



TheBrewsLeader

The official newsletter of the James River Homebrewers

Richmond, Virginia

February 2009

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Upcoming JRHB Events

Sunday, February 8th
Legend 15th Anniversary Party

Monday, February 9th
SAVOR Tickets go on sale

Wednesday, February 11th
Regular Club Meeting at Legends
Extra Special Bitters

Saturday, February 28th
Brews Cruz – Points North

For updated information and the club forum visit
<http://www.jrhb.org/>

January Meeting Recap

The January meeting was called to order by President Mike Lang with approximately 45 in attendance. Mike thanked Tom Martin and the Legends Staff for their hospitality. New guest Tim, Coleman, Bill and Chris were welcomed and returning member John was greeted accordingly also.

Reminder that it is time to pay annual dues; Mike explained that these nominal fees are used to subsidize the awesome parties and also the Brews Cruz.

Next Brews Cruz date is set for February 28th and a sign-up sheet was circulated.

Special thanks was given to retiring officers Robert Doucet, Graham Cecil and William Spiesberger. New officers were welcomed into their posts.

An excellent demo of bottling from a keg was given by John Van Itallie with assistance from William and Shane as well as some excellent audience participation. We saw a counter-pressure filler in action, followed by a Blickman Beer Gun and a homemade counter-pressure filler. Also demonstrated was the bottle filler in the picnic tap method. Several bottles were filled and capped, taking care to cap under foam, and we will be testing the effectiveness of each of these methods at the upcoming February meeting. This will give us another chance to taste John's excellent ESB!

The raffle raised about \$125 and the meeting adjourned around 9:30

Legends 15th Anniversary Party

This is our chance to really show our appreciation to the Legend's staff for giving us a place to meet all year. Sign-up sheets were passed around at the last meeting for volunteer. If you haven't signed up, get in touch with Andy Rolfe or email secretary@jrhb.org and we will make sure Andy gets your info.

This event is a lot of fun. Please remember, though, if you are manning the bar, no drinking behind the bar...the A.B.C. laws still apply!



A must attend for craft beer aficionados and foodies alike, the second annual SAVOR will offer

a memorable craft beer and food experience to a limited number of attendees in the beautiful [National Building Museum](#) in Washington, D.C. on May 30.

SAVOR the experience - enjoy a reception-style sampling of your choice of 35+ sweet and savory appetizers and 120 craft beers from 65 breweries. Converse with the luminaries of the craft beer industry - brewery owners, brewers and representatives will be on-hand - serving your beer.

There will be no tickets available at the door. All Tickets must be purchased in advance. Visit www.savorcraftbeer.com for more information.

Virginia Is Also for Beer Lovers

By Jenny Mayo

Special to The Washington Post

Wednesday, January 21, 2009; Page C02

I've planned a two-day trip for my boyfriend, Mike, and me to the Charlottesville area's historic wine country, which some consider the birthplace of American viticulture. The only thing is, we're going to explore another spirit



For \$5, you can taste six house-made creations at Blue Mountain Brewery in Afton, Va. (By Michael Dolan For The Washington Post)

entirely: beer. Mike, a hobbyist home-brewer, is particularly keen on the idea. Charlottesville is certainly no microbrew capital like Portland, Ore., or Denver. But to its credit and beer aficionados' pleasure, it has embraced making craft beers. The town and scenic surrounding areas boast four homegrown breweries and brew pubs (which, conveniently enough, are in the process

of organizing an official Charlottesville beer trail), and these spots build on a local brewing history that stretches back more than 200 years.

Mike and I head out and hit the "trail" one early winter weekend. Our first stop? [Thomas Jefferson's](#) Monticello.

We dodge the guided stroll through Jefferson's home and instead duck into a basement corridor, where we find the beer cellar. Through placards, historical artifacts and period reproductions of items such as casks, the whitewashed 12-by-16-foot room reveals the brewing background of early America's most famous wine connoisseur.

It turns out that Jefferson reserved wine as an after-dinner treat at Monticello; beer and cider were the "table liquors," and the industrious and experimental Founding Father orchestrated the brewing of both on his estate. He even grew many of his own grains and hops.

What did those early beers taste like? "I wonder. It'd be fun to get the recipe and try to produce some," says Shelley Moss, tasting-room manager at Starr Hill Brewery in Crozet, our next destination.

Now occupying a former [ConAgra](#) factory about 12 miles west of Charlottesville, the brewery began in 1999 as a humble downtown brew pub.

Mike and I wander into the cavernous building and find a space along the U-shaped tasting bar, where Starr Hill provides free samples of most of the eight beers in its regular and seasonal roster. These include its amber ale (caramel-y, award-winning) and the Love (unfiltered wheat beer, popular and available May through August).

During our visit, there's also a limited-edition trial called Lucy, a delicious full-bodied lager with hints of lime and ginger.

