



The Brewsletter Urquell

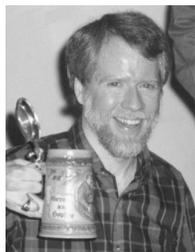
April 2001

Volume 21
Number 4

The Brewsletter of Houston's Foam Rangers

Out of the Wazoo

Bev Blackwood, Grand Wazoo



I HAVE certainly found that writing this column gets easier the more alcohol I have in my system... I guess there's something to the drunken rages of Hunter Thompson after all. My only request is that if you start seeing me doing "Duke" impressions

at meetings you call the appropriate authorities.

I'm actually ahead of schedule this time so I can actually *think* about what I'm writing... Wait a minute... That's not so good... Sorry David, guess this will have to wait for the last minute!

The fruits of our labors are beginning to return to us! Check over in Joe's "Competition Corner" to see who won what (here's a hint ... it's me, Jimmy, Kari & Kuyler, and Joe. We ain't the club officers for nothing, you know.) Several of our members recently represented the club at the Bluebonnet Brew-off and I have to say they put on one heck of a show—the Bluebonnet folks, not our members—we were just loud and obnoxious. Just shy of 900 entries, the Bluebonnet not only does well in quantity, they kick ass in quality. I judged several flights at this year's event and nearly all of the beers were very good. I heard that a few other flights were not as impressive, but if you entered in barleywine, lambic or spice beers, you had to be top-drawer to make it.

One thing in evidence at the Bluebonnet is homebrew. They had it in abundance on the room crawl. I'd love to see the majority of the beers we serve at Dixie Cup be made by our members so that we can show our skill (and we have a *lot* of good brewers here) in addition to winning back what is rightfully ours... The Dixie Cup. I'd like to extend a personal thanks

to Steve Moore, Sean Lamb, Jim Youngmeyer, Carolyn Sackett and Jimmy Paige for all their effort in attending the Bluebonnet. Jim and Jimmy hauled all our beer up to Dallas while Steve and Sean provided tunes and really big hats for the proper ambience. While our hospitality room wasn't up to the Ale-ians or even the Red River brewers standards (not enough black lights or Christmas lights), I am proud to say the Foam Rangers were among the last rooms standing Friday night and I personally was up until 4:30 A.M. Good thing I didn't have anything subtle to judge in the morning. Thank God for lambics.

We're faced with something of a challenge there, as clubs as small as the Ale-ians in Lubbock out-entered us in Dallas. (I'd like to remark here that our own Sly Lazy Bastards had promised organizer Dave Dixon that when he organized the Bluebonnet, they would be there. He was profoundly disappointed that they didn't appear, but he put on a great show nonetheless.) The Dixie Cup is who we are as a club, and we're already picking up steam for this year's event. Ray Daniels, author of *101 Homebrewing Tricks* and Chris White, maker of those great pitchable yeast vials we all know and love, will be attending to speak with us at the Saturday technical conference. As always, we'll have our beloved Fred, who has been presented with the challenge of matching up beers to Mexican foods for the Fred Tasting. Jimmy Paige and Joe Lindsey are already hard at work making this year's event one to remember. There's a lot of energy around the event already and that means this year we'll be looking at a great Dixie Cup. Now all we have to do is brew, brew and brew good (or even great) beers to win it back!

It's easy for me to sit here and tell everyone that we can kick the Bluebonnet's ass, but it's just not going to *Continued on page 9*

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May Brewsletter

Articles are due Friday, May 4

April Meeting

Friday, April 20
8 P.M.
DeFalco's

Remember to go to the *new* DeFalco's location on Stella Link. Don't go to the old Robinhood location.

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Brewsletter submissions should be submitted in \TeX / \LaTeX or plain-text formats (HTML and RTF formats are also acceptable, though not preferred) to the editor at the email address above. Hardcopy submissions may be sent to *The Brewsletter Urquell*, 8840 NW Cornell Rd., Portland, OR 97229.

March Meeting Minutes

Kari & Kuyler Doyle, Scriveners

HOLY GUACAMOLE, BATMAN! We've got a boatload of Belgian beers.

The meeting began a little tardy this month at 9:13 P.M.—Bev was too busy sampling the Belgian beers to worry with official bidness.

Bev started with a discussion on the Jennings trip on May 19. Kehn “Cuffs” Bacon and Scott “Birdman” Birdwell volunteered at the last minute to plan the trip, thus saving us from a disgraceful Jennings-less year. Sign up sheets went around for people who are interested in riding a bus out to the event. If you missed it, contact Kehn or Scott. The Jennings hotel for the event will be the classy Holiday Inn (337-824-5280). Reservations must be made by May 5—ask for the special “homebrew meeting” rate to get the discount. There will again be crawfish for lunch. A well spent \$20 will get you all you can eat of those bigass mudbugs until they're gone. Dinner will be provided by Boudin King for the nominal fee of \$6. The official number for food and attendees must be counted two weeks prior to the event. All Foam Rangers and Houston-area homebrewers are encouraged to attend as long as they won't be in Florida for the Sunshine Challenge. Be sure to work on your muscle tone for the keg tossing event, too.

Bev also announced that the Foam Rangers would be sponsoring a hospitality room at the Bluebonnet Brew-Off. People were encouraged to lug homebrew for it since Bev's deep pockets allowed him to fly.

Pack and Ship for the Crescent City competition was announced to be the following Thursday. The crawfish boil for the competition itself is at 3:00 P.M. on Saturday, April 21 in New Orleans. Tickets for the crawfish boil must be purchased by April 7. April 21 is the day after a Foam Rangers meeting, but it would be great to have some club representation at the Crescent City event!

