

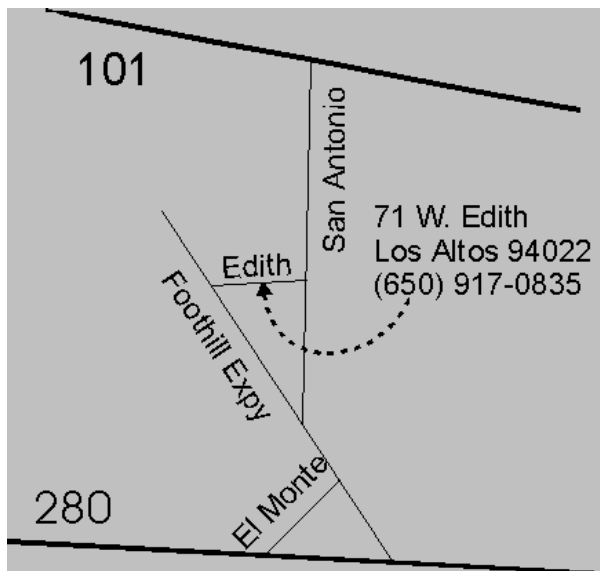
# WHAT'S BREWING?

## Worts of Wisdom Homebrewers

January, 2001

### The Next Meeting

The January meeting will be at David Sanford's house on Wednesday, January 31 at 7:30 PM. The address is 71 W Edith in Los Altos. The phone number is 650-917-0835. Here is a map:



Peter Torgrimson will discuss brewing calculations, including:

- Using International Bittering Units to control bitterness, and
- using gravity units to create a grain bill and monitor mashing.

We also will discuss the upcoming year and what activities we want to do.

There will be the usual socializing and comparing brewing notes and tasting of beer.

### President's Ruminations

*Peter Torgrimson*

As in other segments of our society, now is the time for the State-Of-The-WOW rumination. As I look back

over the past year of WOW activity, there are some things which we did well, and some things which we can improve. In this rambling, I lay out some goals for the next year which really are talking points for discussion: Do we want to do these, or do we want to do something different?

### Newsletter

One area we need to improve is the newsletter. We are going to figure out how to reliably put out a newsletter which I believe will be interesting. If it is not interesting, please let me know and we will make some changes.

We need newsletter contributions from more members. If you have something which may be of interest to other members, send it in to the newsletter editor. It might be an account of a brewing adventure, or misadventure. It might be a review of a brewpub or brewery. If you even just have an idea for a newsletter item, let us know. Someone may be in a position to prepare it for the newsletter.

### Meetings

I believe the content of our meetings generally is OK. I have been operating on the premise that most meetings should focus on tasting different beer styles and learning about brewing them. We need additional ideas

### Dues are due

It's that time of year again! If the last line on the mailing label on your newsletter says, "Unpaid", then that means that we have not recorded a payment from you for 2001. Please make payments to our treasurer, John Watson. You may pay in person at the January or February meetings. If you won't be at either of those meetings, then please mail a check to the club's address (the return address on this newsletter). Make checks payable to "WOW".

Dues are \$18 for single brewers and \$24 for cohabitating brewers.

Read on for more exciting Worts of Wisdom news!

## What's Brewing?

for meetings. No idea is too outlandish. If there is some subject on which you would like to see a presentation, please tell me. Probably somebody can work up an informative talk on the subject.

### Calendar

I have a goal of keeping the calendar planned out for several months and making it more comprehensive.

### Small Brewers Festival

We have managed the amateur beer competition for the past three years. I believe the festival organizers are very happy with what we have done. I propose we do this event again this year, and that we assist the festival organizers in publicizing the event to bring in more entries. Last year, John Watson did an outstanding job of publicizing the event to beer judges and the judging was the best ever.

### Holiday Party

In my humble opinion, this is the high point of the club year. The format seems to be pretty successful, but we are always open to suggestions for improvements. Let me hear your ideas.

### Summer Picnic

This past year we did not have a summer picnic -- the first time in several years this has happened. We definitely should have a picnic this next summer.

