



The Barleycorn Press

Monthly Newsletter Published by the Green Mountain Mashers of Vermont

March 2003

Volume 14 Issue 3



Mashers in Action: Anne Whyte

by Bob Genter

Anne and Matt Whyte are the owners of Vermont Homebrew Supply, but the concept of a busman's holiday does not apply here. Anne loves to brew, even on her day off. When I arrived at her house in late November she had just transformed the day from "chaos to order." The kids had been prepared and taken to school, Matt had gone off to their homebrew supply store, and the kitchen was cleaned and ready for brewing.

She enjoys brewing all styles of beer and even special creations that don't fit any particular category. The batch depends on the season and on the temperature of the basement in their house. This day she brewed a special bitter (5 lbs. Maris Otter malt, 4 lbs. Vienna malt, 1 lb. flaked maize, and 1 lb. cara red

malt). Maris is one of her favorite base malts. Vienna provides a soft maltiness, and she thinks that Munich and Vienna malts are underutilized by home brewers. She doesn't mind a slight corn aroma in this beer from the flaked maize, as its lower nitrogen content leads to a brighter and clearer beer with more alcohol. The cara red provides color and maltiness without being too dark or cloying. The combination makes a wonderful malty profile, like light crystal but without the sweetness. To add the grains she places the paper grocery bag full of crushed malt on her shoulder to easily pour the malt into the 11 quarts of warm water while she stirs.

The mash was heated in a five-gallon pot on the stove until the desired temperature was reached. To monitor temperature, she likes the Pyrex Profes-

sional digital thermometer with an alert and a magnet that sticks to metal surfaces. The probe sits in the mash, and the wire and probe will withstand oven temperatures too. The mash was brought up to 155 F on the stove, and then the pot was placed into a wonderful oven with a digital thermostat that can keep temperatures as low as 130 F. The oven was preheated to 170 F, and the temperature was then set to 155 F when the mash pot was placed inside. She used a large square tile to deflect the heat around the base of the pot. With her years of experience, hitting the target temperature was easy, but in the "don't worry, have a homebrew" spirit, she shoots for a temperature in the mash to be within a couple of degrees of the target and mashes for one hour. She made a point of not aerating the mash or the hot wort too much while stirring.

Anne's philosophy of brewing is to keep it simple: if added effort doesn't markedly improve the beer then she doesn't bother with it. Hence, most recipes do not involve step mashes. She also likes to juggle eight different things at once. It is not unusual that while the wort is being produced she is doing laundry, cooking dinner, racking previous beers, running errands, and doing other tasks. This is one laid back approach to brewing.

A seven-gallon plastic food grade bucket with a false bottom was used for sparging. The sparge water begins heating early, for the brewer who does not start the sparge water right away ends up waiting too long when sparge time arrives. The sparge lasts at least an hour - no less. The color of the runnings was already light at that point.

She doesn't worry about reaching the high final mash temperature during the sparge, which may cause yields to be slightly reduced, so she adds an extra pound of malt (the cost is worth the time savings).

Hop additions during the boil vary with the recipe. For competition beers she pays close attention to IBU bitterness, but today she's making a social beer. Hops were added after the foam receded, but sometimes after a 15-minute pre-boil. This recipe used East Kent Goldings whole hops (5.6 alpha, 1 oz.) for a 60-minute boil, three additions of Challenger (8 alpha) in the middle (1/2 oz. 45 min., 1 oz. 30 min., 1/2 oz. 15 min.), and then finished with 1 oz. Goldings for flavor. The boil was done in halves so that there was never more than three

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NEXT MEETING At Erik and Nancy Sandblom's On March 3rd

The next meeting of the Green Mountain Mashers will take place on Monday, March 3rd at the home of Erik and Nancy Sandblom.

The focus of the March meeting Belgian beer and the discussion will be led by Maarten van Ryckevorsel. Please plan on bringing any unique homebrewed or commercial examples of Belgian style beers you can get your hands on.