Bev thanked all who had entered the last several competitions: Reggale and Dredhop, World Cup of Beer, Drunk Monk, and the Bluebonnet. All Foam Rangers are encouraged to start brewing more and entering the upcoming competitions!

A Dixie Cup organizational meeting was announced for Sunday, March 18 at the Timberwolf Pub. There is a bunch of organiza-

tion needed to put on the Dixie Cup so everyone is encouraged to attend and help out!

For the First Sunday pub visit on April 1, the club is meeting at the Texas Brewers Festival at the Garden in the Heights at 3:00 P.M. instead of the originally scheduled trip to Sneed Wheelers.

A big Belgian round of applause was given for “Titanic” Bob and Nannette for hauling many bottles of beer from Belgium without breakage for the meeting. Bev encouraged all members to pick up beers for future meetings when they are traveling. If you want to know what is needed before a trip, contact our Secondary, Jimmy Paige.

Bev announced that National Homebrew Day is on Saturday, May 5. Everyone is invited to come to St. Arnold's and brew. Most likely we will be brewing ales. Yeast, water, and electricity provided. Big rigs are welcome.

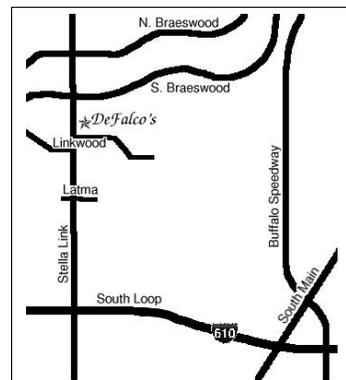
The need to make a new Foam Rangers T-shirt was also discussed. If you have an idea, please talk to Bev.

If you have not paid your dues, you are not reading your very own copy of this brewsletter because last month was your last. You will also lose your discount at DeFalco's if you do not pay up. Doh!

The date of the DeFalco's shop move was still up in the air at the time of the meeting. However, it is now common knowledge that DeFalco's has officially moved! If you haven't already done so, swing by the new shop at Stella Link and Linkwood (just South of Braeswood) and buy lots of stuff.

The next Foam Rangers meeting will be on Friday, April 20 at the new DeFalco's location at 8715 Stella Link. The April beers of the month are Brown Ales, Old Ales, and Scotch Ales, too.

Sounds malty-licious! Until then, Skal! ♦



Beer of the Month

Jimmy Paige, Secondary Fermenter

THIS MONTH we cover Brown ales, and English and Scottish strong ales. These styles have evolved together in Britain and Scotland for many hundreds of years. Early brewing raw materials produced harsher, smokier, roasted malts and brown beers due to use of wood and straw kilning fires. Brewers also used wood mash tuns and fermenters which harbored wild yeasts like *Brettanomyces* and other acid producing microbes (hey, I'm not talking Belgian lambic again). Often, three or more successive worts were drawn from a single mash that produced weaker and weaker worts. These first worts yielded old or stock ale, with lesser gravity brews like milds during the third or fourth wort. The old ale was stored away to age and mellow. The weaker beers were meant to be consumed early or were blended later on with old ale. With new malting methods, the three wort system was replaced with single wort milds and porters. Brown ales were originally known in the 1750s as any beer with darker color to distinguish from the pale beers becoming more popular at that time.

Today's brown ales are classified by the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) into Mild ales (OG 1030–1038, IBU 10–20), Southern (OG 1040–1050, IBU 15–24) and Northern (OG 1040–1050, IBU 15–30) English browns, and the aggressive American Brown ale (OG 1040–1060, IBU 25–60). The milds may be light brown with most being darker. Milds today refer to the lack of hop bitterness; earlier it may have been the lack of sourness they possessed due to being young, unlike the wood cask conditioned "old" ales. The Northern brown ales are lighter in color, more hoppy, and drier than their darker Southern brown counterparts. The American Brown ales stand out from their English cousins by being bigger in gravity and bitterness.

Old Ales are very malty, with fruity esters and red-amber color, OG 1060–1090. Some may have aged characteristics like a port wine. These beers are more malty and less hoppy than barleywines. The Wee Heavy is malty with a caramel aspect. Some possess a roasted malt or smoky aroma. Color is usually dark amber to dark brown. Alcohol warmth should be noticeable.

Scottish ales and Scotch ales may have been around since 6500 B.C. when the Picts were making their secret and hallucinogenic heather ale. The Scottish ales were always maltier due to cooler and less attenuative fermentations and lower hop usage. Hops were expensive and had

to be imported from Britain as they were not grown in Scotland. Today, Scottish and Scotch ales are graduated in Shilling scales: 60/- Light (OG 1030–1034, IBU 9–15); 70/- Heavy (OG 1034–1040, IBU 10–25); 80/- Export (OG 1040–1050, IBU 15–36); and 90/- Wee Heavy (Strong Scotch Ale, OG 1072–1088+, IBU 20–40). The Scottish beers possess a clean maltiness and may have a slight smokiness in the aroma from the use of peat smoked malt and roasted barley. The most well known producers are Belhaven, Caledonian and Maclay.

Commercial Beers For April

Thanks go out to the Waz for adding to this month's samples. I know last month was quite a challenge as far as portion amounts, however, this month we will be able to offer more volume for your palate for most of the selections. For this next meeting the following will be presented:

Brown Ales Saint Arnold Brown, Newcastle Brown, Samuel Smith's Nut Brown, Pete's Wicked Ale.

