educationally oriented non-profit society that serves members of the Mid-Hudson valley in New York.

The HVHB was founded to fulfill the following purposes: a.) to promote public awareness of home brewing; b.) to improve and encourage our brewing skills through education and instruction, recipe exchange, cooperative brewing, competitions and tasting; c.) to learn more about better beer by sharing our collective knowledge; d.) to learn to become good beer judges and help others constructively to improve their brewing skills; and e.) to have good fellowship and assume personal responsibility for drinking within reason.

The opinions expressed are those of the HVHB president, news editor, and contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of HVHB.

HVHB welcomes letter, opinions, suggestions, and articles from members and readers. Items will be published as space permits on a first-come first-served basis. Include your name and phone number with submitted material. Send correspondence to HVHB, Inc. C/O/ News Editor, 83 Little York Road, Warwick, NY 10990.

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Operations Tomme Arthur began developing as head brewer at Pizza Port. Tomme has a long string of national awards garnered since 1996, including Small Brewpub Brewer of the Year for both 2003 and 2004, and a boatload of GABF medals for beers brewed at Pizza Port. He gave us the grand tour, spent about an hour with us, answered every question we had and was quite honest and direct with us, serving up whatever we wanted along the way. A generous host.

Port Brewing purchased the equipment and occu-

(Continued on page 4)

So CA Brewery Tour....

pies the old Stone Brewery location and have been brewing there since early 2006. The brewery features a three-vessel 30 barrel system. They seem



to be running it fairly wide open, and Tomme is now sorry he didn't negotiate a bit harder for another 30 barrel fermenter. Stone took it with them to use as a yeast propagator(!).



The Lost Abbey beers are all bottle conditioned and are being bottled in 375 and 750 ml bottles with cork - hood & wire finish. Their year round group of Lost Abbey beers is Avant Garde (operative word = garde), Lost and Found Abbey Ale, Red Barn Ale (a lightly spiced farmhouse ale), and Judgement Day, a strong dark beer that is also the base beer for the much awarded Cuvee de Tomme. These year round beers will eventually find their way back to our region, including New Jersey. They will avoid New York because the red tape here in NY is a big pain for out of state brewers. Being near NJ, though, we will be in reasonable reach of them.

The thing I am most excited about, though is what is going on in their barrel room. Isn't this cool??



This collection of American and French oak barrels includes some from a distillery, a couple from New Belgium Brewery that were used for their La Folie, and some others used over at Pizza Port in the past. This is not the entire collection, either; there is another full rack out on the production floor. Barrel flavors for some beers, and barrel infections for others - yeah, baby!. This is such a beautiful slow beer project, lots of work and a real labor of love.

The beers that will come from these barrels will be released throughout the year as their "Non-Denominational Ales," whenever they are ready,



and will be available at the brewery and through mail order as part of a brewery release club. New Jersey and possibly New York will be two of the club-destination states. I think I will be a member of that club.

The Non-Denominational presently listed on their website include; Cuvee de Tomme, Red Poppy Ale,

Le Woody Ale, Duck Duck Gooze, and The Angels Share.

Check their website <http://www.lostabbey.com/home.php> for complete descriptions of their beer and get the complete story on Lost Abbey. I know we can expect a good time from this brewery over the next few years.

Since we were in San Marcos, and needed to get something to eat before getting back on the road home, we went up the hill to the new Stone Brewing facility. What you see here is; the beer gar-



den entrance and behind the windows, the new restaurant and swag shop.

In case you have been wondering why you have been seeing Stone Beers all over the place in locations - some where real beer hasn't been before, like Shoprite(!). Stone is way BIG now, dude, and they have a lot of beer capacity to sell.

As you can imagine, any brewery that needs a 30 barrel yeast propagator is making SOME BEER. Stone has installed a 120 barrel system with many fermenters and plenty of room to expand. Heck,



you can buy a house here in NY on a lot smaller than what they have presently devoted to fermenters alone. Arrogant Bastard fans can rest assured that they won't be running out of beer anytime soon.



The new restaurant, The Stone World Bistro & Gardens which has only been open since Novem-



ber, is one of the nicest looking brewery restaurants I have been in. Floor to ceiling windows on

one side look out into the brewery and on the other side look out into the beer garden. The cir-



cular bar, as you might expect, is at the side that looks out over the brewery, and the indoor seating area is large and loaded with stone and wood and the Stone Gargyle seems to be everywhere. There is a very relaxed vibe here, and Stone has lived up to their class reputation of going all-out in their endeavors with this destination restaurant.

Stone has apparently taken some flak for the cost of their restaurant food, and here I have to agree with the flak. Our limited experience was just with a round+ of beers and a couple of appetizers in the bar; we ordered the Arrogant Bastard Onion Rings (\$7.00) and the Grilled Eggplant, Zucchini & King Trumpet Mushroom Stack (\$10.00). What we got just didn't add-up: Big & Bad Stone served up dainty little portions on dainty little plates. It was comical....the photo here was taken before the



food was touched. They put the Arrogant Bastard name on *eight* onion rings. So, we got 4 - \$4.00 great beers contrasting with 17 bucks in food that

was almost gone before we touched the plates. NOT GOOD. A total value mismatch! It's like they are telling us that the food is somehow far higher in value than their beer! Can four or five onion rings equal the value of a pint of any one of Stone's beers? No way....I just don't get it.

Stone CEO Greg Koch put an open letter on their website trying to explain why the food was so expensive, citing the use of natural, local, organic and so on sources for their food, but that doesn't explain it. The materials on those two plates couldn't cost even 10% of the sales price. I have eaten full meals in 100% organic restaurants in one of the most expensive towns in California, Santa Cruz, for less than the cost of those wimpy appetizers, and got so much I had to take some of it home. Greg says elsewhere "We're not health nuts, we're quality nuts." My reply to that is: it can't possibly be considered *quality* unless it has real *value first*.

It will be interesting to watch Stone with this because they are really striking out on their own with their restaurant. The beer tourists will have every other brewery in the nation they've visited on their mind to compare with Stone, so the word of mouth will be important. Will the locals return again and again? We were there at 3 in the afternoon, on the Wednesday after Christmas, and the restaurant was half full then, so maybe Stone is on to something and will turn out to be pioneers of a new brewery-restaurant concept.

Stone's website: <http://www.stonebrew.com/>

Frankie sent me an article on the new Hudson Valley distiller, Tuthill Spirits, as a newsletter idea. I suggest we go over to Gardiner to visit. I will bring it up at the meeting this Wednesday to see if anyone is interested. We can't do any tasting there, so the drive home will be safe.....

UPCOMING EVENTS

January Meeting 96 Main @ Corner of South Clover	Wednesday 1/10 @ 8PM
COMPETITION: NYC Homebrewers Guild HOMBREW ALLEY Loc: Chelsea Brewing Company	Saturday 2/10/07
COMPETITION: Upstate NY Homebrewers Association Loc: TBA	Saturday 3/3/07
COMPETITION: HVHB Competition Loc: Gilded Otter, New Paltz	3/24/07