



BURP NEWS

**Triple City
Tasty Travels
Issue!
Meet Bruce's
Mom!**

The Official Newsletter of
BREWERS UNITED FOR REAL POTABLES
"So Many Brews So Little Time"

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| June 22 | Wheat Beer Contest and Meeting at Trish & Larry Koch's home |
| July 13 | Deadline for July BURP News |
| July 27 | Brewing Battle of the Sexes and Meeting at Alice & Jim Davis's home |
| August 23-25 | Mashout |



BURPers congregate at Rod Rydlun's car to trample the Treasurer at a recent meeting

BURP News is the official newsletter of Brewers United for Real Potables. BURP is dedicated to promoting homebrewing. Annual dues are \$15 for individuals and \$20 for couples. If you care about the beer you drink, join BURP. Please submit new memberships, changes of address, and corrections to BURP, 7430 Gene Street, Alexandria, VA 22310. Articles for the BURP news should be delivered on diskette or paper to the Editor (address is in the masthead) or uploaded to the Enlightened BBS at (703)370-9528. Microsoft Word or text format is preferred.



Koch's Korner

Larry Koch, your Fearless Leader

The Spirit of Free Beer IV appears to have come off without a hitch. We give thanks to those who made it work: Dave and Becky Pyle as overall organizers, Tom and Colleen Cannon as registrars, Rick Garvin as judge coordinator, Bill Newman as steward coordinator, the judges, the stewards, the cooler crew and those who fed us breakfast and lunch. Special thanks to Potomac River Brewing Company for hosting this event yet again. Thank you to the many businesses for prize contributions. Finally, our greatest thanks should go to the hundreds of entrants.

Now comes the next step. Yes, it's probably time to start planning The Spirit of Free Beer V.

Speaking of event planning, we need some help with the August Mash Out. The most urgent need is for a food coordinator for Saturday's dinner. Give me a call if you can help.

Trish and I look forward to hosting the June meeting. Remember, you have my personal guarantee that the weather will be perfect!



Tasty Travels: New Haven

Bruce Feist
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Elm City (the Brewery)

Mayday! Beer overload! On May 1, I visited Elm City, AKA the New Haven Brewing Company. It is a recently-opened brewpub in New Haven associated with the microbrewery by that name, and has by far the largest selection of beers I've ever encountered in a brewpub. I don't understand how they do it. I ordered two samplers of their beers, and a glass of yet another, yet still didn't get through the lot! I am bewildered.

The atmosphere is that of a good, fairly classy restaurant. It's very large, and the waitstaff is friendly, helpful, and cooperative (several times, I asked someone a question and they ran off to someone else with it). They're also rather poised, as they demonstrated when the couple sitting next to me inadvertently ignited their table.

Connecticut Ale is their most popular beer, according to the waitress. They claim that it is sweet and buttery (!), with an almost nutty flavor. I found it bland, with some hop and diacytl flavors, and little aroma. Next!

Broken English Ale, light copper in color, is hopped with Kent Golding; in fact, it's dry hopped. It is indeed a hoppy beer, and has a sour finish.

Uptown Ale is a seasonal brown beer, sweet and malty with a strong caramel note to the flavor.

Chestnut Ale is another seasonal, I believe. It's dark, brown, sweet, smooth, and roughly 5.5% alcohol. Judging from the flavor, it may actually have chestnuts in it; there's a chestnut-like note in the flavor, and a nutty finish.

Their Export is a 10 degree Plato, light yellow beer. Although it smells hoppy, it has little flavor except for some diacytl. Don't bother.

Copper Ale is 11 degrees Plato, and (as the name suggests) a copper color. This is a pretty well balanced beer, with a good malt flavor and some decent hoppiness as well.

Blackbird Ale is 9 degrees Plato and copper-colored. It has a very soft mouthfeel, and like many of the other beers at this brewpub suffers from a buttery diacytl flavor.

Blackwell Stout is glorious. Relatively light-colored for its style, it looks more like porter than stout. It's a robust 14 degrees Plato, and is rich, creamy, and roasty. Excellent beer!

