



Malted Barley Appreciation Society

November, 2002 Newsletter

From the Editor's Disk

Not much to report on my end except that the regularity of submissions by our members keeps me happy! Sorry to have missed the Philly trip, too.

Sam Michalowski, Ed.

October Meeting

Eric Freberg, MBAS

The October meeting began the usual way, with club president Lucy Zachman running through the announcements and upcoming events, most notably the club trip to Philadelphia that was on schedule for the following Saturday. Despite the chill in the air, club members fortunate enough to bring extra layers bundled up and remained outside in the Mug's beer garden. This made the newest club member, Ludwig (Bill's Dachshund), very happy since dogs are not permitted in the indoor dining area.

We then welcomed David Pollack from B. United International, an outstanding importer, as our guest speaker. David first pointed out that B. United now also imports sake, and mentioned an upcoming sake tasting (which took place on October 14) at dba.

The featured beverage of the night was not sake, however, nor was it beer, at least not exclusively. David brought some excellent ciders starting with Dupont Calvados, matured in casks for six months. Next was the Pays d'Auge, a cider which carries the Appellation Controllee, a certification which allow it to identify with this region of Normandy, which boasts the finest ciders such as Pommeau, and Calvados. Comments from various club members about this cider included smoky, cheesy, even band-aid, but all agreed it was excellent. Then it was on to Domaine Dupont Pommeau (available now), a blend of 30% Calvados (an aged apple brandy) and 70% cider which is aged for 30 months in oak. Quite good, very strong.

Eventually we switched to beer. First was an unlabeled, mystery beer which according to my

notes was a 20 year old Imperial Stout, an Aventinus mash with Bordeaux yeast. Sour cherry notes were detected.

The final selection David opened was a Chouffe coffee liqueur, which was warming and coated the tongue. This will be available in November from B. United.

As a final note - we're in the heart of brewing season. Support your local homebrew supplier!

November's meeting, Wednesday, 13th, 2002: Ye Old Faithful Mugs's Ale House, 125 Bedford Avenue



RoadTrip Report: Real Ale Rendezvous 8

Eric Freberg, MBAS

On October 12th, the Malted Barley Appreciation Society held it's first roadtrip in several years. We got together around 10AM at Grand Central with our luxury minibus waiting out front, and by noon we were in Philadelphia for the Real Ale Rendezvous 8.

First stop was Ludwig's Garten, which claims to be Philly's only German restaurant. Hearty authentic German fare seemed to be a fitting way to begin a day of drinking, and this place does it right, from smoked trout to pickled herring to Spaztle to Rouladen. Great potato pancakes. And even the salad had Wurst in it. As for beer, there were over 20 taps, mostly German imports but a few local microbrewed versions of German styles such as Victory's Mad King's Weisse, and even more bottled selections including the tart Berliner Kindl Weisse which was served with a bit of Woodruff syrup to offset the sourness. Also of note, we had a seven-year-old bottle of Kulmbacher Reichelbrau Eisbock, which was chocolaty and surprisingly smooth given its strength and age.

From there it was on to the Independence Brewpub, which was hosting Real Ale Rendezvous 8. For those that don't know, 'Real Ale' is the obsession of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, which has made a point of promoting traditional casked beer while shunning the use of gas pressure for dispensing. Other practices such as filtration, force carbonation, and electrical cooling methods are clearly frowned upon.

There were thirteen offerings, all but one of which are brewed in about a 100 mile radius from Philadelphia. Most of the beers fell into two categories, really hoppy or really strong. I thought it best to start with hops. First and most extreme was Anderson Valley Hop Otter IPA, the only one not from the region. Very floral aroma, definitely dry hopped. Slightly more subdued was the Iron Hill Fresh Hop Harvest Ale, made with 'day-old, wet Cascade' hops. My personal favorite was the Troegs ESB from Harrisburg PA, which had a definite Munich malt character that balanced out the Chinook hops nicely. Other casks were from Victory (ESB) Philadelphia's Nodding Head (IPA).

The stronger selections included Heavyweight's Stickenjab, actually one of the lightest offerings from this brewery. This had nice vanilla notes and a smooth creamy mouthfeel. General Lafayette Imperial Stout 2001 (8.9% abv) was good enough to make us consider a side trip to Lafayette Hill to visit the historic Inn and brewery where this roasty, high gravity brew is made (we decided against it, eventually). While this was perhaps the most enjoyable, the most potent was of course from Dogfish Head, with their Old School Barleywine (15.5% abv). Inspired by a legend of a doctor who brought sluggish ales to life by adding figs, this cask was reinvigorated with figs and dates. There was also Yards' Love Stout, on the thin side, Stoudt's Scotch Ale, Stewart's Old Percolator Coffee Porter, a nice Oaked Porter from Independence as well as their American Amber.

