

Malted Barley Appreciation Society

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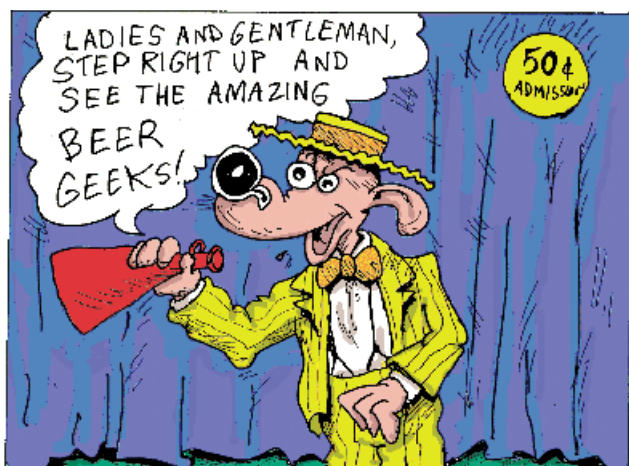
FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Cheers! Here's your newsletter...

— Alan Rice —

Next Meeting:

Wednesday Feb. 14, 2007: Our guest speaker is Shane Welch of Sixpoint Brewery.



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<http://hbd.org/mbas>

January meeting: **Garrett Oliver**

BOTTLING A "LOCAL-1" IN BROOKLYN

BY KEITH OLSEN

Garrett Oliver had decided to turn back to his roots...his roots in homebrewing that is. At one time, Garrett was a homebrewer like many of us sharing his beers with fellow imbibers in the Malted Barley Appreciation Society. Then, seventeen years ago, Garrett began brewing professionally, first at the former Manhattan Brewing Company, and since 1994 as the internationally acclaimed brewmaster at Brooklyn Brewery. While his latest creation brewed with hundreds of pounds of grain in huge stainless steel tanks could hardly be considered a homebrew, his new still-fill bottling line which allows the beer to naturally carbonate in the bottle is not much different than the method homebrewers use. On January 10th, dozens of members of the Malted Barley Appreciation Society were



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treated to a tour of the new still-fill bottling line and a tasting of the first few sample batches to come off the line at the Brooklyn Brewery.

What is a still-fill bottling line? It is the ultimate \$350,000 toy for a brewer. More specifically, it is the apparatus that fills, corks and labels 750ml bottles with “still” (non-carbonated) beer. Almost all commercially available beer produced in the U.S. is force-carbonated, meaning carbon dioxide coming from a separate tank is dissolved into the beer once the fermentation process has essentially stopped. For still-fill bottling, a small amount of yeast is added prior to bottling to allow the beer to receive a secondary-fermentation in the bottle which allows the beer to carbonate naturally.

Of course, the Brooklyn Brewery isn't the only brewery to employ a still-fill bottling line, but it may be one of the only in the U.S. to do so. Unfortunately, this means that any advice or instructions on commercial still-fill bottling are hard to find in English. While Garrett had the choice of installing either a conventional counter-pressure bottling line or a still-fill bottling line at the brewery in Brooklyn, he knew that some of his favorite Belgian breweries (Dupont, Achouffe) still produce their beer using the still-fill method, thereby inspiring him to do the same.

What is the advantage of still-fill bottling you might ask?



Vintage beer bottles from local archaeological digs immediately greet visitors.



Open taps included Cuvée D'Achouffe and Smoked Weissbock. [Photo by Mike D. Lovullo.]



Garrett gave his introduction as we sipped from the complimentary gold-rimmed stemmed Brooklyn Brewery glassware.

Garrett explains that this method “captures all the subtleties and extra stuff in the bottle”. Extra stuff, he explains, are those “extra layers of complexity from the (secondary) fermentation.” While he admits that “less than 5% (of beer drinkers) would notice the difference”, the extra effort is well worth it

to those who will appreciate it. And I believe many of us truly do.