Scottish Ale Belhaven Scottish Ale (in can)

English and Scottish Strong Ales Fuller's Vintage Ale 2000, Fuller's 1845 Celebration Ale, Theakston's Old Peculier, Belhaven Wee Heavy, McEwan's Scotch Ale, Gale's Prize Old Ale 1995, Gale's Millennium Ale, Traquair House Ale, Thomas Hardy's Ale 1994, Hair of The Dog Adam Beer, Orkney Brewery's Skullsplitter (my favorite) and other non-style of the month "surprise" smoky beers that were found between a "rauch" and a hard place.

Recipes

Brown Mild Ale — (for 5 gallons)

5.0 lb. Maris Otter pale 2-row
0.5 lb. Light Crystal
0.5 lb. Medium Crystal
0.5 lb. Dark Crystal
2.0 oz. Chocolate Malt
0.5 lb. Brown Sugar

Use 1.0 oz. East Kent Goldings hops for 60 minutes. Use Wyeast 1028 or White Labs English ale yeast. OG around 1.037.

For a partial mash, *Continued on page 9*

Beer of the Month

January

Porter and Stout

February

Barleywine and Holiday Beer

March

Belgian and Fruit Beer

April

Brown, Old, and Scotch Ale

May

Bock

June

Wheat Beer

July

Pilsner and Kölsch

August

Pale Ale and Bitter

September

Oktoberfest

October

Dixie Cup

November

Amber Ale and IPA

December

Homebrewer's X-mas Party

**Upcoming
Brew-ins at
DeFalco's**

April 14

Joe Lindsey

May 12

Mike Lennox

June 9

Jim Youngmeyer

July 14

Open

August 11

Kehn Bacon

September 8

Kari & Kuyler
Doyle and Ken
Widger

October 13

Open

**Upcoming Pub
Visits**

May 6

Bradley's

June 3

Brenham Brewery

July 1

Two Rows

August 5

Front Porch Pub

September 2

Sneed Wheeler's
Texas Roadhouse

October 7

Bradley's

Competition Corner

Joe Lindsey, Competition Coordinator

Event	Entry Deadline	Pack 'n' Ship Date	Contact Info
Sunshine Challenge May 18-20	May 7	April 26	www.cfhb.org
Spirit of Free Beer May 19-20	May 12	May 3	burp.org/SoFB2001
Oregon Homebrew Festival May 18-19	May 14	May 3	www.hotv.org

Results from recent competitions

Bluebonnet Brew-off

Irving, Texas

Bev Blackwood	2nd	Strong Belgian Ale
Jimmy Paige	2nd	Light Ale
Donald Sajda (KGB)	1st	Cider
Donald Sajda (KGB)	1st	Label competition
Ron Solis (KGB)	2nd	Porter

World Cup of Beer

Berkeley, California

Bev Blackwood	3rd	Strong Belgian Ale
Kuyler & Kari Doyle	3rd	English Strong/Pale Ale
Kuyler & Kari Doyle	3rd	Imperial Stout
Joe Lindsey	3rd	American Barleywine

Drunk Monk Challenge

Warrenville, Illinois

Kuyler & Kari Doyle	1st	Porter <i>also Honorable Mention, Best of Show</i>
Joe Lindsey	2nd	Sweet Stout
Joe Lindsey	3rd	Foreign Stout

Reggale and Dredhop

Denver, Colorado

Bev Blackwood	2nd	Old Ale
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Watch This Space

Continued from page 5

May 17-20, 2001 — Orlando, FL — Sunshine Challenge. Entries due: May 7. Entry fee: \$6.00 per entry. Contact: Ron Bach, 407-696-2738; E-mail: sc@cfhb.org; Web: www.cfhb.org; Pack 'n' Ship: Thursday, April 26 at DeFalco's.

May 19, 2001 — Corvallis, OR — 19th Annual Oregon Homebrew Festival. Entries Due: May 14. Entry fee: \$6.00 per entry. Contact: Joel Rea, 541-758-1674; E-mail: festchair@

hotv.org; Web: www.hotv.org; Pack 'n' Ship: Thursday, May 3 at DeFalco's.

June 1-3, 2001 — Edmonton, AB — 2001 Aurora Brewing Challenge. Entries due: May 31. Entry Fee: \$6 for first three entries, \$5 for each additional entry. Contact: Kevin Zaychuk, 780-436-8822; E-mail: zaychuk@edmc.net; Web: www.ehg.ca; Pack 'n' Ship: Thursday, May 17 at DeFalco's.

June 3, 2001 — St. Arnold Brewery — Big Batch Brew Bash. Entries due: May 12. No entry fee; 2 entry limit. ♦

Watch This Space

Bev Blackwood

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVEN'T HEARD, DeFalco's is in some new and flashy digs! Yes, our favorite grungy homebrewing haven has gone upscale. After a month of delays due to permitting issues, Scott has finally settled (presumably for the next 10 years) on Stella Link. The floor is still mottled (the better to hide the homebrew) and the walls are rough for the most part, so it'll take a real effort for a bunch of homebrewers to mess the place up (but we'll try). What's changed is the ambience... Gone is the fierce fluorescent glow, in its place warm banks of incandescent spotlights highlighting the merchandise. Gone are the dim views of fences and walls out the windows, instead there's a vast sheet of storefront glass looking onto the street. Gone are the paltry five parking places, now there's a whopping 10 or more, plus a whole shopping center across the street. Will those things be missed? Well, a little. After all, the funky hole-in-the-wall character of DeFalco's was a part of its charm, but that charm came at a price and the price was getting higher and higher for Scott.

