Malted Barley Appreciation Society

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Smutty beers, no joking

BY ALAN RICE PHOTOS BY MARY IZETT

A large audience greeted our April guest, **David Yarrington**, Executive Brewer at **Smuttynose Brewery** in Portsmouth, NH. David was in town anyway for Ale Street News' Ultimate Belgian Tasting III at the Heartland Brewery in the Em-

on Thursday, so it was easy to make a few stops in Brooklyn the day before.

David visited us just before

he went with his brewers to the Craft Brewers Conference. It would be a nice perk for them to fly out to San Diego. But he's looking for-

ward to 2009 when it will be held on "home" turf in Boston.

After getting his degree in chemistry, David spent a winter on the slopes in Wyoming. He was then ready to slide into the brewing business at Twenty Tank Brewery in San Francisco. Then he jumped around to Tommyknocker Brewery in Idaho Springs, CO, Golden Pacific Brewing in Berkeley, and Commonwealth Brewing in Boston. He settled down



for a long stint, in all places, at the Tokyo Brewing Co. Finally, it was time to get serious and use his science background, so he enrolled in

SMUTTY: Continued on page 2

BEER EVENTS

Tue. May 13, 6pm, 4th Annual Brooklyn Brewery Dinner at Austin's Steak and Ale, \$60. Enjoy a 5-course dinner and beer pairing, with commentary from Garrett Oliver (on the patio, weather permitting).

Tue. May 13, Beer, Cheese and Chocolate at Jimmy's No. 43. Two seatings, \$35. Tickets and info at NYCDAT.

Tue. May 13, Smuttynose at Bar Great Harry. Gnome, Brett & I, Farmhouse Ale '07, Maibock, Summer Weizen, IPA.

Tue. May 13, 6-9pm, Drink Gruut
Stuff at dba. The US debut of
Genste Stadsbrouwerij (Ghent
City Brewery). Raven Brands is
bringing Gruut Amber and Gruut
Wit.

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Cheers from

the editor.

Alan Rice...

NEXT MEETING:

Wed. May 14,

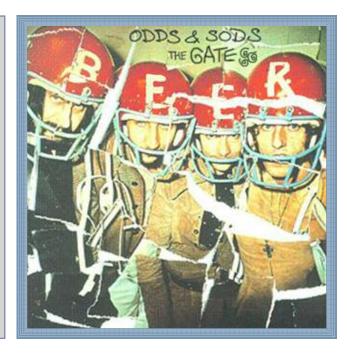
7:30pm, Mugs

Ale House. Our

quest: Mike

Saklad of Stone

Brewing Co.



the UC Davis Master Brewers Program. He's been overseeing the brewery at Smuttynose since 2001.

David was accompanied by Tom Briggs, the Smuttynose NY and NJ sales rep. Tom quit selling mutual funds in Boston to go for a Masters in English. When he saw that he was on a teaching track, he bailed out and went back to an old standby, bartending. Many of you met Tom at the half-pint sized Essex Ale House on the Lower East Side. He had his hand selecting the excellent beer list there. That was in the brief period between when Will Putnam turned the 12" Bar into our kind of place, and when the cops decided to pick on a law-abiding small businessman until he was forced to sell. Essex is once again selling some decent beers, and Tom is now selling some excellent beers.

Smuttynose is making a big push in the NYC area. They've recently had events at Downtown Bar and The Gate. And if you check the calendar, you'll find some Smuttycentric tap handles at Bar Great Harry and Standings.

There was a misunderstanding, and Tom didn't bring any samples to the MBAS meeting at **Mugs Ale House**. It is the biggest Smuttynose account in the area, and Tom didn't want to upset **Ed Berestecki**, Mugs' owner. Tom has never been to the <u>MBAS holiday party</u>

HOT LINK http://hbd.org/mbas/pdf/jan08.pdf and seen what the Shelton Bros. bring. Also, Ed lets us carry in rare bottles to share at the Split Thy Skull strong beer fests, even though there is more than enough beer there to, well, you know.

Smuttynose IPA (aka Finest Kind) is always on tap at Mugs. If you want to know why, ask Jimmy, the regular with the big white beard who's usually at the far end of the bar. (While you're at it, ask him why PBR is *not* on tap.) Their IPA was an East coast response to the emergence of West coast hop heads. The floral and citrus aromas are followed by a grapefruit blast from 65 IBUs of Simcoes, Santiams and Amarillos.





