



Volume 15, January 2007 www.hazeclub.org

President's Message



Homebrewers of HAZE (raising glass to toast)... Happy New Year! As we move into 2007, my only resolution is to brew better beer more often. Well, that and still be a good husband, father, and citizen. When I have time left over, of course.

As I begin my tenure as president of our club, I hope to keep as much fun and knowledge in the meetings and club events as I have been fortunate enough to experience in my five years as a club member. Making beer at home is many things to each of us. For some it's still a new experience loaded with the fear of doing something wrong (heck, it's guys in the kitchen... scary enough).

For others it involves tweaking their equipment to step mash quickly enough through the proper temperature range to avoid killing off the head-producing components of the wort. For me, brewing is simply about producing drinkable beer with a flavor profile that fits within the BJCP guidelines for the particular style I am attempting to recreate.

Our club's mission is to promote homebrewing and education as well as responsible consumption. As a club, I hope that this year brings a renewed excitement for each of us to learn to brew new styles we have never tried, and to bring those beers to the meetings for all of us to share and learn from. I also hope that we as a club enter each American Homebrewers Association Club-Only Competition with a beer selected as exemplifying the great beer we can brew. This year I hope to bring more information to the club regarding these competitions and the process involved in getting your beer to the judges should you have that interest.

As our next meeting approaches (Thursday, Jan 11), I'd like to make a call for everyone to bring at least one beer they have brewed recently to share. Bring as many as you would like to, and let's talk about what's in your beer and how you brewed it. Let me know if you have a session beer (O.G. less than 1.045) that you would be interested in placing in the upcoming AHA club-only competition in February.

Cheers!

Dave

Time To Get Your Rocks Off!!

Off the shelf, that is! The Second Annual Steinbier Brew Session will be held Sunday, January 14th at the Frenn's. Want to brew? Bring your equipment. The pit will be fired up if you want to do a steinbier. But bring some "seasoned stones" as I'm not sure I have enough to go around. Bring something to munch. There will be plenty of bier on hand (or tap!). See you there anytime after 9 AM. Post to the list or email me directly if you need directions. This a free, non-club sponsored event.



Hangtown Brew Noose

H.A.Z.E. CLUB OFFICERS for 2007

President	Dave Pratt
Vice Pres.	Stan Backlund
Secretary	Beth Zangari
Treasurer	Glen Franke
Activities	Alfred E. Newman

**BRING RAFFLE FODDER
TO THE MEETING!!**

H.A.Z.E. is dedicated to fostering social and educational opportunities for homebrewers in the foothills.

Upcoming Events

- January 11, 2007, Thursday **Club Meeting!!!**
 Regular Club meeting at the "Smith", 7 PM
 Your Dues Are Due! \$20 per person or family. Make checks payable to HAZE, or cash. (Sorry, no Canadian or Euro!)

Beer Traveler – A Christmas Miracle in The City

(Grab a barleywine, and find a nice place next to a warm fire...)



There are times when events happen which can only be rationally explained as "Favors from the Beergods"! Such was the case recently in San Francisco at one of my favorite brew pubs in the City, The 21st Amendment. What started out as simple layover to allow the traffic to subside turned into an exciting event of beer (go figure!), food, brewers and knowledge!

www.21st-amendment.com

First, if one isn't paying close attention, one might miss the various pleasantries the Beer-gods throw your way. Or to state otherwise, you must be in the proper frame of mind so as to be receptive to their gifts. Beer can be very helpful in putting you in the proper frame of mind! That being said, the evening started off well enough. I love San Francisco in December, the City can take on a very festive mood, and you can almost sense the coming of Beerapalooza in February. With the 21st Amendment being only a few blocks away from my parking garage, I set that as my first of several "planned" stops. Gift one from the Beergoods: An easy parking spot in the alley right by the pub which I believe is legal, unmetered parking (more on that in moment).



The 21st Amendment at 563 2nd St. SF
Note the Elky in the (legal?) parking spot



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The pub was moderately busy, there were a few open bar spots and a few open tables in the dining area. But most important, there was a single open table in the front with a corner window where I could rest a bit, and keep an eye out for the meter maid! I ordered a pint of the full strength IPA (my favorite) from the bar and returned to my seat. I then noticed a small flyer on the table: "Happy Hour Dailey. \$3.00 pints \$3.00 Appetizers 3:30 – 5:30" My heart sank as I assumed it was at least a quarter to six. Looking at my watch, I had 5:28! I left to the bar and asked the keep if Happy Hour was still on. I was rewarded by the gods (that would be number 2) with a "yes"! "Another pint of IPA, please, and some fried calamari!"

I returned to my table and the current issue of Celebrator Magazine. A few moments later, my eye caught the ominous yellow flash of the metermaid!! I turned to see that he had caught a vehicle parked right out front, and quicker than Saint Nick, had issued a ticket on the hapless prey. But what about me? My BUV (Beer Utility Vehicle) was parked exactly kittycorner and only 20 feet from the now marked SUV, clearly in plain view of the "maid". But no, I appeared to be safe, as he promptly took off for his next victim. Gift number three from the gods!