Next on the agenda was Monk's Cafe, which was a bit crowded at first but eventually we took over the bar in the back room. At many places with huge beer lists, it can still be oddly difficult to find something to order, but there were so many excellent, hard to find beers here that this would never be a problem at Monk's. Some of our selections were Triple Karmeleit, Chimay Triple, DeKoninck Cuvée, Cantillon Gueuze, all on tap. In bottles we had

Oude Beersel Geuze, and Caracole Brown Ale (cool label with a grinning snail standing in front of a candle).

We then stopped at the Foodery, a great bo-dega specializing in beer, where I picked up some Fantome Babilliard, Oude Beersel Kriek, Cantillon Rose de Gambrinus, and Old Rasputin Imperial Stout.

The last stop of the day was a comfortable bar in northeast Philly called Standard Tap which specializes in local beer, from microbreweries such as Yards, Victory, Fancy Pants, Flying Fish, Sly Fox, Dogfish Head, Troegs, Yuengling, River Horse, Appalachian, and Weyerbacher. Good pub grub. Every neighborhood (especially mine) could use a place like this.

On the way home, Bill cracked open a Cantillon Kriek, and we watched a video of the latest Hannibal movie. I'm sure it was a good film but I was not alone in passing out halfway through it.

So it seems our President, Lucy Zachman, has made good on her campaign promise of a successful road trip. That, along with her other contributions including club glasses stored at Mug's, add up to a very productive presidency I'd say. So...elections are coming up....who will be next?



Trip Report: Salone del Gusto, Torino, Italia Jennifer Matrazzo and George de Piro, MBAS

What do chocolate-covered pumpkin seeds from Austria, donkey salami from Italy, and beers from all over the world have in common? Each was available for tasting pleasure at *Salone del Gusto*, the five-day intercontinental collision of taste and culture presented by the International Slow Food Movement. Slow Food is an organization spanning five continents and boasting 60,000 members, half of whom reside in Italy. Membership is open to any interested party and, although the organization enjoys only modest membership in the United States, local chapters or *convivia*, can be found throughout the country.

Slow Food members organize the *Salone del Gusto*, or Hall of Taste, biennially at the Lingotto center, a former Fiat factory which has been converted into an enormous convention center in Turin, Italy. The festival showcased food and beverage

produced by hundreds of companies committed to regional, seasonal, organic materials crafted according to traditional methods – a feast for anyone who loves to taste, as well as an opportunity for festival-goers to sample comestibles not readily available in their particular corner of the world.

We worked all five days of the festival, pouring beers from ten American breweries, including our own C.H. Evans Brewing Company. We brought our award-winning Kick-Ass brown, Pump Station Pale and State Street Porter. Some of the other breweries there were Brooklyn, Deschutes, Lefthand/Tabernash and Kona (from Hawaii).



Jenn pours beer with Charlie and Sandra Papazian

Despite about eight weeks of warm storage while the beers were shipped over to Italy, some of them tasted pretty good. Our pale ale fared the best out of the Evans beers, and Brooklyn Black Chocolate Stout and Lefthand/Tabernash Imperial Stout were also quite tasty. Surprisingly (to me, anyway), a light-tasting lager from Kona traveled really well.

Most of the 138,000 festival attendees were Italian, and since neither Jenn nor I speak our ancestral tongue, describing the beers was a bit of a challenge. Fortunately, Eric from Lefthand/Tabernash was quite fluent and wrote up a list of beer descriptors. As people approached the stand, often with some visible trepidation, we would say, “assagio?” (taste) They would most often reply that they would like a taste, which then prompted the utterance of the words, “dolce o amara? Chiara o scura?” (sweet or bitter, light or dark). We could gauge people’s opinions of the beers by the look on their face or their requests for seconds. There were

plenty of requests for seconds!

There is an Italian craft brewing scene, although it is just in its infancy. Having searched for beer in several Italian cities over the past two years, it is clear that these brewers are truly courageous. Quite often, “birra ala spina” (draft beer) does not even have a tap marker at local cafes. People seem to care only if the beer is draft or bottled, having little concern about brand, and finding any Italian beer is challenging. Indeed, Italy seems like it could be a most difficult place to market artisanal beer.

There were some other beers at the *Salone*, including a selection of cask-conditioned beers from England. The most notable of these was Orkney Brewery’s MacGregor Red, with a big hop nose, and a touch of sulphury “home-perm” aroma. Medium-bodied, with a nice malt-hop balance, this proved to be my favorite session beer of the festival, although the Ayinger booth had some highly-drinkable offerings, too.