### BJCP Exam

There probably is going to be a Beer Judge Certification Program exam in this area in the next few months. For previous exams, we have sponsored a study session, and I propose we have a study session this time also. Anyone interested?

### Club Brew Days

These events are an excellent way for club members to learn more about how their peers brew, and to pick up some useful ideas not only from the brewing, but also from the informal discussions of materials, techniques, etc. If you would like to open your brew session to club members, send an email to WOW members with details. Maybe nobody will show up and that is fine; maybe several people will come by and that is fine also. These club brew days work both ways. I have picked up several good ideas from comments of observers of my brewing. You can email all the members by sending a message to wow@wortsofwisdom.org.

### Brewing Experiments

In past years we have done some relatively serious brewing experiments. I have been talking about doing some ancient brewing experiments for over a year now, and have done nothing about it. The time for idle talk is past and now is the time for ACTION.

### Tied House Beer Event

We are planning a brewing event at the Tied House wherein homebrewers brew beer to a recipe, list of ingredients, etc., and taste the beers and a Tied House-brewed beer of the same style at a party at the Mountain View Tied House. For this to be successful, we need the commitment of area homebrewers to brew the beer and bring their version to the party.

### Broken Hydrometer

This really is a Fermentation Frenzy event and not a club event, but several club members participate and it is a great event. See Phil for details.

### Pub Crawl

We have had several pub crawls in WOW history, and participants seem to like them. After the last one, I decided that I was WAY too old to do this kind of thing. However, as time passes, we tend to remember only the good parts and not the bad aftermath. I could be convinced to do another. How about you? We could do a San Francisco, East Bay, or South Bay event.

### Sail On The Bay

We had a sail on the bay a few years ago. It didn't work out quite as planned, but we had a good time. If there is interest, we possibly could do another -- contingent upon boat availability.

Think about what you want out of this club, and let's do it. Please give me or any officer your thoughts. Bring your ideas to the January meeting and let's discuss them.

Let's do the BIG BREW again (sung to "Let's Do The Time Warp Again").

Peter

## Toronado Barleywine Festival: The Event of the Season

*John Watson*

Yahoo! It is that time of year:

## What's Brewing?

The Toronado Barleywine Festival is almost here again!

I once told someone that in no matter where I happen to be in the world, I'm always going to try my best to get to the Barleywine Festival in San Francisco in February.

What's the big deal? Here's the scoop: Once a year for a week (from Feb 17th to Feb 24th), the folks at the Toronado Pub ([www.toronado.com](http://www.toronado.com)) have on tap over 30 barleywines. There is probably no place in the world that has so many barleywines at any one time to choose from.

These are all commercial barleywines made by local brewers, located mostly in the western US, but a few come all the way from the east coast and even further (UK).

The first Saturday is the main event of the festival, where beer judges from all over the country gather to determine the top barleywines for the year. (If you're a beer judge, sign up for judging early, because this is one of the few competitions that I know of that they don't have any trouble finding enough volunteer help).

Saturday is also best to visit the festival, because after the winners are announced, the judge's top picks disappear fast.

The Toronado Pub is located at 547 Haight in San Francisco.

To get to the Toronado from anywhere in the South Bay: Go to your nearest Caltrain station, and catch the train to San Francisco. Take the train all the way to the last San Francisco station (4th & King Station).

From there, catch a Muni bus to Market Street (probably the 30 or 45 bus ... or walk the 7 blocks to Market St.). It doesn't matter which one you take, just make sure you are going on one that gets to Market Street.

Then get off at Market Street, and catch either the 6, 7, 66 (or 71?) bus, which all run from Market Street and turn onto Haight. Another option is taking the 22 Fillmore which runs perpendicular to Haight Street. Yet another option is taking the N-Judah to Church and then walking about 5 blocks north on Church/Fillmore.

Sorry if these directions sound complex, but public transportation in San Francisco is a real mess.

## 53 Cask Conditioned Real Ales in 10 Days - A

## Pilgrimage Through North Yorkshire and the Lake District of England

*Ed Davis*

What began modestly as let's have a pint and a bite of pub-grub while ambling around the town of York, England, turned into a quest for just one more cask-conditioned real ale that we hadn't yet tasted before! (I should mention that this was not our first encounter with the local brews.) Before we left, Carol Torgrimson asked me to check out CAMRA and report back on its state of well-being. So, the stage having been thus set, we decided that we would only partake in pubs that featured one or more real ales on "hand-pumps." (No gaseous delivery systems for us!)

