

December
1998

BARON MIND

A Monthly
Publication of
the Beer Barons
of Milwaukee
Dedicated to the
Education and
Enjoyment of
Fermented Malt
Beverages

From the Presidents Desk...

Season's Greetings!

Ho Ho Ho!

Fa La La!

Jingle Bells!

To Be Jolly!

It's time for the **BEER BARONS CHRISTMAS PARTY!**

We will all have a great time this year. Lots of beery fun to be had. Good eats provided by Clifford's, which is conveniently located at the party venue. Door prizes and raffles. Maybe even candles at the tables for the pyros in the group. Custom manufactured beer made with care especially for this event! Think of it! Plus commercial quaffables as well. Bring a friend!

Don't forget, this is also the only opportunity you'll get to have a say in who is going to drive this bus for you through the coming

year. Final nominations and the actual election of Beer Barons officers takes place at this event.

I have enjoyed my stay at the helm and look forward to enjoying my time as a spectator. This is the best group of beer people around!

I hope to get back into the practice of home brewing full speed real soon. My intentions include hosting a style group or two. As soon as all the dust settles from my recent personal upheaval this will be considered.

Gloria In Excelsius Deo
Et En Terra
Fa La La

I remain,

Sincerely Yours,

Dean Halonen



Upcoming Events



December 16th: Christmas Party & Officer Elections
January 27th: To be announced
February 24th: To be announced
March 24th: To be announced
April 28th: To be announced
May 26th: To be announced

December Meeting

The December monthly meeting will be held at Clifford's, 10448 W. Forest Home Ave., Hales Corners, at 7:30 PM on December 16th. The meeting will feature our annual Christmas Party.

Membership Information:

The Beer Baron's of Milwaukee is open to anyone 21 years of age or older. Annual dues, which cover the cost of producing this newsletter, are \$10.00. In addition, we normally charge a \$5.00 fee for each meeting attended to cover the cost of the beer we taste that evening, however, additional fees may be required to cover the costs of special events. Dues may be paid at the monthly meeting, or a check may be sent to:

Treasurer, Milwaukee Beer Barons,
P.O. Box 27012,
Milwaukee, WI 53217.

This newsletter will be sent free to prospective members for 3 months. The date that appears on the address label of your newsletter is the date that your membership expires. We do not send reminders, so be sure to check the date on the label to see when its time to renew.

An (Un)Official And (In)Complete History of the Beer Barons

by Richard Grzelak

With this, our December meeting, the **Beer Barons** will begin our tenth year as an organization, and what began as an offshoot of the *Wisconsin Vintners Association* is now a mature club itself.

On a bitterly cold Wednesday in December, 1989, 27 people, most of whom were home-brewers, met at *Benno's*, on Greenfield Avenue in West Allis to form the group now known as the **Beer Barons of Milwaukee**.

It was at that meeting that we decided that the focus of the club would be broadened to cover beer in general rather than limiting ourselves solely to home-brewing. It was felt that in doing so, we would not only distinguish ourselves from other clubs in the city, but also expand our appeal to reach a greater number of people.

After much discussion, we finally settled on the name "**Beer Baron's of Milwaukee**", and chose as our motto the phrase; "Dedicated to the Education and Enjoyment of Fermented Malt Beverages." Annual dues were \$5.00, and the monthly meeting fee would be variable depending upon the cost of the beer.

Benno's was our home for the first few meetings after

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<http://www.execpc.com/beerbarons>

which it was determined that we had outgrown that location. We then met at the *Gaslight West*, on 84th and Coldspring for the next several meetings before we finally found our home at *Clifford's*.

In addition to our regular monthly meeting, for the first several years, we also had a monthly social night, in which members would meet at different establishments recommended on the basis of choice of beers as well as whether or not the beer was properly stored and maintained. Remember, this was just as the availability of microbrews began to widen.

In addition to our social nights, there were several sub-groups which met over the years, which, unlike those of today, met not just to brew beer, but also studied the style and its variations. Among the styles studied were: Pale Ales, Black Beers, Bock Beers, Belgian Ales, and Octoberfests. There was also a group which studied beer faults.

These groups would meet on a monthly basis, each member developing a certain expertise in the beers studied. Each group would then conduct a meeting for the benefit of the general membership.

Home brewers have always been a key component of our membership, and we have always supported organized competition. In fact, a number of our members have produced blue-ribbon winning beers in national competitions. Since our inception, at least one meeting a year has been devoted to homebrewing.

As we have grown, so too have our traditions. After a false start in the early in our history, the annual picnic now seems firmly established. The Christmas party has been held annually since we began, and our newsletter has been a fixture since our inception.

Over the years, meetings covered a wide variety of topics. In addition to representatives from the breweries, we also had a seminar which focused on how to judge beer, as well as discussions on malting, yeast biology, and water chemistry. Some meetings discussed gadgets, and others were just social. In short, we lived up to our motto. We truly are "dedicated to the education and enjoyment of fermented malt beverages."