Directions:

To get to Erik and Nancy's from I-89 exit 11, follow U.S. Route 2 east into Richmond Village. Turn right at the stop light (follow the sign towards Huntington). After crossing the bridge and passing the round church, veer to the

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gallons of water to lift at a time.

This batch used Wyeast London III. The yeast slurry from the bottom of a previous batch of beer was used as a starter. In general, Anne uses 6 to 8 ounces for a lager with specific gravity less than 1.060 and 10 to 12 oz. for a lager > 1.060. The plan for this 1.055 ale was to use 4 oz. A 6 to 10 oz slurry would be used for ales > 1.060. Fermentation is either in glass carboys or food-grade plastic buckets. The carboys are placed in plastic milk crates.

As we all know, sanitization is very important. She uses 1-tablespoon bleach per gallon and rinses the carboy with tap water to remove residual sanitizer. When it comes to transferring beer or sanitizer, she has this wicked ½ inch diameter siphon that does the trick in no time. A smaller diameter 3/8-inch siphon

right. Follow this road (Huntington Road) through a series of sharp curves. Take your second right onto Hill View Road. Then take your second right onto Williams Hill Road. Then take your first right onto Wortheim Lane. Their house is 0.614 mile up Wortheim Lane, on the right side of the road (The mailbox is located at the driveway, also on the right). The house is a Cape-Cod style with cedar shake siding.

The address and phone number are:

614 Wortheim Lane
Richmond, VT 05477
(802) 434-3493



**Don't Forget to
Bring Some
Snacks and three
Homemade
Beverages to the
mtg. If You Don't
Have Any
Homemade Bevs,
Please Bring
Three Good/
Unique
Commercial
Beers**

is used for bottling.

Anne was born in Burlington, and she attended Vergennes Union High School. Her bachelors degree is in economics with a minor in French from St. Michael's College. The recession was just beginning when she graduated in 1981, so it was difficult to find the

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Staff Box



The Barleycorn Press is a monthly publication of the Green Mountain Mashers Homebrew Club. The Barleycorn Press appears in the final week of each month. **Contributions are due by the 25th of the month of publication or two Thursdays prior to the next meeting (which ever comes first).** Please send contributions via e-mail (preferable) or send on a 3.5" IBM compatible diskette (hard copy as a last resort) to:

Tim Cropley
235 East Main St., Richmond, VT 05477
(802)434-7293 (hm)
t_cropley@yahoo.com

Contributions on any subject even remotely associated with the brewing and/or enjoyment of beer and related beverages are happily accepted by the editors. The editors reserve the right to edit any contribution as a function of available space, while making every attempt to maintain its integrity. The views expressed by contributors to the Barleycorn Press are not necessarily those of the editors or of the Green Mountain Mashers Homebrew Club.

This publication is made available free of charge to all dues paying members of the Green Mountain Mashers. Subscriptions are available to all other interested parties at \$7.00 yearly (US funds).

Note: The yearly dues of \$10 should be paid by the end of January. Please mail your check or money order made out to the "Green Mountain Mashers" to Treasurer Lewis Greitzer at the following address:

Lewis Greitzer
33 Harbor View Road #1201
South Burlington, Vermont 05403
(802)658-2621
lewis@together.net

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View the Official Web Page of the Green Mountain Mashers at:

<http://www.mashers.org>

Officers not listed above:

President - Rich Evans, Ph # (802) 899-3006
"Evans, Rich" <evansrj@us.ibm.com>
Secretary - Ernie Kelley Ph # (802) 434-3674
"Kelley, Ernie" <epopmafs@together.net> OR
"Kelley, Ernie" <erniek@dec.anr.state.vt.us>



