



May 2008 Newsletter

Next Club Meeting Sunday 18th May 2008 @ 12:30pm

THE PRESIDENTS REPORT



A reminder that the next meeting is this Sunday, 18th of May at the Naval Association Hall from 12:30 onwards.

With the Stout Extravaganza getting much closer we obviously need to finalize the details for the event and produce a flyer with all the event details. I have received quite a few queries from brewers anxious to know what styles are being judged and what the event details are.

It may also be a good time to plan our brewing calendars for the other upcoming competitions such as Pale Ale mania, Oktoberfest and Vicbrew ...

Also, I would like to ask for submissions for the newsletter !!!

Cheers ... Colin MacEwan

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE AT THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION
HALL, BARRETT RESERVE, GRAHAM STREET, WEST
FOOTSCRAY (OPPOSITE THE YMCA) MELWAY 41 J3

Westgate Brewers is committed to encouraging responsible drinking

REMEMBER-If you Drink and Drive-You're a Bloody Idiot

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Club Meeting Diary

May 2008

Activity Tba

June 2008

Activity Tba

July 2008

Activity Tba

August 2008

Activity Tba

October 2008

Activity Tba

November 2008

Activity Tba

December 2008

Activity Tba

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Coming Events

July

Westgate Brewers

Stout Extravaganza

Tba

August

Worthogs

Pale Ale Mania

Tba

September

Oktoberfest 2008

Tba

October

VicBrew 2008

Tba

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Hop secrets

By Willie Simpson SMH August 27, 2003

Weird and wonderful recipes of home brewers searching for the perfect drop.

A home-brewing acquaintance of mine swears by his wife's pantyhose. He says they make all the difference to the hoppiness of his ales. Not that he actually wears the pantyhose, you understand (though I sometimes wonder when he goes on about "sheer-to-the-waist" being the best style). He cuts them in half, stuffs in hop flowers and ties a knot for a ready-made hop bag. It's just one of countless favourite home-brewing tips.

When home brewers start adding hops you know they've really got the bug. And there are as many different methods as you can imagine. Some brewers make a sort of hop soup by steeping hop pellets in boiling water and then straining the lot into their fermenters. One inventive soul uses his coffee plunger, which works a treat except that his coffee now has an overpoweringly bitter and resinous flavour. "Keep it clean and don't rush," was the first piece of advice I received from my friendly home brew shop. Cleaning and sterilising all those bottles and equipment is a major chore for most backyard brewers. I soon discovered a shortcut that saved me hours of menial work: rinse the bottles as soon as you've drunk the contents and soak them in a weak bleach solution in a large plastic drum. When bottling day arrives I pull out my clean, sterilised bottles, rinse them and fill them with my latest brew.

Many home brewers have their favourite secret ingredient. At one stage I used to add half a kilo of clover honey to my lagers because I'd read somewhere that it added complexity. Perhaps it did, because one of my entries won best pilsener in a home brew club competition.

Actor and home brewer Paul Mercurio used to give his stouts a real Aussie character by adding a dollop of Vegemite. If you want to try this at home, start with a tablespoon of Vegemite per 18-20 litres of wort; if you like the effect you can always ramp it up next time.

A quick trawl through home brew websites reveals recipes containing all manner of secret ingredients, including chocolate and raspberry topping and even a tin of sweetened condensed milk. The chocolate topping (250mL) was added to a Cooper's Stout kit while the raspberry variety will apparently turn a wheat beer kit into a Belgian framboise lambic brew.

The can of sweetened condensed milk is the heart of Two Plank Stout (the stout turns out as thick as two short planks, apparently) and, like the flavoured toppings, should be dissolved in boiling water and added directly to the fermenter.

Another recipe calls for the grated zest of six limes and crushed coriander seed. The resulting Lime and Coriander Lager is also known as Thai Curry Beer because that's the style of food it should be drunk with. What's next? Fermented Shrimp Paste and Galangal Beer or Turmeric and Chilli India Pale Ale, perhaps?

Home brewers often have their favourite hop variety which finds its way into all sorts of different brews. But sometimes it's not just hops. English beer writer Michael Jackson was sampling beers at a home brew convention in the US when he encountered a particularly resinous India Pale Ale. "I late-hopped it with marijuana, man," the brewer informed him. Jackson says he went back to his hotel that night and enjoyed the soundest sleep of his life.

Growing Hops

You've been brewing your own beer and loving it. What could possibly make it even more fun? Using your own homegrown hops! Hops are perhaps the coolest vine you could grow in your garden. They are fast growers reaching up to 30 feet in a season, provide great shade in the summer, have a killer aroma at the end of the season and come back year after year.