What remains? First and foremost: Scott and his expertise. I'm fond of saying Scott will forget more about homebrewing than I'll ever know and as long as he's running the show, I'll be asking him for his opinion on recipes, equipment and my beers. Second, Scott's staff is still on hand, to answer your questions and find that missing gasket when you can't figure out where it is in the new store. Last, all the same stuff is still there: the malt bin still has a broad range of grains, there's a variety of extracts and lots of fresh hops and yeast for your brewing enjoyment. I must confess I didn't see the "sample" fridge during the move, but I'm sure that it will have a place of honor in the new location as well. So drop by and say hi to Scott, and maybe help him hang a poster or move a few boxes if you feel like it. Moves like this only come every 10-15 years (we hope!) so there's a lot to be done until we're all settled in the new location.

Since this *is* the all-Houston column, let me be sure everyone knows that Ken Rich and the Brew Stop may not be moving, but it is still a fine place to go shopping as well and Ken knows his beer too! (Not only that, it's in the same place you left it the *last* time you were there!)

Ken is also home shop to the KGB whose Big Batch Brew Bash is coming up soon! The entry deadline for your American IPAs is May 12, while the competition itself is on June 3 at Saint Arnold brewery. If you brew a winning beer, expect the admiration of your fellow brewers, a nice gift certificate and the chance to brew with the "big boys."

Also in May is National Homebrew Day, May 5, again at Saint Arnold Brewing. Bring your buckets, your cooler, your "big rig" and whip up a batch of whatever you're famous for in celebration of the legalization of homebrewing. Just remember, if homebrewing hadn't been legalized, we wouldn't have St. Arnold. Brock is fond of reminding his tours (every Saturday at 1:00 P.M.) "Jimmy Carter was our greatest President ever." Why? Because he made homebrewing legal again! So come out, have a beer *and* brew a beer!

April/May Events

April 14 — Brew-in at DeFalco's *new* location, 8715 Stella Link

May 5 — National Homebrew Day at Saint Arnold Brewery

May 6 — First Sunday Homebrewer's meeting — Bradley's Restaurant and Brewery, Webster, 3:00 P.M.

May 12 — Brew-in at DeFalco's

May 19 — LA-TEX Rendezvous — Jennings, Louisiana.

Club Meetings and News

Bay Area Mashtronauts

Next meeting: 6:30 P.M. April 10, at Bradley's in Webster. Nuts and Bolts competition.

Brew Bayou

Next meeting: 7:00 P.M. April 18, at Smithhart's Country Grill in Clute.

Deja Brew

Next meeting: May 3, Kelvin Arms Pub.

Foam Rangers

Next meeting: 8:00 P.M. April 20, at the *new* DeFalco's on Stella Link. Beer of the Month for April is Old Ale, Scotch Ale and Brown Ale.

Golden Triangle Homebrew Club

Anyone interested in Golden Triangle events can call Joe Kubenka at 409-721-9810 nights or 409-575-1581 days for locations and times.

KGB

Next meeting: 7:00 P.M. March 17, at Carl Scott's house. Annual Disenfranchising of Crawfish and KGB Election. Beer of the Month: American and European Lagers.

Competitions

April 27-28, 2001 — Berkeley, CA — 3rd Annual Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing Competition and Technical Conference. Contact: Mike Riddle, 707-259-1421; E-mail: riddle@sonic.net; Web: hbd.org/mcab/mcab3

Continued on page 4

Beer Heaven: Belgium in Two Unforgettable Days

Bob Daugherty

Part one of a two part series

BEER HEAVEN! In our weekend in Belgium I never discovered the origin of the country's name but I am certain it can only mean "beer heaven" in Flemish. Visiting the country my fiancée, Nannette, and I had two objectives: (1) try as many Belgian beers as possible; and (2) bring back as many Belgian beers as possible for the Foam Rangers.

As a comparative beer novice (in your mighty ranks), I needed to do considerable research before leaving. Of the six books I read, the two most beneficial for the traveler were Michael Jackson's *The Great Beers of Belgium* and *The Good Beer Guide to Belgium and Holland* published by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) folks. Though Jackson's book is wonderful for his prose, wit and color photographs, I found the CAMRA guide more useful. Brewers and beer cafés are organized regionally or by city and descriptions, commentary and ratings of nearly all of a brewery's products are provided. In addition, I used web pages suggested by Jimmy. One, belgianstyle.com/mmguide/pronounce/speak.html, even had .wav files offering the correct pronunciations of Belgian beers and breweries! This, of course, ensures that you will get the right beer (but I can't think of a safer place than Belgium to receive a "wrong" beer. Before visiting I would definitely download the pronunciation guide and listen to it a few times as I did. Besides "yes" (yaa), "no" (nay), "please" (ahls-tew-bleeft') and "thank you" (dhank-ew), it'll be all the Flemish you'll need to know!

