Brewprint

The Newsletter of the Boston Wort Processors

Volume X, Number 9 September 1997

Club Calendar

Compiled by Steve Stroud

September

6 Sat Topsfield Fair Homebrew Competition, entries due by Aug. For more info contact A.J. Faulstich, 508-922-3411 or Bob Murphy at rbmurphy@tiac.net

7 Sun Wort Processor Club Meeting; Brew Moon, Boston, MA Contact: Jeff Flood @ 282-7396.

20 Sat Common Ground Homebrew Competition, Windsor, ME. Contact TJOCIIIMD for more info - (207) 236-3527

27-28 Grand Old Portsmouth Fall Brewers Festival, Portsmouth, NH. 10am-5pm. Info: Yvette Hix, tel. +1 603 422-7506. e-mail: es2721@rscs.com

October

2-4 Great American Beer Festival XVI, Denver, CO. See http://www.beertown.org/gabfframeset.htm for more info.

11 Sat? Wort Cider Pikinik & OFest, Anderson Fruit Farm, Westwood, MA. Details and exact date TBA.

24-25 14th Annual Dixie Cup Homebrew Competition and Sheep Festival, Houston, TX. Contact Sean Lamb, <slamb@ghg.net>

25 Sat Weiss is Nice Club-Only Competition, AHA Sanc. Comp Warrenville, IL. Entries due Oct 20. Contact Brian Rezac at (303) 447-0816 ext.121 or brian@aob.org.

November

7-9 Real Ale Festival, River West Brewing Co., Chicago, IL For more info, see: http://www.mcs.com/~rdan/RAF.html

15-16 10th Annual 24-Hours of the Belgian Special Beers, Antwerpen, Belgium. Sat 2pm-2am, Sun 10am-10pm. Info: Kulminator, tel.00-32 3 2324538. e-mail: PCrombecq@antwerpen. URL: http://www.dma.be/p/bier/7_2.hm

BEER BARD BLASTS BREWER

John Dittmann

Beer Bard Michael Jackson has requested that Wort Processor Dr. Tim Dalton cease using the name BeerHunter for Dalton's internet site. The site (http://www.tiac.net/users/tjd/bier/bier.html) Has been titled the Beerhunter since it was unveiled late in 1995.

In a email message dated 31 July 1997 Jackson's assistant, Owen Barstow, asked Dalton to cease using the BeerHunter moniker. Jackson has owned the BeerHunter mark for some time. It should be noted that Jackson's BeerHunter web site (http://www.beerhunter.org) is no longer being updated.

Dalton said that Barstow's message was not threatening and he would comply with Jackson's wish.

An August 14 check showed the name BeerHunter was still being used for Dalton's site.

MINUTES OF THE CLUB MEETING

The meeting was called to order by soon to be ex-President (foreshadowing notice) Greg Kushmerek at 8:28 on 8 August 1997 in the backyard of soon to be acting President (more foreshadowing) Jeff Flood and Ellen Au. Jeff and Ellen were thanked for hosting the meeting and for the yummy food they prepared on the grill. Steve Stroud was thanked for editing the August (including Pub Crawl) edition of the Brewprint. Justin Haber volunteered to edit the September edition!!!

Greg made a request for a new webmaster; circumstances required him to delegate this task to someone else (even more foreshadowing). Note: after the meeting, Ken Jucks and Steve Stroud have volunteered to share this responsibility.

Greg also made a plea for someone to become the Boston Homebrew Coordinator for this coming year's competition. Experience with competitions is helpful, but certainly not required.

Libeerian report: Due to mechanical problems with the club's libeery van, the libeery was not at the meeting. Shekar was working on fixing the problem. Two new books were donated to the libeery, one by Steve Stroud and one by Mary Anne McQuillen. (Secretary's note: Shekar's American Pale Ale recipe that won the national Hail to Ale competition was published in the recent Zymergy issue!!!)



Treasurer report: Mike Fertsch channeled through Steve Stroud to say that we have $2400 in the club treasury.

The Wort Processor of the Year (WPOTY) trophy was presented to Jeff Flood!!! Jeff's humble acceptance speech consisted was "Thanks".