As a part of our brewery tour that evening, Garrett was more than happy to show-off his impressive new bottling line. (*Images on next page.*) The process he describes is as follows:

- The rinser rinses each bottle with filtered water coming from the sterile filter.
- Next, the evacuation fills each bottle with carbon dioxide
- The 16-head filler can fill up to 40 750ml bottles a minute with the still beer. The beer has a bit of added sugar and a special refermenting yeast strain. This yeast is a different strain than the one used in the primary fermentation of the beer.
- The leveler then injects a puff of carbon dioxide to top off each bottle.
- The corker pulls a vacuum across the surface of the beer, then using a set of knives, inserts a cork into the top of each bottle.
- The wire hooter fastens a wire hood over the cork.
- The bottle arrives at the col

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lection table, where it goes into special crates to be stored in a 25-degree Celsius “warm room” while the secondary fermentation takes place.

- After approximately nine days in the “warm room”, the bottles spend two-weeks in cold conditioning. The bottles are then moved back onto the final stages of the bottling line where they are washed and the labels are applied.

The addition of a different yeast strain at bottling may seem strange to those of us familiar with the brewing process. Garrett explains that the yeast used for the primary fermentation are “pretty tired” from this first stage and won’t do their job to adequately carbonate the beer. The new yeast strain also has the potential to impart its own unique flavors to the beer providing added complexity. The brewery experimented with several different yeast strains until finding just the right one.

It is interesting to note that the Brooklyn Brewery received assistance from at least two other breweries during the production of the first beer to be produced using the new bottling line. Brewer Bert van Hecke from the St. Bernardus brewery in Belgium traveled to Brooklyn to consult in the production and bottling of Local 1. And Brewery Ommegang in upstate New York kindly lent the specially-designed crates used to store the beer during its secondary fermentation. While they resemble plastic milk-crates, the design allows for sufficient air circulation during the refermentation process. Can you imagine such friendly cooperation between competing entities in any other business?

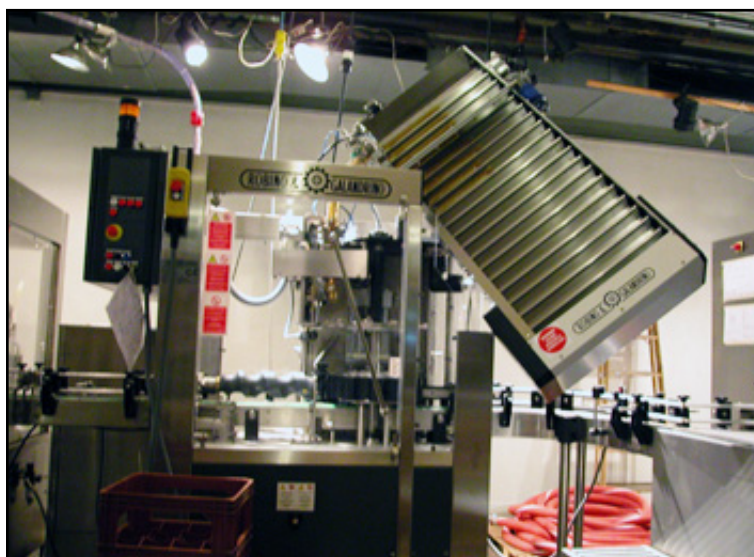


Local 1 will be the first beer released utilizing the new bottling line. This beer was initially brewed last year under the name Fortitude, although it has evolved in part due to the new bottling line. Not brewed to the specifications of a specific style of beer, Garrett describes Local 1 as having characteristics of a tripel, a strong saison, and a Belgian strong pale ale, but in the end it is not quite any of these, and “very much it’s own thing.” While the only grain used in the production of Local 1 is pilsner malt, a slightly richer color results from the use of a special candi sugar.

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Empty bottles enter from the left. They are rinsed, evacuated and filled.



Bottles then continue on to the corks. Wire hoods come down from the apparatus on the right. Bottles exit out to the collection table on the right.



This is the bottle washer and labeler. The bottler is in the background.



The brewhouse is located in a former matzoh ball factory. But yeast and barley now meet the wheat for a much different result.



Garrett holds a kettle-stirring rod "liberated" from the ruins of nearby abandoned brewery. [Photo by Mike D. Lovullo.]