Prior to the trip I also researched Belgium's history. After all, as a history teacher, I had to justify the trip for my school and students! Belgium's location between great historical friends Germany and France has made it a frequent battleground. Napoleon's decisive defeat at Waterloo occurred here as did Hitler's last gamble to win World War II—the Battle of the Bulge. However, it is for World War I that Belgium is so tragically remembered. The area around the town of Ypres (pronounced as "Wipers" by British soldiers who obviously had *not* listened to the pronunciation guide) remained the only part of Belgium not to fall to the Germans in the war. Half a million soldiers died there in four horrible battles. If time permitted me to visit only one battlefield it should be Ypres. To appreciate the battles better, I read several histories of the battles. The most readable were Lyn MacDonald's *1915* (the second half of the book applies to Ypres) and *They Called it Passchendaele*. In addition, Holt's *Battlefield Guide to the Ypres Salient* provides great maps and directions to get around the area. I really believe in doing this kind of research before a trip. The books and historical events come alive and it is well worth the effort.

Unfortunately, before leaving, Nannette and I discovered that the Brussels flight we had hoped to take was filled with paying passengers (they can be such an inconvenience to us non-revenue passengers at times!). We chose to fly to London and take the new Channel Tunnel (Chunnel) that now has a direct connection to Brussels. Though I was excited about

the Chunnel, it turned out that there is actually not much to see of the billions of pounds and francs that went in the great engineering project, save the two big holes! From Brussels's central train station we took the subway to our hotel. (Since Brussels serves as the capital of the European Union and NATO Headquarters, prices can be very high during the week but many hotels offer half-off weekend discounts. Be sure to look first and book early.) After checking in, we headed out. Food is a necessary prerequisite before power drinking so we sought a restaurant. We happened onto one called Leon near the Grand Place and had the mussels and french fries for which Brussels is famous. We downed them with Duvel from the rather short beer list. At another nearby café I had my first Bush Beer. The beer takes its name from the family named Dubuisson which owns the brewery (buisson means "bush" in French). The name is changed to Scaldis for marketing in the U.S. lest anyone receive one when they asked for a Busch beer! The former President Bush supposedly received a palette of several cases for his inauguration from the company as a gift. The company got a "thank you" note but no requests for any more. What a waste of good beer! It's doubtful the current President Bush was offered any! I can only compare this beer to a barley wine, and as the saying goes ... "this beer goes to eleven." Actually it is twelve since that is the alcohol by volume making it the country's strongest brew! The company now offers a Bush 7% with only half the alcohol. (Damn shame I think!)

Next we went in search the café Mort Subite. Mort Subite is easy to find BBB (before Bush beer), but we had trouble. The street is too small for most maps but easy if you can find the Galleries Royale St. Hubert. This is an ancient shopping arcade off of the Grand Place. Walk straight through to its end and Mort Subite will greet you to your right.

Mort Subite (Sudden Death) is named after a card or dice game (sources vary) played here by bankers and brokers on their lunch break. When a bell announced the re-opening of the banks, one last roll determined who would pick up the beer tab for all. Mort Subite is filled with mirrors listing prices and has only about twenty beers, most of which, of course, are named Mort Subite and made by De Keersmaecker which is now owned by a multinational beer corporation most recently called Alken Maes. As in the U.S., large corporations have gobbled up many of the smaller breweries. In Belgium though, it seems, many have been allowed to continue making their beer with some commercial changes rather than simply being shut down, as here, to decrease competition. Mort Subite does not have as high a reputation as Cantillon or Boon among lambic lovers, perhaps because of its sweetness and low alcohol content, but we particularly enjoyed the several we had at the café. Nannette became a life long devotee on the spot of the Cassis and I enjoyed my first Faro beer. Faro is a young lambic sometimes mixed with a weak beer called Mars. Sugar is added for fermentation. The beer is very sweet and an interesting experience one should have (though not on a regular basis).

Following Mort Subite, we thought we should see some genuine non-beer tourist sites. The famed Mannekin Pis was nearby. Brussels's most recognized symbol, it features an old statue of a small boy urinating into a pool. Inexplicably, millions come to see it! Unimpressed, we went to the pub across the street named after it. This pub featured Rodenbach on draught! Ah, a magical phrase! However, we did feel obligated to try the wheat beer Mannekin Pis (labeled as Blanche de Bruxelles in the café). Made by the Lefebvre brewery that also produces honey amber ale Barbar. Now it was time for "ordinary" Rodenbach. It is made with the two year oak-aged ale that does not go into Grand Cru or Alexander and is mixed with three parts fresh beer. It is obviously not as sour or cherry tasting as its brothers, but still is damn good. I had fond hopes of having much, much, more Rodenbach since our destination the next day was Ypres, which was only a few miles from Rodenbach's brewery in Roeselare.

Stumbling back to our hotel, we found the café Falstaff. Definitely not named after the American beer (but rather the Shakespeare character who may have been based on a Belgian living near the second Globe Theatre), it offered a stunning combination of art nouveau and art deco architecture and a beer list only slightly larger than Mort Subite. From the quite stiff waiter I got first a Fruit Defendu (Forbidden Fruit). As the name suggests, the beer is very fruity and spicy. It is made by Pierre Celis's former brewery, Hoegaarden, which was bought by the multinational firm Interbrew (now the world's third largest brewer, it also owns Bellevue and the popular Stella Artois and Leffe in Belgium). Forbidden Fruit's label features a painting of the Garden of Eden by Rubens of Eve tempting Adam with a beer rather than an apple! According to Jackson, when the beer was first introduced in the U.S., the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms officials tried to ban it claiming the label was indecent! (The real reason surely could not have been the 9% abv?) Fortunately, the artistic "sensibilities" of the ATF prevailed and the beer was admitted. Whenever we mentioned to Belgian beer drinkers our Texas background, they brought Celis up. They were of course disappointed to discover what is happening to the Celis company here.