Above, Tom Briggs and David Yarrington pouring at the ASE Ultimate Belgian Tasting III. At left, David at the MBAS meeting.

Smutty has had no problem sourcing hops during the current shortage. They have always contracted with farmers three to four years out since it takes that long for hop rootstocks to mature. But prices that had been \$4-5/lb. for years climbed to \$5-6/lb. for very early purchase of the 2007 harvest, to \$12-25/lb. on the spot market, if you can find them. David is still looking

to secure a few thousand more pounds this fall.

Some brewers only want bitterness without a specific flavor profile, so it doesn't matter what goes into the vat. Many farmers are planting hops that are high in alpha acids to meet this need with the smallest acreage. Since they are planting fewer varieties, the plants are at greater risk for disease and pest infestations. And brewers that are looking for aroma and delicacy will have to improvise. Even worse, it may be impossible to add a new style when there is no spot market to fill an unforeseen demand.

Fortunately, there were plenty of hops to brew a full batch of **Big A IPA**. They were bottled in early April,

Continued on next page

and they should be hitting the distributors as you read this. But if you recall, the bottles didn't even make it to NYC last year. It is very popular, and you had to move fast to find it on tap. At the Manhattan Cask Festival at Chelsea Brewing, Big A IPA was the first cask of over 40 to kick.

At 9.2%, Big A is DIPA, but not like the West coast versions. David loves his hops, but he doesn't care for the caramel malt that many of them use.

They had to use the "kitchen sink" method to come up with enough hops. So expect it to taste a little different this year. They used Cascades and Nuggets in the boiling addition. Centennials were added every 5 minutes for the last 30 minutes of the boil. Crystals were added in the whirlpool. They dry hopped a mixture of Chinooks, Nuggets, and Sterlings in the fermenters after primary fermentation, and whole leaf Centennials in the bright tank.



Smutty bottles their regular line-up of beers under 7% abv in six-packs. Their high gravity seasonals like Big A IPA are in bombers. **The Big Beer Series** are all bottle conditioned, and vintage dated for your cellar. Many can be found for under \$7, and all are well worth a try. The brewers like variety, so the line-up changes every year. This year, they're skipping Scotch Ale and Oktoberfest, but Imperial Stout and Maibock are already out. Definitely seek out the Farmhouse Ale and Wheat Wine this summer, then Barley Wine and S'muttnator Dopplebock in the fall. At the end of the year, look for the first release of Belgian Quad.

Also new this year was **Smuttynose Baltic Porter**. It was on cask at Mugs for the meeting, and it was delicious. It is for malt lovers, with Pilsner, Munich, Cara-Hell, Dark Crystal 120, Carastan 35, Chocolate Malt,

and Black Malt. They're balanced with 40 IBUs of Magnums (bittering) and Liberties (flavoring and aroma). The bottled version pours with a two finger tan head with dark orange lacing. There are dried fruits on the nose and the bit of licorice on the tip of the tongue.

A mouthful of silky chocolate goes down with a coffee finish.

Baltic porters evolved from Imperial Stouts, which were the stronger versions of the British stouts that took the voyage to Scandanavia and Northern Europe. But Baltic Porters are usually lagers or cold fermented ales, so to understand what you are tasting, compare it to a Schwarzbier or Dopplebock, as well as an Imperial Stout.

D. Carnegie and Co. is Sweden's largest brewery, and their Baltic Porter is David Yarrington's favorite. Interestingly, it is top fermented, as is Sine-



brychoff from Helsinki. Okocim and Zywiec from Poland brew lager versions. They are easy drinkers, well distributed, and less than half the price of the former pair.

David wanted to run a pilot system to try experimental beers. But he didn't want to waste money on new equipment, or time on a 5-gallon homebrew batch. Then he realized that he could brew 5 barrels for the same effort, and sell it as a one-off like in a brewpub, because "chalk is cheap." All they needed was some extra fermenters. He found two 30 bbl tanks that Great Lakes Brewing had been using for yeast brinks (storage), and they sold them at an amazing price.

So now he is brewing the **Short Batch Series**, 20 to 30 bbls at a time. These limited released beers are draft-only and found at select beer bars up and down the East Coast. Expect about four or five styles per year. Right now, as you read this, they are at Bar Great Harry, and there may still be some left at Mugs. So that is another reason to come to the May meeting.

Gnome is a hoppy tripel inspired by Houblon Chouffe. He used White Labs Chimay-style yeast, and hopped with Vanguard, Sterling and East Kent Goldings. It's a still fruity, even with aging, because it didn't drop properly.