BARON MIND is published by the **Beer Barons of Milwaukee**, a non-profit organization. Club officers are:

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Wisdom From The Past

Editors Note: *Over the years, a number of interesting recipes have appeared in our newsletter. A sample of which follows:*

Seasonal Brewing

by Larry Krolkowski

Think summer! That's right, now is the time to remember the taste of a chilled Pilsener after golfing on a hot summer day. Now is the time to brew that beer. Sure, you can always go out to your local liquor store and pick up a six-pack since the Pilsener style is the most popular style here in the U.S. But while American beers use corn or rice as adjuncts, you can make your Pilsener more in the style of a Pilsner Urquell or Bitburger by using all malt.

Pilseners are not the easiest beers for a homebrewer. Pilseners should be "clean" and "crisp". Superior ingredients and impeccable sanitation are critical since off-flavors will stand out. Clarity is also important. Although chill haze doesn't affect the taste of your beer, it affects your perception of it. Also, since pilseners are lagers, they take longer and require cold fermentation (around 50 degrees for the primary fermentation and as close to 32 degrees as you can get for the secondary). But for most homebrewers, the urge to brew this popular style is irresistible. Here are some extract recipe guidelines:

4 to 5 pounds light malt extract
Up to 1/2 pound crystal malt
Up to 1/2 pound toasted malted barley
2-1/2 ounces boiling hops (Hallertauer, Saaz, or Tettnanger)
1/2 ounce finishing hops
lager yeast

Pilseners typically have an original gravity between 1.040 and 1.048. You can vary the amount of hops used to suit your taste.
(**BARON MIND**, January, 1992)

STATE FAIR: Best of Show Recipe

by Dennis Davison

DOPPELBOCK

Even though this was an all grain brew, you can substitute 10 pounds of a light dry extract.

14 pounds Schreier 2-row
1 pound English Crystal (80 lov)
9 oz. Briess Chocolate
3 oz. Briess Black Patent
Three gallons of water with 3 tsp. of gypsum added. Decoction mash at 120 degrees for 35 minutes, 150 degrees for 30 minutes, 160 degrees for 25 minutes. Sparge with 170 degree water, collect 6 gallons of run off. Add 2 tsp. nutrient and bring to a boil. Boil for 90 minutes.

Hopping rate:

1/2 oz. Perle 6.7% Alpha 60 minutes;
1/2 oz. Perle 6.7% Alpha 35 minutes;
1 1/2 oz. Mt. Hood 3.5% Alpha 20 minutes.

Original Gravity 1.078 Final Gravity 1.024

A one quart yeast starter of Wyeast Bavarian Lager #2206 was used. Initial fermentation took place at 50 degrees for 10 days. Secondary fermentation was 3 weeks at 35 degrees. This beer was kegged and artificially carbonated on 11/2/92. Temperature was kept at 35 degrees. Counter pressure bottled 12/1/92. This beer was 8 1/2 months old when judged.

(**BARON MIND**, August 1993)

Spruce Beer

by Larry Krolkowski

Without a doubt, spruce beer is my favorite seasonal beer. I suppose it isn't really a seasonal since you could brew a spruce beer using bottled spruce essence that can be purchased year round. Don't do it! It's so darn easy to brew spruce beer the right way that you don't need to take short cuts.

Spruce beer isn't a novelty beer. Spruce was added to beer long before hops were. And I suspect that hops became prevalent in beer not because of superior flavor characteristics, but because hops are inexpensive and have better preservative qualities. Spruce beers have a slight cola flavor. Most people that I have served them to think they're great.

All you need to do to brew a spruce beer is to collect four ounces ~w green spruce needles. This is not as difficult as collecting eye of newt. If you live around here, you certainly have a spruce tree somewhere in your neighborhood. However, you don't want pine needles, you want spruce needles. Spruce trees are tall, dense, cone-shaped trees. They have horizontal branches that support many long twigs full of needles, usually hanging down from the branch. During May, the branches produce the new years growth of twigs and needles. While spruce needles are generally dark green, the new growth needles are a much lighter color. Take a scissors or pruning shears to snip off enough of these two to three-inch twigs to get your four ounces. You don't need to separate the needles from the twigs. If you don't have a scale, just pack as many of these twigs as you can into a one pint container and that should be close enough.

You use the spruce needles exactly as you would use boiling hops - throw them into the brew kettle at the beginning of the boil and strain them out at the end. Easy!

Here's a simple extract recipe for a five gallon batch:

5 pounds of dark dried malt extract or 3.3 pounds of dark malt syrup
2 pounds of dark dried malt extract
4 ounces of new green spruce needles (boil for 60 minutes)
2 ounces of Hallertauer hops (boil for 60 minutes)
ale yeast

(**BARON MIND**, May 1994)

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