Mike Biblyk was recognized for wining the Pete's Wicked Ale clone contest and announced that next year's clone target is Bigfoot Ale (a big hoppy barleywine).

Everyone was urged to attend the Pub Crawl, as it is one of the most anticipated Wort activity of the year.

The Yeast God was not inflicted with a yeast infection at this meeting, but promises to be infected by many good strains for the September meeting.

Greg Kushmerek announced that effective the September meeting, he was resigning as president of the club, and Paula Jones has nothing to do with this decision. Greg has obtained a new job that required him to move to Holland at the end of September. (Hint: there is a free place to stay in the middle of some great beer producing area!) Jeff Flood (current VP) will serve out Greg's term.

The September meeting will be Brew Moon in the Theater District on Sunday the 7th of September at 1:00.

The final order of business was a presentation by Guy DeSephano of Boston Beer Brands. They currently import and sell beers from 16 independent regional British breweries. He distributed a number of these beers and answered questions on them. Here are some of those he brought, and assorted comments on them.

Brains Ale - This is the national beer of Wales. This ale has a wonderful Fuggles hop taste with almost a hint of cherries.

Black Ram - The definitive Yorkshire Ale made by the Black Sheep Brewery. This beer is called Black Sheep in the UK, but due to US trademark problems, it has to be marketed under a different name here. This is made at the old Theakston brewhouse. Consensus was that this was a great beer. Look it up at any good beer bar or beer store.

Ushers 1824 - This nice ale as been widely available in the Boston area on tap for the past 3 or 4 months. Go and find it!!!

Dark Horse Porter - This is also an Ushers product. It is a sweet porter that is lower in gravity, and not as chocolatey as the US porters.

Ushers IPA - claimed to be a "real" IPA, with the recipe actually used long ago for shipment from the UK to India.

Frederic Robinson (Premium Beer) - This comes from a large brewery that does private labeling. Most of their products are low quality brews for cheap mass consumption, but this product is special (at least according to Guy).

The meeting was closed at 9:07.



Directions to the September Meeting

Sunday, Sept. 7th from 2:15 to 4:15
Brew Moon
115 Stuart Street (Park Sq.),
Downtown Boston.
(617) 523-6467.

Members should assemble at the far back corner of the bar off to the right as you enter as this is the area that will be set aside for us to hold the meeting. Homebrew WILL BE allowed. Please remember that this is also a bar/brewery and that they do serve some very highly acclaimed brew, i.e. Munich Gold, Scotch Ale and so forth. Newly brewed is an extremely tasty porter which I think has some oats in it. (Taste like it to me, brewer won't tell.) I am trying to setup a tour of the facility and hope to have a brewer present for questions. I'm sure we can hang out afterwards if we like , but I request that we stay to the beers being served and save our Homebrew for another occasion.

By Public transportation:
Take the Green Line to Boylston, exit the station walk toward the theater district along Tremont Street, at 1st set of lights take a right and Brew moon is the 2nd or 3rd door.

From the south:
Route 93 north, exit at Chinatown/ Mass. Pike exit, go toward Chinatown. At bottom of ramp take a left. Go 4 or 5 sets of lights and park (Good Luck) 8^) Brew Moon is on the corner of Tremont and Kneeland St.

From the north:
Route 93 south, exit Chinatown exit, go to Kneeland St. and turn right. Follow above directions.

From the West:
Mass Pike east to Copley Square exit, go down Stuart St. until it joins with Kneeland St.





AGENDA FOR THE SEPTEMBER 7TH MEETING
THE MEETING STARTS PROMPTLY AT 2:15 PM!!

1. Thanks to hosts (Brew Moon)

2. Welcome new members

3. Thanks to Justin Haber for the newsletter (volunteer needed for next month)

OLD BUSINESS

4. My last meeting

   - Laura Conrad taking over mailing list
   - Ken Jucks and Steve Stroud doing web work

5. BHC Coordinator Ken Jucks!

6. Steve Stroud Cider Picnic Coordinator

7. Libeerian Report

8. Treasurer's Report

NEW BUSINESS

9. Len Lemieux wants to get glassware for the club

10. Open to the floor



HOP REPORT

By Dean Goulding

Hop crop report from Mansfield, MA.