I ordered a glass of their new Imperial Stout, which is 8.5 percent alcohol. They limit consumption of it to two water glasses per person. With only one glass, I was well under the limit, right? Anyway, it was opaque, smooth, and sweet. Roastiness was definitely present, as was its alcohol. It's one of the best Imperial stouts I've had. The brewer wrote a poem in its honor:

As black as Balkan coal
As thick and intense
as a Siberian winter
As dangerous as Stalin
with a cigar and machine gun

For dinner, I had spicy corn chowder and salmon, both of which were good but not outstanding.

All in all, I recommend this brewpub. Although the beer quality is variable, some of the choices are excellent.



Trish's Tips

Trish Koch, your First Lady of BURP

Free For All / Food For All

Dear First Lady: How much beer and food should I bring to a meeting?

Signed: Hungry and Thirsty

Dear Hungry: How much do you plan to eat and drink? On the last page of every newsletter is a guide for new members. "Bring more beer than you drink; bring more food than you eat." Actually, this applies to current members also. It is not surprising that good brewers are also good cooks. Many enjoy sharing their culinary as well as brewing talents. There are others who prefer to bring a good quality commercial beer and something nice from the grocery. Either approach is fine, as long as you don't just bring one 12 oz. bottle of homebrew and drink a six pack.

Spirit of Free Beer IV

Dave & Becky Pyle

The Fourth Annual Nation's Capital Spirit of Free Beer Homebrew Competition was held on May 18 at the Potomac River Brewing Company in Chantilly, Virginia. BURP attracted 203 entries from as far away as England.

I would like to thank the people who made this contest possible: Potomac River Brewing Company; Rick Garvin, the Judge Coordinator; Tom Cannon, the Registrar; Doug Kruth and Bill Newman the Steward Coordinators; Debbie Parshall, Christie Newman, and Barbara Stevens, the Cooler Ladies; Bill Ridgely, the Drop-Off Points Coordinator; Lynne Kruth, the Publicity Coordinator; Wendy Aaronson and Alison Skeel, the Facilities Coordinators; Jim Tyndall, the Burgermeister; and Alan Hew and Jude Wang, our Breakfast Coordinators.

Winners

1. Light Lager

1st	Rhett Rebold	Cream Ale
2nd	Jim Wagner	Bohemian Pilsner
3rd	Eric Clem	German Pilsner

2. Amber and Dark Lager

1st	Delano DuGarm	Schwarzbier
2nd	Gary Nazelrod	Marzen/Oktobertfest
3rd	A.J. DeLange	Munich Dunkel

3. Bock

1st	Bob Dawson	Traditional Bock
2nd	Rhett Rebold	Dopplebock
3rd	Dave & Becky Pyle	Traditional Bock

4. British And German Ale

1st	Steve Marler & Bill Newman	Kolsch
2nd	A.J. DeLange	IPA
3rd	Ben Johnson	Special Bitter

5. American Ale

1st	Anthony Gromek	American Pale Ale
2nd	Justin Bruno	American Pale Ale
3rd	Anthony Gromek	American Pale Ale

6. Brown Ale

1st	Mark Cassells	English Brown Ale
2nd	Lynn Ashley	American Brown Ale
3rd	Fred Hardy	English Mild

7. Porter

1st	Wendell Ose	Brown Porter
2nd	Robert Stevens	Robust Porter
3rd	John O'Farrell	Brown Porter

8. Stout

1st	Robert Stevens	Classic Dry Stout
2nd	Keith Chamberlain	Imperial Stout
3rd	Jeff Vogt	Oatmeal Stout

9. Strong Ale

1st	Scott Bickham	Barley Wine
2nd	Keith Chamberlain	Strong "Scotch" Ale
3rd	Keith Reding	Barley Wine

10. Belgian Ale

1st	Bill Ridgely & Wendy Aaronson	White (Wit)
2nd	Jim Busch <i>et al</i>	Belgian Strong Ale
3rd	Delano DuGarm	Triple

11. Novelty

1st	Mike Horkan	Specialty Beer
2nd	Randy Paul	Classic Specialty
3rd	Christian Smerz	Classic Style Fruit

12. German Wheat

1st	Andy Anderson	Weizenbock
2nd	Dan Bindbeutel & Sarah Glorioso	Weizen
3rd	Robbie Zev Ludwick	Weizenbock

Best Of Show

1st	Robert Stevens	Classic Dry Stout
2nd	Anthony Gromek	American Pale Ale
3rd	Andy Anderson	Weizenbock

Spirit of Free Beer Prize Update

Dave & Becky Pyle

Our sponsors have been very generous this year in furnishing prizes for the Spirit of Free Beer IV Homebrew Competition.

