



The Barleycorn Press

Monthly Newsletter Published by the Green Mountain Mashers of Vermont



December, 2000

Volume 11 Issue 7

Vermonters Turn Maine-iac for the Maine Brewer's Festival

by Ruth Miller

November is such a dreary, god-awful month - I always feel a need for a good last road trip, and the Maine Brewer's Festival, held annually the first Sat. of November in Portland seemed to fit the bill. I have a friend who lives right on the water in Falmouth, just 10 easy minutes from downtown. Although I have turned her on to Belgians, she's really more of a wine drinker and she was headed to the White Mtns. for a weekend of hiking anyway, so I was on my own with a free place to stay. Yeehaa!

I bought my ticket in advance after being warned that the late session (8-12pm) always sells out. When I went down to pick up the ticket at 3, the line for the early session (3-7pm) stretched waaay

but with TWO lines marked on them - one at 2oz. for the wines/meads; and the other at 4oz. for the beers. My initial caution at making 12 carefully-planned choices was thrown to the wind when later in the session, people started carelessly dropping their tickets (often long strings of them) onto the floor, where I happily gathered some up to meet my needs. I was much happier tasting a larger number of beers & dumping half, than being limited to only 12 larger volume samples. And when you got a genuine "dog", there was no guilt about unceremoniously dumping it and moving on. Dumping into a huge plastic barrel is kind of grody - I missed returning the offending brew back to the ground from whence it originated as you can on the Burlington waterfront - oh well.

So, what did I taste? Since I spend a

down Cumberland Ave., so I returned later after a beer downtown to a reduced crowd. The event is held in the Portland Exposition Hall, a funky old place that looks (and even smells) like our familiar Memorial Auditorium, right down to the vinyl sheeting covering the basketball floor. I'd have to say that the Burlington Fest on the waterfront with the Lake and sunset at hand far surpasses this venue, but whaddya want for November? The crowd was mighty different too, which speaks volumes about Burlington's demographics - the typical yuppie, well-to-do college-educated crowd was replaced by a genuine, blue-collar crowd, with a collective mighty thirst. The other big difference is that the ME fest promoters were forced by their permit this year to limit each ticket-

lot of vacation time in ME, I have had nearly every Maine brewer's offering, except for a few, and those pesky seasonals. So, I skipped the ones I was familiar with, and headed into less familiar territory thusly:

Allagash: In Portland, have had all their great Belgians, but couldn't resist a glass of Dubble Reserve - perfect as usual.

Andrews: Located in Lincolnville: had their very thin Porter in the past, but tried the Northern Brown Ale. Absolutely undistinguished - a "dumper." Too bad, cause their labels are sooo charming...

Atlantic Brewing: Had all of these Bar Harbor brews over the years - they are all consistent & superlative.

holder to 12 tasting coupons, and no more. You had to smoke outside (I really appreciated that) and only Maine brewers and wineries were allowed as exhibitors. Two bands took the stage in turn, one local and one from Boston; both great. A 12-member, authentic Scottish pipe & drum corps, sponsored by the brewery in Rockland was my favorite, though. Guys in kilts make me crazy, what can I say? And I have a genetic disposition toward bagpipes, so there you are. There was limited food available, but I was glad I ate before I came, as the offerings were over-priced & scanty.

After finding out I would only get 12 tastings, I was bummed. The sample glasses were the exact same Burlington-issue ugly mini-pilseners,

Belfast Bay Brewing: One of my favorite pubs on vacation - great IPA and Oatmeal Stout. They had a Barley Wine on this past summer for the first time. Good food at their pub in Belfast on Rte. 1.

Bray's: Located on Rte. 302 in Naples. I decided on their Pleasant Mtn. Porter. And it was - very pleasant!

Casco Bay: Located down the street from Allagash, their Riptide Red won a GABF award this year. It was pretty OK.

Geary's: The venerable old family-run Portland brewery - sampled their always delicious London Porter and the winter seasonal called Hampshire Ale - mighty strong stuff!

(Continued on page 2)

Gritty McDuff's: Have stopped for dinner and a sampler at their new Freeport location. My favorite is their Black Fly Stout, but I decided to try the Christmas Ale - a very unexpected super-hoppy IPA. No fruits & spices in this one! Pretty intense.

Kennebec Brewing: A new contender in Gardiner. Asked for his best offering; got a crappy cream ale - bleahh!