Sucks.

Basically the drought has been a real pain to the Cascades donated by Fred and Marianne in this their second growing season in Mansfield. The first year I had a good volume (2 quart freezer bags) from two vines. This year I allowed two more to climb and the started out fine, although late due to the April 1st Blizzard I also mulched with a bag of composted manure under the wood chips. A mandatory outdoor water ban was no help, although I did pour the water collected from the basement dehumidifier over them when I could. They also got no water from either mother nature or myself during a June vacation. Looks like about a 60% reduction in volume by harvest time. Moral of the story is water, water, water.

Beer Trivia

Courtesy of Pete's Wicked Ale

It was the accepted practice in Babylonia 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer, and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the "honey month" or what we know today as the "honeymoon".

Before thermometers were invented, brewers would dip a thumb or finger into the mix to find the right temperature for adding yeast. Too cold, and the yeast wouldn't grow. Too hot, and the yeast would die. This thumb in the beer is where we get the phrase "rule of thumb".

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. so in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them to mind their own pints and quarts and settle down. It's where we get the phrase "mind your P's and Q's".

Beer was the reason the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. It's clear from the Mayflower's log that the crew didn't want to waste beer looking for a better site. The log goes on to state that them passengers "were hasted ashore and made to drink water that the seamen might have the more beer".

After consuming a bucket or two of vibrant brew they called aul, or ale, the Vikings would head fearlessly into battle often without armor or even shirts. In fact, the term "berserk" means "bare shirt" in Norse, and eventually took on the meaning of their wild battles.

In 1740, Admiral Vernon of the British fleet decided to water down the navy's rum. Needless to say, the sailors weren't too pleased and called Admiral Vernon, Old Grog, after the stiff wool grogram coats he wore. The term "grog" soon began to mean the watered down drink itself. When you were drunk on this grog, you were "groggy", a word still in use today.

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic cups. when they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle", is the phrase inspired by this practice.

In the middle ages, "nunchion" was the word for liquid lunches. It was a combination of the words "noon scheken", or noon drinking. In those days, a large chunk of bread was called lunch. So if you ate bread with your nunchion, you had what we still today call a luncheon.

Beer Drinking in Spain

By Laura E Conrad

My latest adventure as a world traveler was to go to a music workshop in a small town in Spain. Darocca is an hour and a half by bus south of Zaragoza, which is the capitol of Aragon, and is about half way between Madrid and Barcelona.

Like Japan (my previous adventure), Spain is not the place to go to get a variety of wonderfully hand-crafted, idiosyncratic beers. However, there are good reasons to go there (one of which is that they really do know some things we don't about how to party); if you go there, you will drink beer; and here are a couple of things you will want to know.

All the draft beer is better than all the bottled beer. This means that what the dictionary tells you about how to order beer is wrong. If you ask for "una cerveza", they will give you a bottle. In order to get a draft beer, ask for "una caña". This will usually get you 6 or 10 ounces. To get a half-liter, try saying "una caña grande".

I spoke disparagingly about the bottled beer above, but I don't remember when I've enjoyed a beer more than the one I got out of a vending machine at the Madrid bus station, when it was seeming like a very long time in 95 degree heat since an airline stewardess had asked me what I wanted to drink.

Right now, the dollar is strong, so everything in Spain seemed really cheap. I got to Madrid after the workshop too late to be able to find a cheap "Hostal", so I decided I really didn't mind turning back into a rich American, and I went to the hotel across the street from the Hostal than had been recommended to me. Although I had been looking forward to the Madrid nightlife, and had chosen this location as halfway between the nightlife and the Prado museum, I decided the nightlife could wait until the following night. The mini-bar had prices that were about twice what I'd been paying in the bars in Darocca, but still less than I would pay at a bar in Cambridge.

When I did get to the bars in Madrid, it turned out that the thing they serve with beer where we would get nuts or pretzels is green olives with pits. I wondered what to do with the pits -- the answer is that you throw them on the floor.