All About Beer	2 Subscriptions
Anchor Brewing Co.	Shirts
Barley House	\$50, \$35, & \$15 Gift Certificate
Belgique Gourmande	\$50 Gift Certificate
Blue-N-Gold Brewing Co.	6 Glasses
Boston Beer Co.	Sweat Shirts; Long Sleeve T-Shirts
Brew America	\$100 in Gift Certificates
BrewMasters	\$50, \$35, & \$15 Gift Certificate
Brickskeller	\$25 Gift Certificate
Brimstone Brewing Co.	"Brewer for a Day"
Cairo Wine and Liquor	\$35 Gift Certificate
Capital City Brewing Co.	\$75 & \$40 Gift Certificate
Chicago Brewing Co.	Glasses
Dock Street Brewing Co.	\$35 Gift Certificate; 1 T-Shirt
Freshops	12 4 oz Bags of Hops
Home Sweet Homebrew	\$35 Gift Certificate
HopTech	5 Books
Hop Union USA, Inc.	5 Pounds of Hops; 1 T-Shirt; 2 Hats
House of Wines	Chimay Glasses
King Street Blues	\$25 Gift Certificate
Koch's Koncepts	Koch's Kooler
Legends, Ltd.	1 Case Heather Ale
Maryland Homebrew Supplies	55 Pounds Marris Otter Malt
Merchant Du Vin	Orval Sign; Glasses
Northern Virginia Beverage Co.	Dozens of Glasses
Old Towne Tavern & Brewing Co.	\$50 worth of Gift Certificates
Oliver Breweries, LTD	Mini Keg; 1 T-Shirt & 1 Hat

Oxford Brewing Co.	2 Bags of British Malt
Pennsylvania Brewing Co.	2 T-Shirts
Pete's Brewing Co.	Shirts & 1 Hat
Phoenix Imports Ltd.	Shirts
Potomac River Brewing Co.	"Brewer for a Day"
Rick's Wine and Gourmet	\$50 Gift Certificate
Rogue Ales	\$50 Gift Certificate
Select Wines	Dozens of Glasses
Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.	Shirts
Silesia Liquors	Sponsor Traveling Trophy & Plaque
Stoudt's	2 Pint Glasses
Storey Communications, Inc.	Books
The Flying Barrel	\$50 Gift Certificate
The Legend	1 T-Shirt, Mug, Carry All
Total Beverage	\$25 Gift Certificate; Provided all the openers needed for the SOFB.
Virginia Beverage Co.	Provided Best of Show Prize! Brewer for a Day - Brewing the prize winning beer on location to be served behind the bar at the Va. Beverage Company!!
Wild Goose Brewing Co.	\$75, \$50, & \$25 Gift Certificate; Glasses
WYEAST Laboratories	12 WYEAST & 1 T-Shirt

BURP Officers

Office	Officer	Phone
Fearless Leader	Larry Koch	(301) 587-5293 H
Minister of Education	Wendy Aaronson	(301) 762-6523 H (301) 594-5649 W
Ministers of Culture	Becky & Dave Pyle	(703) 273-2108 H
Ministers of Truth	Bruce Feist Polly Goldman	(703) 370-9509 H
Minister of Propaganda	Bill Ridgely	(703) 971-5744 H (301) 827-1391 W
Minister of Finance	Doug Kruth	(703) 671-0857 H
Liberian	Bob Cooke	(703) 451-1540 H

July's Competition: Brewing Battle of the Sexes

Dave & Becky Pyle

Style Guidelines: Anything goes.

This is a fun competition. It is totally open-ended. Any style is fine. Extract or all-grain can be brewed.

The one rule is you can't make this beer alone. You must have a partner or partners for this brew, and, as the name indicates, it's boys against the girls.

Come on everybody, let's see some brewing going on!

Don't forget: June's competition is Wheat.