Back to my IPA, Celebrator and calamari. But not for long as the "silence" was soon broken by an unintelligible overhead announcement. Suddenly I noticed a large group of people ascending the stairs to the small dining area which overlooks the larger dining room. Curiosity, one of my many redeeming qualities, compelled me to inquire as to this mass migration. It was at this moment I learned of the "Beer School". Had this gift been wrapped, it would have been the size of a cable car!

The Beer School it turns out is a semi-regular event of beer and food pairing offered by 21st Amendment about every month, or so. There is usually a theme, such as Holiday Beers, which was the theme this evening. One of the last events was the Beer "Schoolbus", which is basically a pubcrawl with brewers from various pubs! Rumor has it that one of the next events might be "An Evening With The Brewer", slated to be an exclusive, limited and intimate sit down dinner in the brewery with the brewer.

Wasting no time, I promptly introduced myself to a fine young man named Lloyd Knight, who also turned out to be the General Manager. Indicating I was interested in taking a few pictures and writing a story for the widely read and highly regarded Brewnoose, I was escorted upstairs and given a spot in the "Brewers' Corner" from which I could observe, write, chat, and of course, sample the fine offerings of the evening! It was here I met Jessie Houck, head brewer at the 21st Amendment, and Brendan Dobel, head brewer at the ThirstyBear (My interview with Brendan will be featured in an upcoming issue of the "Noose").



Rumor has it the next Beer School may be an "Evening With the Brewer" held in the brewery of the 21st.

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The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Nico Freccia, co-founder of the 21st with Shaun O'Sullivan (who, by the way, has been very sick with pneumonia and we wish him a speedy recovery). Nick wasted no time in launching the evening with the 21st Amendment's own Holiday Spiced Ale. This beer is made in the classic English brown style, has a simply delicious aroma, and is spiced to give a gingerbread character. It has a dry finish and there is little evidence of its 6.2% ABV. This beer was a GABF 2002 medal winner and I personally prefer it slightly to Anchor's Christmas Ale. We then compared this beer with Young's Winter Warmer, a classic, ruby colored English beer of 5% alcohol. Young's features Maris Otter pale and crystal malts, Fuggle and Golding hops, and cane sugar. According to the Head Brewer:



The Mezza Platter

An award-winning ale to chase away the winter blues and warm the cockles of your heart. (Nothing like hot cockles, eh?!). These beers were paired with a fabulous Mezza Platter of Hummus, Salamino, Bocconcini di Mozerrela, Roasted Red Peppers, Seared Ahi Tuna and Babbaganoush - it was a feast in and of itself!

A quick note about food at the 21st Amendment: it's awesome! The menu is incredibly varied with pub grub, salads and some of the best burgers on the West Coast. You can go there just for the beer, but you would be missing out not to eat there, too!

The next beer, also paired with the Mezza Platter, was Affligem Noel. Certainly an excellent choice for a December evening in San Francisco, this beer was a welcome compliment to the richness of the hummus and babbaganoush. Now owned by Heineken Brewery, Affligem traces it's ancestry all way the back to the oldest Abbey in Flanders founded by Benedictine monks in 1074. Dark colors, rich creamy flavors and a pleasant WV (Warming Value) of about 9.0%.

Before the Affligem was gone, and with nice morsels still remaining Mezza Platter, the next course of Tuscan Cannelloni Rossini was presented. Delicious stuffed with veal, spinach and ricotta cheese, it was covered in a fabulous marinara and parmesian cheese.

Next Nick decided a "palate cleanser" was in order and fine examples of Sierra Nevada 2006 Celebration ale were served much to the delight of the nearly 50 eager "students" of the school (fortunately, class size reductions have not occurred at the "Beer School"!). This beer went down hoppily and was an excellent choice to prepare for the next course which included an extra special secret guest!

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Beerincidence: Today is December 5, 2006. It was on December 5th that the 18th Amendment was repealed. Any idea what amendment repealed the 18th? See below for the answer!

And what to my wondering eyes should appear, none other than Jeremy Cowan of Hebrew Beer, sans Reindeer! All the way from New York he came, to educate the students, and offer L'Chaim! A sort of double nut brown he pulled from his sack, a dark special brew, but not nearly black. Crystal and rye with a nice caramel flavor, warrior hops for bittering and Simcoe to savor. He spoke nary a word, and got straight down to task, with beer flowing to all, like from a bottomless cask. The Jewbelation was delicious, a true winter warmer, from a man who never mentioned if he ever wanted to be a farmer. Some history is here of which you might not be aware, Jewbelation was actually conceived in San Francisco some 10 years ago with care. So to be here with us as this special guest tonight, Jeremy and his beer made it just right!



"Students" studying hard for exams with Jeremy Cowan of Hebrew Beer.