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This sugar is crystallized, but is a dark, intensely sweet, extremely caramel-like, slightly earthy syrup produced from the first pressing of sugar cane grown in volcanic soil



We were lucky enough to sample three different test batches of Local 1. In the first batch, Garrett explained that they low-balled the carbonation in order not to end up with bottles exploding like grenades. Pouring this pale-golden brew into the glass, there is a sweet honey-like aroma with slightly herbal notes from the Golding hops. The taste is initially sweet, but relatively dry in the finish, slightly tangy and somewhat champagne-like. Garrett refers to this up-front sweetness as a "false sweetness" since the beer has little residual sugar (only 1.9% after the secondary fermentation). There are hints of sulfur in the flavor due to DMS (dimethyl sulfide), a flaw that was to be corrected in the next batch.



Batch #2 had a much higher carbonation

due to the fact that twice as much yeast went into each bottle. The sulfur notes had all but disappeared in this batch, but so had some of that initial sweetness. While certainly a very enjoyable beer, less carbonation and a little more sweetness might just nudge it closer to ideal in this taster's opinion.

Batch #3 utilized more candi sugar which fermented out completely without becoming over-carbonated. The

resulting beer is closest to the final production beer, with the aroma of the dark candi sugar in the nose. It is a quite complex yet very easily drinkable brew with a tangy, drying finish. At 9% ABV (alcohol by volume), a tinge of



Brewery cat laments, "Who drank my beer?"

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alcohol is barely discernable in the taste, but the strength is well hidden. While aspects of the flavors remind me of some great Belgian beers, this brew really is unique and truly one to be savored.

As a final treat, Garrett was kind enough to share some of the beer straight from the fermentation tank that will soon be bottled as the first commercially-available batch of Local 1. While yet to be bottled and undergo the secondary fermentation process, the initial taste is certainly promising of great results to come.

Local 1 is due to appear on store shelves the last week of February. The 750ml bottle will retail for approximately \$10. The Malted Barley Appreciation Society thanks Garrett Oliver for the opportunity to learn about the still-fill bottling process and to preview Local 1 prior to its official release.

Keith Olsen's craft beer blog can be found at apintofknowledge.wordpress.com

PHOTOS BY PAMELA RICE UNLESS NOTED BY MIKE D. LOVULLO.



So much science, 'tis all to good end. [Photo by Mike D. Lovullo.]

CALENDAR

BEER EVENTS

Wed. Feb. 14, 7:30pm, Malted Barley Appreciation Society, Mugs Ale House. If you love beer, come to our February meeting. Our guest will be Shane Welch of Six-point Brewery. And in the spirit of the day, bring something to share. Homebrew or an unusual bottle is always welcome. hbd.org/mbas/calendar.html

Thu. Feb. 15, Unibroue at Hop Devil. Meet the brewer and beat the cold with mulled Quelque Chose. Also Terrible, La Fin du Monde, Raftman, Trois Pistoles, Maudite, and Unibroue 15 among others, many on tap.

Fri. Feb. 16, 11am – Sun. Feb. 18, 2am, Max's Belgian Fest, Max's on Broadway, Baltimore, MD. At least 50 Belgian beers on tap and over 120 Belgian bottled beers, some never before seen in the U.S. No entrance fee, sample sizes available. Belgian inspired food. <http://www.maxs.com/>

Fri. Feb. 16 – Sun. Feb. 18, Magic Hat Mardi Gras Weekend, Downtown Burlington, VT. For details, and a chance to win a VIP weekend for 4 or lots of swag: <http://www.magichat.net/mardigras2007/>

Thu. Feb. 22, Kuhnhehn at Hop Devil. Meet the brewers and enjoy Raspberry Eisbock (13.5%), A Few Schillings Too Many Wee Heavy (12.5%), Nine Belgian Strong Ale (9%)– aged in Syrah barrel, American Imperial Stout (13.5%), and Bourbon Barrel aged Fourth Dementia Old Ale (9.5%).

Fri. Feb. 23 – Sun Feb. 25, Cask Head Festival, Brazen Head. About 25 casks will pour throughout the weekend.

