

July

2017
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Meeting

Tuesday, July
11 at 7 pm. At

Stein Fillers

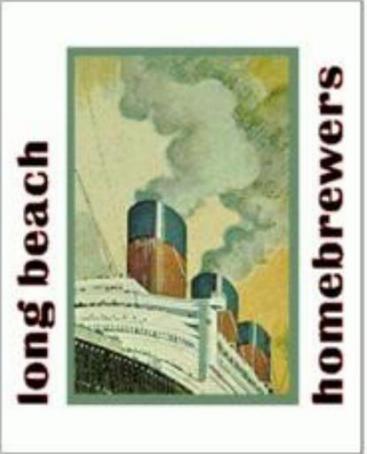
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The Brews Telegram

The Newsletter of the Long
Beach Homebrewers



President's Message

Greetings Fellow Homebrewers,

Happy July,

I write this a couple days after a very successful, first Annual Red, White, and Brews Homebrew contest. Several of us gathered at <http://4thandolive.com/> on Saturday morning to judge 84 entries in seven different American categories. There were several wonderful beers but the Best of Show came down to a tight battle between two excellent and very different beers – a cream ale and a wheatwine. After lots of discussion and tasting the BOS crew decided on a winner, the superb wheatwine brewed by our very own Jon Silvertooth. Congrats Jon on your Best of Show winner!

I need to thank a lot of people for helping put on this very successful event. First off, our very gracious hosts at Fourth and Olive, this was my first visit to the restaurant and I'll definitely be returning. The staff was wonderful and very hospitable, the beer and wine list is excellent and well-curated especially if you enjoy hard to find German beers, and the Alsatian influenced food that we had for lunch was tremendous, I'm already craving the sauerkraut. They are also very accommodating to our vegetarian and vegan friends.

Of course, I have to thank those who helped put together the contest, Josh, Jon, and Travis – thanks for all your help and as always, thanks to the Silvertooths for storing the beers and hosting the label and sort session. Any finally, thanks to all the members who came out and stewarded and judged, we couldn't do it without you. It looks like we'll have raised about \$500 to donate to US Vets, a great start to the competition.

As we get ready for the July meeting, I'm looking forward to tasting various members Belgian-style creations.

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Continued from page 1...

I was also somewhat surprised about how popular last month's non-beer fermentables theme was. I didn't realize how many mead makers we had in the club.

Cheers and Happy Brewing,

Ray

2017 Monthly Style Schedule

Month	Comp Month	Style or theme
July		Anything Belgian
August	3rd	Biere de Garde - 24C
September		5 minute beers (details to follow)
October		Intentionally Sour
November	Final	Marzen - 6A
December		Beers with spices / Holiday beers

Tastings at the June meeting (anything but beer)

Ray G.	Mango Apple Cider
Jon S.	Sake
Jon S.	Dessert Apple Wine
Jon S.	Chocolate Raspberry Port (wine kit)
Jon S.	Avocado Mead (made with avocado honey)
Mike F.	Port style wine
Smitty	2013 Joe's Ancient Orange Mead
Steve	Melomel - Orange, Cinnamon & Clove Mead
Dave G.	Melomel - Bartlett Pear Mead
Matt	Dry Mead
Matt	Cherry Melomel
Devin	Orange Blossom Mead
Neil H.	Clover Honey Mead
Derek J.	Guava Melomel
Andi	Melomel & Kambucha
Mike G.	Mead with Fruit
Mike G.	Cider with Cherries
Travis	Cyser
Travis	Mead
Levi	Pineapple Sour
Scott G.	Cider

Other Beers:

Adam	Brett Saison
Oscar	Red Ale
Oscar	IPA

5 Minute Beers

By Jon Silvertooth

Hi fellow LBHB'ers. You may have noticed that we have a monthly beer theme of "5 minute beers" for the September meeting. Many have asked us what that means so they know what to brew, and I honestly didn't have a detailed plan when I suggested it. Now that I've had some time to think it over, here are the details...

