



# Hudson Valley HomeBrewers, inc.



Volume 8, Number 9

September 1997

## Presidents Forum

Much thanks to Art Scott for organizing the program on hops and hop identification for the August meeting!

At this month's meeting, Lyn Howard will be talking about wine making. Many club members dabble in making wine and other fermentables, so this should be an interesting topic and one that's new to our club. If you have samples of homemade wine that you would like to share with the other club members, please bring it to the meeting. I'm also working on getting

Ken Turow and a CIA chef to talk at a future meeting. Their talks and food samples are always a big hit (remember the posole poblano soup?!).

Congratulations to the winners in the Dutchess County Fair Homebrew competition!

The names are too numerous to mention in this column. Manny Holl took "Best of Ale", "Best of Lager" and 14 category ribbons, Tony Becampis had a total of 15 ribbons and Dave Ifil took a total of 11. Kevin Walsh also received the "Chairman's Choice Award" for his mead, which was a first place winner in the mead category. Enjoy what's left of your summer and I'll see you at the September club meeting.

**Al Alexa said the library inventory will be published in next month's newsletter and on the web page. Make your request to Al & he will bring your item to the next meeting.**

## Our Last Meeting

8:12 call to order by Pres Greg Holton  
22 members present.

Art Scott brought Sheila & Tom St Onge as guests. Tom is an experienced Homebrewer. A big welcome to them both & please come back to our next meeting/events.

Greg spoke of a tentative future meeting with Ken & his chiefs at the CIA. A menu of hot & spicy SW food to be washed down with Vienna style lager is planned. More on this next month.

Next meeting's topic is home made wine.

The steering committee meeting is next Wednesday at Gentleman Jim's @7:30pm.

Greg reported in Ira's absence our treasury stands at \$1,102.81

### Beer bringers:

Bruce Franconi-growler of chocolate raspberry lager. Art Scott-German Pilsner keg Bitter, all grain keg Ray Sykes-fifth of Brasies, Biere de garde(Noel).

Art Scott, this evening's speaker presented an informative discussion on hops. Twelve varieties were discussed with actual cuttings of flowers & leaves were laid out for members to inspect. Thanks to Art for his good effort with this discussion and for providing two kegs of fine beers for our beer breaks tonight. Also thanks to Jim Taylor & Greg for helping Art with the display items.

Jim Taylor & Al Alexa spoke about our bus trip to New Jersey. 47 lucky people will depart October 25th to 7

(Continued on page 2)

## Board Meeting

Present were John Dugue, Tom Moeler, Art Scott, & Ira Seegal.

In addition to items already reported in the previous Membership Meeting Minutes we discussed:

- 1) A volunteer is needed for raffle prize coordinate & more importantly, soliciting items of merit to be won. Ira noted the income from the 50/50 has decreased drastically. Some names were mentioned.
- 2) The Notorious club will be at our next meeting to sell & promote their annual Octoberfest. ....John Dugue

Meeting adjourned at 10:00pm  
John Dugue

## Next Meeting Easy street Cafe Wednesday, Sept. 10th 7:30 p.m

Aug. speaker: Lynn Howard on making Home made wine. The club beverage will be wine.

Beverage bringers Lyn Howard  
Pub Crawl details and updates

Got a brewing Question?

call:  
BREWERS HOTLINE

Tom Moeller 339-3575  
Manny Holl 452-2612  
Greg Holton 876-6484  
Jim Taylor 255-8474

different destinations including breweries, brew-pubs, and excellently reviewed restaurants. The cost will be no more than \$30. My advice: reserve early.

Bill Woodring brought tonight's style of the month. 6 bottles of St Amand, traditional biere de garde from Northern France (\$4.50 retail). This ale is lagered 2-3 months to give it its distinctive characteristics. Its woody character exemplifies the classic French country ale made from only French ingredients. This is as close as it gets to farmhouse brewing. Thanks Bill for your presentation and thanks to Fishkill Beer & Soda for providing the samples.

