

# Malted Barley Appreciation Society

September, 2001 Newsletter

## Trip Report (II) The Weyermann Maltings

by George de Piro

After eating and drinking at Schlenkerla until closing our first night in Bamberg, Jenn and I retired to our room at the wonderful Hotel Messerschmidt. Our second day in Bamberg promised to be exciting: we were scheduled to meet with Sabine and Thomas Weyermann at their maltings!



I had met Sabine and Thomas once before, at the brewpub in Albany. They were touring the north-eastern United States and came in to try the award-winning brown ale made from their malts. While dining we chanced upon the subject of European beer cities. Sabine was well prepared for this conversation, armed with several promotional pamphlets from Bamberg. As if it were necessary to make the most densely breweried city in Germany more appealing, she offered a guided tour through

the maltings. I was sold!

Jenn and I awoke at the crack of noon and ventured forth into the cool, gray world of Bamberg. Consulting my tourist map I saw that we could stop at Fässla on the way to the maltings. Unfortunately for us, we only had time for one beer and a pretzel in the smoky front room. Their *Zwergla* was a deep copper with a light, subtly spicy aroma. The palate, dry and malty, faded into a long, dry finish with more than a hint of bitterness. Sehr gut!

We made our way across the railroad tracks to the maltings. The large brick buildings are difficult to miss. Many of them were built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, at about the same time the building that houses the Albany Pump Station was built. There are architectural similarities despite the ocean between them.

**This Month's Guest Speaker  
George DePiro, Chief Brewer**



**C.H. Evans Brewing Co  
at the Albany Pump Station**

Meetings are held at Mugs Ale House, on the corner of 10th St. and Bedford Ave in Brooklyn on the second Wednesday of each month. This month, the meeting will be on the 12th. Mugs is three blocks from the Bedford Ave stop on the L train.

Sabine greeted us and introduced us to the Quality Control Manager, Andreas Richter, who was to be our tour guide. He took us all through the maltings, answering my many questions with patience. The facility is quite impressive. Housed inside the century-old buildings is a very modern malting plant, brewery and laboratory. Much of the malting process is automated, although the principles of malting

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## Malted Barley Appreciation Society

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are the same as they were 100 years ago.

The tour led us through all the phases of malting, from grain delivery to packaging.

Like most modern malting facilities, the Weyermann maltings uses Saladin boxes (pictured) to germinate the grain rather than floor malting. It is much more efficient than floor malting, although there are a few maltsters in the world that still insist floor malting yields a superior product. It is up to the individual to decide upon the quality of beer made from the different types of malt.



The Weyermanns also have a small brewery on site for the production of malt extracts and coloring beer. Coloring beer is a fascinating and useful product. It is made by mashing highly roasted barley malt and condensing the extract into a syrup. The consistency of the syrup is determined by its color, so that every batch will be the same color.

The Weyermann beer colorant, Sinimar ®, is held in a fermentor prior to being condensed into syrup. The German beer purity law requires that the product be treated just as ordinary beer, despite the fact

that there is no fermentable extract. It is exactly the same after fermentation as it was before!

Many of Germany's Schwarzbiers are made by adding coloring beer to a paler product. This increases the variety of beer a brewery can put out without the need to increase brewing capacity. A homebrewer can do the same thing: simply make a wort from 100% roasted malt and add some of it to a pale beer to make it dark. The flavor will of course be altered, too, becoming noticeably roasty if enough colorant is added.

I recently did this at the Pump Station. Sales of our porter increased unexpectedly early in the summer, causing us to run short. To satisfy the demand for a dark beer I made a colorant from Weyermann Carafa 2 and added it to my blonde ale (60 ounces per 15 gallons). The resulting Schwarzbier had a stronger roast presence than I expected, but was well received by the public. It proved so popular that I am planning a more traditionally made Schwarzbier for early winter.

After the tour we met with Thomas at the company canteen, a marvelous space filled with more beer paraphernalia than I've ever seen in one place. We drank the local favorite, the smoky Schlenkerla Märzen, and talked about the Weyermann's recent trip to Russia. After a short while we were joined by Sabine, and Thomas introduced us to some of his home-made schnapps.



The Weyermann Canteen. I'd never want to leave work!