Green Mountain Masher Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Information
3/3/03	March Mtg - Belgian Beer Tasting - Erik Sandblom's	Erik Sandblom (h) 434-3493 (email) sandblom@gmavt.net
4/7/03	GMM April Mtg - Masher Challenge (Kölsch) and Hoops & Hops	Tom Ayres and Anne Barrett, Winooski (h) 655-5587 (email) tom.ayres@verizon.net
4/25/03	GMHC Entry Deadline	Anne Whyte (h) 879-6462 (w) 655-2070 (email) vtbrew@together.net
4/26/03	GMHC Entry Log In - Rich Frog	Anne Whyte (h) 879-6462 (w) 655-2070 (email) vtbrew@together.net
5/3/03	Green Mountain Homebrew Competition	Anne Whyte (h) 879-6462 (w) 655-2070 (email) vtbrew@together.net
5/12/03	GMM May Mtg - Jim Silvia and Melissa Levy's	Melissa and Jim (h) 482-7400 (email) jim@vt.bitxbit.com OR melissa@vt.bitxbit.com
6/?/03	GMM June Mtg - Barbecue at Monk's house - Grillables and pot luck dishes made with beer. Last meeting until Fall.	Rich Evans (h) 899-3006 (email) monk@together.net

Please contact Tim at the phone # or email address noted below to add items to the Masher Calendar

Please contact Tim Cropley at (802) 434-7293 or by email at t_cropley@yahoo.com if you have any beer events that you think the membership would like to know about. It is our hope that we will also list other regional competitions as they are announced. We also hope to list AHA sponsored Club Only competitions in an effort to remind people to consider bringing beers that fit the competition style to club meetings so that the membership can pick one for entering.

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right job in her field, and she wanted to remain in Burlington. So she worked a number of different jobs: baker, real estate (where she found their house), and she also helped Matt as a roofer in the dead of winter. She always liked to cook and make foods from scratch. Her children were very young so she gardened, canned, and baked their foods to conserve money.

This enthusiasm for cooking from scratch got her started brewing, and her story is one of passionate persistence. She attended two sessions of a home brewing class on Church Street. At that time Catamount Brewery was beginning operations, the Vermont Pub & Brewery had recently opened, and the community was starting to learn about good beer, but most of the best brands were too expensive. Her first two batches of home brew were so bad that she poured them down the drain. She had purchased the basic brewing equipment (but no thermometer) and used the method recommended by Papazian (1991: p. 22-24) to add hot wort to the cold water in the fermentation bucket. The first attempt had water so hot it killed the yeast.

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attempt was so cold that the yeast didn't get started. Then she bought a thermometer. For the third batch the house was too cool for fermenting ale, so she wrapped the fermenter in an electric blanket for warmth. The beer fermented in one day! The recipe used cans of corn sugar and mixed cans of malt. Although she still didn't like the taste, it was beer, and she was off and running. Her first all grain recipe used a colander to sparge the grains. The beer ended at SG 1.023, so dry malt had to be added. So you home brewers can't go wrong by going to Vermont Homebrew Supply. Anne now makes award-winning beers, but she has "been there" and has tried as many techniques as any home brewer should.

Today she no longer uses corn sugar, and prefers all-grain recipes (although she likes malt extracts like Bierkeller Light), liquid yeasts, longer boils, a wort chiller, and a computer to make developing recipes easier. She likes to write her

own recipes, and writing them down allows her to compare different grains, adjuncts, hops, and yeasts.

To attract new home brewers to the hobby, Anne teaches a short-course on making beer. The first day is spent brewing the beer, and the second day is spent bottling it.

Anne has been very active in the Green Mountain Mashers. She was president for two years (highlights were trub treks to Boston and Chambly, invited speakers on Belgian beer and wheat beer styles, and activities like a club brew and a gadget night). In those pre-electronic days she literally cut and pasted together the newsletter for photocopying and mailing; my, have we come a long way! This interview was a great opportunity to have a lot of fun learning more about beer and wine making, to taste and evaluate different beers and wines that Anne has progressing, and to learn more about the details of ingredients and methods. We are very

fortunate to have such a great resource and friend.