The basic rule is that once water touches any other ingredient, you have 5 minutes to get that wort into a fermenter. That leaves you some options:

- a. You can boil the water prior to adding extract and/or steeping grains.
- b. You can move hot wort to your fermenter and let it chill in a fermentation chamber prior to adding yeast.
- c. You can move hot wort to your fermenter and let it chill overnight naturally, as Australian homebrewers have done for years. Then add the yeast after it cools off naturally.
- d. You can chill it using a plate chiller/counterflow chiller on the way to the fermenter.
- e. You could make a no-boil beer, such as a Berliner weisse.
- f. Use your imagination... just make sure to go to the fermenter within 5 minutes of water touching any other ingredient.

Please keep notes on anything and everything you did so you can share the experience with the club when pouring your beer. This is an educational experiment and I, for one, am looking forward to seeing the creative ways that members use to tackle this challenge and try the resulting beers. 😊

(ed: This is way more liberal than when the club first did this challenge. You had to have your fermenter sealed in five minutes. No boiling water or allowing it to cool or adding yeast at a later time. You had five minutes to brew your beer. Period. End of Instructions. Brewing Done. And to get to Stein-Fillers for the meeting we had to walk five miles uphill on broken glass with bare feet carrying our beers on our back. But I digress.

Stein -Fillers at that time carried pre-hopped extract in cans so bittering was not a problem. I don't think a 4 minute boil is going to get much hop extraction. Are you going to super-hop it using your Beer Recipe App with a 4 minute boil? Just some things to think about.)

LBHB Advent Calendar Project

By Jon Silvertooth

It worked out so well last year that we are doing two this year! We are taking sign-ups for our holiday club project, the LBHB Advent Calendar. We are once again putting together an advent calendar, but not a crappy milk chocolate calendar. Instead, this calendar will be filled with 24 days of awesome Homebrew.



If you have not seen the signup email, please let me know. I'll work with Tom to ensure your membership is up-to-date and that you are setup in the member Google group.

We have completely filled one calendar, and we need about 6 more participants to complete a second calendar, so please sign up now before all the slots are taken up!

The Beer Room

By David Gansen

At three years of age, I was about as dumb as any other bone-headed kid bouncing off the walls, and maybe more so. I was dangerously creative, and curious about everything that could only get me into big trouble. On one night in about 1960 I was roaming around in playful territory that was all too familiar to me: the darkened recesses of our basement, a concrete subterranean antechamber imbedded into dirt that, in my family's language, always referred to as the Furnace Room because it housed a massive 1940's era gas burning central heating unit that still warms the house to this day.

From that room was a door that led to another, smaller room buried beneath the front porch of our house, that today, if you were to ask any one of my eight brothers and sisters the name of the room, they wouldn't hesitate to say, the "Beer Room", because that was where my Father actually brewed his own beer. I seem to recall I wasn't allowed to go into the beer room by myself, but on this night in 1960, I was having a thirst for new adventure so like a Viking conquering new lands, and to whom rules meant very little, I crossed over the threshold and entered a forbidden territory.

At the base of the south wall of the room was a protruded concrete footing about 18" tall and 18" deep, and on top of that footing stood several stacks of cases, each containing a dozen 32 ounce quart bottles of my Dad's beer. The stacks formed a progressive angle that tapered to the shape of the ceiling. The center stack was four cases high; the one next to it on the right, three, then two. All together these stacks of cases formed a very cool "staircase" formation that was way too alluring a climb for a three year old bone-head to pass up.

Scaling the first stack was a breeze; the second was no big deal except that it seemed a bit wobbly. As I reached for the third stack, I planted a foot, attempted to pull myself up, and over the whole thing went. What seemed like a thousand bottles, but was probably just a single case, maybe two, all went crashing to the floor and effectively transformed a large quantity of my Dad's homemade beer into chards of splintered glass and billowing foam.

