



The Brewer's League Journal



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December 2004



Holiday Meeting and Elections

Come join your fellow GEBLs at the meeting on December 9th in a celebration of the past year and a look toward to the future. December's club meeting is always fun and entertaining with Winter Warmers and the White Elephant Exchange, but we have one bit of business left to do before the new year - the election of the board of officers for 2005 (we promise that there will not be any prolonged election results). The candidates are as follows:

President/Vice President:

Gary Albright, Lori Brown, Fred Farris, Val Oliver

Secretary:

Linda Fredin, Karen Froelich

Librarian:

Jim Brischke, Will Fredin, Karen Froelich

Treasurer:

Dennis Fugier, Bob Winchell

Membership Coordinator:

Gary Albright, Fred Farris, Gordon Legg

Newsletter Editor:

Fred Farris, Scot Oliver, Eric Wilson, Bob Winchell



Inside this issue:

• From the Pres.	2
• Scuttlebutt visit	3
• Shepherd Brewery	4
• Shepherd Cont'd • Style Calendar	5
• The Rock	6



**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE December 9
at THE FLYING PIG at 7:00 PM**

A letter from the President

Dear GEBL's,

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone in the club for their contributions this past year. It is the entire membership that makes a club function. Without members volunteering their time and efforts, GEBL would not exist. Thank you to all the people who were willing to serve on the executive committee in 2004. I enjoyed serving with each and every one of you. Thank you to all of the people who accepted nominations to possibly serve the club in 2005. Thank you to all of those GEBL's who made contributions to the newsletter, and thank you especially to Shelley and Val for publishing another twelve issues this year. Thank you to everyone who attends our monthly meetings – together we are the GEBL.

We had a great year in 2004. We added new members, tasted a lot of outstanding beer, learned more about our great hobby, and participated in many fun social events like the big brew (thank you Will and Linda), our Bottleworks field trip in May, the summer BBQ (thank you Shelley and Gary), the same recipe competition (thanks again Shelley), and the fall pub crawl (thank you Fred and Gordy), with an added stop at Bottleworks (Matt thanks you all). We enjoyed many entertaining guest speakers like Jon Tobey and his mead discussion, Paul Wasik from Anacortes Brewing, Tom Munoz of Far West Ireland Brewing, and the entire crew at Scuttlebutt Brewing in Everett.

Many of our members participated in homebrew competitions both as entrants and as judges. Out of the four largest local homebrew competitions in 2004 – our club took home two Best of Show awards. Pretty impressive! We also won the Homebrew Club of the Year award at the Evergreen State Fair, again.

I look forward to another great year in 2005. Please raise your glass and let me propose a toast – “Here's to creating many more group memories (however fuzzy they might be), brewing great beer, and developing long-lasting friendships in 2005.”

Cheers!
Lori



Visiting the Scuttlebutt Brewing Company

By Fred Farris

We held our last club meeting at a different but delightful location, the Scuttlebutt Brewing Company located in Everett in the waterfront next to the Everett Marina. The owners and brewer, Phil and Scuttlebutt O'Bannon and Matt Stromberg, hosted us for wonderful afternoon meeting. Many of us enjoyed their delectable fare and fresh brews. After we'd had a chance to sate our appetites, Phil treated us to three of their exquisite brews: Winter Weizen, Gale Force IPA (90+ IBUs), and Old No. 1 Barley Wine (11.9%+ ABV). All of the brews were big, malty and tasty. Matt who has been brewing at Scuttlebutt for over five years was there to give us tour of their brewery and tell a few tales about his brewing history. It turns out that Matt and Arlen Harris are both Washington State alumni and both happened to attend Wazu and start their brewing careers at the same time. Matt, like nearly all of us, started out home brewing on his stove top. When he'd go to the local homebrew supply store, the proprietor mentioned that between he and some other fellow, they were pretty regular customers. It turns out that the other "regular" customer was Arlen. Matt describe his dorm room as being lined with fermentors along the walls. Matt was the head McMenemy's brewer here in Washington working at the Mill Creek McMenemy's before joining Scuttlebutt Brewing. Scuttlebutt brews are now available on Horizon Airlines, as well as at Costco and Trader Joe's. With their current production schedule, it appears that the Scuttlebutt will exceed 1,800 barrels of production this year! These folks are really serving some excellent microbrewed ales and the next time you are down in Everett, I recommend you check out the Scuttlebutt.