Kennebunkport Brewing: The Pugsley-created offspring of Shipyard located in "Bush Country." Had stopped in Oct. for lunch & a sampler - my favorite was the Punkinhead Ale. They didn't have here, so I had a Longfellow Winter Ale - a very big beer!

Maine Coast Brewing: Another Bar Harbor brewery, I've tasted all their beers on vacation and found them to be universally thin & uninspired. "Imperial Stout" is a definite misnomer for the watery stuff I tried of theirs.

Bangor, Camden & now So. Portland along with a very decent restaurant at each locale. I'm a big fan of their Hazelnut Porter, but they're replacing it with a new (boring) Golden Ale. I had the Cabin Fever Winter Stock, which was a "sea DOG" worthy of dumping out, and the Blueberry Ale was gone early into the session.

Sebago Brewing: Now with 2 locations in Portland (the downtown one is way nicer than the one at the Maine Mall for obvious reasons). Have had all their beers - the Retro Porter is killer. Their food menu is quite good, too.

Sheepscot Valley Brewing: Located in Whitefield (wherever that is) these guys were the little brewery with the big taste. They had a marvelous Wee Heavy that was gone quickly, and ran out of everything else by 9:30. Next time bring more beer, guys!!

Shipyard Brewing: The BIG one in Portland. The jokers they had manning the booth couldn't describe the beers

Narrow Gauge Brewing: Located in Farmington, I tried to stop by on my way to a kayaking weekend up there, but was warned by a local that they were in the process of changing management and the service was abominable. The 2 beers I sampled at the Fest, a Scotch Ale and a Barley wine, were genuinely awesome, however. I'll give 'em another try next summer...

Oak Pond Brewing: Located in Skowhegan, they were out of their popular Dooryard Ale, but the Nut Brown was great as usual, and the Octoberfest a real classic (even brought a bottle home.)

Rocky Bay Brewing: Every time I've tried to stop by the little brewery in Rockland, they've been closed PROMPTLY at 5 and I've missed them. They make soda pop, as well as an Octoberfest, a Nut Brown (which was delicious) and a Lager.

Sea Dog Brewing: They have pubs in

they were offering to save their lives. I tried the "Winter Ale", a wheat ale with a surprisingly full body and amber color. The talk going around the crowd was their "Nitro" - I assumed it was the beer everyone was going for to get the quickest buzz. Actually, it was a very civilized IPA dispensed on nitrogen, hence the name. Lots of disappointed drunks with "milk-mustaches" going through the line.

Stone Coast: Two locations in ME - one at Sunday River Ski area's access road (called Sunday River Brewing Co.), and the other is the hottest live-music venue in downtown Portland. I've had all their beers, so I passed. Seem to be best known for their "420 Hemp Ale", but I love the Black Bear Porter. The food they serve at both locations is mighty good.

Whale Tale Brewing: Located in Old Orchard Beach, I'd been warned these guys were "poseurs" and they don't take brewing very seriously. Well,
(Continued on page 3)

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 \$10.00 yearly (US funds).

Note: The yearly dues of \$15 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

Advertising space is available to non-profit and for-profit organizations wishing to offer beer related items or services to the readers of this publication. The editors reserve the right to accept or reject any advertiser. For advertising rates, availability and deadlines please contact the editor.

No rights reserved. Any part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise. No prior permission, written or otherwise, is needed from anyone.

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

<http://home.nycap.rr.com/burke/masher/>

Officers not listed above:
President - Jerry Gormley, Ph # (802) 658-4038
"Gormley, Jerry <jgormley@xraylitho.com>
Secretary - Ernie Kelley Ph # (802) 434-3674
"Kelley, Ernie" <epopmafs@together.net> OR
"Kelley, Ernie" <erniek@dec.anr.state.vt.us> I

after tasting their god-awful Pumpkin Ale, I'd have to say I felt no guilt dumping my glass - yecch!!

Blacksmith's Winery: the only winery exhibiting, they are located about 20 miles from Portland just off Rte. 302 west in So. Casco. All their wines were '99 vintage, and consisted of a Blueberry wine, a Vidal Blanc and a Chardonnay. I've had some nasty Blueberry wines and I hate Chardonnay, so I went for their Roughshod Blueberry Port. Oh my God - I'd found heaven on earth!! It was truly delightful, and next trip over I'm gonna stock up. Not cloyingly sweet or too fruity - rich & mellow & just right!

Cask & Hive Winery: Located in Monmouth, they make the instantly recognizable Chickadee Hard Cider, and Arthur's Ambrosia, a cider blended with mead. Both delicious, but pricey.