50/50 raffle:

Club-T-shirt won by guest Tom St Onge

bottle opener-Bob Stevens

Fishkill Beer & Soda-2 bottles biere de garde won by Art Scott & Paul Stolarski

Party Creations-special issue Zymergy on hops won by Tom St Onge

4oz chinook-Rich Sleight

4oz nuggat-Greg

EDME monkey poster-Tom Moeller  
Fermenter volume marker-John

Dugue

Ray Sykes-2 bottles Golden Pheasant won by Greg & Chris Rohrbach

John Dugue-Bud bottle opener-Rich Sleight

Meeting adjourned @ 10:10pm

John Dugue

### Feinberg & Littlefield Inducted Into Belgian Brewers Guild.

Brussels, Belgium- Wendy Littlefield and Don Feinberg, the owners of Vanberg & DeWulf in Cooperstown, NY., have become the first Americans in history inducted into the Belgian brewer's guild. The "Chevalerie du Fourquet des Brasseurs (or "Chevy with Four Doors for Brewers" if my Flemish is correct)," dates back hundreds of years to the time of St. Arnould and King Gambrius. Congratulations from ALE BrewsGram Wendy and Don! For those of you who have not met these two down-to-earth Belgian beer experts, Wendy and Don import some of the most complex and

## LynHoward to speak on producing Home crafted wines

Making wine can be fun; and by using some of the same techniques used in making beer you can produce a quality wine at home. At the September meeting I will talk about making wine at home and share some of my experiences and techniques. We will explore the following topics:

wine making equipment, wine making procedures, wine ingredients, finings used in wine making, and bottling basics. I do not proclaim to be an expert, however I have enjoyed making wine for the last few years and have generally found the end product to be drinkable.

Since the majority of my experience is in making grape wines I will concentrate (ha, ha, ha) on this area for my discussion. I will bring samples of red and white wines made from locally grown red hybrid and white native grapes. Also joining me will be Susan and Claude Dixon who will share information about making fruit and vegetable wines. They have graciously agreed to bring a sample of their infamous potato wine for all to try.

Our presentations will be informal, filled with info and fun; not "just another stuffy wine tasting." As the harvest season is approaching it is a great time to be thinking about starting a batch of wine before your winter brewing session resumes.

delicious Belgian beers available in the United States. Soon, they will open their own Belgian-style brewery in Cooperstown named **Ommagang**, or Ohmygosh or something like that. E-Mail: [zythos@aol.com](mailto:zythos@aol.com) with the correct name of the new brewery and Win a book of Your choice from either Storey Publishing or Brewers Publications, on what else? Beer or brewing! Get a hold of Don & Wendy at: [info@belgianexperts.com](mailto:info@belgianexperts.com), and have them send you all their free catalogs and goodies - tell em' the fat man sent ya'!

## Editors column

by Ray Sykes

Just brew it!

Well I Know that I have taken Hiatus from Doing any brewing this summer outside of 2 mead's that I threw together so finally this past weekend I did a brew I called Stout de Garde did not follow any recipe did not weight any grains just mashed some grains tasted the wort threw in some Saaz and splat. then boiled Then the last 15 min threw in some 4 oz strisel spalt then at end threw 2 oz saaz O.g. 1.077. when I started I wanted to

(Continued on page 4)

## Upcoming events

### September 1997

**20th** 3rd annual Oktoberfest Sponsored by New York Notorious Brewers at the Catskill Mountain Pub

### OCTOBER 1997

**25th** -HVHB Tri-state Pub crawl

**20th** - AHA Bitter Mania club only comp.

*As organizer of last year's Fall Fest competition, by default, I am the spokesman for this year's competition; or lack of competition. After some preliminary discussions with the brewery, it was their decision that the competition this year be very large, or not at all. We spent a couple of months trying to work out the logistics, to no avail. Without brewery's support, and the lack of MVFOB support, the project was humanely killed. There will be NO Fall Fest 1997 Homebrew competition. There will be a Fall Fest 1997, though. Date is set for Saturday September 13th at the brewery. Gates open (I think) at 10 AM.*

*Check out [www.saranac.com](http://www.saranac.com) for more information.*

*Cheers,*

*Tom Gaskell*

Hudson Valley Homebrewers, Inc.

The HVHB News is a publication of Hudson Valley Homebrewers, Inc. (HVHB). The HVHB is an educationally oriented, not-for-profit society that serves members of the Mid-Hudson Valley area, NY. The HVHB was founded to fulfill the following purposes:

- To promote public awareness of home brewing
- To improve and encourage our brewing skills through education and instruction, recipe exchange, cooperative brewing, competitions and tasting
- To learn more about better beer by sharing our collective knowledge
- To learn to become good beer judges and help others constructively to improve their brewing skills
- 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. Any articles not credited were written by the Editor (Ray Sykes).