Bob's Beer Bottle Collection by Bob Proctor

Vermont winters are long and cold and around January, it's either find a Winter project or face getting Cabin Fever. This year's project was documenting my Beer Bottle Collection. It's a small collection with somewhere around 350 bottles and cans but that's enough to make things interesting. This project was especially fun as it joins hobbies of collecting beer bottles, photography, programming and web authoring. The collection started long ago

and the rules were loose from the start. Basically, I collected the bottle if I consumed the beer or knew the guy who did. Some bottles were given to me and others swiped or stolen but what the heck, it's just a hobby!

Making a photographic studio was much more difficult than had been imagined. Lighting was the tricky part. Two light stands placed left and right held two 100W incandescent bulbs each for the primary illumination. Overhead lights helped illuminate the background. The background was white poster board that sloped from the table to the vertical backboard. A cloth scrim positioned in front of the lights helped diffuse the light and avoid (reduce) reflections. The camera used for the project was a Sony DSC-F717, a 5 mpix digital camera with a 5X optical lens, lots of manual settings and a powerful flash. The flash proved totally useless! While editing out shadows is possible in Adobe Photoshop, the 3 minutes per bottle editing time was way too time intensive, plus part of the

deal was to complete the project before the start of Mud Season!

Getting the white balance and colors right was equally tricky and I'm still not satisfied with the results. Three kinds of bulbs were tried before finding GE's 100W Reveal, something that almost works. Experimentation continues with some 250W Photographic bulbs. Use of a gray card for setting the white balance is something else to try. Aperture priority set to f6.2 improved the depth of field. With that, the text on the edges of the bottles are almost readable. A slight over exposure seemed to give best results. Use of a tripod and time delay feature gave a clear shot.

Once pictures were taken there was a need to rotate 90 degrees, crop and re-size. Cropping was manual with Adobe Photoshop, as was minor color correction. Rotating and resizing to 180 x 450 pixels was automated with a batch process. The final pictures are approximately

30 Kbytes each, which provides acceptable load time for most viewers.

The Beer Database is a simple text file with special delimiters for Index, Name, Brewery, Style, Size, Country and Information. A perl program creates all the pages and runs in just a couple seconds. The Web Page has cross-hyperlinked lists for Style, Brewery, State and Country. This simplifies viewing, searching and updating the database. Moving data to the server takes a few minutes but it's automatic with WS-FTP Pro. The time consuming part of the process was getting data from the beer bottles into the database. While that's not too hard for the Vermont brews, it can take several minutes each to get data from foreign or hard to read labels.

The project isn't complete but the web page is ready for viewing. Challenges remaining are correcting the style information and foreign names that use special

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 fonts. I'm open for suggestions (and help) and will gladly share the perl program and photography techniques with any interested Masher.

Check the page at:

<http://together.net/~rproctor/BeerPage/>



Upcoming Club-Only Competitions

Here are the upcoming AHA Club-Only Competitions. If you've got some homebrew that you'd like to consider entering, bring it to the club meeting before the entry due date

for consideration as the Green Mountain Masher's entry.

APRIL 2003

Brown Ale Competition

Entries Due by April 4, 2003

Judging will be held April 12, 2003

Shipping Address:

The Prairie Homebrewing Companions

c/o Susan Ruud

5605 56th Ave. N.

Harwood, ND 58042

Hosted by Susan Ruud and the Prairie

Homebrewing Companions of Fargo, ND

Category 10 Brown Ale

MAY 2003

"All that Glitters is Not Old" Competition

Entries Due May 12-22, 2003

Judging will be held May 24, 2003

Shipping Address:

AHA COC

c/o Catalina Products

5620 N. Kolb Rd Suite 205

Tucson, AZ 85750

Hosted by David Moritz, Matt Stinchfield and the Rillito Creek Brew Club of Tucson, AZ

Category 11 English & Scottish Strong Ale

AUGUST 2003

European Pale Lager Competition

Hosted by Jon Douglas and Foam on the Range of Denver, CO

Category 2 European Pale Lager

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2003

Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beers

Hosted by Harrison Gibbs and the Colonial Ale Smiths & Keggers of Williamsburg, VA

Category 24 Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beer



Now You're Cooking With Beer! Presidents and Beer

by Ruth Miller

Beer was a historic beverage throughout America's formative years, and was enjoyed and routinely commented upon by many of our notable leaders, including Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson. I wonder what Bush drinks - Lonestar to reflect his unilateralist outlook? Or maybe Shiner Bock - befits a stubborn goat looking to open a can o' Texas whoopass...or whatever.