### North Yorkshire

On the first evening in York we visited the Hogshead Inn. They had 6 ales on pump (only 3 I hadn't tasted before) and a very tasty steak-n-ale pie made with Tetley's Ale. We sampled the three ales we hadn't tasted before and a couple we had and tottered off to find our hotel (no minor task). The next day, feeling pretty proud of our start, we found the First Hussar, a pub that had been in the business since 1808. We ordered up their speciality--Yorkshire pudding and chips with gravey--and a "couple" of pints (they had 8 ales which, of course, we had to taste them all!). Black Sheep Brewery's Riggwelter (5.9%ABV) was especially good as was York Brewery's Terrier Bitters. We chatted with the owner, John Cass, who told us about the CAMRA book: "Good Beer Guide 2000" (which I immediately purchased). This 578 page "bible" of real ales in the U.K. lists many of the pubs in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland that provide cask-conditioned real ales, all the breweries producing cask-conditioned real ales; and a list of the names of the all the ales produced! He also recommended that we visit the Yorkshire Brewery.

Later that same afternoon, having allowed some time to recover from lunch at the First Hussar, we were off to the Yorkshire Brewery. ([www.yorkbrew.co.uk](http://www.yorkbrew.co.uk)) They have a 20 bbl system with open primary fermenter ala Anchor. Yorkshire produces 3 standards—Stonewall Bitter, Brideshead Bitters and Yorkshire Terrier (my favorite)--and numerous specials at the whim of the brewmaster, Andy Whalley, and the owner. After the tour, we met Andy and quaffed one of each of what they had to offer. A most delightful way to spend a rainy afternoon!

## What's Brewing?

After another day in York and a few more pints in a few more pubs, we were off to Whitby, a delightful fishing port on the North Sea, where Capt. Cook learned to sail (and probably had a few pints himself). There, we encountered the brews of the Black Dog Brewery at the Duke of York Pub.

In our ignorance, we drove right through the town of Darlington on our way to Durham without knowing about the brew festival underway (bummer!). No matter, we made up for it later! The Tourist Info Office in the town center recommended the Victoria Inn for our evenings lodgings. This turned out to be a local den of iniquity that had 7 ales on hand-pump. As we were leaving for dinner--after having had a pint or two--the publican/owner said that if we wanted a wee one before bed to come in through a certain door if we returned after they closed for the night. Well, when we returned, there was hardly standing room at the bar and this an hour past closing! In the course of having a last pint or two, we met a chap who was a member of CAMRA and got a couple of recommendations on brews to try (Daleside's Green Grass Old Rogue and Darwin's Hodges Special) and places to stay in the Lake Country where we were headed next.

### The Lake District (Cumbria)

This is delightful country side with beautiful lakes amid lush green valleys snuggled between the rugged hills of the area. Sort of a combination of the Marin hills and Santa Cruz mountains with lakes and green meadows. Many small villages with a pub or two. There 11 microbreweries in the county. Lots of hiking trails in the hills. Stayed the night in Keswick and supped in the Bank Tavern where they had many of Jennings brews including "Snecklifter" (5.1%ABV).

We then thought we'd investigate the place south of Windermere that the chap from the Victoria Inn in Durham recommended--the Watermill Inn in Ings ([www.watermill-inn.demon.co.uk](http://www.watermill-inn.demon.co.uk)). Our first impression on entering was this must be an ale drinkers version of heaven! Sixteen (16) cask conditioned real ales on hand-pump! Alan (the owner) takes great pride in the proper care and serving of the beers he purveys. A couple of the more remarkable ales were J.W. Lees' "Moonraker" (7.5%ABV) and the Moorhouse "Black Cat Mild" (almost a porter at 3.4%ABV). He and some of the other patrons gave us great recommendations on other pubs to visit and beers to drink! It was a wonderful base for excursions through the area and a warm, cozy pub to come "home" to. We stayed two days!

