

The Worthouse News



A PUBLICATION OF THE EDMONTON HOMEBREWERS GUILD

May 2003

**Our Next Meeting is at Alley Kat Brewing, 9929-60 Ave, Edmonton
Monday – May 5 - 7:30 pm**

The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild Executive *(Sept 2002 to June 2003)*

President.....Roxy Hastings
Vice-President.....Neil Herbst
Secretary.....Boyd Oberhoffner
Treasurer..... Robert Carminati
Competition Chair.....Glen Hannah
Newsletter.....Günther Trageser

Club Meetings

EHG meetings are held on the first non-holiday Monday of a month, from Sept. to June, at Alley Kat Brewing, 9929-60 Ave, Edmonton. Meetings start at 7:30 pm. A few meetings for this season are planned to be held at local beer establishments well known for the quality of the beer they serve.

Contributions

The Worthouse News is a monthly publication of EHG, mailed to paid members, club sponsors and sister Brew Clubs.

Articles in the Worthouse News may be used in other homebrewing newsletters providing credit is given to the author and EHG.

Submissions to the Worthouse News may be sent to the editor/publisher.

Anyone who has not yet renewed his/her membership, please do so at the next meeting.

Membership fees are due and are still at a bargain price of \$25.00. Please bring a cheque or cash.

View from the Top

What can I say but that we are rapidly approaching the end of our regular brewing season and with that competition fever is upon us. Guild members anted up to the call and have entered about 24 beers in each of the Canadian Nationals in Toronto and the Saskatchewan regionals in Regina. I was especially glad to see some first time entries and entries from people who have entered but a few competitions before. That speaks well for the future of the club. Combined with a revitalized interest amongst some of our long term and more competitive members I can see the fortunes of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild are once again on the rise.

Of course the most important competition is our own EHG-Aurora Brewing Challenge/MCAB qualifier to be held of June 3-5. This is Canada's biggest competition and draws entries from not only Alberta but across the nation and into the U.S. That being said, don't let the size of the competition scare you off. Yes there is a lot of quality brew but the quality of the judging is also outstanding. This is your best chance to really learn about your brewing skills and how to improve them. The comments you receive are absolutely the best way to learn about brewing. Remember, virtually all of the best brewers in the Guild are those who have competed at the big competitions. They've learned to take to positive criticism and advice they have received from the competitions to truly hone their skills at the craft of amateur brewing. Few of us started off at the top of the pack, but many of us are there now — because we had the courage to compete. **GO FOR IT!**

You can bring/send your beers to Alley Kat during the last week of May. Of course the easiest time to bring them will be for the June meeting. We also encourage you to bring beers to the May and June meetings that you have questions about. There will be many judges at these meetings who will help you decide on what class to enter. Of course a really good option, and a great way to learn about beers styles, is to enter the beer into more than one category or subcategory. We highly encourage you to consider this option, especially if you are relatively new to the art of brewing. Further, in the spirit of helping you learn about your brews, this year we have decided to take multiple entries in the same category. If you have two ESBs enter them both and let the judges pick the best one.

Glen Hannah has done a fantastic job of organizing the competition. Looks real smooth right now. Of course we will need judges and stewards to help make it a success. Get a hold of Glen at the next meeting and sign up. Stewards are critical to a great competition and a great way to get introduced to this most exciting event in amateur brewing. So if you can't judge and you've never helped out before, this is an excellent chance to get involved with the Guild. Glen can also be reached at glhannah@telusplanet.net

Entry information can be found on our website www.ehg.ca

BURRP

Remember May is BURRP month where we all get to taste those really ridiculous beers that you concocted over the last few months with just 10 lbs of 2 row. Bring your beers no matter how good or how bad they turned out to be. We will have 2 panels of BJCP judges and judge candidates go through a formal evaluation and talk about the beers. But we will also want to here from the brewers. Bring your recipes and tell us what in the world you were up to and how you tried to do it! Try to name a style if you can, but just homebrew is also acceptable.