Shepherd Neame Brewery

By Shelley Albright

When Gary and I were in the planning stages of our vacation to England, we knew that we wanted to visit an English brewery. Internet searches led us to the Shepherd Neame Brewery. This looked like a good brewery tour for us to take due to its historic claims and its relatively close proximity (around 20 miles) from where we were staying. The tour was by reservation only (you could make on-line reservations) and the cost was around 10 US dollars, payable at the time of the tour. That seemed like a steep price for a brewery tour, but they advertised light refreshments and up to three half-pints of beer. We decided to make reservations to tour Shepherd Neame.

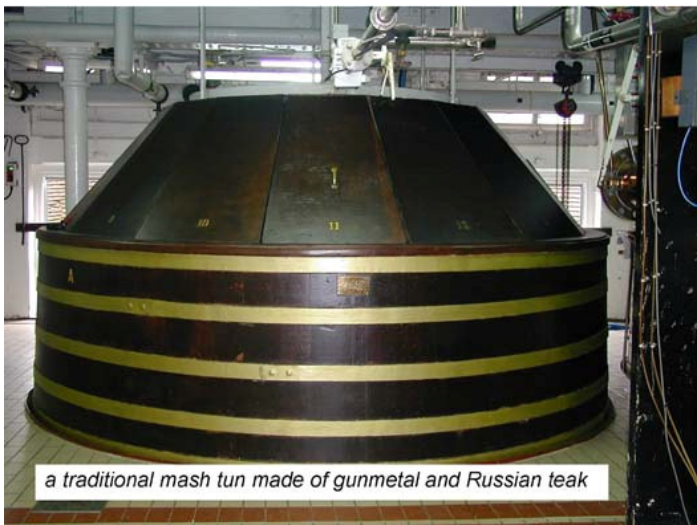
The Shepherd Neame Brewery has been brewing ales since 1698 and takes claim to the fact that it is Britain's oldest brewery. The brewery is located in the historic, British hop growing town of Faversham, Kent where beer has been brewed for over 850 years.



Our tour day was here; we waited on one of the main streets of Faversham for our tour time to come and for the doors of the brewery to open. Soon, we were greeted by our tour hostess and escorted into the tasting room where the tour started and ended. In the tasting room, the beer engine tap handles lined the back of the bar which was decorated with hop vines that were filled with hop cones. Waiting for the tour to start, I read the description of the many beers that would be available to sample at the end of the tour. I was getting **very thirsty** and wished that we had the option of skipping the tour and to just start tasting.

I was glad that I was not allowed to skip the tour. The 45 minute tour was the best brewery tour that I have ever been on, and I have been on quite a few. Some of the historic brewery equipment such as the two beautiful Russian teak mash tuns are there for view, are still in use today. The hostess gave the usual talk about the brewing process, but along with the talk you got to taste the various grains that were used in their beers and to actually touch and smell the leaf and pellet hops that were used. This was not new to me, but what a wonderful education this was to the occasional brewery tourist.

We continued our tour and passed the more modern day stainless brewing vessels which were similar to the ones used in the U.S. We climbed up narrow metal stairways to view where bottled and kegged beer gets filtered. In the bottling room, more than 250,000 bottles gets filled each day. Past the bottling room was the oldest operating steam engine outside of London. This steam engine was once used to drive the malt mill and the other brewery machines. The engine continues to be operational and is still fired up on special occasions.