Our taste buds tingling, Mike and I join the (also free) brewery tour just starting. Moss leads about 20 of us through the facility, explaining ingredients, brewing styles and on-site equipment. It's a good Beer 101 lesson and also manages to entertain Mike, who has been on a lot of such tours.

After some much-needed downtime and eats, the beau and I conclude our day at Charlottesville's South Street Brewery, a decade-old downtown night spot that draws a largely young professional and grad student crowd. On a winter evening, the place is inviting, with its dark wood, exposed brick and fireplace.

At the long copper-topped bar, we dive into a beer sampler: \$6 for seven tastes. Two are guest appearances from other breweries. The other five are house-made, including Sahti (an easy-drinking, straw-hued, Finnish-style brew) and Absolution Ale (a rich, malty English-inspired beer).

Sunday morning seems like the perfect time to pop out to the vineyard-dotted countryside of Afton (about 20 minutes west of Charlottesville), where a brewery and tasting room called Blue Mountain Brewery has been competing for wine-country customers for a little more than a year.

The porch is the best place to soak in the mountain views, but given the chill, we snag a table inside the sunset-hued, high-ceilinged tasting room. Mike and I order upscale pub grub and the requisite beer sampler (\$5, six house-made tastes). Blue Mountain is a bit more experimental than the other nearby brew houses, and this morning, we sip the glory of this risk-taking by way of the Double Barrel-Aged Chocolate Cherry Imperial Bourbon Stout, a decadent, dessert-y combination of flavors neither of us has experienced (the brewing involves cocoa nibs, cherries and aging in both bourbon and wine barrels).

"We get bored," co-owner Matt Nucci says. "We're always going to have a lager, kolsch and our Full Nelson [pale ale], but with the other beers, we like to mix it up."

Which reminds us, we've got one more stop: the rustic Devils Backbone Brewing Co., at the foot of Wintergreen ski resort. Inside, we discover a bustling crowd of all ages, including a lanky, longhaired man the bartender helps us identify

as Tom Peloso, a hometown musician who broke into the big time with rockers Modest Mouse.

The beer sampler here (\$6) scores us eight flavors, including Five Apostles Saison (a sweet, Belgian style) and Black Rock Stout (roasted coffee and chocolate finish). Some of the brews lack a certain oomph (the place has, after all, been open only since November). The atmosphere, on the other hand, needs little improvement.

As Mike and I savor the last drops in our glasses, we realize we've conquered the beer trail. Or maybe it's the other way around.

AHA Club Only Competition

March/April 2009

Beers with OG > 1.080

Entries should be brought to the March Meeting.

BJCP Category	Style
5C, D	Dopplebock, Eisbock
9E	Strong Scottish Ale
12C	Baltic Porter
13F	Imperial Stout
14C	Imperial IPA
15C	Weizenbock
16C, D, E	Saison, Bière de Garde, Belgian Specialty Ale
18C, D, E	Belgian Tripel, Belgian Golden Strong Ale, Belgian Dark Strong Ale
19A, B, C	Old Ale, English Barleywine, American Barleywine
20	Fruit Beer over 1.080 OG
21	Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer over 1.080 OG
22B, C	Other Smoked Beer over 1.080 OG, Wood-Aged Beer over 1.080 OG
	Specialty Beer over 1.080 OG

Style of the Month

8C. Extra Special/Strong Bitter (English Pale Ale)

Aroma: Hop aroma moderately-high to moderately-low, and can use any variety of hops although UK hops are most traditional. Medium to medium-high malt aroma, often with a low to moderately strong caramel component (although this character will be more subtle in paler versions). Medium-low to medium-high fruity esters. Generally no diacetyl, although very low levels are allowed. May have light, secondary notes of sulfur and/or alcohol in some examples (optional). **Appearance:** Golden to deep copper. Good to brilliant clarity. Low to moderate white to off-white head. A low head is acceptable when carbonation is also low

Flavor: Medium-high to medium bitterness with supporting malt flavors evident. Normally has a moderately low to somewhat strong caramelly malt sweetness. Hop flavor moderate to moderately high (any variety, although earthy, resinous, and/or floral UK hops are most traditional). Hop bitterness and flavor should be noticeable, but should not totally dominate malt flavors. May have low levels of secondary malt flavors (e.g., nutty, biscuity) adding complexity. Moderately-low to high fruity esters. Optionally may have low amounts of alcohol, and up to a moderate mineral/sulfury flavor. Medium-dry to dry finish (particularly if sulfate water is used). Generally no diacetyl, although very low levels are allowed.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium-full body. Low to moderate carbonation, although bottled commercial versions will be higher. Stronger versions may have a slight alcohol warmth but this character should not be too high.

Overall Impression: An average-strength to moderately-strong English ale. The balance may be fairly even between malt and hops to somewhat bitter. Drinkability is a critical component of the style; emphasis is still on the bittering hop addition as opposed to the aggressive middle and late hopping seen in

American ales. A rather broad style that allows for considerable interpretation by the brewer.