Brett & I started out as a Belgian Strong ale with yeast cropped from the Gnome. It didn't drop right, either. They added *Brettanomyces claussenii* to the sec-

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ondary. It is similar to Ommegedeon in that it is a Belgian-style beer that was released without enough "horse blanket" funkiness. If any bars have a keg of this, they should save it for their next Smuttynose event.

David would like to brew sour beers like Berliner Weiss or Gueze styles. But he is wary of playing with bugs like Lactobacillus, because the risk of infecting the brewery is not trivial.

Smuttaroni is brewed with 7% wild rice in the grain bill. The recipe came from Mike Luparello, a former brewer at the Portsmouth Brewery. The base is a hoppy pale ale, with pilsner, wheat, and caramel malts, and Sterling hops. If he brews it again, David will use 10% wild Peter Egelston, Ed Berestecki, and Tom Briggs at Mugs. rice. It's a pleasant, easy drinker at 5.5%

and 35 IBUs. Of the three experiments, this one is drinking the best right now.

David Yarrington spent 3 years in Japan helping Dave and Mike Kubeck get Tokyo Brewing Co. get off the ground. Brewpubs were not allowed in the late nineties, so they had to open a microbrewery. And even to do that they had to change a law that required a minimum of around 100,000 bbls/year production. They were located in the Azabu Juban distict, in a large warehouse. Part of the building was converted into a multimedia space called Deluxe. David helped attract music events while he was there.

David found the culture in Japan to be both wonderful and maddening, because things are so different there. One of things that he enjoyed was Hanami. It's the ancient Japanese custom of enjoying flowers. Entire families make a day of it, especially when the cherry trees are in bloom. Thousands of people picnic together in the parks in late April. The feasting includes copious amounts of food and drink. Think of leaf peeping in New England, but everyone is really, really into it. That feeling, along with a taste of New Glarus Wisconsin Belgian Red Ale, inspired **Hanami**, Smutty's spring seasonal. When it debuted last year, the Japanese Consul from Boston and the Mayor of Portsmouth came out.

Hanami is a barely-hopped pale ale with 50 gallons of cherry juice in each 50 bbl. batch. They didn't use cherry essence, since it gets lost if you don't use enough,



and it tastes like cough syrup if you use too much. The juice ferments out, leaving a subtly tart, not sweet, flavor. The bitterness also comes from the fruit. Some people really like it, but others hated it. I've had it bottled, and didn't care for it. David says it's better on tap. It should taste the same, like Bud does. But their small brewery doesn't have the state of the art equipment.

I think they got it right with Smuttynose Pumpkin Ale. Theirs is one of my favorite pumpkin beers. Is has just the right balance of fruit and spice.

Smuttynose continued their NYC ramp-up when founder **Peter Egelston** dropped by Mugs last week. He is not unfamiliar with Brooklyn, having lived there from the mid-seventies through mid-eighties. He owned a building across 5th Ave. from where Bierkraft is today. It's upscale today, but it was a very scary place back then. (You've seen the movies).

He started homebrewing as soon as Jimmy Carter legalized it in 1977. His kit beer was lousy but still better than anything produced commercially back then. He later found homebrew supplies at Milan Labs, a wine making shop on Spring St. in Little Italy.

He had taken a pay cut from his doorman job to teach English as a second language in Times Square. When he had completed all of the credits for a Masters in Education, he taught English at Sarah J. Hale High School in Brooklyn. But they paid salaries in the teens, and the quality of teachers matched the pay. If they

Continued on next page

could "fog up a mirror," they were hired.

His sister **Janet Egelston** came out from CA for a visit, and drank his homebrews. She dragged him back home to Santa Cruz to check out the Front Street Pub, the first brewpub he had ever seen. They looked at a few other places, and together opened the **Northampton Brewery**. Now that Commonwealth is closed, it is the oldest brewery in Massachusetts. They celebrate their 21st anniversary on August 10, 2008.

Together they opened **Portsmouth Brewery** in 1991. In 2002, it was time to be siblings again, not partners, so they bought each other out, with Janet taking Northampton.

In 1993, Peter attended the bankruptcy auction of the

Frank Jones Brewery. Not intending to buy anything, he bought the building and the equipment. He had no business plan, no brand, and no name. ("Smuttynose" is the name of a tiny island among the Isles of Shoals, not too far out along the NH/ME border.) And he had no experience in a production brewery, which is quite different from

a brewpub. The bottom fell out of the microbrew business in 1997, and sales dropped 30%. Instead of listening to unsolicited advice to brew mainstream beers, he went the other way. The Big Beer Series was founded in 1998.

