

Malted Barley Appreciation Society

August 2005 Newsletter

<http://hbd.org/mbas>

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Here's the August 2005 Newsletter!

Proost!

Warren Becker

AUGUST MEETING

Wednesday, August 10, 2005

Our guest speaker will be Elizabeth Lyons of Dogfish Head Brewing.

MUGS ALE HOUSE

www.mugsalehouse.com



125 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211



Tom meets our guests from Brugge, Belgium, Katrien & Filip



JULY MEETING

By Warren Becker

Tom Baker of Heavyweight Brewing Company <http://www.heavyweight-brewing.com/> was our July guest speaker. *The descriptions below were taken from the Heavyweight web site.*

Tom brought samples of Biere d'Art, a biere de garde which was selected as one of the best farmhouse ales by a New York Times tasting panel in October 2004. It's brewed exclusively with French-grown pale malts and German hops. A long boil develops a deep amber color and malty complexity. Some black pepper in the boil contributes a subtle spiciness. The beer is fermented with monastic lager yeast and the finished beer is bottled-conditioned and packaged in 750 ml. bottles @ 7.7% ABV.



Tom poured his *OneTimeOnlyPfarmhouse* Saison Style ales. **GOLDEN**, a more traditional style, golden in color, made with malted and unmalted wheat and gently spiced with Sweet Woodruff. Hopped with Saaz and Styrian Goldings and fermented with two yeast strains. 5.8% Brewed: Jan.13 **DARK**, inspired by Fantome's Black Ghost and Pizza Port's

SPF8. It's deep brown in color and the combination of roast and tropical fruit flavors are strange but effective. It's hopped with English Goldings and Saaz and fermented with three Belgian yeast strains. ~6% Brewed: Feb.17

HOPPY, a super hoppy, floral aroma, golden saison.

SPICY is the latest saison, and uses licorice and coriander, among various other spices. Lots of flavor!



Tom discussed both the new and old Heavyweight beer projects. Among those mentioned were, a bitter at 3.8% ABV; a Mild at 3.1% ABV; Black Ocean, a 4.1% ABV second-runnings of their imperial porter; Old Salty 2005 Barleywine; Russian Kavas Sour Beer; Ginger Altbier; and some future wood-age beers made with Brettanomyces.



Also, we had special guests at our last meeting. Filip and Katrien Geerts from Brugge, Belgium, along with Craig Somers from Washington DC, attended our meeting for the first time. Filip writes/posts quite a bit about Belgian brewing on the Burgundian Babble Belt <http://www.babblebelt.com/board.html> , Rate Beer <http://www.ratebeer.com/> , as well as on his sites.

Here are Filip's sites to check out: Belgian Beer Board: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/belgianbeer/?yguid=162570044>

Map: <http://users.pandora.be/filip.geerts/beerpubmap2.htm>

Filip's site: <http://users.pandora.be/filip.geerts/>



Another successful raffle, thanks to BR, Bob, John and Jill!



Sophie and Ludwig eyed our July meeting from the backyard

WHAT'S IN A NAME? BELGIAN-STYLE STRONG ALE

By George de Piro

What does the name "Belgian-style Strong Ale" mean to you? Frequent guests of the Albany Pump Station may be well-acquainted with our summer seasonal. Those of you who were sad to see it go last year have cause to rejoice: it will be back on line within the week!

What does "Belgian-style strong ale" mean to the rest of you? Belgian strong ales are a diverse family of strong beers brewed in Belgium. Some are as dark as molasses while others are as golden as a Caribbean dawn. Some are spicy and sweet while others are fruity and dry. The range of flavors is tremendous!

The Belgian-style Strong Ale we brew here at the Pump Station fits into the substyle of strong ale known as "Tripel." Beers of this category are expected to be golden with bright white foam that laces the drinker's glass. They are not particularly sweet, but have a notable malt character. They are not very bitter, but the presence of hops is often noted, especially in fresh samples. While Tripels are usually 8-10% alcohol by volume, the flavor of alcohol should be well-hidden. This, along with the beer's pale color and relatively light body, make it a deceiving brew worthy of respectful consumption.

The history of this style is quite interesting. It is a very young style, in beer terms; the first examples of light-colored tripels were brewed after World War II. The exact origins of the style are disputed, but it is likely that its roots are within one of Belgium's Trappist monasteries.

Trappist monasteries are financially self-sufficient. Some abbeys support themselves making cheese and bread, others train dogs, and six brew beer. Five of these are in Belgium, with the other nearby in the Netherlands. Only beers that are brewed in Trappist monasteries can be legally labeled as "Trappist." Others are simply called "Abbey beers." The most famous Tripel produced today is also one of the oldest: Westmalle Tripel. It is brewed at the Trappist monastery of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, near Antwerp in the village of Westmalle.



"Thou shalt not spill a drop!" Trappist brothers at Westvleteren.