Because the beer is standardized and not especially interesting, you may want to experiment with the other things to drink. Sangria seems to be what people order when we would be buying pitchers of draft beer. I was staying in a wine-producing area; the wines ranged from the very fine wine which we were served in large quantities in a bodega after one of the concerts, through the perfectly respectable red table wine served in large quantities at the workshop communal meals, to some real rotgut someone bought in town in a bottle without a label (luckily not in large quantities). The meals usually ended with fruit; most often peaches which were local and in season. Many people chopped the peaches up into the wine, and added some sugar, creating a version of sangria. My French serpent professor said that was how he had begun drinking wine when he was about 10. The night of the student-organized costume party, this beverage was produced in bulk in plastic buckets.

The communal meals were eaten with red wine and water. Afterwards (at both lunch and supper), servers came around with coffee, milk, an herb tea called manzanilla, brandy, and anise liqueur. Opinions varied about whether the manzanilla was just camomile, or had other things in it, of which one may have been linden flowers. I believe it was not simply camomile. In any case, the after dinner drink I got hooked on was spiking the manzanilla with the anise liqueur. The other advantage of the anise liqueur was that it came in a bottle with a rough surface, so when the singing started, the bottle worked as a percussion instrument when rubbed with a piece of silverware.

Both Saturday nights I was in Darocca, there was a festival of some kind, with live music and dancing in the streets. For the second one, they were serving a drink which was a mixture of rum, coffee, and some kind of sweetener, and seemed quite good, although far stronger than I would chose to dance for hours on. (I had a couple of "caña grande"s.)

One of the subjects the non-Spaniards at the workshop discussed regularly was whether anyone in Spain ever gets any sleep. The Spaniards assured us that they when they weren't on vacation, and were getting up to go to their offices, they were on a much more reasonable schedule, but a student from Toronto, currently living in Madrid, assured me that people do in fact party every night until early morning and then get up and go to the office at 9.

At the workshop, there was a concert every night from 8-10, followed by dinner, followed by singing in the dining room until the staff threw us out at about midnight, followed by collecting at the "official" bar, and possibly going on to other bars for more singing and dancing. The sleeping accommodations didn't lend themselves to getting to sleep before everyone else decided to go to sleep, which was never before 3, and some nights not until much later. I never made it much past 4, but people did stay up until 6 AM. (This is why I never had trouble getting a practice room when I looked before 10 in the morning.) I did get one data point on what the Spaniards do when there isn't a workshop: One of the best dance musicians I've ever met, who had been playing, singing, and dancing longer than most other people in Darocca, met me at a bar in Madrid the night before my plane left (two days after the workshop ended). I can vouch that he actually yawned at only 12:30, and we called it a night and said "adios" at only 1 AM.



Beer Offers Same Heart Benefits as Wine

"The truth is found when men are free to pursue it." FDR

Censorship is un-American.

NEW YORK (Reuters) -- The medical benefits of red wine may have been exaggerated, according to a study of the drinking habits of almost 129,000 people in northern California.

While the study's findings again confirm that moderate drinking helps protect against heart disease, it appears that red wine confers no more protection than beer or white wine.

The study published in the August 15 issue of the American Journal of Cardiology conflicts with results of other investigations that favored the cardiac benefits of red wine.

"A number of country-to-country comparison studies have seemed to indicate that red wine is better for your heart than other alcoholic beverages," says study lead-author Dr. Arthur Klatsky, a cardiologist at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Oakland, California.

"That idea has received a great deal of media attention, ever since '60 Minutes' reported on it in 1991. The international studies, however, suffer from research flaws that make the findings less certain," he says. Among these "flaws," according to Klatsky, are smaller sample sizes and lack of more information about the study subjects.

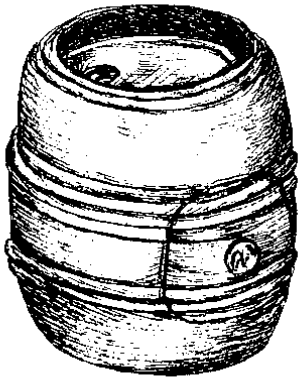
"To find out whether red wine really makes a difference, we analyzed the drinking habits of a large number of northern California Kaiser Permanente members and determined the relationship between what they drank and their coronary health," the researcher explains.