The Italian craft brew booth had several unique offerings, most of which were in the upper range of alcohol content. One memorable beer, named “Super,” was a malty, light amber beer with 8% alcohol and a pleasant finish in which malt and hops balanced well. My favorite Italian beer was *Panil Barriquée*, a brown, richly malty strong ale with the wonderful, earthy characteristics of *Brettenomyces*. I had more than one!

Beer was just a small part of this festival, however. Throngs of people slowly scoured over dozens of aisles packed with booths exhibiting everything from wine to whiskey, chocolate to cured meat. And cheese. Slow Food considers pasteurized-milk cheese a threat to deeply embedded cultural traditions, as well as a generally boring and homogenized product. Positing the official, Manifesto in Defense of Raw-milk Cheese, Slow Food is committed to preserving a market for raw-milk cheese and its unusual flavors and aromas. Indeed, a single sample from any of the numerous offerings of *la via del formaggio* would have been enough to inspire even the most committed fast-food junkie to ditch the Velveeta slices. Saval cheese, velvety and Welsh; artisan cheddar from Britain, sharply fruity with earthy undertones; Spanish gamonedo, creamy, peppery and blue; Polish oscypek, oval-shaped and smoked. And of course, the Italian mainstays of parmigiano reggiano, gorgonzola, asiago, stravecchio, marscapone, provolone, pe-

corino, and mozzarella (made from unpasteurized buffalo milk, of course).

Pointing to the folly of fast living, Slow Food seeks to banish the degrading and disruptive effects of fast food and asks you to make like a snail and, well, slow down. Slowing down establishes the time to seek out quality food and the openness to derive pleasure from that food. To this effect, Slow Food devotes a tremendous amount of energy to palate education through taste workshops. We attended several such *laboratori del gusto*, where participants were encouraged not only to taste with several senses (sight, smell, touch, as well as taste), but were further reminded about the essential connection people have with the earth. It makes perfect sense, of course, that the kind of grass a cow eats affects the taste of the cheese produced from its milk, or that soil-type and terrain contribute to the quality, and therefore taste, of the grapes used to ferment wine. Yes, it makes sense, but how often do we think of it this way?

Five days of the *Salone* left us wanting more. There is something exalting about a global marketplace of local, hand-crafted products. The festival is a homage to the generations of knowledge implicit to every wheel of cheese, every sip of wine, every bite of food. Slow Food wants to impose values on your taste buds. Slow Food wants you to discover your kitchen table as secular holy land, a center of tradition where food offers both contentment and communion. So slow down, sit back, and enjoy.



Contests, Events and other Goings On

New England Fall Regional Homemade
Beer Competition

Deerfield, MA, December 7, 2002

Jason Hunter, 413-519-1738,
hunter@postandbeam.com

<http://mail.symuli.com/NEHBOTY/>

At the Blind Tiger Ale House in November:

*Belgian Beer Week, Starts Wednesday, Nov. 13th.
Features 19 Belgian and Belgian-style beers on draught including: Allagash Grand Cru, Chimay Triple, De Dolle Stille Nacht, Hoegaarden, White Kross Double Brown, Leffe Blonde, N' Ice Chouffe

(aged 1 1/2 years), Rodenbach Red, Saison du Pont, Saison du Brooklyn, Southampton Abbot 12, Stoudt's Triple, Vapeur Cochonnette, Victory Golden Monkey, Delerium Tremens Nocturnum, Gouden Carolus, Weyerebacher Quad or Triple A, Special Heavyweight Cask, and the debut of Garrett Oliver's brand new Belgian-style Triple from Brooklyn Brewery.

*On Wednesday Nov 20th, at 6pm, the 2002 Dogfish Head World Wide Stout will be unveiled. Sam from Dogfish will also be bringing his Old School Barleywine and some of his 90 minute IPA.

Results from 2002 Great American Beer Festival, Denver, CO, October 3-5



Our very own George de Piro of C.H. Evans Brewing Company, Albany, NY won Gold in the American-Style Brown Ale (31 Entries) for his Kick-Ass Brown!! Congratulations George!!!!!!

Several other of our Regional Brewers won Medals at this year's festival.

- Foreign-Style Stout - 20 Entries
Gold : Black Hole XXX Stout, Chelsea Brewing Company - New York, NY
- Experimental Beer - 32 Entries
Gold : Berliner Weisse, Southampton Publick House - Southampton, NY
- German-Style Brown Ale - 24 Entries
Bronze : Southampton Secret Ale, Southampton Publick House - Southampton, NY
- Belgian-Style Sour Ale - 13 Entries
Bronze : Flanders Red Ale, Southampton Publick House - Southampton, NY