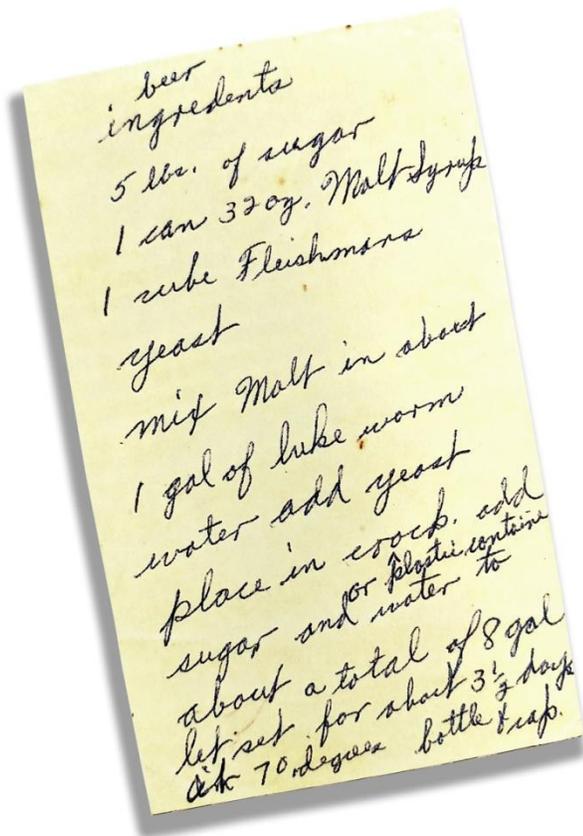
I was lucky enough to still be perched on the second stack, and having just narrowly escaped following the bottles to the floor, I surveyed the site and knew right away that I was in huge trouble. I was trapped with no way out but managed to keep my wits about me and did what any resourceful child like me would do in this situation. I cried and I cried. Soon half the family, including my Mom and Dad, came rushing into the beer room to surveille the carnage. One of my older sisters immediately scooped me up off my perch and whisked me out of there real quick while my none-too-happy-about-the-whole-thing Dad was left to clean up a monumental mess. I remember thinking at the time my sister had just saved my life, not from the shattered glass on the floor but from my Dad!

Measure H.R. 1337, signed into law on October 14, 1978 by Jimmy Carter, allowed the brewing of beer at home for personal use, and eliminated the paying of excise taxes or penal bonds which, up to that point, had been enough to discourage many would be home brewers from pursuing the home-based crafting of beer as a



Entering the Beer Room, the sink and cabinet where my Father brewed are in the foreground. On bottling day an old steel table was rolled into place to the left of the sink to support the empties Dad would siphon into from the cabinet above.

hobby. But this event would come more than twenty years after my father's efforts in the mid 1950's to make at home what then was technically illegal, and probably believed to be difficult to achieve. What prompted my



beer ingredients
5 lbs. of sugar
1 can 32oz. Malt Syrup
1 cube Fleischmann's yeast
mix Malt in about
1 gal of luke warm
water add yeast
place in crock. add
sugar and ^{or plastic container} water to
about a total of 8 gal
let set for about 3 1/2 days
at 70 degrees bottle trap.

My Dad's only known recipe, drawn up in his own hand.

father to take this course was probably not born out of a need for beer, because after all, it was available at any liquor store, but more likely something similar to what inspired the rest of us neo-homebrewers: to satisfy a curiosity that you could in fact do it yourself, and maybe in the process, actually brew something palatable. Judging from the only recipe we have of his, jotted down in his own hand, it was likely the former.

Where he got this recipe is up for family historical speculation. One theory is that he drew from his own experience and may have made his own beer growing up on the farm. This idea would certainly have some merit as my Dad was the consummate "do it yourself" master, always employing the skills he developed growing up in an environment where ingenuity and resourcefulness were vital to survival. And this was during Prohibition so if you wanted beer you *had* to do it yourself! He may have even contacted his step-father back in Nebraska and gotten a few tips to formulate his concoction. But it could also be that he may have read a magazine article or gotten the basics from one of his bowling buddies.

In any event, the recipe he used was typical of an innovative homebrewer's makeshift concoction with virtually no homebrewing resources available to draw from, and it involved the two basic ingredients of beer: sugar and yeast, albeit in a much more rudimentary form than what we homebrewers know today. His grist was a 5

pound bag of table sugar and flavored with a can of malt syrup, as is revealed in the recipe. Coming in third on the ingredient list is a cube of Fleischmann's yeast. That's right, baker's yeast. What about it? Obviously he was going for the bready, biscuity notes commonly found in German lagers, and supplemented the malt extract as it helped to form a backbone against the simple and flavorless table sugars. Had to be part of his master plan I'm sure.