Style Guidelines:

<u>Style</u>	<u>Gravity</u>	<u>IBUs</u>
Berliner Weisse	1027-1032	05-12
Weizen	1045-1050	08-14
Dunkel	1045-1055	10-15
Weizenbock	1066-1080	10-15
American Wheat	1030-1050	05-17

Berliner Weiss. Pale in color. Light body. Sour character with low alcohol content. Virtually no hop bitterness. No hop aroma. Color (SRM): 2-4.

Weizen. Pale in color. Light to medium body. Flavor is slightly sour with refreshing qualities. Flavor and aroma suggest cloves and banana. Lightly hopped. Color (SRM): 3-8.

Dunkel. Deep amber to dark brown color. Light to medium body. This style of beer is much like the Weizen listed above but can be a bit stronger. With chocolate-like maltiness this tones down the clove and banana character somewhat. Low bitterness. Color (SRM): 17-22.

Weizenbock. Either light or dark (helles or dunkel). Medium to full body. Malty sweet character with high alcohol content. Low bitterness. No hop aroma. Fruitiness and esters OK. Color (SRM): 7-30.

American Wheat. Pale in color. Light to medium body. No sourness whatsoever. This beer is like the Weizen listed above but American Ale Yeast is used instead of German wheat yeast. Lightly hopped. Color (SRM): 2-4.



Tasty Travels with Bruce: Atlanta, GA

Bruce Feist
bfeist@mnsinc.com

Phoenix Brewing Company

The Phoenix Brewing Company, in Atlanta, Georgia, had been open for a mere five weeks when I visited it for lunch on April 11. The restaurant has a very open and airy feel to it; it's very bright for a restaurant, and offers outdoor seating. It has an excellent menu, but a limited selection of beer. I chose the sampler of all three beers, which cost \$3.00.

The first beer was an Oatmeal Stout. It was one of the roastiest such beers I've had, yet also had the silky smoothness of the oatmeal (which was subdued in comparison with others that I've had). Recommended highly!

Their Nut Brown Ale had a particularly sweet aroma. It was a well-balanced beer, with a good strong maltiness. This was also a well-crafted beer.

Finally, I had their Pale Ale. It was at the bitter end of the appropriate range for the style. The finish had a good, clean, hop bite.

My lunch consisted of a lamb sandwich and Vidalia onion soup, both of which were very good.

All in all, the Phoenix Brewing Company is off to a good start. I hope that by now they've increased their beer selection; they're well worth a visit if you're in the area. Be warned, though: they're fairly distant from the center of town.

John Harvard

Also in Atlanta is a branch of the John Harvard brewpub which is based in New England. I went to this brewpub with a social group of people, and didn't take proper notes, so my memory is a bit sketchy. It was much more crowded than Phoenix, and had a wider selection of beer. The quality of the beer was mixed, though, as opposed to the general excellence of Phoenix; also, its atmosphere was louder and darker.

All in all, John Harvard wasn't bad, but Phoenix was more to my tastes. Happy Travels!

Pub Crawl Update

Bret Wortman

Here's the scoop (so far) on the BURP pub crawl. We're scheduling it for July 13, and it presently looks like it will feature four brewpubs plus another location, all conveniently located along Metro routes. Price has not yet been fixed, and final details are yet to be worked out with the individual establishments. I'll have full details by the next newsletter.

If anyone needs more information, they can reach me at home (703-369-0558) or work (703-902-8815).



Treasurer's Chest

Doug Kruth
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Club Finances for 5/1/96 through 5/25/96

New Business

- None

Old Business

- Spirit of Free Beer

Income Statement

5/1/96 Through 5/25/96

Category

Inc/Exp

Income

Membership + \$340

Education + \$260

Total Income \$600

Expenses

Total Expenses \$0

Total Inc/Exp \$600

BURP Account Balances

5/25/1996

Cash \$0

Payable \$0

Receivable \$98

Savings \$3,000

Checking \$4,191

Net Worth \$7,289

What does all of this mean?

Income - Funds received during the reporting period.

Expense - Expenses incurred and paid by the organization during the reporting period.

Accounts Payable - Expenses that we have incurred that have not been paid. Generally this will reflect a zero balance since we pay most (if not all) of our bills when these expenses are incurred.

