

THIS is the HOTV BREWSLETTER

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President's Corner

by Lee Smith

The 1996 Homebrewers Picnic has come and gone, and what a nice outing it was! The weather was questionable, but the power of positive thinking prevailed, and we had a (mostly) sunny and pleasant day. Attendance was good, with 65 adults and 33 children representing five area clubs. There was plenty of good food and drink for everyone, and the adult and kids' games were, as expected, a lot of fun. CAPITOL BREWERS prevailed in the adult games and, in spite of tremendous competition, carried the magnificent Handy-Capper Trophy home to Salem. Congratulations to Eric Munger and his determined crew . . . they deserve the honor. As for HOTV, spring training camp will open in March. My thanks to all who helped in so many ways and a special thanks to Rob Robinson, Stephanie Low, Jeff Tobin, and Ted Manahan for their extra effort and involvement.

Going back to before the picnic, the September meeting at Kim's house was attended by 18 members and five guests, one of whom (Kelly Ivors) joined our club ON THE SPOT! Thanks, and welcome, Kelly. Business discussed included the October 19th pub crawl (Matt Martel and I will do a phone survey early in the month); the picnic; officer nominations for 1997; and, lastly, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to contribute \$100 to the Corvallis Environmental Center to recognize the work the Center does throughout the area as well as to express our own community interests.

For the first time I'll be going to the Great American Beer Festival in late September, and I'll have a report (of sorts) for you at the October 16th meeting at Ron Hall's house. See you there.

-Lee

BsoM

Be on the lookout for the revival of the Beer Style of the Month at the meeting. In the past, someone felt it would be a good exercise to sample several examples of a particular style of beer at each monthly meeting. This event was well received; however the person who was responsible weaseled his way out of continuing the program, and we have been awaiting its reincarnation. Jeff Tobin has graciously agreed to

take over the task for a few months. This month, we will sample Bier de Garde. Please bring a few dollars to donate to this worthy cause if you intend on participating. As usual, anyone who has a good idea for the Beer Style of the Month should pick up some examples, get a message to your humble newsletter editor for publication, and become somewhat familiar with that style. In the past we have sampled Scottish Ale, Stout, Brown Ale, Pale Ale, Wheat Beers (including hefe, dunkel, and American wheat but not including Belgian wheat beer), and, I think, IPA.

Kudos!

Heart of the Valley Homebrewers members have again agreed to support our local community. It has been over a year since we decided to make a presence and adopt a stretch of highway to keep clean. We have been keeping up our end of that deal very well. Congratulations. In addition to continuing this service, we have agreed to take an additional step. At the last meeting, a motion was passed to make a donation to a local charitable organization. We gave one hundred dollars to the Corvallis Environmental Center, a "vital community resource actively working to broaden public participation in the protection and restoration of our natural environment." The environmental center returned a letter of thanks for our generosity.

We also discussed the possibility of future donations, dependant on the club's financial status. The group agreed that we do not want to consider charitable donations on a continual basis, but that we would consider an annual donation to one group or multiple groups in late summer or early fall. This is the time when HOTV is finished with all expenses related to the annual competition and festival. We agreed that it would be a good idea to amend the bylaws to describe the annual nature of possible future contributions. If you feel like drafting something, send a copy to the editor and bring it to the next meeting.

One final idea that was bounced around was to give more of our time as volunteers. This would directly benefit our community and help to promote the art and joy of homebrewing. One possible outlet is the Avery House project.

Events, Upcoming and recent:

Last month's meeting was well attended by members. Several new faces joined us as well. We are even bringing in new mead makers. Yippee!

October 5: Highway 20 litter pick up.

This quarter, our litter pickup was postponed due to weather. If you didn't make this one, we will be doing it all over again in a few months!

October 16: HOTV monthly meeting.

This month the meeting will be at the home of Ron Hall. Ron has graciously invited us to once again awe at his cheerio's recipe. This will be a good meeting as we will be debriefing from the picnic and making final plans and updates for the pub crawl.

To find the meeting, all you need to do is find Ron's house. Oh, I see. You need help. Well, here it is:

From Corvallis, go North on Highway 99W 6 miles. About 1/4 mile past Adair Village, go left on Tampico Rd. Proceed west 3 miles, take a right turn onto Trillium Lane. Ron's house is the first driveway on the right, about 100 yards up the lane (38945 Trillium Lane).

Lost Souls may call 745-7062

October 19: Pub Crawl!

Heart of the Valley is once again sponsoring a pub crawl for its members. We will be taking a luxury coach from Corvallis at 10 am, make a stop in Albany to pick up passengers, then on to Portland for a sensory evaluation of several local fermented products. The expense of this gala event will be deferred by HOTV. Final details will be discussed at this month's meeting.

Elections upcoming:

Lee said he won't do it, so you will be the next president!

The Return of ---Trademarked name "Dr. BR" removed at the request of Jay Hersh--- . . .**

I recently held a BJCP study session. One component of the session was a ---Trademarked name "Dr. B**r removed at the request of Jay Hersh--- sensory evaluation. Good luck - there is extra Bud Light available! This Bud has been doctored with various chemicals that simulate defects that may be found in homebrewed beers. I will bring the samples to the next meeting, for your "enjoyment"

Ted Manahan

Picnic Report:

The second annual Homebrewers' Picnic was a success, even though HOTV lost the coveted capper.

Newsletter format:

Currently, our newsletter is distributed two ways. Members, friends, and Swill Sucking Deadbeats (those members who refuse to pay dues) who have E-mail addresses get their newsletter by E-mail. Paper copies are sent only to dues paying members in good standing who either (a) don't have E-mail access or (b) have E-mail but want a paper copy also. I have become aware of some members' concerns that the electronic format is too temporal and easy to delete. Remember, if you want a paper copy, just let me know and I will add your name to the list of people who get one! It is really that easy! Unless, of course, you are a Swill Sucking Deadbeat, in which case you should really pay your dues. And speaking of dues . . .