Most importantly, they give your homebrew that personalized touch that can't be achieved using any other method. Even those among us without a green thumb can grow hops easily and productively. Hops are grown all over the world but tend to prefer a temperate climate and don't do very well too close to the equator. Fortunately, they do grow fine here in Utah. In fact, at least one commercial hop variety was bred from a wild hop collected in Logan Canyon, Utah.

Hops are grown from a hop rhizome; essentially a root cutting. These rhizomes should be planted in loose, non clay-like soil, within the next few weeks. Hops prefer being grown in an area that receives full sunlight. Prepare the soil and lay the rhizome horizontally in a shallow trench not more than 6 inches deep and cover it with loose soil. Then start watering it. Hops like moist but well drained soil. Within a couple of weeks the first shoots should be appearing. Remember, hops are a vine and will need something to climb. Some sort of stake or pole should be planted securely in the ground next to the rhizome the same day you plant. Run sturdy twine that the vine can train on from the pole to the ground. Hop plants can grow to be 15-25 feet tall or more so make sure you give it room and keep it off the ground.

Many vines can grow from one rhizome; however, the strongest 2 or 3 should be selected and the rest should

Spring is here!

The temperatures are rising, the snow has given way to rain and, if you are like me, the beer is flowing. Well, put down that beer and get into the garden! Yes, you heard me right, our hop rhizomes are on the way, and will probably be at the store by the time you read this newsletter! It is also the time of the year when our tastes shift from the darker stouts, porters and barley wines to the lighter German and American style Hefe-Weizens and have we got a simple but delicious recipe for you.

be cut off at ground level in order to promote health growth. As the vines grow, train them clockwise around the pole/twine and don't forget to keep the soil moist. Don't spray the whole plant though, just water the soil. If you spray the whole plant mildew can become a problem. Furthermore, be careful not to over water the plant. When the vine is tall enough, probably early summer, remove the leaves from the ground to the 4 foot level. This will prevent leaf wilt that can kill the plant. For the rest of the summer simply sit back and enjoy the beauty and the shade that a row of hop plants provide. But don't forget to water!. When the hop cones start to fluff and become drier to the touch and the yellow lupulin glands become larger and more fragrant it is time to harvest. Some lightening in color and/or a slight yellowing on the cone will also help indicate when it is time to harvest. A ripe hop cone should snap in half when bent and you should be able to smell the hops from several feet away. Pick the hops and let them dry on a screen in a dark, dry place until they are papery. The hops should then be frozen in oxygen barrier bags or mason jars to preserve freshness. After harvest cut the vines back

to about 4-6 feet in length then at first frost cut them back to ground level and cover them with mulch until spring. A hop plant can yield 1/2-2 pounds of hops in a season but don't expect to reach that yield in the first growing season. Also, don't expect your hops to have quite as much bittering power as the commercially grown ones.



On a recent trip to the Grand Ridge Brewery I noticed a lot of hops growing wild out the back ...



Does anyone remember the type?

E-Fuel MicroFueler Turns Sugar, Stale Beer Into Gas For Your Ride



The dream of a home ethanol pump has been realised, says the *New York Times*, thanks to inventor named Floyd S. Butterfield. One of the world's only celebrated non-hillbilly still-makers, Butterfield has invented the \$10,000 E-Fuel 100 MicroFueler, a gadget that combines heaps of sugar and a sprinkling of yeast to ferment an alcoholic brew which it then distills into ethanol. The notion is that, as long as the price of sugar stays relatively low, it could cost about \$1 per gallon to make the fuel. It's even cheaper when you put un-drunk stale beer in the system: Since the fermentation is done, all it takes is the electricity to distill the beer into scotch-whiskey fuel for your car.

Carbon haters would be happy that a gallon of the MicroFueler's ethanol is supposed to produce just 12.5% of the carbon from a gallon of normal gasoline. Butterfield is also someone who people should listen to: In 1982 he won an award from the state of California for "best design of an ethanol still" says the *Times*. (I had NO idea I could enter my still in a competition!)

Naysayers predict that quality control would be a problem (and anyone who's ever homebrewed beer can probably attest to the finicky nature of the process. Others charge that since sugar costs 20-cents per pound, and you need 10 to 14 pounds to make a gallon of ethanol, well, there goes your cost savings. But Butterfield and his Silicon Valley finance whiz/business partner Thomas J. Quinn swears you can buy "inedible sugar" from South of the Border for 2 to 3 cents per pound.

There's also a small matter of 100% ethanol being illegal as an automotive fuel, but Quinn says that, too, will be resolved. [\[NYT\]](#)

PC Beer Dispenser



Finally, the PC beer dispenser mod has arrived. Who'd have ever thought combining the two would be such a good idea?