To complete the evening, I thought it was time for a Rochefort. Rochefort is one of Belgium's six trappist breweries. It is located near where the Battle of the Bulge was fought—deep in the Ardennes. Though the monastery has existed nearly eight hundred years (first as a convent), beer has been brewed (off and on) for only about four hundred! Three versions of Rochefort exist. Each is brewed with the same ingredients but the very different characters result from the different fermentation techniques and are called Rouge (6), Verte (8), and Noire (10). The numbers are the gravities in Belgian scale of degrees. The Rochefort 10 was my second favorite beer (after Bush) I had during my whole visit. It was very fruity with a bitter chocolate taste to go along with a high alcohol content of 11% by volume. According to Jackson, the beer is brewed by only about ten workers (four of which are actually monks). A monk at the brewery reminded Jackson about the importance of beer in their diet.

Forbidden then to eat cheese or fish, the beer balanced their diet. Ah... what I would give for a diet including a daily Rochefort!

Deciding to forgo another famed café nearby called Cirio, we somehow made it back to our hotel—the Art Hotel Siriu. The hotel is billed as the first "art gallery hotel." Each room was designed and decorated by a known Belgian artist. Unfortunately, ours was for the most part a dull combination of geometric designs, though the sink was quite clever!

It was not easy waking up the next morning, but when we did we headed down for the buffet breakfast offered without charge by the hotel. We then did a bit of shopping and saw the beautiful Grand Place. It consists of a public square surrounded by eighteenth century buildings which once were headquarters of various guilds. Oddly enough the one still serving its original purpose is the Brewers Guild. Even though a beer was probably the last thing we wanted after the night before, we headed for it. Usually open, it offers free tastings and a small brewers museum. We tried our best to get in but found all doors locked. Dejected, we tried to find the beer store we had seen the previous evening. Our original plan had been to see the Cantillon Brewery (in the suburb of Anderlech—that might sound far but nothing is really far in Brussels, or Belgium for that matter!) and then to visit the beer store. Finding the store, the Beer Temple, at last, we were amazed at the selection. Never before had I felt so much like a kid in a candy store with Daddy's credit card! I walked around the store several times before making any selections and then slowly began bringing the beers to the counter. Nannette's eyes got wider and wider as she saw the stack grow and grow—wondering how we would ever transport it all home. It was very hard to decide what to bring home for the Rangers. Jimmy had given me a list and I was able to find at least three-quarters of his recommendations. Rather than buy three bottles of each for a sufficient tasting, I chose to get as many different beers as possible. I was worried if there would be enough for everyone to at least have a taste. However, if you were at the meeting last month you witnessed the best impression of St. Arnold I have ever seen—Jimmy making one beer last indefinitely as he made sure everyone had a bit of even the nip bottles!

The store's employee could not have been more helpful. His English was excellent. He answered all our questions and made excellent suggestions. He did warn me not to buy the De Troch Beers (marketed as Chapeau). He called them "fruit syrup." I was a bit disappointed because of its reputation for making a lambic with about everything that has ever grown on a tree or vine—including bananas, pineapples, strawberries, and apricots. I trusted his judgment, which was later justified when later I had a De Troch-Chapeau banana beer in a bar. All I can say is that it was the worst beer I had ever had (that is except for any Budweiser or Miller product—but they do not really count do they?). The Beer Temple's employee understood packing, as he apparently had to transport store products frequently to and from Bruges. He got out a roll of the beer lover's friend, bubble wrap, put together some nice boxes and did the best job of packing I had ever witnessed. When done, our nearly forty beers

(and some were the big 75 cl. bottles) were in three small boxes. I went to a nearby store and bought a metal roller cart. We securely taped the three boxes. Over cobblestone streets that began to take their toll on the cart, I pulled the cart back to our hotel room. Checking out, I realized this was one time when we would have to get a cab and not rely on stair-filled public transportation. There was no way we could take both our suitcases and the beer to the Cantillon

brewery. Yes, this was the sacrifice that I had had to make to buy the beer! But then again, it's an excuse to go back again next year isn't it? We caught the train to Ypres (Ieper in Flemish). It would be only an hour-and-a-half ride (made more comfortable by the fact that we accidentally sat down in first class). As we headed west, visions of Rodenbach and Flanders Fields filled my head. And so far the roller cart was holding up. . . ♦

LA-TEX: The Jennings Trip

Kehn Bacon

IT'S JUST OVER A MONTH AWAY and it's time to sign up for Jennings! Everything, except the transportation arrangements, has been prepared and we're waiting for your commitment so we can determine whether we can hire a bus. The cost for the bus would be about the same as last year (\$25), but we will need 30 plus people to sign up. We are also looking at alternative modes of transportation such as vans or scooters and will provide information about the cost at the April meeting.

We'll be staying again at the Holiday Inn off I-10 in beautiful nondescript Jennings, Louisiana, where all the women

are women, the men are men, and the children are of either sex. You can reserve your room by calling 337-824-5280 by May 5—ask for the LA-TEX homebrewer's special rate of \$56.

The all you can eat crawfish boil lunch will be served at the park for \$20 and a dinner of boudin, red beans and rice will be served back at the hotel for \$6.

Come by the new Super DeFalco's on Stella Link, just south of South Braeswood, to sign up and pay. Please make your check payable to **The Foam Rangers**. Put LA-TEX on your calendar today!! Aaaaaaeeee!!! ♦

This Month in Foam Ranger History

Sean Lamb

IN CELEBRATION of the 20th Anniversary of the Foam Rangers, we offer the following glimpses into the past.