Accounts Receivable - Receivables from individuals or vendors that owe us money. Again, there should not be much activity here. However, I plan on developing a forecast model that would generate a figure here for membership renewals and estimated new memberships.

Cash - Cash on hand that has not made the bank yet. Petty cash.

Checking Balance - Just that. The balance of our checking account at the time of this report.

Net Worth - is the total of (our checking account balance + cash on hand + accounts receivable) - accounts payable.

Club Expense Policy

Expenses incurred by individuals for BURP will be reimbursed only when accompanied by an original receipt for the expense. There will be no exceptions to this policy. With our incorporation, it will be even more important to document our cash flow for tax purposes.

Expenses in excess of \$50.00 that are not typical or recurring expenses (such as the newsletter) should be discussed with either Larry Koch or myself before they are incurred.

MALT Tasting: BURPers Invited

Scott Philbrook
Scott.Philbrook@cmail.irs.gov

I just joined BURP, but I have been a member of MALT (Maryland Ale & Lager Technicians) out of Bowie for over a year. I was at BURP's Xmas party in '94 and had a blast.

Anyway, that said, I'm hosting a MALT tasting / tiki-torch lawn party at my house August 17, 7:00 PM. The Gaithersburg brewing club is also going to be invited. Beer judging will be available if brewers want to submit beers for this - otherwise, its a tasting / party. We would like to open it up for BURP members.

We are providing food, plates, cups, etc. and are asking for \$4 each + beer with RSVP or \$5 at the door + beer. Those bringing a 5 gallon keg for the party will not be charged. We will have a 6 tap keg spigot board and names of brews and brewers can be engraved on plaques if we are notified ahead of time. I have thrown two of these before and they were blasts. My wife and I are party animals and it will probably go late. Anyone too tanked to drive is welcome to crash at the house.

Andy's European Beer Journal: Beer Festivals in Britain & Belgium

Andy Anderson
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OK, so you've finally stopped procrastinating and you're planning that long overdue trip to Europe to sample all (or at least as many as humanly possible) the best that the European brewmasters can offer. Where do you start? A fine method for introducing yourself to the best in liquid-malted-pleasures is through a beer festival. As an American, it is difficult even to begin to comprehend the total number of beer festivals found throughout Europe. Main-stream America tolerates beer and its "Joe 6-Pack" image. Europe embraces beer. However, I probably should not use the term "Europe" so loosely.

When it comes to alcohol, Europe can generally be separated into three areas by geographic latitude. Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, and Greece) has a warmer climate, more suitable for the grape and the resulting wine. Middle Europe (Ireland, Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and The Czech Republic) has a more temperate climate which allows the grain production necessary for beer. Northern Europe (Scandinavia and, possibly, Scotland) favors the production of distilled spirits. Whether this is for tax reasons, crop seasons, or simply as a tonic for the long, cold, and dark winter months, I don't know. In any event, when I refer to beer festivals and the European love affair with beer, I'm really referring to the middle-latitude European countries. For purposes of this article, I will pare it down even further by only discussing British and Belgian beer festivals, so you can stop reading if you're only an Oktoberfest fan.

Great Britain

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), which I may have occasionally criticized in previous columns, is a blessing for beer festivals. Every year in the first week of August, they sponsor the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF). This is the big one - the *huge* one. I went to last year's GBBF and was quite pleased. Cask-conditioned ale does not always travel well and August in London can be warm, so the beer may not always be at its best. But it's probably the only opportunity you will ever have to taste beers from all over England during the same tasting session. For the past several years, the GBBF has been held in Olympia, in London. Olympia is a huge event-hall more resembling the Hindenburg's hangar than a festival hall. You pay a nominal fee to enter and then a separate reimbursable fee for a glass. After that, each beer you want is paid for in cash. The majority of beers available are cask-conditioned ales, but they also have a separate section for cider and perry as well as a "Bieres sans Frontieres" section for Belgian, German, & U.S. beers (sorry, no Budweiser or Miller). If you've ever been to Denver for The Great American Beer Festival, then you really ought to visit England and see the original of the big national festivals. For 1996, the GBBF will be held 6-10 August in Olympia, London.