The recipe doesn't note any hops but I remember the hops well. They came packaged in a small cloth sack with a draw string and were twig-like dried sprigs with small clumps of leafy sprouts, and what I recall most is they just stank badly. They were likely a Cluster variation, as that is the uniquely American strain that dates back to the colonial days and was the only variety produced in the US until newer more palatable strains were cultivated en-masse and made available in the 1970's.

Everything on the list would go into the fermenter, a massive 5 gallon porcelain vat and as the recipe instructs, "throw everything into the vat and fill water up to the five gallon level," and



The south side of the Beer Room, showing the concrete footing from where I launched a significant quantity of my Dad's beer to the floor.

then basically let the baker's yeast go to work. Sanitization? They didn't need no stinkin' sanitization back then! Heck no! These were real men; homebrewing pioneers who measured the strength of their beer by how much it curled their back hair!

There was a cabinet in the beer room above the sink that of course my father built himself because, having grown up on a farm in Nebraska, everything was do-it-yourself and that became an ingrained mantra of the rest of his life. He even built the sink, a welded at the corner seams, galvanized sheet metal contrivance that still sits there today but by now has given way to layers of rust. However, the cabinet itself was unique. Installed above the sink, it featured a curved backwall, covered with a sheet of stainless steel that allowed the cabinet to accommodate a large cylindrical vessel, namely his large porcelain vat. This cabinet served as his fermentation chamber.

He installed a light fixture on the back of the cabinet ceiling to power a 12 watt light bulb, while toward the front he placed a small mirror set at just the right angle to be able to observe the progress of the fermentation. The vat would go up into the cabinet and the light bulb would slow cook the wort while stimulating the fermentation at the same time. This was open fermentation before it was even cool. The Fleischmann's yeast would kick in and begin to consume the table sugar and malt extract. Every day following, he'd take me by the hand and we'd walk down to the beer room. I'd stand next to the sink, my head not quite



The fermentation chamber. Note the mirror still in place he used to watch the progress of the fermentation.

far enough up to reach the rim, and watch as he'd open the cabinet door and cast an analytical gaze into the mirror. I didn't know what any of the fizzy foam meant on top of the smelly liquid in that vat but he did, and only he knew when the time was right.

Then one day he would suddenly declare it's ready to bottle! The old steel table was rolled into place right next to the sink and the entire top surface was topped with rows and rows of 1 quart, wide-base beer bottles. To siphon it down he'd take an old piece of 1/2" garden hose, put one end into the vat of beer, suck on the other end a little, and out came the yield! Moving from one bottle to the next, he'd fill each to about 2 inches from the top as I would gaze on in amazement. A little bit would always slop onto the table with each pass but it didn't bother him, just a little collateral damage.

When all the bottles reached their fill it was time to cap. This was my favorite part just because I love the mechanical contraption. It was an old lever-driven, compression bottle capper mounted to a plank of wood. One by one each bottle would be carefully placed under the collar, the cap set in place, and the hand crank pressed downward. The cap fixed, the bottle would be dropped into an open slot formed by interlocking pieces of cardboard inside the confines of a sturdy, wax coated corrugated carton that once filled, would stack with the rest of his inventory on top of the concrete footing. And there they would sit until one by one, they were consumed, shared, given away, stolen by my older brother or crashed to floor by yours truly.

Each bottle when served, would have a layer on the bottom of about a half inch of residual yeast so my Father always decanted, usually into a quart-sized jar that had once contained our mayonnaise supply for the week. Certainly nothing exists anymore that describes just how good or bad Dad's beer was, than just our memories. As a kid he'd let me have a sip now and then and at 3 or 4 years old, I thought it the grossest thing I'd ever tasted. My brother, who never really gained a taste or appreciation for beer, couldn't recall. But a friend of his from high school who'd shared the stolen contraband with him once said to me years later, "That stuff could make you grow hair on the bottom of your feet!"

But when you consider that the reason why many of us got into home brewing, that we felt we could brew something that was better than what was on the market at the time, then as bad as my father's beer

might have been, could it have been any worse than what was commercially available at the time? Then he just may have achieved his goal. And when I consider that my father brewed beer, as I do, and his father before him, I can't help but regret that the three of us were never able to get together and brew a batch. But maybe when I pass on to the big brewhouse in the sky one day, the three of us will finally get our chance to do just that.