Mon. Feb 26, 6-7pm, The Science of Beer, The New York Academy of Sciences, 7 World Trade Center, 250 Greenwich St. at Barclay St., \$25. Reception with beer tasting to follow. This is the third event in the Academy's five-part Science of Food Series. Join us to explore the science of brewing with Charlie Bamforth, PhD, DSc, chair of the Department of Food Science & Technology and Anheuser-Busch Endowed Professor of Malting & Brewing Sciences at the University of California, Davis. Charlie Bamforth has been part of the brewing industry since 1978. He is formerly deputy director-general of Brewing Research International and research manager and quality assurance manager of Bass Brewers. He is a special professor in the School of Biosciences at the University of Nottingham, England, a Fellow of the Institute of

FRIDAY–SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 23–25

The Eleventh 'Cask Head' Cask Ale Festival at the Brazen Head

About 25 casks will pour through the weekend (at least 11 at any one time while stocks last, 6 or 7 on gravity pour, 5 via handpumps). No entrance fee, and prices will be very reasonable—pay as you imbibe. All beers will be served in 10-ounce or 16-ounce measures (your choice for all beers). They're won't be any miserly sample pours that last for only a couple of sips. Expect an adventurous selection, including Dark Star Imperial Stout, possibly the only firkin of the 2006 batch to reach America! For more information, go to: <http://www.brazenheadbrooklyn.com/>.

Brewing & Distilling, and Fellow of the Institute of Biology. He is also editor-in-chief of the Journal of the American Society of Brewing Chemists and has published innumerable papers, articles, and books on beer and brewing. <http://www.nyas.org/ebriefreps/ebrief/000593/beer.html>

Wed. Feb. 28, Stout Fest, Spring Lounge. We sell a lot of stout beer on and around St. Patrick's Day. Vote for your favorite of 5 on tap. We will feature the winner during the month of March.

Thu. Mar. 1, Pennsylvania Breweries Night at Barcade. Draft list TBD.

Sat. Mar. 3 – Sun Mar. 4, Hop Head Heaven, Hop Devil. Sample sizes available Noon-6pm. The List so far: Arcadia Hopmouth, Avery Majaraja, Bells Hopslam, Blue Point IIPA, Bullfrog Edgar IPA, Dogfish Head 120, Great Divide Hercules, Harvest Moon Hops2 Imperial IPA, Otto's Double D IPA, Rogue I2PA, Russian River Pliny the Elder, Sly Fox Odyssey, Triumph IPx.

Sat. Mar. 3, 12-4pm or 6-10pm, Philly Craft Beer Festi-

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val, Philadelphia Cruise Terminal, \$35. American craft beer from at least 45 breweries and over 120 beers. The Cruise Terminal, with its 50' ceilings and seafaring murals, is a unique venue that we hope will be our home for years to come. The Navy Yard itself is a destination worth visiting. You will be amazed by the Destroyers and other U.S. Navy vessels. Located just off exits from I-95 or I-76. Public transportation available. <http://www.phillycraft-beerfest.com/>

Sat. Mar. 10 – Sun. Mar. 11, Split Thy Skull Brooklyn

Strong Ale Fest, Mugs Ale House. Sample sizes available Noon-6pm. The List so far: Allagash La Musette Scotch Ale (10%) (2006), Blue Point (Cherry) Imperial Stout Cask (9.2%) (2006), Brooklyn Brewery Black Chocolate Stout (10.6%) (2005), Captain Lawrence Nor'easter Barrel Aged Dark Belgian Ale (12%), Chelsea Brewing Tsar's Imperial Stout, Dark Star Imperial Stout (7.8%) (Cask), Geary's Anniversary Ale (7.6%), Great Divide Oak Aged Yeti Imperial Stout (9.5%), Heavyweight Old Salty (11%) (2005), Hooker Oak Aged Imperial Porter (7.8%), Hooker Oak Aged Barley Wine (10%) (2006), Northcoast Old Stock Old Ale (13.25%) (2005), Rogue – Old Crustacean Barley Wine (11.3%) (2006), Heartland Brewing Full Moon Barleywine (10%), High Point Brewing Ramstein Winter Wheat (11.5%), Russian River Damnation Belgian Strong Pale Ale (7%), Sierra Nevada Big Foot Barley Wine (9.6%) (2006), Sixpoint Bolshoi Imperial Stout (10.2%) (2006), Sly Fox Panacea Barley Wine (9.6%) (2006), Smuttynose Wheat Wine (10.7%), Smuttynose – Oak Aged Barley Wine (10%) (2006), Stone Old Guardian Barley Wine (11.2%) (2005), Stone Imperial Russian Stout (10.8%), Southampton Abbot 12 Quad (10.5%) (2006), Southern Tier Unearthly Double IPA (11%) (2006).