DUES:

Yes, it is that time again. You owe money. OK, well not quite yet, but it is best to beat the rush. HOTV's year begins on January first, so start the year off right and keep your membership current. Don't make us hunt you down. It is really not a pretty sight. Our prestigious group needs your continue support to maintain its high standards of excellence. Gee, that sounds like a load-of-crap line, eh? Also, consider a gift membership for that difficult-to-shop-for on your gift giving list! Don't forget . . . Free Beer with every membership. Or, perhaps I am making this up.

Guest Article

Excerpt from Andy's European Beer Journal

For those of you who do not know me, I'm a BURP member who moved to England a year ago as part of a two-year exchange between the US and UK navies. In reality, this was just an excuse to increase my consumption of European beer. I live in Bath which is in the southwest of England, but I still journey over to the Continent via the car ferry every few months to keep track of those special Belgian beers. Regardless of where I travel, I take pen and paper to take notes on what I find. Now that I finally rejoined the 20th century by regaining an Internet connection, I thought it might be interesting to spew forth some of this information to the BURP community. As dedicated beer aficionados, we tend to always be planning or contemplating a visit to one of the beer capitals of the world. Hopefully, I can help by supplying some morsels of the European beer scene, with emphasis on England and Belgium. By no means am I attempting to pass myself off as an expert. In fact, I'm certain that there will be several BURP members more knowledgeable on any given subject on which I correspond. If anyone has any questions, comments, complaints, or jeers please feel free to contact me at my e-mail address listed below. Now, without anymore preamble, on with the show and this month's topic ... CAMRA

CAMRA is the acronym for "Campaign for Real Ale". That many of us in America know of CAMRA indicates how important it has become to the English beer market, yet it is a recently created organization. Barely 25 years ago, CAMRA began as a simple consumer reaction against the spread of lager beer in England. Great Britain stands alone as the only country in the world where ale is consumed in greater quantities than lager. However the rapid spread of kegged lager in English pubs in the 1960's threatened the very survival of real ale. A full discussion of real ale will have to wait for a future column, but suffice to say a good real ale is a wonderful elixir but it is also a living product which requires proper care and treatment by the pub. A poorly treated real ale can go "off" quite quickly resulting in an undrinkable pint. Pasteurized, kegged beers which are dispensed by CO2 are not nearly as vulnerable to shoddy handling. If we remember the "kegger parties" of our youth, the Budweiser off the tailgate of an F-150 tastes just the same as the Bud from the most posh bistro. The large British breweries of the 1960's discovered they did not have to expend time and money training staff if they switched to kegged lager, and the majority of English pub-goers were willing to accept the change. CAMRA was formed to protect real ale and its heritage as the English national beverage. What is so amazing is that this grass-roots movement has actually succeeded. Real ale in England is stronger now than at any time in the past three decades. While fewer large breweries remain as a result of several mergers, new microbreweries continue to start-up throughout the country. CAMRA has remained at the forefront of the English real ale revival and today their membership is larger than ever before. Once I arrived in Bath and opened an English checking account, the first check was to join CAMRA. The next check was for their 1995 Good Pub Guide and other assorted literature. As with any organization which becomes larger and more powerful, difficulties as well as benefits accompany the increase in size.

In some respects, CAMRA has become too successful. Their original goal has been met and now they are searching for new goals. CAMRA recently expanded to also include the cause of craft-brewed cider (hard apple cider) and perry (pear cider). They have also chosen to denounce the use of swan-necks, sparklers, and cask-breathers. These devices have nothing to do with the real ale itself, but rather the manner in which it is served and stored. Another cause they have chosen to champion is that of the "full pint". EU law allows the pint glass to be 95% beer and 5% foam. CAMRA wants all beer. I personally believe these issues to be of marginal value. The organization appears to be nit-picking on these points. Unfortunately, these concerns spill over into the Good Pub Guide. A fantastic pub will be omitted from the Guide for violating one of these minor problems. Similarly, a rather mediocre pub will be included because the staff always top- off the pint glass without being asked. This means the guide has less value than one might expect.

Before I assumed my present post in Bath, I used to visit London at least once per year solely for pub crawls. (Ooh, I hope my mother's not reading this. She thought I just had an intense interest in the British Museum!) I normally went with Tom Cannon, another BURP member, and over the course of several years we took voluminous notes on various London pubs. We (well, mainly Tom) turned these notes into a "Top 20 London Pubs" list with an attached one page description of each establishment. On subsequent visits to London we would selflessly sacrifice our livers to analyze and revise the list. To this day I believe it to be a very accurate log of the best pubs in London. Well, imagine my surprise when I studied my copy of CAMRA's 1995 Good Pub Guide and found that many of these pubs were not listed in the Guide. It's only with time that I have learned how CAMRA's editorial policy biases the selection of the pubs for inclusion in the Guide. Don't get me wrong, the Guide is very helpful and quite useful when visiting a new area in England. It's just that now I recognize their bias and cross reference the Guide with other books on English pubs.

I am a member of CAMRA and will remain so. CAMRA provides a valuable service for Great Britain. Anyone who plans on visiting England, Wales, or Scotland would do well to invest in a copy of the Good Pub Guide. Just remember that their agenda may not be yours. You may want a pub with many varieties of bitter, good food, a warm fire, a nice view, and a friendly host - CAMRA may want the landlord to unscrew the sparkler from the beer engine spout.

[◀ Back](#)