Comments: More evident malt and hop flavors than in a special or best bitter. Stronger versions may overlap somewhat with old ales, although strong bitters will tend to be paler and more bitter. Fuller's ESB is a unique beer with a very large, complex malt profile not found in other examples; most strong bitters are fruitier and hoppier. Judges should not judge all beers in this style as if they were Fuller's ESB clones. Some modern English variants are brewed exclusively with pale malt and are known as golden or summer bitters. Most bottled or kegged versions of UK-produced bitters are higher-alcohol versions of their cask (draught) products produced specifically for export. The IBU levels are often not adjusted, so the versions available in the US often do not directly correspond to their style subcategories in Britain. English pale ales are generally considered a premium, export-strength pale, bitter beer that roughly approximates a strong bitter, although reformulated for bottling (including containing higher carbonation). **History:** Strong bitters can be seen as a higher-gravity version of best bitters (although not necessarily "more premium" since best bitters are traditionally the brewer's finest product). Since beer is sold by strength in the UK, these beers often have some alcohol flavor (perhaps to let the consumer know they are getting their due). In England today, "ESB" is a brand unique to Fullers; in America, the name has been co-opted to describe a malty, bitter, reddish, standard-strength (for the US) English-type ale. Hopping can be English or a combination of English and American. **Ingredients:** Pale ale, amber, and/or crystal malts, may use a touch of black malt for color adjustment. May use sugar adjuncts, corn or wheat. English hops most typical, although American and European varieties are becoming more common (particularly in the paler examples). Characterful English yeast. "Burton" versions use medium to high sulfate water.

Vital Statistics:	OG: 1.048 – 1.060
IBUs: 30 – 50	FG: 1.010 – 1.016

SRM: 6 – 18

ABV: 4.6 – 6.2%

Commercial Examples: Fullers ESB, Adnams Broadside, Shepherd Neame Bishop's Finger, Young's Ram Rod, Samuel Smith's Old Brewery Pale Ale, Bass Ale, Whitbread Pale Ale, Shepherd Neame Spitfire, Marston's Pedigree, Black Sheep Ale, Vintage Henley, Mordue Workie Ticket, Morland Old Speckled Hen, Greene King Abbot Ale, Bateman's XXXB, Gale's Hordean Special Bitter (HSB), Ushers 1824 Particular Ale, Hopback Summer Lightning, Great Lakes Moondog Ale, Shipyard Old Thumper, Alaskan ESB, Geary's Pale Ale, Cooperstown Old Slugger, Anderson Valley Boont ESB, Avery 14'er ESB, Redhook ESB

Extra Special Bitters Recipe

Thanks to John Van Itallie for this recipe

Makes 10 gallons:

15 lbs UK 2-row

1 lb Crystal 60L

4 lb Munich Malt

4 oz. Cascade 5.6% alpha 60 minutes

4 oz. Willamette 5% alpha 10 minutes

4 oz. Willamette 5% alpha 2 minutes

Irish moss 15 minutes

Windsor Dry Yeast

Filter with Active Carbon and Adjust mash and sparge water as follows:

Mash:

20 g CaSO₄

8 g MgSO₄

4 g CaCO₃

Sparge:

25 g CaSO₄

11 g MgSO₄

5 g CaCO₃

Single Infusion Mash 60 minutes at 148F.

60 minute Boil

Ferment at 68F for 10 days; transfer to secondary; keg after another 4 weeks or so.

OG: 1.053

FG: 1.016

ABV: 4.8%

Mash Efficiency: 74%

OUR COMPLIMENTS TO...

The WeekEnd Brewer Homebrew & Wine Supplies

4205 West Hundred Road

Chester, VA 23831

(804) 796-9760

<http://www.weekendbrewer.com/>

River City Cellars Beer, Wine and Gourmet Foods

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**(10% Discount for JRHB Members with JRHB
Membership Card Only)**

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Monthly Meetings

All regular club meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at The Legend Brewery, 321 West 7th Street, Richmond, Virginia. Homebrew tasting at 6:30, meeting at 7:00. We thank Tom Martin and the rest of the Legend staff for their gracious hospitality.

Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

President: Mike Lang – president@jrhb.org

Vice President: Dan Mouer – vicepresident@jrhb.org

Treasurer: Mike Hinkle – treasurer@jrhb.org

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Web Site

<http://www.jrhb.org/>

Submit Articles

Articles or other items of interest from the membership are welcome (encouraged) and should be submitted to the Secretary. Email to secretary@jrhb.org.

Dues

Membership dues are \$20 per calendar year. Dues will be prorated on a quarterly basis.

Inclement Weather Policy

If the Richmond city Schools are closed due to inclement weather on the day of a regularly scheduled Club meeting, the meeting will be cancelled, and re-scheduled for the following Wednesday – this will be confirmed by e-mail.

Remember

Drink Responsibly -

Don't Drink and Drive!

Members and guests at James River Homebrewers meetings and events are individually and solely liable for any and all actions attendant to or resulting from their participation.