Wed. Mar. 14, 7:30pm, Malted Barley Appreciation Society, Mugs Ale House. We don't have a guest lined up yet, so check our website nearer the date: hbd.org/mbas/calendar.html

Fri. Mar 23, 6:30-10:30pm, Ultimate Belgian Tasting II, Puck Building, \$95. Presented by Ale Street News in conjunction with the Belgian Consulate. Belgian beers, Belgian foods, chocolates and cheeses will be served in an elegant setting. Formal dress, jacket and tie required for men. Tickets only in advance at <http://www.alestreetnews.com/>

Sat Mar. 31, Noon-3pm, Weyerbacher Brewery Annual Open House, Free. Peruse the brewery in Easton, PA, taste samples of numerous kegs stationed throughout, and chat with the brewers. Mix your own variety pack to go. <http://www.weyerbacher.com/>

Sat. Apr. 28 – Sun. Apr 29, TAP New York Craft Brew & Fine Food Festival, Hunter Mountain, \$45. Enjoy unlimited tastings of over 80 beers and sample local gourmet foods. <http://www.tap-ny.com/>

HOME BREW COMPETITION

February 17, 2007, Homebrew Alley, Chelsea Brewing Co., Pier 59, New York City. Organisers: The New York City Homebrewers Guild. Best of Show will win a two-line jockey box. One entry will be chosen for the Brewer's Choice Award - the lucky winner will see his or her creation brewed at Chelsea Brewing Company! It's past time for submissions, but if you would like to be a judge or a steward, go to: <http://hbd.org/nychg/>.



Neither is on the waterfront: Your choice, Brooklyn or Manhattan



LOCAL BEER EVENT VENUES

- Andy's Corner Bar**, 257 Queen Anne Road, Bogota, NJ 07603, (201) 342-9887, <http://www.andyscornerbar.com/>.
- Barcade**, 388 Union Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. (718) 302-6464. <http://www.barcadebrooklyn.com/>.
- Brazen Head**, 228 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn 11201. (718) 488-0430. <http://www.brazenheadbrooklyn.com/>.
- Collins Bar**, 735 8th Avenue, Manhattan 10036. (212) 541-4206. <http://collinsbar.com/>.
- David Copperfield's**, 1394 York Avenue, Manhattan 10021. (212) 734-6152. <http://www.davidcopperfields.com/>.
- dba**, 141 First Avenue, (212) 475-5097, Manhattan, 10003. <http://drinkgoodstuff.com/>.
- Downtown Bar & Grill**, 160 Court Street, Brooklyn 11201. (718) 625-2835.
- Essex Ale House**, 179 Essex Street, Manhattan 10002. (212) 505-6027.
- Hop Devil Grill**, 129 St. Marks Place, Manhattan 10009. (212) 533-4467. <http://www.hopdevil.com/>.
- Mugs Ale House**, 125 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. (718) 384-8494. <http://www.mugsalehouse.com/>.
- Spuyten Duyvil**, 359 Metropolitan Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. (718) 963-4140. <http://www.spuytenduyvilnyc.com/>.
- Liberty Heights Tap Room**, 36 Van Dyke Street, Brooklyn 11231. (718) 246-1793. <http://www.libertyheightstaproom.com/>.
- Standings**, 43 East 7th Street, Manhattan 10003. (212) 420-0671. <http://www.standingsbar.com/>.
- Stanton Publick**, 17 Stanton Street, Manhattan 10002, (212) 677-5555, <http://www.villedgepub.com/>.
- Schneider**, 107 Avenue C (at 7th St.), Manhattan 10009. Tel. 212 598 1098. <http://www.zumschneider.com/>.



Former president Alex Hall stands in—and stands tall—for Mary Izetelny, incoming president, one more time to give us new business and old for the club.