We learned that after fermentation, about one fifth of their yeast is used for future fermentation. The remainder of the yeast is put through a yeast press. The pressed yeast is collected and used as an animal food, or in health products such as yeast tablets or yeast extract spread like Marmite.):

Ahead of us was the kegging plant (**I was really thirsty now**). Several hundred kegs were waiting to be filled. Next came the cask racking operation, "the real beer" station, where still fermenting beer is filled into metal casks with natural finings. The finings help clear the beer after fermentation has stopped. The

casks used were firkins, the nine gallon size and kilderkins which hold 18 gallons.

The next to the last stop on the tour was the quality control room where every batch of beer goes through a series of lab and taste tests before it is allowed to leave the plant. Rows of firkins waiting to be tested and tasted, lined the temperature controlled laboratory wall.

Finally we walked back into the tasting room and found a table. We were all given a half-pint glass and got to choose which beers we would like to start with. I figured seeing that I was **so thirsty**, I would start out with a lighter brew, knowing that it would go down quickly. I started with a light pilsner called Oranjeboom Pilsner. This was a tasty full bodied pilsner that put any mainstream American beer to shame. I went with a cask bitter next. The Best Bitter was very clean and flavorful with the subtle taste of Kent Goldings hops in the not so distant background. I thought that there was only one more choice to be had, so I stepped up to the bar and had a few cheese and crackers while I read the descriptions of the strong ales. I decided on the Bishops Finger and was not disappointed. This beer had a full bodied fruity flavor and a long lasting hoppy finish.

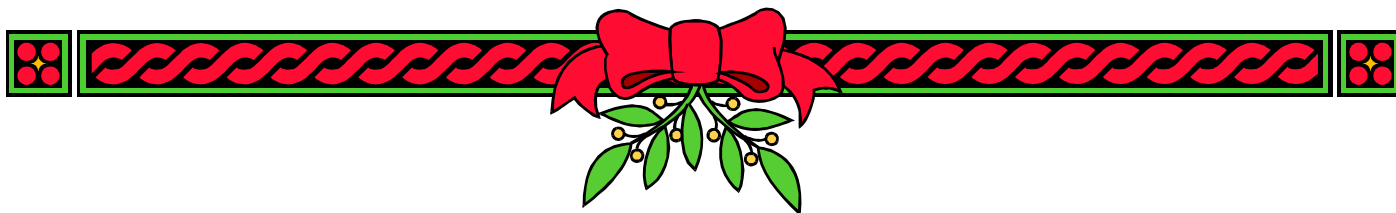


Imperial Half Pint Sample Glasses

Just as I thought that the tasting was over, the kind woman behind the bar announced that there were some beer varieties that were just available in bottles available to try. The first was a light organic ale and the second was their celebration ale called "1698". The latter beer was brewed in 1998 to celebrate Shepherd Neame's 300th anniversary. This was definitely the granddaddy of their beers. The rich malt flavor blended with a tasty hop balance and high alcohol content made it a great sit back and sip it ale. Yum!

During the tasting period, the gift shop was open to purchase shirts, posters, many different collectables and of course beer. We bought several bottles of the "1698" to take back to our cottage.

This brewery is highly recommended and you will not be disappointed. You may make your brewery tour reservations at: <http://www.shepherdneame.co.uk>



Style & Speaker Calendar

GEBL

December	Winter Warmers (Big Beers)
2005	
January	Porters
February	Speaker
March	Open Lagers
April	Speaker
May	Belgians

AHA

2005	
January	Irish Red Ale
Mar/Apr	Sour Beers
May	Extract Beers
August	Belgian & French Ale
Sept/Oct	European Amble Lager
Nov/Dec	Baltic Porter

by Gary Albright

Their web site is: <http://www.therockwfp.com/#>



*Thanks to all who have contributed this year !
Happy Holidays - Shelley & Val*