The years of hard work are paying off now. They have grown about 20%/year the last 6 years. In 2006 they surpassed the 15,000 bbls mark, so they are no longer a microbrewery but a regional brewery. Last year they produced 18,000 bbls, and 20,000 bbls will be brewed this year. Smuttynose is found from ME to VA, and also in PA and WI. They are not planning on expanding beyond these states right now, since their current market is not saturated.

However, big plans are in the works. Peter has been trying for several years to relocate to a new building with a logically laid out brewery. In Newmarket, he had a great location with views of the Lamprey River and an historic mill. He tried to stay in Portsmouth, but the property that he eyed came with too much baggage, and the neighbors didn't want them.

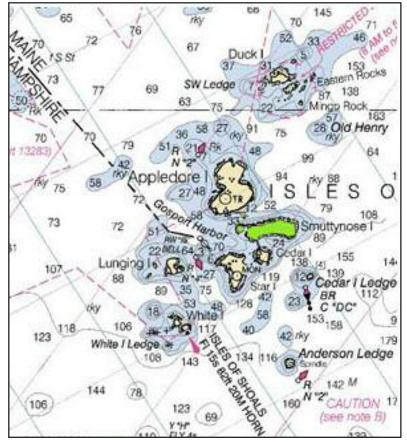
This turned out to be a blessing when a 17-acre site on Towle Farm Road in Hampton became available. The original barn is still on the site. He will be protecting the wetlands and operating the "greenest" possible facility. He has plans for a 43,000 square foot hilltop brewery with the potential for 60,000 bbls, and a 7,000 square foot restaurant.

In 2007, Peter Egelston accepted the New Hampshire Business Review "Excellence in Manufacturing" award on behalf of Smuttynose Brewery. And last December, Beer Advocate Magazine named Portsmouth Brewery's Kate the Great Imperial Stout the best beer in America. It used to stay on tap for 2 or 3 months, like their other high gravity beers, but the winter batch was gone in a week. Beer geeks are already planning road

trips from as far away as PA to pick up a couple bottles or a growler from the next, 10 bbl. release at the end of May. They even put a countdown clock on their website. Peter doesn't understand all of the fuss. Brewers Tod Mott and Tyler Jones produce many excellent beers, and to Peter, this one is no better.



The new Smuttynose Brewery and restaurant in Hampton, NH will open in 2010.





All New York breweries and brewpubs are invited to the annual TAP NY, a late-April craft beer and fine food fest at Hunter Mountain in the Catskills. There is also a competition. This is the only event where the best craft breweries and beers of New York and the Hudson Valley are recognized. Congratulations to the 2008 winners:

NEW YORK STATE:

F.X. Matt Memorial Cup, Best Brewery, Ithaca Beer Co.

Gold Medal: Ithaca Ten Imperial Red Ale Silver Medal: Ithaca Flower Power IPA Bronze Medal: Brooklyn Brown Ale

HUDSON VALLEY:

Matthew Vassar Brewers' Cup, Best Brewery, **Brown's Brewing Co.**

Gold Medal: Olde Saratoga White Ale

Silver Medal: Captain Lawrence Xtra Gold Triple

Bronze Medal: Keegan Ales Mother's Milk Stout Ithaca Beer's Chief Brewer, Jeff O'Neil. Photo by Mike Lovullo





The Brewers Association presented the prestigious World Beer Cup awards in San Diego on April 19, at the close of the annual Craft Brewers Conference. A crowd of 1500 brewers and their colleagues were on hand. There were 2864 entries in 91 categories by 644 breweries from 58 countries and 45 states. The 2009 conference will be held in Boston. More info and winners list at http://www.beertown.org/ Congratulations to the New York medalists:

Wood- and Barrel-aged Beer, Silver: **Brown's Whiskey Porter**, Brown's Brewing Co.

European-Style Dark/Münchner Dunkel, Silver: Munich Dunkel, C.H. Evans Brewing

German-Style Strong Bock, Bronze: JW Dundee's Doppelbock, High Falls Brewing Co.

American-Style Amber Lager, Bronze: **Brooklyn Lager**, Brooklyn Brewery

Belgian-Style White, Wit or Wheat, Silver: Ommegang Witte, Brewery Ommegang

Classic English-Style Pale Ale, Silver: Saranac Pale Ale, F.X. Matt Brewing Co.