The eight-year study looked at data from health examination questionnaires supplied by 128,934 men and women from 1978 through 1985. Those who consumed alcohol were asked about the number of days per week they drank wine, liquor, or beer. Wine drinkers were asked about the type(s) of wine they usually drank -- red and/or white table wines, and fortified and other wines, including champagne.

Study participants were followed until death, or termination of their health plan, or first hospitalization for coronary artery disease (CAD). This follow up period ended December 31, 1991.

Of 67,357 people who reported drinking wine, about 44% reported drinking only table wine. "Those drinking only red wine included the largest proportions of men and heavier drinkers, whereas drinkers of only white wine included the largest proportion of women and black persons," the researchers state.

When the researchers analyzed the data in the light of total alcohol use, they found that drinking red and white wine in all persons, and drinking beer in men, appeared to offer some cardiac protection. But red wine offered no greater protection than white wine or beer.



"Our major conclusions from these data are that all types of alcoholic beverages probably protect against CAD and that additional protection by specific beverages is minor," the researchers state. "...For drinkers, there are no compelling health-related data that preclude personal preference as the best guide to choice of beverage."

Antioxidant substances in red wine are thought to be responsible for inhibiting the build up of fatty plaques in coronary arteries. "Beer contains similar polyphenolic substances,but in lower concentrations than wine and in variable amounts dependent largely on proportions of malted barley used in the brewing procedure," write the study team. "Male beer drinkers may choose 'stronger' high malt beverage types more often than women, offering another hypothetical explanation for male/female CAD risk differences among beer drinkers."

"Drinking patterns could play a role" in the effect of alcohol on the heart, they write. "Spree drinking may attenuate alcohol's protective effect against CAD. Ingestion of alcohol slowly with food (more usual with wine, and possibly beer) may have more benefit."

The researchers recommend weighing the risks and the benefits of drinking on an individual basis, including factors such as risk of problem drinking, the "long list of medical conditions caused by alcohol," and the risk of heart disease.

Study co-author Dr. Gary Friedman, director of research for Kaiser Permanente in Oakland cautions against heavy drinking. "The incidence of coronary disease seems to decline with increasing alcohol consumption, but when you look at mortality, deaths from coronary heart disease -- once you get above that moderate level of alcohol consumption -- start to increase," he said.

SOURCE: American Journal of Cardiology (1997;80:416-420)

The Bert Grant Story
By AVIVA L. BRANDT
Associated Press Writer

YAKIMA, Wash. (AP) - Bert Grant just wanted a decent beer.

So he mixed two different malts, a special ale yeast hybrid he isolated and fresh hops to create a beer that pleased his palate.

Then he offered it repeatedly to decision makers at the major breweries where he worked in the 1940s, '50s and '60s.

"They said it tasted great, but no one would buy it," Grant, 69, says with a chuckle.

Finally, 15 years ago, he began brewing it in commercial quantities himself.

That was the beginning of Grant's Scottish Ale, a beer Grant brags is the best in the world. It is the flagship brew of Yakima Brewing and Malting Co. and of Grant's Pub - the first post-Prohibition brewpub in America.

Before 1982, when the pub opened here, federal and state laws prohibited the sale of beer where it was brewed, according to Craig Bystrynski, editor of the trade magazine BrewPub.

"The whole structure after Prohibition was very odd and cumbersome," he says. "It started with the idea that drinking is evil and it must be regulated in the strictest way possible, otherwise the people who make alcoholic beverages will abuse the system."

Federal laws were changed in the 1970s after strong lobbying, and states slowly followed suit. Brewpubs are still illegal in Mississippi and Montana.

Bystrynski considers Grant the trailblazer for a booming industry that has mushroomed to 1,400 brewpubs across the country, with the largest number in the Pacific Northwest, California and Colorado.

"I think what happened was brewpubs followed a trend that's a major cultural trend in America," Bystrynski says.

"It's a trend toward flavor, a trend toward more variety. People are demanding more when they go to restaurants, when they drink wine and when they drink beer. Brewpubs are a natural development."