So there they are - did you know the state of Maine and Vermont are neck 'n

neck with the number of microbrewerys per capita? Although I always enjoy sampling Maine's micros, I believe I'll continue doing so in the course of my vacations and road trips. Although there are many great beers to try at this convenient one-time event, the venue detracts from each brewery's unique character. Besides, I'd rather sip a store-purchased Allagash Tripel in the comfort of my buddy's outdoor hot tub gazing out at Casco Bay, than sample at their industrial brewery any day.

NEXT MEETING At the Magic Hat Brewery on December 4th

The next Green Mountain Masher meeting will take place on Monday, December 4th at the Magic Hat Brewery.

The brewery is located to the west off Rt. 7 on the street (with a traffic light) that is kind of across from Heritage Ford (nice directions, huh?) .

The following items are on the agenda for the business portion of the meeting:

1. Club election
2. Barley Wine Brew
3. Club Survey
4. Competition Czar
5. Presentation by Bob Johnson
6. Old Business
7. New Business

Hope to see you all there! I

Minutes of the November Meeting by Ernie Kelley

The November meeting was held on the second Monday of the month so as to celebrate election victories (or drown your sorrows, as the case may be) at the newly refurbished Paul Hale Brewery in Burlington. Rather, we gathered to honor the new infusion of cash into the coffers of the trial lawyers of America, an infusion which continues to this day some two weeks later. All hail Marx and Lennon, we're all bozos on this bus.

President Gormley called the meeting to order more or less promptly somewhere in the period between 7:30 and 8:45, and immediately proceeded to Item #0 on the agenda.

Item #0 - The report on Dave Gannon is that he's doing well and expects to be out of the rehab hospital by Thanksgiving. He plans to return to his home in Maine and to begin his new job as soon as possible. A card to Dave was circulated for all to sign.

Item #1 - Maarten gave an update on the mass brewed barley wine. Seven individual batches were brewed and mixed together in Tom Ayres' wood whiskey barrel. The beer has been in the barrel for about three weeks and appears to be doing well. It had a rather phenolic band aid-like aroma early on that seems to have dissipated. The plan is to decant the brew from the barrel in about another week, remove the trub, and put the wort back into the barrel for secondary fermentation and aging. Jerry Gormley, Tom Ayres and Monk will organize the transfer operations. Monk recommended that we let it freeze and make an eis barley wine.

Item #2 - The Ankeney Experiment:

Five beers were brewed with Alexander's Malt Extract. Ruth Miller brewed a Scottish Ale, Dave Blumenthal a pale ale, Dave Clark an ESB, Bob Genter a ginger porter, and Jerry Gormley brewed on the can (really). The beers need to be judged at some point, photos of the brewers need to be taken, and a winner has to be declared and certified to the experiment's sponsor. Damn good thing we don't have votes to recount.

Item #3 - Anne Whyte has put together a membership poll which is now up and running on the club's "web site". It is important to get a good feel for the demographics and expectations of the members of the Mashers if the club is to best serve their needs. Please log on and complete the questionnaire. Anonymity is guaranteed.

Item #4 - Dave Marshall announced that Anne Whyte has agreed to become the new Competition Czarina. A transition team is being formed. Way
(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

to go Anne!! I'm sure you'll do a great job.

Item #5 - The big black locomotive, otherwise known as club officer nominations, was next into Hale Pub Station. Lew Greitzer remains Treasurer For Life, your's truly - Ernie Kelley will serve a second consecutive term as Secretary, and the one and only Rich Evans was the only nomination for Club President and will assume the reins of command from Jerry Gormley provided he wins the election at the December Meeting. No votes were counted, nor were any recounted.

Soon to be ex-President Gormley adjourned the meeting at some point after it began and the crowd returned to Paul's hospitality for the usual post-meeting goings-on. |

New business - A general discussion of resurrecting the winter Trub Trek was discussed. A bare bones affair, wherein the club would only organize the bus and itinerary. All ancillary entertainment will be at the discretion (or indiscretion) of the trekers. A day trip loop of Rock Art, Kross, Trout River, Jasper Murdock's, 7 Barrel, VP&B was proposed.



**Barleycorn Press
Green Mountain Mashers
c/o Tim Cropley
235 East Main St.
Richmond, Vermont 05477
U.S.A.**

Place Stamp Here
Post Office will
not deliver
without sufficient
postage