British-Style Imperial Stout, Gold: **Brooklyn Black Chocolate Stout**, Brooklyn Brewery

American-Style Wheat Wine Ale, Silver: Wheat Wine, Great Adirondack Brewing Co.

Calendar

Continued from page 1

UNDERLINED TEXT INDICATES HOT LINK
Tue. May 13, 5-9pm, A Sierra Nevada Debut at Spring Lounge. Be the first in NYC to try Southern
Hemisphere Harvest Ale. No American brewer has ever before put out a beer with fresh-picked hops from the southern hemisphere (New Zealand). Pacific Hallertau, New Zealand
Motueka and New Zealand Southern
Cross hops were picked, dried, flown and brewed within a week. Also, Pale Ale, Summerfest, and Torpedo Ale for only \$4/pint.

Tue May 13, 6-9pm, Beer Dinner at House of Brews, \$45. Five gourmet courses paired with world-class beers at the 51st/8th location. Click link for menu and reservations.

Wed. May 14, Allagash at <u>Down-town</u>. Drafts: Black, Odyssey, Musette, Interlude, Four. Bottles: Victor, Curieux, Hugh Malone, Victoria Ale, White Ale, Fluxus, Tripple Ale, Grand Cru, 11th Anniversary

Wed. May 14, 4-8pm, Brooklyn Un-

corked 2008 at BAM Café, \$50. Edible Brooklyn's annual local-tasting soiree. Drafts from Blue Point, Brooklyn, Heartland, Sixpoint, and Southampton. The full suite of Long Island wines. Specialty items from local markets and samples from neighborhood restaurants.

Wed. May 14, 6pm, Smuttynose at Standings. Five drafts, free sausage & peppers.

Fri. May 16 - Sat. May 17 SAVOR

in Washington, DC, \$85. SAVOR: An American Craft Beer & Food Experience will highlight the culinary delights of beer as part of the Brewers Association's annual American Craft Beer Week celebrations. Enjoy a reception-style sampling pairing your choice of 35+ sweet and savory appetizers with 96 craft beers from 48 breweries. Attend food and beer pairing salons. Converse with the lumi-

naries of the craft beer industry, including Tomme Arthur, Adam Avery, Peter Bouckaert, Sam Calagione, Vinnie Cilurzo, Greg Koch, Jim Koch, Garrett Oliver, Hugh Sisson, Carol Stoudt, and Rob Tod.

Fri. May 16-Sun May 18, Noon-Midnight, 15th Tri-Annual Cask Ale Fest at the Brazenhead. You know the deal: 11 casks tapped at a time, 10oz or 16oz pours, pay as you go. Arcadia Hop Rocket Double IPA, Blue Point Blueberry Ale, Blue Point Double Blonde, Blue Point Sour Cherry Imperial Stout, Chelsea Sunset Red, Chelsea Pro-Am Altbier, Chelsea Tsars Revenge '07, Chelsea Oak Aged 100 Gyle Imperial Mild, Cricket Hill Col. Blides Bitter, Cricket Hill Hopnotic IPA, Dark Star Hophead, Dark Star American Pale Ale, Defiant Brandy's Brown, Green Flash Imperial IPA, Green Flash Double Stout, Heartland Old Red Nose '07, Heartland Sour Raspberry Aged

Calendar continued on next page

Homebrew Events

MAY 17, 2008

12th Annual B.E.E.R. Brew-Off

At The American Legion in St. James, NY Presented by Brewer's East End Revival of Long Island

Entries collected Apr. 12 – May 10 Details at: http://hbd.org/beer/

JUNE 7, 2008

Buzz Off Homebrew Competion

At Iron Hill Brewery in West Chester, PA Hosted by Brewers Unlimited Zany Zymurgists http://hbd.org/buzz/ JUNE 13-14, 2008

New York State Homebrew Competition

At the NY State Fairgrounds in Syracuse
Hosted by the Salt City Brew Club
http://www.saltcitybrew.org/sf competition.html

JUNE 19-21, 2008

AHA 30th Nat'l Homebrewers Conference, Cincinnati

The world's largest-attended conference devoted to amateur brewers. Keynote speaker is Jim Koch of Boston Beer Co.

http://www.beertown.org/events/hbc/

Please participate. All entries welcome. Judge and stewards wanted.