Thomas distills schnapps of several varieties, including plum, apple, cherry and, of course, beer. In order to distill schnapps lawfully, he must grow the fruit used in its production. Talk about dedication to

a hobby! The beer schnapps was intriguing, with only a slight resemblance to the flavor of beer. The plum schnapps was my favorite, with a rich, fruity nose and flavor.

After consuming more alcohol than I had intended (after having eaten only a pretzel!) we set off to have dinner with the Weyermanns and some of their staff at a local brewpub. The Weyermann's daughter, Fanny, and their dog, Bonnie, also joined us. It's such fun to bring dogs to restaurants!

To be continued...

Note: The Weyermann website has been recently updated to include an informative virtual tour of their facility. It can be found on the web at <http://www.weyermann.de>.

## The August Meeting

By Eric Freberg, President, MBAS

With triple-digit temperatures keeping us out of the beer garden in favor of the air conditioned Mug's dining room, the Malted Barley Appreciation Society welcomed Sal Pennacchio of the Old World Brewing Company as our August guest speaker.

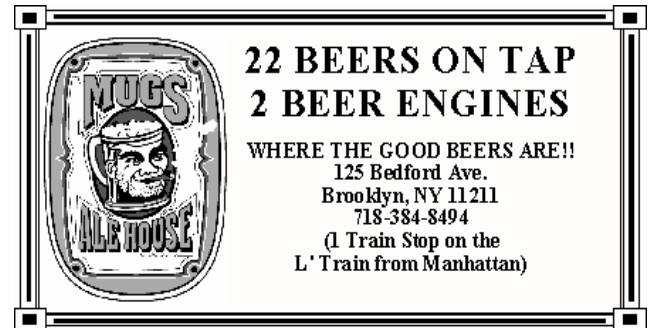
Sal has been largely responsible for keeping craft-brewing alive for over a decade in Staten Island, which was without a brewery since before prohibition. He began his brewing career with a homebrew shop, then founded Old World, well recognized for New York Harbor Ale - but until recently no brewing took place on Staten Island. However, he recently finished building a 20-barrel brewhouse not far from the Ferry terminal (tours available, Saturday afternoons), made from equipment he obtained from the defunct Fireworks brewery in White Plains and the former Mountain Valley Brewery in Suffern (which is now operating as Ramapo Valley Brewery).

Sal brought along a keg of his Kolsch-style ale, which he brewed with help from GABF winner David Hartman. It had a nice, complex malt profile, but it was still crisp and refreshing enough to quench our thirst in the intense heat (OK, I know I said the AC was on, but still).

In addition, he currently has an amber, and upcoming plans include a Porter, Oktoberfest, and Peach Wheat. He also plans a beer made with pumpkin, and expects to do a Barleywine this winter.

Most of Old World's beer is sold at the stadium where the minor-league Staten Island Yankees play. With just a hint of well deserved pride, Sal pointed

out that his beer far outsells the other offering at the stadium, a certain megabrew which I won't embarrass by naming. The more mainstream Amber does best, though. In Manhattan, Old World beer can usually be found at Waterfront Ale house.



## Contests, Festivals, and Other Goings On

### September 11: Fuller's Tasting

8:00 PM, David Copperfield's 1394, York Avenue at 74th Street NYC

### September 15: MBAS Pub Crawl

Begins at Waterfront Ale House (Manhattan) at 12:30PM

### September 19: Blind Tiger's First Annual Smoke-Out Beer Festival,

7:00 p.m. The Blind Tiger Ale House

### September 20: Ale Street News Oktoberfest Beer Dinner

Oscar's American Brasserie, Waldorf Astoria, New York City Info: 800-351-2537

### September 25: English Beer Party

7:00 p.m.: The Blind Tiger Ale House

### September 25: "Oktoberfest with Brooklyn Brewery" with Henry Sidel. Rock Center Cafe

September 27-29, Great American Beer Festival Denver CO. For Info, 800-351-2537

### September 30: Regional Breweries.

A Benefit for Slow Food USA. America's new independent regional breweries team up with local food purveyors for a fanatastic beer and food tasting at the Puck Building in Manhattan. Brooklyn, Sierra, Anderson Valley, Stoudt's, Magic Hat, Otter Creek, special guests Deschutes of Oregon, New Belgium of Colorado, Alaskan and more. Information: 212-988-5146

### October 6: 6th Annual Brewfest

Killington VT. For info, 802-422-1700