However, in addition to the huge GBBF, each branch of CAMRA is encouraged to hold their own beer festival and to use it as an opportunity to promote their regional beers. Mirroring events in the States, there has been a rapid growth in the number of micro-breweries here in Great Britain. As the majority of beer produced is cask-conditioned real ale, the beer produced by these new micro-breweries will usually only be found in the few pubs with which they have a contract. So a small, regional beer festival is a wonderful way to sample beers you might never have the opportunity to try. To give you an idea of the number of these festivals, for the month of May I counted a total of 22 different beer festivals which CAMRA sponsors.

I live in Bath where the CAMRA-sponsored beer festival is held in mid-October each year. As you might expect, your intrepid reporter threw himself into the fray with reckless abandon to bring back this information for BURP readers. I have been to several of the regional festivals for comparative (and drinking) purposes. The Bath festival is a bit larger than the average local festival, but, in general, the format between festivals is quite similar.

The Bath festival lasted for two days. There were about 60 different cask-conditioned ales as well as ciders available to try. The casks all rested on a steel lattice-work behind the long bar from which they were gravity-dispensed (i.e. no beer engines). None of the beers from the large brewers (Bass, Courage, S&N, Whitbread, Guinness, Allied, etc.) were available. Instead, the beers were all from relatively small breweries. Given the larger size of the Bath festival, the organizers were also able to get beer from Devon (SW England) and Cumbria & Yorkshire (N England) in addition to the local breweries. A small fee was paid to gain admission to the festival and then additional money was required to buy each beer.

Alternatives to CAMRA include Small Independent Brewers Association (SIBA) festivals as well as individual pub-organized events. I recently attended the SIBA festival held at Tucker's Malting (an old grain malting company) in Newton Abbot, Devon. Here I learned that just Devon contains 19 different micro-breweries, although a few might more correctly be classified as brew-pubs. It's a wonderful feeling sitting at a table and sampling delicious beers you've never even heard of before, while occasionally being showered upon with malted barley falling out of an overhead shoot.

One of my favorite festivals is actually run by a pub. Many pubs have seasonal festivals where they introduce extra guest beers. While entertaining, these are usually not worth traipsing across the country to attend. An exception is The Old Ale Festival held by The White Horse on Parson's Green on the week-end in November immediately following U.S. Thanksgiving. For people who have seen Michael Jackson's "The Beer Hunter", Jackson takes the viewers on a cellar tour of The White Horse along with its landlord Mark Dorber. Mark accumulates approximately 60 different Old Ales and Winter Warmers (including Anchor Steam's Christmas beer - the only beer served by CO2) for his customers. But more importantly, he treats the casks properly, and you rarely get an "off" pint. So this fall, why not have Thanksgiving in London?

The last British beer festival that I wanted to discuss is held in the last weekend of May at Traquair House in Innerleithen, Scotland. This festival is a celebration of Scottish beer. For those who are not familiar with Traquair House, they make (IMHO) the finest Scotch Ale in the world. I did not attend last year's festival, but heard so many good things about it that I'm really looking forward to this year's. As you may guess, I'm writing this column in early May. The Traquair House festival marks the beginning of my grand tour of Scotland.

Belgium

I must admit that my study of Belgian beer festivals is nowhere near as exhaustive as my English study. While Belgium is a lot closer to me in Bath than it might be to you in Washington, it is still a little too far for a day-trip to a specific Belgian festival. I live 210 miles west of Dover, so for me it's the trip across England which is the nuisance, not the ferry ride and short train trip in Belgium. Anyway, I have been to a few Belgian beer festivals and can offer some comments.

On the first weekend in July, 1995, I attended a lambic festival held in Beersel, Belgium (1-2 July). An abandoned 17th century castle sitting in the middle of a lake was the backdrop for one of the most enjoyable days of beer-tasting I've ever experienced. It was not an all-encompassing lambic festival, as a few important producers, such as Cantillon and Hanssens, were absent. But I was able to sample plenty of Boon Marriage Parfait, Drie Fonteinen, and Oud Beersel, as well as some of the more standard brands. The real beauty of this festival was over-indulging on an enigmatic beer-style in a lovely, tranquil environment on a warm summer's day.