To honor President's Day this month, one of the following recipes features cherries and cherry-flavored beer (calm down, Steve L!). I've chosen Unibroue's

inimitable "Quelque Chose," a strongly cherry-flavored Belgian-style ale to use in and accompany this dish, in remembrance of that whole Washington cherry tree fable. You can find boneless duck breasts at the local health food & gourmet stores, fresh or frozen. You can also find the tart dried cherries now at several local supermarkets - the Montmorency variety is preferred, but just look for "tart" rather than "sweet" - they give the dish more oomph. Duck is admittedly greasy and rich, so you can substitute chicken breasts if you prefer.

For dessert, how about a killer creme brulee scented with Cascade hops? Use either pellet or whole form, but put them in a muslin or tea bag so that they don't leave little bits in the cream to make it bitter. Or you can strain them out with an extremely fine sieve. Since these are for aroma, not bittering and since Cascade is quite high on the IBU scale, you need to be careful not to overdo it!

Duck Breast Braised in Quelque Chose

- Serves 2

2 boneless duck breasts, with skin on

1 bottle Quelque Chose

Salt & pepper

1 cup tart pitted dried cherries

1 shallot, minced

1 tsp cornstarch or arrowroot powder

1 cup wild rice, parboiled for 20 min.

Preheat oven to 350. Make cross-hatch slices just into the skin on each duck breast, but not down to the meat. This lets the fat cook out and leaves the skin crispy & easy to remove later. Sprinkle meat-side with a bit of salt & pepper, and lay them flat, skin-side-up in a shallow baking dish. Toss in 1/2 of the cherries, and all of the shallot. Pour enough beer to almost cover the breasts, but don't cover the skin. Bake for 30 min. Take breasts out of pan, and skim off as much fat as you can. Then pour remaining juices, cherries, shallots & all

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 in a blender with the cornstarch and blend 'til smooth with a little more beer. Peel skin off breasts if you're low-fat conscious & cover them in the dish with the cherry sauce. Throw in the rest of the dried cherries, and the parboiled wild rice. Cook for another 15 min. to thicken the sauce. Remove from oven, spoon out some rice into each dish, and a duck breast & some cherries with sauce on top. Enjoy with a glass of *Quelque Chose* - food fit for a president (or Canadian premier?).

Cascade-Scented Creme Brulee

Makes 4

- 5 egg yolks
- 1/2 oz Cascade hops (pellet or whole)
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- Brown sugar

An hour before you start, put the hops in a bag, or put them directly in a bowl in the fridge with the milk & cream. After an hour, take out the bag or strain them carefully & discard hops. Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Put this mixture along with the sugar & vanilla in a heavy-bottom pan, and bring to a boil while stirring - do not scorch! Allow to cool down off heat. When lukewarm, whisk in the egg yolks until nice & smooth. Pour into several shallow, wide ramekins or individual custard dishes, or you can put it into one big shallow one. Fill to about 1/4" of the rim(s). Place the individual dishes or dish inside a larger shallow baking dish, into which you've poured 1/2" of very hot water. Bake for 45 mins. for individuals, or 1 hr. for a single large one. A knife inserted should come out clean. Remove from water bath, and cool at room temp for 15 min. Cover with food wrap and chill in the fridge for at least an hour.