One recommended day trip took us to the village of Torver and the Church House Inn, established in the 1600s, where we quaffed a wonderful pint of Morland's "Old Speckled Hen" (5.2%ABV). On the way back to Ings, we stopped in the Black Bull Inn, home of the Coniston Brewery, where we had lunch and a pint each of "Old Man Ale" (4.4%ABV), "Opium" (4.0%ABV), and their (great) prize winning "Blue Bird" (3.6%ABV).

Of all fine ales that we found and of which we had a pint or two, there were many more that went undiscovered and untasted. We didn't have time (a mere 10 days) nor the petrol for our car (the petrol hauleurs were on strike then) to go to Masham and the Black Sheep and Theakston Breweries nor to Cockermouth and the Jennings brewery, to name a few. We didn't have time to return to Tewksbury (in the Cotswolds) and the Olde Black Bear Inn, the oldest pub in England, having opened in 1308! (Anyone over 5 ft 8 in. tall needs to watch their head going through a couple of the doorways!) The last time we were there, they had 6 wooden barrels of ale dispensed by gravity! What a treat they were! There was Salem Porter, Spitfire Ale, Wadworth 6X, Tanglefoot, Wizard's Wonder, and Farmers Glory.

A night at the Volunteer Inn in Chipping Campden (the Cotswolds) on our way to London (and a pint of Charles Well's "Bombardier") and then home lead us to sample 3 more cask ales and a cask lager! The barman "forced" us to compare the cask lager--Millers Lager of Fat God's Brewery (4.7%ABV)--with Carlings, Stella Artois, and Hoegaarten Wit! Dirty work, but someone had to do it.

### Conclusion

CAMRA is very much alive and doing very well! Real ales are thriving. Some of the major breweries are providing their own versions of casked conditioned ales. Free houses abound so the variety of beers available in any pub is much better than in the heyday of tied-houses.

A word of advice to the uninitiated--do some serious "training" before you embark on a tour of the real ales of the U.K.! And plan ahead, beer is only a rental product!

*By Ed (hic! burp!) Davis.*

## 2001's Busy Brewing Calendar

*Peter Torgrimson*

## What's Brewing?

The calendar of upcoming events is expanded in this newsletter to summarize the brewing events for the next year -- at least those probably of interest to WOW. Several of these require some additional commentary.

**WOW Meetings** - We generally have meetings on the last Wednesday of the month. Exceptions are November (where the meeting is jammed up with Thanksgiving or the WOW holiday party) and December (Christmas). This year the October meeting falls on Halloween. If desired, we can move this meeting to the prior week.

We always can use new meeting places and topics. If you can host a meeting, please let me know. If you want to hear about a topic or have any suggestions for the meeting, let me know. Even better, if you want to present a talk, DEFINITELY let me know.

The **Toronado Barleywine Festival** is the high point of the year for barleywine-heads. The judging will be on Saturday, February 17. If you are not already signed up to judge it probably is too late. However, you can still go and taste an incredible selection of barleywines during the week-long festival. Remember, though, that the prize-winning barleywines go quickly. You might want to get up there on Saturday afternoon or Sunday for the best selection. Remember, this is barleywine. You might consider taking public transportation. John Watson knows how to do it. (ed.: See John's article in this newsletter.)

**AHA Club-Only Competitions** - These are competitions (6 per year) restricted to a single style per

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **January 31 - WOW meeting, David Sanford's house.**
- February/March/April - BJCP exam.
- February 17 - 23 - Toronado Barleywine Festival, San Francisco.
- February 21 - AHA Dunkelmania club only competition - entries due.
- **February 28 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- March 9 - AHA Stout club only competition - entries due.
- March 10 - World Cup of Beer - entries due.
- March 14 - Broken Hydrometer III - entries due.
- March 20 - Broken Hydrometer III event.
- March 24 - World Cup of Beer - finals and party.
- **March 28 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- April 13 - AHA National Homebrew Competition - first round entries due.
- **April 25 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- May - AHA Bockanalia club only competition - entries due.
- May 5 - AHA Big Brew 2001.
- **May 30 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- June 21 - 23 - AHA National Homebrewers Conference.
- **June 27 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- July/August - WOW summer picnic.
- **July 25 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- August - AHA Wit club only competition - entries due.
- August - Small Brewers Festival of California, Mountain View.
- **August 29 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- September/October - WOW English pub crawl, York, UK.
- **September 26 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- October - Northern California Homebrew Festival, Napa.
- October - AHA California Common club only competition - entries due.
- **October 31 - WOW meeting, location TBA.**
- November - California State Homebrew Competition, Stern Grove, San Francisco.
- November 3 - Teach A Friend To Homebrew Day.
- **December 2 - WOW holiday party (tentative).**
- December - AHA Mild club only competition - entries due.