Just after the Second World War, the brothers at Westmalle brewed their first golden-colored strong ale. It was an instant success, and now has many secular imitators, including the well-known Duvel (brewed by Moortgat brewery in Belgium) and the C.H. Evans Brewing Company's "Belgian-style Strong Ale." Our Tripel, like all, uses a fair amount of adjunct in place of the malt to help keep the body light without compromising alcoholic strength. This year, we used unrefined organic cane sugar and locally produced honey as the adjuncts. While these sugars are completely consumed by the yeast, leaving the beer dry rather than sweet, a detectable honey and molasses flavor remains in the brew.

Our new batch of Belgian-style strong ale should be on tap by August 3rd, so be sure to come by for a glass. This year's formulation was inspired by homebrewer Bob Craft's recipe, which won the Saratoga Thoroughbrews' annual homebrew competition last April. A taste of this freshly brewed beer is much more informative than this article. A sip is worth a thousand words!



Katrien, Filip, and Glenn, at the Ommegang Brewery "gate".

BELGIANS COME TO COOPERSTOWN

By Warren Becker

Well there are several old sayings about redundancy. "Bringing coals to Newcastle" and "Bringing ice to Eskimos" being the ones that pop into my mind. On July 16th, Glenn Burnett and I brought "Belgians to a Belgium Comes to Cooperstown" event at the

Ommegang brewery. The Belgians were Filip and Katrien, to be specific.

For those not familiar with Glenn Burnett, he has visited over 500 brewers, taken thousands of beer-related photos, and has written/posted several trip-related articles. He is truly the "I've been everywhere" man, with no hesitation in picking up, and driving hours for a beer-related event both in Europe, and in the US.

Undaunted by the 4 hour road time each way, Filip and Katrien were excited about attending this exceptional event, featuring some of the best Belgian style ales produced by both Belgian and US breweries. This side by side availability makes this event unique. To sample both the Belgian and US products within one tent was quite extraordinary! Some of the most unique, and original recipes were tasted.

We stopped off at the Cooperstown Brewery to sample beers in their taproom. They were friendly hosts and some terrific beers.



A mini Burgundian Babblefest with Eric, Mike and Steve.

Though the temperature was hot, and the air was very sticky, the large crowd was very friendly, and the brewery representatives, including brewers, were eager to discuss their beers. Lots of smiles abounded that afternoon. Introducing Filip and Katrien to the folks at the fest was great! It's like bringing the "real deal" palate to the plate, and Filip was quite impressed by the craftsmanship and diversity of beer styles available from the US brewers that day. The US Belgian styles ale held up well along side their Belgian counterparts.



Filip and Katrien meet Laurent Demuyne of Ommegang.

After that long hot day, Glenn drove us over to the Albany Pump

Station to meet up with George de Piro, former MBAS President, and now award-winning brewer. Though we got lost on the Albany off-ramp system, we arrived to George behind the bar, mastering the dispensing of his fine beers. This was Glenn's first visit there, as well as for Katrien and Filip. We sampled all of George's line-up, enjoyed the tasty food, and took an impressive "dignitary-style" brewer lead tour around the massive structure.



George gives THE Pump Station brewery tour.

It was long day of beer, beginning at 9AM to hit the road, and finishing up around 2:30 AM. Thanks to Glenn for driving, and all the new friendly faces, for giving Filip, Katrien, and I the chance to experience this one of a kind event.

HOMEBREWING COMPETITIONS:

- October 16th: 2005 Southern New England Homebrew Competition (SNERHC2005)** is scheduled at *Edmund Town Hall* in Newtown, CT -- the same location as last year. This is an easy reach from I-84 and close to MY Place, the best beer bar in New England. In addition to BOS, awards will be given for 1st and 2nd runners-up, best showing by a novice brewer, and "Best Batting Average." Awards earned at the competition will count toward New England Home Brewer of the Year (NEHBOTY) awards. We did not have as many entries as we would liked to have had last year. We know that summer is not prime brewing time, but you all still have some good spring brews left over -- save some in the back of the fridge for SNERHC. This year, there will be no limit on the number of brews entered by a brewer, because we do not expect domination of the competition by brewers going for the NEHBOTY award.

BEER RELATED EVENTS:

- August 10: Malted Barley Appreciation Society Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. at *Mugs Ale House*, 125 Bedford Avenue (North 10th Street, three blocks north of the Bedford Ave. L-train station). Our guest is Elizabeth Lyons of Dogfish Head Brewing in Delaware. As always, we should have some excellent homebrews to taste, and Mugs usual great selection of beers.
- August 25th, Sixpoint Burlesque Night**, *Barcade*, 388 Union Avenue, (718) 718-302-6464. No kidding.

Alex Hall's

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BEER CALENDAR

<http://www.cask-ale.co.uk/us/tqi.html>



Steve Gale, Burgundian Babble Belt founder, wearing his emotions towards drinking fine local beer, on his head, at the Ommegang Fest!

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