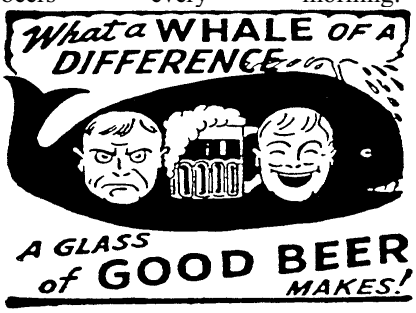
Born in Dundee, Scotland, and reared in Toronto, Ontario, Grant got his start in the beer industry at age 16 as an analytical chemist at Canadian Breweries Ltd. in Toronto. He had two job offers when he graduated from a technical high school shortly before the end of World War II - to work as a gold assayer or learn to brew beer.

Grant notes that he "could have earned MUCH more money as a gold assayer."

He enjoys recollections of his start almost as much as he enjoys a good pint.

"Five years before it was legal for me to drink, I was tasting 100 beers in a day. Oh, it was a terrible job, but somebody had to do it," Grant says, a wide smile brightening his face.

"Can you imagine what my classmates thought when I went back for my graduation in June and they asked me what I was doing? `Oh, I have a terrible job. I have to taste 50 beers every morning.'"



He later worked as director of brewing research at Stroh Brewing Co. in Detroit and as a consultant to most of the world's best-known breweries.

In 1967, he was drawn to Yakima, in the heart of the nation's largest hop producers, where he pioneered a process of pelletizing hops - a prime ingredient of beer - to preserve their freshness.

But that wasn't enough for him.

"I was just tired of all the regular beers and I'd been making beer in a pilot brewery to evaluate new hop varieties in my basement. So it was only a small step to go from 5 gallons to five (31-gallon) barrels.

"And that's what we did," Grant says.

He's been both an example and a teacher for others who want to break into the industry.

"In our second year, 1983, at least 10 percent of the people coming into the brewhouse were potential competitors, people who wanted to open up their own breweries," Grant says. "Probably two-thirds of the guys who started out between 1983 and 1986 came through Grant's Pub to see how it was done."

Although the market has gotten tighter for microbreweries, which have to compete for shelf space in stores and tap handles in bars, the brewpub industry keeps growing.

"When you get down to the real heart of it, a brewpub is at its very core a bar-restaurant. What distinguishes it is the beer made on premises, but it has to operate as a fully functional bar-restaurant," says Jim Parker, director of the American Homebrewers Association, based in Boulder, Colo., and former director of the Association of Brewers in the same office.

"So anywhere that a bar-restaurant will succeed, you can put a brewpub," Parker says.

Bystrynski agrees.

"I think the brewpub market is definitely going to continue to boom," he says. "They're local entities. They're restaurants."

Annual production at Grant's brewery, Yakima Brewing & Malting Co., has grown from 1,000 gallons in 1982 to 25,000 31-gallon barrels 15 years later.

"The thing I was proud of is that the first 5-barrel batch tasted the same as the last five-gallon batch," Grant said.

In 1995, Grant sold both the brewery and the pub - where special batches of beer are still brewed regularly in his original five-barrel kettle - to Woodinville-based Stimson Lane, the parent company of Chateau Ste. Michelle winery among others.

He is still chief brewer and oversees all phases of the beer-making, but the brewery needed an influx of capital to keep growing, Grant says.

"We were increasing our sales, but not really fast enough to keep up with the industry. We had to have more marketing expertise and more marketing dollars so we decided to sell," he says.

He considers it an advantage to have sold to Stimson Lane rather than any of the major breweries that made him offers over the years.

"Being a winery, they're not going to be coming in like Anheuser-Busch would come in and say, `Well, you could do this cheaper' or, `You could hit a wider market by doing this.'

"They just leave the beer the way it is," Grant said.

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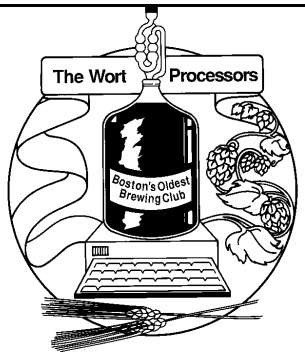
The Boston Wort Processors is a society dedicated to furthering the art of homebrewing and to the responsible enjoyment of good beer. Membership, including a subscription to this newsletter, is $20.00 for on year (full membership) and $12.00 per year (associate membership). Sample and back issues are $2.00 each.

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