10 Years Ago

In *The Brewsletter Urquell* Feature article: an interview with David Power, "Homebrewer and President of the Home Wine Makers of Houston." "Ye Olde Yard of Ale Drinking Glass" article produced by the Dickens Inn of Philadelphia and provided by Ed Busch, president of the MASH homebrew club of Flagston, NJ, "The Galloping Suds Sucker" written by Sean Markham includes a review of the Brewery Tap, 717 Franklin Ave., in Houston.

Club Meeting Held at Stacie Watson's. John Donaldson made a technical presentation on brewing in 5 gallon "Corny" kegs, Jarry Rogen was appointed "Darts Czar" for the club. Beer of the month was Pale Ale, with Secondary John "JD" Gonzales serving up Bass, Samuel Smith's, Sierra Nevada, Anchor Liberty, Redhook ESB, Pyramid, Full Sail, and Santa Fe products.

Other events Nine new members joined, (including Mr. Steve Moore). Darts night was held April 27 at Cecil's on West Gray. The Malt Hoppers of Bryan/College Station held the Homebrewers Campout at the Birch Creek unit at

Lake Somerville April 26-27. Foam Rangers won ribbons at the HWBTA National Competition: John Donaldson (1st place Bock, 2nd place Continental Dark), Tim Case (2nd place Light Ale, 2nd place Porter), Ron Kline/Lou Caranante (2nd place Pale Ale) and Jerry Rogen (3rd place Dark Wheat).

5 Years Ago

In *The Brewsletter Urquell* More postcards from the Central Florida Homebrewers showing the Dixie Cup in distress—this time in the jaws of an alligator and in the drivers seat of a NASCAR car. Plans for the 5th Annual Jennings LA-TEX Bayou Rendezvous were exposed. Brewsletter Editor Beto Zuniga reported on his trip throughout California, Oregon and Washington.

Club meeting Held at Larry and Leigh Mayhew's tin shed. Beer of the Month was Amber Ales and Pale Ales.

Other Events The chance to be "Brewer for a Day" at the Bank Draft was won by the following Foam Rangers in a contest sponsored by the Bank Draft: John Smollen for his English Bitter, Troy Donovan for his Steam Beer, and Todd Kellenbenz for his Dunkel Weizen ♦

Out of the Wazoo

Continued from page 1

happen without everyone's best effort. The club officers, by their volunteering to serve, have already taken on a lot of the load and will be filling major roles before, during and after the event. What we need is the kind of "I'm here, put me to work" attitude that came through when Scott moved to his new store. There was a moment when everyone gathered around Scott's massive old hop refrigerator, tipping it and lowering it to the ground at the new shop. The scene

was reminiscent of the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima, with everyone lending a hand to the effort. Once the hop fridge was in the door, DeFalco's was well and truly "moved in" as hopheads everywhere rejoiced.

I'd like everyone who works, wins and contributes to our getting the Dixie Cup back to feel that same kind of team spirit, that they had a hand in bringing the heart and the soul of the club back from its exile in North Texas. I'd also love for people leaving the Dixie Cup to feel that while we may not be the biggest competition, we're far and away the best competition in Texas. Let's get to work! ♦

Beer of the Month

Continued from page 3

substitute 4 lb. light malt extract for the Maris Otter and steep the specialty grains.

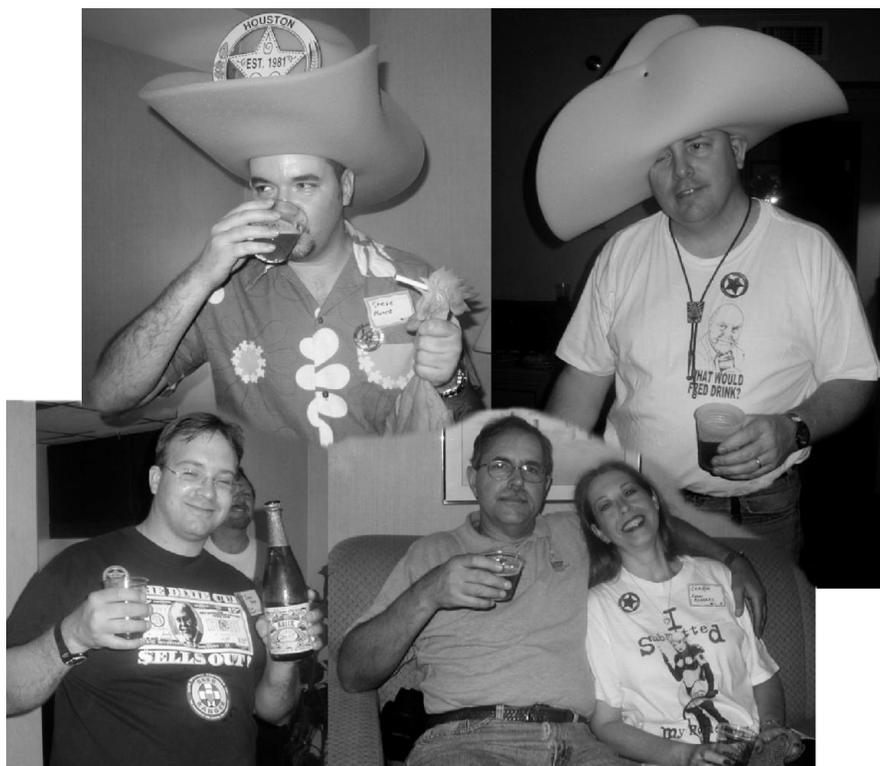
Use 1.5 oz. Target hops for 60 minutes and 0.5 oz. East Kent Goldings for 15 minutes. Use Wyeast 1318 or White Labs British Ale yeast. OG around 1.070.