Last November, I traveled to Antwerp for The Great Belgian Beer Festival (18-19 Nov), or the 24 Hours of Belgium (two, 12-hour festival sessions). This was nowhere near as large in floor-space as the American or British festivals, but the variety of beer was still quite tremendous. There were approximately 120 different beers from a total of 48 breweries. This festival seemed to emphasize the smaller breweries, as 33 of the breweries present had annual productions of less than 20,000 hl. While I was there, I met three friendly Swedes who enjoy the same passion for Belgian beer as I. We ending up sharing our various beers, so that by the end of the festival we had each tried all 120 beers. This is great except when it means you have to drink all the fruity, syrupy crap offered by Timmerman's. Another advantage of this festival was its location in Antwerp. This meant I could spend all my off-hours at Kulminator, possibly the finest Belgian- beer bar in the world.

The final Belgian festival that I have space to write about is the Hop Festival held in Poperinge. This festival is only held once every three years. The next festival will be September 13-15, 1996. While the festival starts on Friday, Sunday is the big day with a special tour of the Hop Museum, a demonstration of hop picking, the Hop Parade (the Hop Queen is elected on Saturday), and a final drinking session. A source in Brussels tells me that all the hotels in Poperinge are already booked, so I'm planning to stay outside of town and take the train in to Poperinge. I'm eagerly looking forward to September.

For anyone interested in additional information, I have more details about all these festivals. Also, if there is any particular British or Belgian beer festival that I haven't mentioned, I'll be happy to look into it for you. This column is only meant to whet the appetite for all those prospective European-beer hunters.

...and now it's time for me to go off and search for another pint of research.

Mashing

Benjamin L. Schwalb

Buy your mash grains in 50 or 55 pound sacks for the best price. English and Belgian malts are supposedly better than American, but they cost more. There are 2-row and 6-row grains. There are subtle differences between the two in husk-to-endosperm ratio and extract yield, but if you're a beginner you needn't concern yourself with that.

A grain mill is very desirable. You can buy crushed grain, but for long-term storage it's better to keep it whole and crack it with your mill as you need it so humidity doesn't dampen it and allow microbes to infect it.

There are several mash/lauter systems you can use. One is a spigotted picnic cooler with slotted copper or PVC pipe on the bottom which leads to the spigot. This system is inexpensive, allows mashing and sparging to be done from the same vessel, and doesn't need any added heat to keep a constant temperature.

More expensive is the modified keg/propane system. Half-barrel beer kegs made into kettles by cutting their tops out, are used to hold the mash and wort. Heat is provided by propane burners sitting under the kettles. The mash kettle has a false bottom (mesh that sits a few inches above the bottom, for separating the sweet wort from the grains), a spigot underneath the false bottom (for draining the wort), and optionally a thermometer. A pump can be installed for recirculating wort from the bottom to the top of the grains. The wort is drained into a second kettle and boiled in it. In two-kettle systems, sparge water can be added from another vessel; in three-kettle systems, it is added from the third kettle. There are many ways to configure keg/propane systems. Research it before deciding how you want yours. Remember that it is expensive, bulky, and requires mashing outdoors or in a shed (you don't want propane fumes in your home).

My system is relatively simple and inexpensive, so I recommend it for the beginning masher. I mash in a 5-gallon stainless steel pot. My lauter tun consists of two plastic buckets and a piece of nylon screen. One bucket has hundreds of 1/8 inch holes drilled in the bottom, and the other is my bottling bucket (with a spigot near the bottom). I put the screen over the bottling bucket and insert the holey bucket (no, it's not a religious idol) into it, so the bottom of the holey bucket sits just above the bottling bucket's spigot and the screen is snugly in between. This makes a nice false bottom. Then I pour the mash in and drain. Since I use my boiling pot for mashing, and my bottling bucket as part of the lauter tun, the only extra cost was a bucket and some screening - about \$15.

Crack the grains in your mill (this step is necessary in order to expose the starch). Do not powder the grains, or else the tiny bits of husk will make a grain bed that the wort will have difficulty draining through when you sparge ("stuck mash"). Heat your mash water, which should be about one gallon per 3-4 pounds of grain. Whatever temperature you want the mash to be initially, you must heat this water (called "strike water") to about 10-15 degrees warmer, because the grains, which are room temperature, will cool the water.

