



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

February 2021

Contents of This Issue

Brewer's Log
Secretary's Column
Reading about Beer and Brewing

Next Meeting

February 16, 2021
Club meeting, Zoom, 7pm

GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB
PMB 1204
3705 ARCTIC BOULEVARD
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503

GNBC WEBSITE
www.GreatNorthernBrewers.org

PRESIDENT
Mike Fisher
president@greatnorthernbrewers.org

VICE PRESIDENT
Christophe Venot
vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org

TREASURER
Thomas Huling
treasurer@greatnorthernbrewers.org

SECRETARY
Jordan Couture
secretary@greatnorthernbrewers.org

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR
Steve Johnson
membership@greatnorthernbrewers.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Phylicia Christian, 2020-2021
Chaven Davidson, 2020-2021
Deb Morgan, 2021-2022
John Trapp, 2021-2022
Robert Trosper, 2021-2022
Contact information via our website

Brewer's Log

By Mike Fisher

For the first time since I have been a member of GNBC, we had a "regular" monthly meeting in January. Many of us miss the big industry meeting and the barleywine festival, but we've made the most of the situation and we'll look forward to those events soon.

We had a small monthly meeting in January in lieu of our usual industry meeting. Thank you to Kat for her long service as membership coordinator and 2020's officers and board members. Welcome aboard and congratulations to the new board members, Steve as our new membership coordinator, and the returning officers and board members for 2021.

Be sure to mark your calendars for our 2021 Club Campout. John Trapp has reserved the Trail River group site for July 8–11. That's a Thursday to Sunday, so we'll have three nights together this year. Stay tuned for more information.

As I requested last month, please send in any ideas you have for meeting topics, presenters, etc. in the future. Ideas are always welcome.

For this month's flame-out, I continued my longer-term brews, including a wheatwine and a second runnings from it that, with additional malts and sugar, was even bigger than the original beer. (Who knew a wit yeast, with a supposed alcohol tolerance of 8%, could ferment up to nearly twice that?) I also started a more sessionable, sparkling melomel to enjoy as things start to warm up. I will look forward to sharing brew when we are able to meet in person again.

Secretary's Corner

By Jordan Couture

Happy February Club Members,

Covid and cold weather got you down? Have a homebrew, or even better have a homebrew with your friends. You will find information about this month's virtual meeting on our website.

Happy shortest month of the year,

Jordan M. Couture Secretary

Reading about Beer and Brewing

By Steve Johnson

The potential original gravity of wort, calculated from recipe, is usually a good predictor of the alcoholic content of the resulting fermented beverage. Exceptions came to mind when I was reading articles about the

history of Doppelbock and about The Small Beer Company of England. Then I remembered one batch I brewed in the Autumn of 2017...

In the February-March 2021 issue of *Craft Beer and Brewing*, Jeff Alworth discussed the monkish history of Doppelbock. How could a beverage in the seven to eight percent ABV range function as the only Lenten meal for otherwise fasting monks? Alworth cited a possible answer in the historical brewing research of Ron Pattinson.

Pattinson's research noted the low efficiency suggested by the brewing records of the mid-19th century commercial successor to the monk's brewery. Though the original recipe might yield seven percent ABV using modern methods, the historic method produced a beer likely containing just five percent alcohol. Alworth wrote that the beverage would have been loaded with additional calories, perhaps justifying description as "liquid bread" and the only daily meal of an otherwise fasting monk.

Shortly after reading the articles about Doppelbock, I read "Small But Perfectly Formed" in the February 2020 issue of *The Brewer's Journal*. The products of the Small Beer Brewing Company are small indeed, ranging from 1.0 to 2.7 ABV. The brewery achieves these results not by removing alcohol through evaporation or by halting fermentation or by using second runnings, but by a proprietary process not described in detail. The brewers did note that the worts for their beers contain the same quantity of fermentables as might be used to produce a beer containing 4.5 per cent alcohol.

After reading these articles, I was reminded of a batch of Saison I brewed in Autumn 2017. From the recipe, BeerSmith estimated original gravity as 1.051 and ABV as 5.1 per cent. At the end of brewday, measured OG was 1.034. When fermentation was completed, I calculated ABV at 3.1 per cent.

I apparently caused the low efficiency by using wrongly sized grain sacks and by lax attention to mashing temperature. That particular batch was my first with a new system. After several years of doing BIAB using two five gallon pots on a kitchen stove, I moved my operation to a converted 15 gallon keg and a propane burner. Unfortunately, for that first batch I continued to use the same two grain sacks, rather than a single grain sack sized for the new brew kettle. Subsequently I have used a single, larger grain sack and closely monitored the mash. Later batches yielded the ABV suggested by the estimated and actual original gravity.

Doppelbock remains one of my favorite styles to drink, though one I have never brewed. I would be happy to taste products of The Small Beer Company, should they turn up in Anchorage. As for that long gone batch of 3.1 Saison? I called it Table Beer and kept the records from that batch.

--Steve Johnson

The *Craft Beer and Brewing Magazine* website is <https://beerandbrewing.com>.

The internet will retrieve Ron Pattinson's several articles on Doppelbock by searching on Pattinson and Doppelbock. Pattinson's website is <https://barclayperkins.blogspot.com>.

Many issues of *The Brewers Journal* are freely available online at

<https://issuu.com/meatpacking/docs>. (The publisher's main product is a journal for the meat packing trade.)

Another interview with the Small Beer Company is available at <https://www.masterofmalt.com/blog/post/a-spotlight-on-the-small-beer-brew-co.aspx>.

A HUGE Thanks to our 2021 Supporters

Present your GNBC card at these suppliers for a members-only discount. See each store for details.



8401 Sandlewood Place Anchorage, AK 99507 | 907-561-5771



MATHESON
ask...The Gas Professionals™



THANK YOU
to our 2020
sponsors!



We're
recognizing
them again this
year, when they
really need OUR
support