ABC 2003 update

Glen Hannah
Competition Chair

Our competition isn't too far away so I thought I'd update everyone with the progress of activities and accomplishments leading up to this year's **Aurora Brewing Challenge** coming up on June 6th, 7th and 8th. First of all, a big thank you to **Jim Whittome** for designing and building a very informative and interactive website complete with links to the application form and brochure designed by **Neil Herbst** and **Roxy Hastings**. I think all your questions can be answered in the brochure. Neil and Roxy have compressed a ton of information in such a compact amount of space. **Bruce Sample** has lined up a caterer to take care of us on the Saturday. With all the sampling and judging that will be going on we'll definitely be hungry! He has also gathered some awesome prizes from his industrial contacts. Stay tuned! **Kevin Zaychuk** has ordered the medals with no snags that will be ready well before the competition according to the supplier. **Richard Bruins** has been working diligently to retain past sponsors and has recruited some new ones (see brochure) so please support our sponsors. **Harry Wagner** and our newsletter editor **Günther Tragesar** have been contacting brewing clubs and associations promoting the event. As with any

volunteer hosted event we can always use more. Areas you could help out in include: judging, stewarding, equipment setup and take down, data entry... There will be a sign up form at the May 3rd club meeting for all those interested. Finally, I can't thank our Directors and volunteers enough for the work they have done. Everything is coming together to make the ABC 2003 the best one yet. I'm sure everyone is almost finished brewing their entries. Try to send in as many as you can and oh, by the way, don't forget the cutoff date which is Monday, June 2nd the same night as the June club meeting. If you can't volunteer for the event or will not be submitting entries don't be a stranger – come on out to the BBQ / Best of Show wrap up party on Sunday the 8th starting around noon.

Okanagan Fest-of-Ale

Penticton, BC, April 4-5, 2003

Glen Hannah

Edmonton Home Brewer's Guild members **Bruce & Dory Sample** and **Glen & Linda Hannah** jetted the WestJet 08:10 am flight direct to Kelowna on Friday morning to take in two days of sampling some crafted ales from Western Canada's finest microbreweries.

A warm welcome was given to three American microbreweries that were on hand representing Washington State. Eighteen breweries served up their namely brews like "Grampa Clem's Brown Ale" and "Back Hand of God Stout" that were well received both days. The convention hall was literally sold out, if that could ever happen! It took me over an hour to find my wife! Friday night ended at 9 pm but many carried on elsewhere. Our crew managed to weather the storm well that night and were able to carry on the following day.

Blood shot eyes and hangovers were abundant on the Saturday morning when the festival reopened at noon. Linda and I and a friend of ours didn't plan on returning back for noon – it just happened that way. Bruce and Dory toured some wineries and met us later in the afternoon. The American microbrews all ran out of supply early Saturday afternoon. A strange liquor law exists and at the time of this writing I'm not sure if it's provincial or federal legislation but a brewery cannot enter into Canada with more than three kegs of beer to donate otherwise duties and other tariffs are imposed.

Popular beers included: Alpine Munich Marzen, Alpine Bavarian Dunkel from Alpine Brewing (US); Barley