To Serve: sprinkle enough brown sugar over the top of each custard to lightly

cover without clumps. Place under a pre-heated broiler close to the heat element for only as long as it takes for the sugar to melt - watch them carefully as it may be less than 30 seconds! (Burnt sugar tastes nasty, and by the way *Creme Brulee* means "burnt cream" in French). Take them out and the sugar will turn hard & glassy and ready to break through to the hop-perfumed custard beneath, but serve immediately to preserve the spectacle!

Next month - gotta be something Irish, I suppose. Stay tuned...



Ask Mr. Lager

Every month (give or take) Greg Noonan will answer one or two questions from members of the Green Mountain Mashers. Anyone who has

questions for this column should email them to me at t_cropley@yahoo.com

1) Does the act of boiling the wort for an hour or so convert some of the sugar/carbohydrate molecules into simpler, more easily fermentable molecules? I have heard invert sugar can be produced by boiling sucrose in a mildly acidic solution for an hour or so, breaking it down into glucose and fructose which are more readily fermentable, and I wanted to know if this process is taking place when you boil the wort?

Here is about all I know about invert sugar. Sucrose is a compound sugar composed of glucose and fructose. Invert sugar is sucrose that has been hydrolyzed. Honey is largely composed of invert sugar. Addition of an acid and elevated temperatures speed up the hydrolytic inversion. The fructose is "inverted" by the hydrolysis and refracts polarized light. Since yeast needs to excrete the enzyme invertase to ab-

sorb sucrose from solution, theoretically invert sugar is easier to ferment that sucrose.

I say theoretically because there doesn't seem to have been a lot of research published about the subject. At the January club meeting, there was some discussion about inversion in a normal wort boil, and the best hypothesis goes to Steve Lefebvre that because wort is acidic, there must be some inversion of sucrose in the wort boil. Logically, that would seem to be the case, but I know of nothing in the literature to prove it.

What I did find out is that inversion is neither instantaneous nor total. I found reference to a sucrose solution at pH 5.0 held at 175°F inverting only 13% of the sucrose after 6 hours. Another reference gave four to six days for inversion without the addition of acid. The amount of inversion in a wort boil is probably negligible, as Steve surmised.

2) Mr. Lager, I've read your book, but still have questions about temperatures involved in fermenting lager beer. Could you give some basic recommendations of what temperatures should be used for the various phases? From pitching the yeast, primary fermentation, secondary, lagering, even priming for carbonation. The yeast packages say pitch when below 80 degrees (too high in my book), fermentation 47 - 52, etc. I realize fermentation times vary at microbreweries vs. homebrews but can you also relate your experience to the small batch sizes?

I have a strong opinion about the lager yeast available from the yeast labs. It is cultured at elevated (75-85°F). It shouldn't be. High temperature culturing favors mutation, so that the culture then needs to be fermented at a higher than 'normal' lager fermentation temperature to succeed.

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We have been unable to ever get any lab cultured lager yeast to successfully ferment out in 7 days or less at below 50°F - in fact, we have resigned ourselves to pitching at 55°F and letting the temp rise to 58-60°F to get a 5 day ferment.

The labs are never going to change their procedures, so I think it is good advice to all brewers to pitch and ferment in the 50s. Ferments that take longer than 5-7 days inevitably produce off flavors. Even though primary in the 55-60°F range generally produces inappropriate esters, I don't see a viable alternative.

I always have preferred secondary fermentation at 40-45°F, because at colder temperatures there is less scavenging by the yeast. 30-35°F lagering seems to be no more than 'aging' to me, the cold only speeding up the settling process. Ideally, using lab-cultured yeast I would recommend pitching at 55°F, keeping the

primary from rising above 60°F, transferring to secondary at 40-45°F for two weeks when the ferment slows down, and then further lagering for up to two months at 30-40°F.



**Member Dues were due by the end of January.
Please pay Lew Greitzer either at the February
meeting or mail it to him at:**

**33 Harbor View Rd #1201
So. Burlington, VT 05403
(802)658-2621
lewis@together.net**

**Make checks payable to
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