More beers to come! The Val-Dieu Noel hails from the only non-Trappist brewing abbey in Belgium, the Cistercian Abbaye du Val-Dieu (Valley of God). Dating from 1216, this monastery is near the village of Aubel. Of epicurean interest, this area is also known for Herve cheese and sits roughly at the trisection of Holland, Belgium and Germany. The Val-Dieu Winter is a 10.5% abv bottle conditioned ale of original recipe, and is unfiltered and unpasteurized.



The Lovely Ladies of the 21st!

At some point we were treated to another culinary excursion of German bierwurst wrapped in puff pastry with spicy mustard. It was most excellent! By the way, have I mentioned how totally excellent the people of the 21st are? Well, they are!!

My memory begins to fade a bit at this point and I realize now that my written note-taking skills were degraded rapidly. The last surprise of the evening before I unfortunately had to bid my farewell was an unexpected offering from the Anheiser-Busch Company. AB offers a brew labeled the Brewmaster's Private Reserve. It is essentially the first runnings of Budweiser and comes in at a malty 8.4%. When you drink this beer, you can definitely taste the Budweiser character, but in a much mellower and fuller presentation. It's an enjoyable, somewhat sweet beer, if not slightly comical to consider that the King of Beers might actually be second runnings!

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I have no direct notes after this point, at least none that I can now decipher, however, the rest of the evening was scheduled for something like this:

Scampi Alla Busara, head on shrimp in the traditional Adriatic style, and reflecting the tradition of serving no meat on Christmas eve, only seafood. Possibly paired with Anderson Valley Winter Solstice Ale, a two time World Beer Championship Gold medal Winner (1997, 1998). A medium bodied ale with a WV of 6.9%. Alternatively, the scampi may have been paired with Full Sail Wassail. This delightful beer is brewed with four different malts and a blend of imported hops, giving it a malty full body and a pleasantly hoppy finish that appeals to both hop and malt lovers, alike. A true Christmas miracle!

Still hungry? Then how about grilled Roman Christmas Piadina filled with artichokes and fontina cheese? Oh, excuse me. Did I mention that they cook at the 21st?! I'm telling you, the restaurant is excellent!! And what libation might we have served with this? I can only guess, but the beer selection of the evening might suggest a trip back to Belgium for Gouden Carolus Noel from the Het Anker brewery in Mechelen. At 10.5% ABV, this ale has a warm coppery color and rich bouquet. It referments in the bottle and improves with age.

On to the next course of roasted pork loin with dried cherry sauce. My pairing choice for this dish (of course, without having had the pleasure of sampling), might have been the 2006 Anchor Christmas Ale. Admittedly, not one of my personal favorites, but I think the unique spicing of this quintessential winter warmer would work well with the cherry sauce. Anchor's Christmas ale has been a tradition since 1975 (Look for a report on the Anchor tour in an upcoming issue of the "Noose").



Students of the beer School. Good grief! It's Uncle Bob!

The last course before dessert was soft polenta with four cheeses and wild mushroom schmutz (that's what it says!). Probably the Anchor Christmas would work with this dish, but it just as easily could have been Le Baladin Noel. Very dark with ruby highlights, the WV of 9.0% is pronounced when cold. Let this beauty warm up, however, and you will find sweetness at the front of the tongue followed by a big cherry sweetness and light alcoholic burn. This fine Italian beer from the Baladin brewpub in Pizzo, Italy, near Torino might have worked equally well with the pork and dried cherry sauce. European pubcrawl, anyone?

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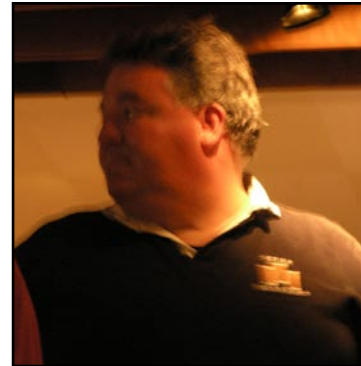


Before you get to the end of this story, put the “Noose” down and log onto YouTube. Search for Watermelon Wheat Beer. You will be treated to an interesting little diddy sung by none other than Nico himself.

And finally, the dessert and crowning jewel of the evening was Hungarian Christmas Palaschinke (pronounced pa-la-chin-ke), filled with holiday jams, and covered with powdered sugar. I have never had this but my blood sugar is rising just reading about it. The last beer on the list not already paired is the venerable Samichlaus (Sammy-Claws). One of the strongest beers in the world at 14%, the name means Santa Clause in Swiss German. This beer is only brewed once a year on December 6, the feast of St. Nicholas, and is fermented slowly over 10 months in the style of a Bavarian bock. This beer stands well to aging and becomes more complex with a creamy warming finish.

Well, that’s it. Hope you enjoyed it. I know I did. And, the answer to the quiz:

Why the 21st, of course! Is that a Beerincidence, or what?!



Holy crap? Is that Zangari?!