Mill Pale Ale, Cayuse Wheat Ale from Barley Mill Brewpub; Black Bear Ale, Hemp Cream Ale, Kamloops Honey Lager from Bear Brewing; Scotch Ale, India Pale Ale, Blonde Pale Ale from Boundary Bay Brewing Co. (US); Newcastle Brown, Extra Special Pale Ale, 1516 Bavarian Lager from OK Spring; Skaha Bluff's Light Blonde Ale, Giant's Head Gold Canadian Ale, Naramatta Nut Brown Ale, Indian Rock IPA from Cannery Brewing Co.; Kick in the Pants Ale, Red Branch Irish Ale, Back Hand of God Stout from Crannog Ales; Cypress Honey Lager, Kitsilano Maple Cream Ale, Killarney Stout from Granville Island Brewing Co; Salt Spring Golden Ale; Mayne Sale Ale, Pender Island Porter from Gulf Island Brewery, Wild Honey Authentic Ale, Paddywack India Pale Ale, Old Brewery Pale Ale from Nelson Brewing Co.; Chilliwack Blonde, Old Yale Pale Ale, Sergeant's IPA from Old Yale Brewing Co.; Canterbury Dark Mild, Natureland Organic Lager from Pacific Western Brewing Co.; India Pale Ale, Maple Cream Ale, Espresso Stout from Phillips Brewing; Mullen's Special Blonde Ale, Ridge Traditional Vienna Marzen, Ridge Old English Bitter Ale from Ridge Brewing Co.; Shaftebury Cream Ale, Shaftebury Honey Pale Ale, Summer Solstice Ale from Shaftebury Brewing Co. (OK Spring); Coyote Ale, Black Widow Dark Ale, Killer Bee Dark Honey Ale from Tin Whistle Brewing Co.; La Maudite, La Terrible, La Fin du Monde from Unibroue Inc. and Boulder Creek Golden Bock, Bushwaker, Grampa Clem's Brown Ale from Winthrop Brewing Co. (US).

Because this was an ale fest, ales were pretty well the entire menu. The usual ales were available to try: pale's, blonde's, IPA's, nut brown's, wheat's and honey brown's. There were exceptions and kudos to them for bringing variety: Alpine Brewing – Munich Marzen & Bavarian Dunkel, Ridge Brewing – Vienna Marzen, and Winthrop with their Golden Bock among others.

Bruce and I were looking for more obscure beers and we found some. Phillips Brewing out of Victoria and Granville Island from Vancouver were serving Maple Cream Ale. I know this style has been around but I had never tried one before. Pale in colour, hint of maple flavour with a dry, crisp finish. Reminds me of the days when I was a kid going to sugaring off parties. Not the beer but the maple syrup of course! Unibroue had generated a lot of interest with La Maudite, La Terrible and La Fin du Monde. But perhaps the most interesting beer I tried was 'Kick in the Pants Ale', a cask conditioned ale dry hopped with Goldings brewed by Crannog Ales in Sorrento, BC, about an hour and a half drive from Kamloops in the Shuswap region of the

province. They also have a potato stout that I didn't get to try. Brian the brewer will take anything that grows from his farm and try to create a beer from it. Their story is rather unique. Currently they are Canada's only certified organic farmhouse microbrewery. The brewery sits on a ten-acre farm with the brewery providing feed for the livestock and the farm providing the hops (Goldings, Fuggles, Nuggett, Willamette, Bullion, Mt. Hood, Centennial and Cascade) for the brewery. Their malts come from Armstrong, BC an hour away from the farm. I guess you can say their ingredients come from the same bioregion (is that right Kevin) and quality control is easily monitored.

The festival was a great experience. I discovered different brews and learned about some new breweries I had never heard of before. Looking forward to the Great Canadian Beer Festival in Victoria next year.

Upside down carboys

by Bob Boufford

As we browse the homebrew magazine ads and mail order sites, many of us wonder if a conical fermenter or unitank should part of our home brewery. There are several advantages to unitanks. Near the end of the primary fermentation cycle, the trub can be dumped without the need to rack the beer into another vessel (carboy for most of us). As active fermentation slows down, the yeast can be harvested for the next batch of beer and at the end of fermentation, the finished beer can be drained right into bottles or kegs without additional siphoning.

However, while there are several advantages to unitanks, the price of a unitank, even small ones can be more than many of us can afford without being sure this is the best way for us to brew beer. Even the low-end high-grade plastic unitanks are close to \$150 CAD/\$100 US with stainless steel starting at five times as much.