If you are using undermodified malt, the initial mash temperature should be 122 degrees and should be held for around 30 minutes in order to help break down proteins (this step is called a protein rest). Then it should be brought up as quickly as possible to starch conversion temperature. Most malt, however, is fully modified, which makes a protein rest unnecessary.

For starch conversion, the accepted temperature range ("accepted", of course, meaning "because we don't know any better") is 150-158 degrees. At the high end, alpha amylase creates more unfermentable sugars and therefore a sweeter, more full-bodied brew; at the low end, beta-amylase starts to kick in and create more fermentable sugars and therefore a more alcoholic brew.

There are different mashing techniques. The simplest is infusion, where the grains sit undisturbed in water the whole time. In recirculation infusion mashing, water (which has become wort) is pumped continuously from underneath a false bottom to the top, so there is constant movement and drainage. Decoction mashing is a more complicated process of removing some of the mash, heating it to a higher temperature, and adding it back in.

There is much controversy over how long conversion takes. Some say a half hour, some say two hours. I've heard of some people doing 4-hour decoction mashes, which seems like overkill to me. Factors such as pH and mash thickness affect conversion speed. To test for complete conversion, mix a little wort with some iodine. If there is still some unconverted starch, the solution will turn purple or black.

The pH should be between 5.0 and 5.5, and additives such as gypsum can be added to lower the pH if you have soft water. A proper pH assists conversion, but you need not worry too much about it.

At 168 degrees, conversion enzymes are killed. For this reason we don't want to overheat our grains until conversion is complete. Raising the temperature after conversion is called "mash out".

Okay, let's mash! Ingredients for a 5-gallon mash (if different size mash, adjust amounts proportionately):

- 10-11 lbs cracked pale malt (11 if American, 10 if imported)
- 2 lbs cracked crystal malt
- hops – your choice of amounts and types
- 1 teaspoon gypsum

1) Heat strike water with gypsum to 168-170 degrees. Add grains and stir to make sure all grains get soaked. Remember that the temperature will drop immediately, so the initial temperature won't kill many enzymes.

- 2) Take temperature reading. Add boiling or cold water to raise or lower temperature to where you want it.
- 3) Keep temperature constant for an hour or so. You can keep the mash kettle on low heat and stir occasionally, or put it in an insulated box, or place it in a slightly heated oven. If mashing in a picnic cooler, just let it sit. Optionally, do an iodine test to make sure conversion is complete.
- 4) Mash out – raise temperature to 168 degrees and hold 10 minutes. Do not raise over 170 degrees, as this can cause bitter husk tannins to leech out.
- 5) Remove mash from heat and sparge with 170 degree water. Sparging method depends on what kind of equipment you're using.
- 6) Bring the wort to a boil, then add hops (optionally, use a hop bag). Boil about an hour or until wort level drops to amount of beer you want. Add aroma hops if desired.
- 7) Cool and pitch yeast.
- 8) Feed your spent grains to livestock, or throw them in your compost heap, or use them as fertilizer in your garden.

Congratulations! You're now a masher.

Tasty Travels with Bruce's Mom

Addie Feist (Bruce's Mom)

Carnegie Hill Brewing Company
1600 Third Ave
New York, NY 10128

Wednesday night at the Carnegie Hill Brewery on Third Avenue and 90th Street in Manhattan was a very enjoyable experience. The brewery appeared pleasant but unpretentious, with plain, uncovered wooden tables and booths. Six beers were available on the beer menu, but I selected the raspberry that had just become available and Dad chose the Gotham Porter. His technical opinion was that it was "good." My raspberry was light, good tasting and enjoyable.

The brewery has only been in business for a year and the menu will change to a lighter, more warm-weather-appropriate style as of the day after our visit. The menu we saw included burgers, grilled vegetables and chicken, and some traditional hearty selections such as meatloaf and meatballs, as well as several pasta dishes and pizza.

The terrific poster, "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall" was, unfortunately, unavailable for purchase.

The young waitpersons were attentive and friendly. Our waiter told us that the chef had quit recently and all the young employees had just moved up a notch. Despite this, everything seemed to be running reasonably smoothly.

Dad's grilled chicken had an herb crust and was served attractively on a bed of mashed potatoes. My turkey burger, as well as most of the items on the menu, was reasonably priced, according to Manhattan standards. The Carnegie Hill Brewery is part of the TransMedia program.