competition with one entry from each participating club. If we have any interest in a club-only event, we will judge the entries, hopefully at a club meeting, and send in the winning entry. The club pays for the entry. The schedule for this year is:

**February** - Category 13, European Dark Lager (Munich Dunkel and Schwarzbier).

**March** - Category 16, Stout and Category 12C, Russian Imperial Stout.

**May** - Category 14, Bock.

**August** - Category 19B, Wit Bier.

**October** - Category 6C, California Common.

**December** - Category 10A, Mild.

For more information, check out the AHA website at [www.beertown.org](http://www.beertown.org).

## What's Brewing?

**BJCP Exam** - There is a tentative exam this winter or spring. We will sponsor a study session to prepare for the exam.

**World Cup of Beer** - This East Bay competition is one of the better competitions in this area and is my favorite (good beer, good people, good judging, and GREAT FOOD). I encourage everybody to enter their beer in this event. The club usually makes a delivery run so this competition is very easy to enter. Entries are due March 10. This year they are accepting most beer styles. The preliminary judging is March 17. The final judging and party are March 24. The party is open to judges and entrants. DON'T MISS IT. This party is the best homebrew competition party I have been to. Check out the Bay Area Mashers website at [www.bayareamashers.org](http://www.bayareamashers.org) for more information.

**Broken Hydrometer III** - Also in March (see the calendar) is Fermentation Frenzy's Broken Hydrometer event. Featured are good beer (single style) and a great event. Phil has done a great job of conceiving and sponsoring this event. This is an event which calls for some really good beer. Mark Thompson has won the two previous events, and it probably will take exceptional brew to dislodge him this time.

**WOW Summer Picnic** - This next summer we should have a picnic. In the past these have been a lot of fun. We have had these in parks, but arranging a venue where beer is allowed can be a problem. I propose that we consider having this event at someone's house. Any volunteers?

**Small Brewers Festival of California** - This August event is another highlight of the WOW year since we manage the amateur brewing competition. This also is the easiest competition to enter. Even if you haven't entered a competition before, consider entering this event. We also need judges and stewards.

**WOW English Pub Crawl** - There is talk of organizing a WOW tour of English microbreweries. See Ed Davis' article elsewhere in this issue. The proposed time frame is September or October. If you are interested, think you are interested, or just want to know more about it (wannabe interested) see Ed or Carol Torgrimson. DO IT NOW.

**Northern California Homebrew Festival** - This early-October regional conflagration in Napa's Skyline Park draws homebrewers and speakers from throughout the area. This is a weekend of camping, socializing, learning about beer and tasting an amazing array of homebrews. Unfortunately, WOW has never really participated in this due to distance, schedules, fear of

camping, etc. I am hoping that we can really participate this year. Everybody who has attended has had a great time.

**California State Homebrew Competition** - This Stern Grove event probably is the best competition (in terms of quality of beer) in the area, although I believe the World Cup is equal. The Stern Grove event does draw the best judges. There are two ways to enter: The hard way (win a first place in a competition in California in the past year), and the easy way (each club can enter three beers in every category).

**WOW Holiday Party** - DON'T MISS IT.

The bottom line to all this is ... GET OUT THERE AND BREW.



## About Us

The Worts of Wisdom Homebrewers is a diverse group of people living all around the Santa Clara Valley and up the peninsula who are interested in learning more about beer and brewing and sharing their brewing experiences and their beer.

Make sure to check out our web site:  
<http://www.wortsofwisdom.org/>

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