AMERICAN CRAFT BEER WEEK OF May 12-18, 2008

CALENDAR: Continued from page 7

Stout, Ramstein Double Platinum
Blonde, Ramstein Munich Amber,
Hook Norton Hooky Dark, Kelso Saison, Kelso Bock, Kelso Hop Lager,
Kelso Pils, Magic Hat Lucky Kat,
Wolaver's All American Ale, Sixpoint
Sweet Action, Sly Fox Phoenix Pale
Ale, Sly Fox Grisette, Smuttynose
Shoals Pale Ale dry hopped Cascades,
Smuttynose IPA dry hopped Simcoes,
Stoudt's Scarlet Lady dry hopped East
Kent Goldings, Troeg's Hop Back
Amber Ale, Weyerbacher Hops Infusion, plus Doc's Draft Apple and Pear
ciders.

Sat. May 17, Noon-6pm, <u>Captain</u>
<u>Lawrence</u> 2nd Anniversary Party
at the Brewery in Pleasantville.
Beer, BBQ and live music.

Sat. May 17, 2pm, Sixpoint Brewery
Tour and Tasting at Cherry Tree,
\$25. This is a special opportunity to
visit the Sixpoint Brewery. Regular
tours will not resume until the fall.
The bus boards at 1:30pm and leaves

the Cherry Tree Bar at 2pm. Taste a few specialties at the brewery. Return to Cherry Tree for a 2-hour open bar featuring Sweet Action, Righteous Rye, Diesel Stout, Apollo Wheat, Bengali Tiger, Gorilla Warfare, and Brownstone. Limited to 50 people, purchase tickets in advance at Cherry Tree.

Sat. May 17, 5-8:30pm, 14th Annual Connecticut Craft Brewers Fest, Jesse Camille's
Restaurant, Naugatuck, \$35.40
breweries and brewpubs (all in CT are invited), 135 beers, food, live music.

Sat. May 17, 1-5pm, Brandywine Valley Craft Brewers
Fest at Iron Hill Brewery in
Media, PA, \$30. 25 regional
breweries, live music.

Tue. May 20, Beer and Cheese
Night III at Pacific Standard.
Lists TBA.

Sat. May 31, 1pm, 3rd Annual Yeast Feast at Spuyten Duyvil. Special afternoon opening for rare and obscure lambics and other funky beers.

Sat. May 31, 1-7pm, Sixpoint pres-

Calendar continued on next page

MBAS 2008 COMMITTEE

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Page layout: Pamela Rice

http://hbd.org/mbas

ents the 3rd Annual Big Ten
Block Party at Ulysses. A Midwest-style block party, downtown on
Stone St. Brats and burgers, and the regular pub menu. Bengali Tiger,
Righteous Rye, Apollo Wheat, Sweet
Action, Brownstone.

Thu. June 5, Arcadia at Barcade.
Tim Surprise will be present.

Thu. June 5, 6pm, <u>Sierra Nevada at</u>
<u>Standings</u>. Five drafts, free burgers.

Wed. June 11, <u>Allagash at Lenora's</u>
Way. Rob Tod will be present.

Fri. June 13, Friday the Firkenteenth at <u>Grey Lodge</u>, Philadelphia. Minimum 13 gravity casks on the bar. Sat. June 14, <u>Stoudt's 17th Annual</u>

<u>Micro-Fest</u>, Adamstown, PA. Two sessions, \$28. Breweries from around the country, German food, live music.

Thu. June 19, 4:30-8:30pm, 7th Annual Connecticut Brew Fest at the Old State House, Hartford, \$35. Breweries from throughout New England, food from area restaurants, live music.

Fri. June 20-Sat June 21, American Craft Beer Fest at the Seaport World Trade Center, Boston. Three sessions, \$43.50.75 brewers, 300 beers, guest speakers, more.

Sat. June 21, <u>Troegs presents the</u>
<u>5th Annual Harrisburg Brewers</u>
<u>Fest</u>. Two sessions, \$35 and VIP,
\$95. At least 35 breweries (mostly

Mid-Atlantic), live music, inexpensive food.

Sat. June 21, Noon-4pm, 12th Annual Garden State Craft Brewers
Guild Fest on the Battleship New
Jersey, Camden, \$43.25. All 16 NJ
breweries and brew-pubs will be
pouring for only 750 guests.

Up-to-the-minute event info:

http://hbd.org/mbas/calendar.html
For the latest draft lists, go to:
 http://hbd.org/mbas/new.html
For area beer bars, go to:

http://hbd.org/mbas/beer.html