HVHB welcomes letters, opinions, suggestions, articles, recipes, etc from members and readers. Items will be published as space permits on a first-come, first-served basis. Include your name and phone number on the material submitted. Send correspondence to: C/O News Editor HVHB, Inc.

P.O. Box 283 Hyde Park, NY 12538

or FAX them to (914) 847-4663

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# — WAITING FOR THE MILLENNIUM —

JACKSON'S JOURNAL  
WAITING FOR THE MILLENNIUM  
by Michael Jackson

This will be a tense winter as I wait for my Millennium Ale to mature. The beer was made last September at the King and Barnes brewery in the county of Sussex, south of London, England. A single bottle arrived at my desk at Christmas in an individual wooden box, which I could not resist opening.

It contained a bottle-conditioned ale of 1098 original gravity and a potential alcohol of at least 9.5 by volume. An accompanying note said that this mighty brew was being marketed at around US \$15 a bottle (about 27 ounces).

The orangey-colored ale was somewhat syrupy, with the flavors of thick-cut marmalade. As it develops in the bottle, it should become leaner and more sparkling by the end of winter. As its name suggests, the beer is really intended to be laid down until the year 2000. By then, it may resemble a maderized champagne.

The company should at that stage be able to celebrate a history of 200 years. The timbered building where the local bishop once levied taxes on the town's cattle market is now a part of the brewery's own retail shop, jostled by less characterful expansions of the past two decades. Inside, the establishment is an equal tangle of old and new: a working (though retired) steam engine and pulley system; in one room, a small, copper, between-the-wars kettle, with cannonball-like counterweight; a more modern, stainless-steel affair in the next (incongruously paired with an ancient copper hop-jack); and relatively small, square fermenters rather than the giant cylindro-conicals seen in many breweries.

The Millennium Ale comes with a tiny booklet identifying the variety of barley used (the classic Maris Otter, grown in eastern England); the man who steeped, sprouted and kilned it (Mervyn Elliott, the third generation of his family to work at

Simpson's Maltings, in Ditchingham, on the Suffolk/Norfolk border); the source of water (the brewery's own well, 288 feet deep in a stratum known as Tunbridge Wells Greensand); the hops (the Early Bird and Goldings varieties, from the Kent farms of Steven Wickham and Peter Highwood, via a merchant in business almost 200 years) and the (two-strain) yeast.

Maris Otter is the juiciest-tasting of traditional English malting barleys, and at Ditchingham it is sprouted by the gentlest of methods: by being spread on the floor, rather than by more modern techniques involving boxes or drums. The soft water is hardened slightly for fullness of mouth-feel. The hop varieties, in the form of blossoms rather than pellets or extracts, confer distinctly aromatic, leafy, resinous, earthy aromas and flavors. The hoppy dryness is highlighted by the cleanness and crispness of the house yeast. The size and shape of the fermenters also make for a fullness of flavor.

I have long been fascinated by the balance of sweet maltiness, herbal hoppiness and dessert-apple fruitiness in the King and Barnes beers, and now better understand how this is achieved.

## Overcoming Misfortunes

On both sides of the Atlantic, the older generation of rural breweries has a struggle to survive. King and Barnes has also had more than its share of misfortunes.

In the 1960s, its own maltings burned down. In the 1970s, its yeast ceased to function properly. The strain turned out to have been hobbled by fungicides being used by hop farmers. Fortunately, the brewer of the day had kept a supply in reserve at the British brewing industry's research center. A couple of years ago, chairman Peter King died of a heart attack, widely believed to have been caused by overwork. He has been replaced by his cousin Bill King, a working brewer.

King and Barnes is known to discerning drinkers in the United States for its hoppy Festive Ale and its treacly, earthy, smoky Old Porter. The company has in recent years developed a reputation for bottle-conditioned beers. It all began with a strong, winey Christmas ale made for staff and friends in the trade. When a buyer for a British chain of liquor stores sampled this ale in 1992, he asked if the brewery could supply his company with a bottle-conditioned version.

They now make a different bottle-conditioned special for every month of the year. February brings a ginseng-flavored Valentine Ale, March has an Oatmeal Stout, April a very sweet Corn Beer (a dubious achievement, that). August a wheat brew. My favorite month is October, with a spicy, oily, big Rye Beer.

## Ushering In A New Era

My own writing encouraged the reintroduction of oatmeal into some stouts, but I can claim no credit for its use in an April seasonal ale from another country brewery in England. This product, called Spring Fever, is produced by Usher's brewery, of Trowbridge, in the county of Wiltshire, in the west.