So what can one do to try out a unitank without breaking the grain bank? Fortunately, for about the price of a kit, the Fermentap valve kit will let you convert a standard 5 or 6.5 US gallon carboy into a "poor person's" unitank. While not as effective as even a small plastic unitank, it's a good introduction to fermenting beer like the commercial brewers.

The Fermentap valve kit consists of a valve assembly that fits on the end of a carboy with the addition of a racking cane to serve as a vent tube. After the wort is

pitched with yeast, and the valve assembly is fitted, the carboy is flipped upside down and placed in a stand. Tubing is run from the racking cane vent tube into a bucket as a blow-off/airlock.



Once fermentation starts, every couple of days, one dumps trub that settles into the neck of the carboy. Even though I haven't tried it, the manufacturer claims one can harvest yeast in the same process.

After fermentation, the green beer is drained through the valve into a priming bucket or right into a keg for those who do forced carbonation. With the use of Primetabs (priming sugar in tablet form), one can even skip the priming bucket and run the beer right into the bottle.

While this sounds like a great setup, there are some challenges to using Fermentap. For one, a unitank has a 60 degree angle that allows the trub and yeast to settle down to the bottom. However, most carboy necks have a much shallower angle. With the shallow angle, yeast tends to stick on the sides and requires one to "swirl" the carboy around. Not the most easy and safe task.

Dumping trub on a regular every other day basis is also critical. I got trapped out of town for an extra couple of days and it was a challenge to get the plug out of the valve to have trub flowing again. It's not a "pitch" and leave alone setup like a standard carboy fermentation setup

I also found one needs to adjust a recipe batch to be ½ to 1 gallon less than the typical recipe for a 5-gallon batch. There needs to be a good 2 inches of headspace when the carboy is flipped upside down to avoid clogging the vent tube. For a 5 US gallon carboy, it really means 4 ½ US gallon batch. To make a full 5 US gallon batch requires a 6-6.5 US gallon carboy. Fortunately, there are several tools available for quickly adjusting batch sizes including ProMash and the Beer Tools web site (<http://www.beertools.com>).

Finally, setting up the assembly can be a challenge. It's not easy to flip upside down into the stand, a full 5 US gallon carboy at about 8 lbs per gallon. It really takes two people to safely setup a full 6/6.5 US gallon carboy.

It's also best to set up on a sturdy table or bench and not move it, so it's definitely an effort to lift a full carboy.

While not perfect, I've had some fun with the Fermentap valve kit. As I live in a small apartment, the kit allowed me to try out a unitank setup with existing equipment and not lose space storing even a small plastic unitank. My next project is to setup the valve kit with an 11-liter carboy (the taller 8.5 inch diameter one, not the 10 inch diameter 2.5 US gallon half height) for doing "half batches" of 2 to 2.5 gallons.

The Fermentap valve kit sells for about \$23 US including a stand that can serve as a carboy drying stand. Unfortunately, Fermentap does not have direct sales and by their web site, no Canadian distributors. Several US mail order homebrew suppliers sell the kit and ship to Canada. Beer, Beer, More Beer (<http://www.morebeer.com>) is located just down the street from the manufacturer in Concord, CA just outside of San Francisco.

6th Annual CAMRA Beer Festival – Calgary

We received the following correspondence from our good friend Mike Tessier in Calgary:

The beer club that I am a member of, Camra, is having it's 6th big festival on May 3rd at Bottlescrew Bill's. Most of you have attended before and those of you who haven't it is always a great time. I have worked the brewers hard to make some great stuff for the festival.

Some of Alberta's best brewers make special festival only cask conditioned beers for the event (11 in all) and tickets are almost free at five bucks. That includes your entrance a glass you can keep and your first beer. The event runs from noon until the beer runs out or 8pm which ever comes first. Hope you all can make it is always fun.

Hope we can all enjoy a sunny day together.

Mike and Bo

I know, this is very short notice but, maybe, some of you were going to be I Calgary anyway... now you know what you can do for your personal enrichment.