For a partial mash, substitute 9 lb. light malt extract for the Maris Otter and steep the remaining grains. ♦

Strong/Old Ale — (for 5 gallons)

- 11.0 lb. Maris Otter pale 2-row
- 0.5 lb. Light Crystal
- 0.25 lb. Medium Crystal
- 0.25 lb. Dark Crystal
- 0.5 lb. Wheat malt
- 0.5 lb. Cara-pils
- 0.25 lb. Special B

Foam Rangers Invade Irving



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Program
Volunteers**

Kehn Bacon

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Before 11:00 P.M.

Bev Blackwood

713-432-1248 (H)

713-972-4832 (C)

Before 11:00 P.M.

Jim Johnson

281-992-3055

Steve Moore

713-923-2412

Before 11:00 P.M.

Ron Solis

281-324-7157

Before 9:30 P.M.

Jim Youngmeyer

713-667-0455 (H)

713-267-5108 (W)

Before 9:30 P.M.

DeFalco's

713-523-8154

Business hours

Use common sense when calling these folks, and please respect their time restrictions.

If you would like to add your name to this list, talk to the Waz.

Odds & Sods

Turning Garages Into Breweries

SYDNEY (Reuters) — Beer-loving Australians have flocked to their garages to turn them into home breweries after hotel beer prices jumped following the introduction of a 10 percent consumption tax nine months ago. "We've had huge sales of home brew kits in the last eight months," Alec Hill of Pacific Brewing Pty. Ltd. told Reuters on Friday.

Australia's largest grocer Woolworths says the sale of home beer brewing kits has risen 55 percent since the introduction of the goods and services tax last July, according to local media.

A home brewing kit costs A\$70 (US\$35) and makes 22 liters (five [Imperial] gallons) of beer or 60 small bottles called "stubbies" in Australia. But refills cost only A\$11.50 for 60 bottles compared with A\$25 for a case of 24 bottles in a hotel—a savings of close to A\$50 for beer-swilling Australians.

The Australian Hotels Association said there has been a sharp decline in over-the-counter beer sales since the consumption tax hiked the price of on-tap beer by nine percent.

Australia is one of the world's biggest beer drinking nations with 99 liters (22 gallons) per head being downed each year.

Genetic Engineering For Beer

An international group of scientists recently announced the development of a new strain of barley that will enable large breweries to save a wad of cash. Using the same techniques that have been used to develop a wide array of genetically modified crops, from tomatoes to rapeseed, a group of scientists have developed a strain of barley that can, under the right conditions, malt itself. According to Dr. Olaf R. Lipo from the Norwegian team that worked on the project, farmers will be able to harvest the malted barley and deliver it directly to the brewery, thus eliminating the costly malting step.

Don't expect to find this stuff at DeFalco's though. Due to the licensing costs, it will most likely only be grown by, or under contract to, large breweries such as Anheuser-Busch. Despite the higher costs of the seed and the extra expense of the chemical spray that triggers the heating organism, the reduced costs of malting should allow A-B to save at least \$80-100 million per year.

The modified barley is a 6-row strain, and

due to the limitations of the technology, only pale malt is possible. According to Dr. Jose Tika of the Argentinian team, they inserted the DNA of the hotheaded naked ice borer into a Morex barley kernel. The hotheaded naked ice borer, discovered in Antarctica in 1995 by Aprile Pazzo, was chosen because of its unique ability to use its tremendous body heat to melt the ice while hunting penguins, its preferred source of food.

Once they determined how to control the ice borer's heat generation, the scientists were able to alter the specific parts of the DNA to enable the barley to heat itself up to the temperatures required for malting, although only enough for pale malt. Darker malts are out of the question, at least with the current technology, but as the amount of dark malts required by the majority of the world's breweries is so small, Dr. Tika doesn't expect any further research in that area.

Dr. Lipo, however, is very cautious about the impact that the new variety of barley will have. "Although this is a tremendous breakthrough in grain research, people, especially Europeans, are very concerned today about genetically modified foods. As a result, the breweries will need to be very careful in how they market their beers that are made with this new barley."

Brett "Doc" Wills, the owner of Café d'Sol, a popular vegetarian restaurant and pub in Berkeley, California, was critical of the idea. "It's hard enough for us to keep up with all the GM foods out there now. We pride ourselves on not serving anything made with GM food. Now we'll have to verify all the beer we serve too. Nobody around here is going to want to drink beer that's been contaminated with Franken-barley."

Whitbread Unloads Pubs

Last May, the British brewer Whitbread sold its brewing interests to Interbrew, thus ending 250 years of British brewing history. Whitbread did, however, hold onto their pubs ... for a while.

This month, Whitbread announced that their 3,000 pubs will be sold to Morgan Grenfell Private Equity, the venture capital unit of Deutsche Bank.

One of the biggest names in British brewing has now completed its transformation to a "leisure" business—focusing on hotels, restaurants, and fitness centers. ♦



Amber Ale
 Kristall Weizen
 Brown Ale

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Contact the Brewsletter Editor for more information.

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Foam Rangers Membership Form

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Make checks payable to **The Foam Rangers**.

Bring this form to the next meeting, drop it off in person at DeFalco's, or send it to:

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