At a modest to medium strength of 4.0 percent alcohol by volume, Spring Fever has a sunny, full yellow color; a remarkably smooth body; a deliciously malty-creamy flavor; and a balance of orangey dryness imparted by Styrian hops, from Slovenia. There is perhaps a firmness from the hard water of Salisbury Plain.

While the oats used in stouts are usually raw, those employed here are malted to give a richer, toastier flavor. While the proportion of oats to barley in stouts is often less than 10 percent, Spring Fever has a much richer blend, though the brewers are uncharacteristically coy on precise figures.

The oats are grown in Scotland and malted in the border town of Berwick; the

WAITING FOR THE MILLENNIUM (Continued from page 2)  
barley is grown and malted in Wiltshire and Oxfordshire. With this blend, the beer is by no means thick and wintry, but sustaining enough for a cool spring. It will be followed by a sharper wheat beer, called Summer Madness; then a toffeeish, minty, rye brew, Autumn Frenzy; and for winter, a dark ale utilizing crystallized barley malts that impart treacly, nutty flavors.

In more sober, wintry, mood, the brewers have called the last one 1824 Particular, and are marketing it with some success in the United States. They innocently deny any attempt to create a southern rival to Yorkshire's Old Peculier.

Usher's is a remarkable survivor. The front office dates from at least the 1700s. (Did the Flemish weavers who settled Trowbridge perhaps also bring brewing?) Thomas and Hannah Usher started their business in 1824, as a tiny brewery and pub. The present brewery facade is variously inscribed 1888 and 1912. By that time, Usher's beer was so successful that it was also being brewed in London.

Whither Watney's?

Then, in 1960, disaster struck: Usher's was acquired as a branch brewery by the London-based national company, Watney's, dead set on persuading every corner of Britain to drink the same bland, lifeless Red Barrel beer. Watney's was later acquired by the "leisure industry conglomerate, Grand Metropolitan.

The Campaign for Real Ale eventually drove Red Barrel off the British market, and Grand Met pulled out of the brewing industry. The former Watney's brewery in Mortlake, London, is now leased by Anheuser-Busch to produce Budweiser for the British market. Some minor Watney's products are today brewed by Maes in Belgium and Sleeman's in Canada, but are not available in Britain.

The last managing director of Grand Metropolitan Brewing, Roger North, organized a management buy-in of Usher's. In beer lovers' demonology, a man with his background in accountancy is suspect, but North has an obvious, almost boyish, passion for the brewery. His proudest boast is of its yeast propagation system, perhaps an esoteric asset but one that adds a further host of new flavors to the beers made at Usher's.

Usher's own yeast imparts a restrained fruitiness to its own year-round beers, such as the beautifully balanced Founder's Ale, an India pale ale of almost American hoppiness, and the chocolatey Dark Horse Porter, but four or five strains are employed for other purposes.

The brewery uses a different yeast, for example, to produce the much fruitier Bulldog Pale Ale, under contract for Courage. Yet another yeast ferments the rather neutral Lal Toofan ("Red Storm") Lager, brewed under license from an Indian company for sale to curry houses in Britain. A further strain is used for the grassier Steinlager, a New Zealand

lager for the British market.

Such eclecticism requires considerable discipline and care in a brewery that resembles Willie Wonka's Chocolate Factory (there is even a pipe-bridge carrying beer across a main road to the packaging hall). Thank heavens for it. I just wish my local Tandoori restaurateur would augment his kegs of Lal Toofan with a few cases of that wonderful India pale ale.

Just brew it!(Continued from page 2)  
brew 3

different styles of beer so just combined 3 into 1.

But what did know what I wanted was to support the local homebrew shops. They Have had a rough summer most people don't brew in the summer because of other activities , vacations or were they brew is to warm ,or they fear beer spoilage. But that don't stop the bills from coming in. or paying the help. At one time there were 6 home brew shops in the Hudson valley. that has dwindled down to 3 so now many of us have to drive even further to get our supplies so that may lead to further reduction in how much we brew.

I know that when I first started brewing that the shop owner gave me good advise and encouragement.I know they support me and the club now they provide raffle prizes for our club meetings and they support our competitions.

So its time to support most valuáble home brew Resource our local Homebrews hop.

Happy HomeBrewing .....

**Hudson Valley**  
**HomeBrewers, inc.**

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