

# Malted Barley Appreciation Society

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Cheers! Here's April's newsletter...

Alan Rice

## April Meeting

Wednesday April 12, 2006

Our guest speaker is Steve Bayconich, NYC sales manager for Blue Point Brewery.

**MUGS ALE HOUSE**

[www.mugsalehouse.com](http://www.mugsalehouse.com)



*The Salty Dog notched his seventh skull and got metaphysical with Giorgio di Chirico.*

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<http://hbd.org/mbas>

## March Meeting

### Scott Vacarro

The MBAS welcomed Scott Vacarro to the March meeting. Scott is the owner and brewer of the new Captain Lawrence Brewing Co. in Pleasantville, NY. The first batch was brewed December 16, and the beer was ready in February. Alex Hall was at the opening. His article from Gotham Imbiber #18 follows. Read Scott's biography there, and also on his website at <http://www.captainlawrencebrewing.com/>.



Scott grew up on Captain Lawrence Blvd., and has always used the name for his beers. James Lawrence was mortally wounded in a battle against the British in Boston Harbor on June 1, 1813. Lawrence shouted, "Tell the men to fire faster and not to give up the ship; fight her till she sinks!". "Don't Give Up The Ship" became the motto of the U.S. Navy, which has named numerous ships in his honor.

### So you want to open a brewery?

Scott told us the saga of the difficulty in opening the brewery. After three months, he finally satisfied the town of Lawrenceville and was allowed to begin work on the building. But the floor wasn't strong enough to hold the 20,000 lb. tanks. Beams were necessary, but they interfered with the floor drains. Since there was no straight shot, they had to dig an ejection pit and buy a pump. Liquids are pumped up to the sewer.

They have a 1.3 million BTU, 5 inch cast iron boiler. It vents

*Continued on next page.*



through a 16" double walled flu. The flu goes 12 feet up to the ceiling. Unfortunately, it must then travel another 18 feet up past the bathroom in the furniture warehouse upstairs. The kettlestack takes a sideways turn through warehouse's electrical closet.

You can imagine the dust kicked up by all of the construction. To keep it away from the furniture, huge fans blew it out towards the parking lot - and it covered all of the cars.

The tanks were acquired from Dogfish Head for next to nothing. But Scott had to transport it. There were several problems with the truck, but the worst



was that a 7,000 lb. tank was not properly tied down, and it partially slipped off. It was stuck in a Wal-Mart parking lot until his friends at Prospero Winery, also in Pleasantville, got it on their truck.

### And then we taste

Scott brought several growlers in a large cooler. The American Pale Ale with Crystal malt and Cascade hops will pay the rent, but I think the well balanced Smoked Porter will be their flagship beer (sorry, pun necessary). It is even better now than it was at last month's Cask Head fest. The Belgian ale comes in at an easy drinking 6.5%, and is flavored with coriander. I am looking forward to trying the DIPA, at 7.5% and 80 IBUs.

Since Captain Lawrence beers are so tasty, and they are the only brewery in Westchester County, Scott has quickly captured many accounts. Their website lists the bars where you can try his beers. Growlers are also available at the brewery on Saturday afternoons.—Ed.



*Capping the evening with Dark Star Imperial Stout on cask.*



*The hound finds a friend at Harefield.*



*Why do we always end up at Spuyten Duyvil?*

**TO SEE MORE OF MICHAEL DLOVULLO'S PHOTOS, GO TO:**

**<http://www.flickr.com/photos/mdlovullo/sets/72057594093068282/>.**

## Williamsburg Pub Crawl

On March 25, 2006 MBAS members and friends took a stroll (or was it a hike?) around Williamsburg. The annual pub crawl started at Mugs at 2:00pm. Then it was down to Spike Hill. This is the first year that The Levee was on the itinerary. Alex kept the event on schedule as the crew transferred up to The Matchless. Another long move over to a new place, Harefield Road Pub. We then headed back west to Barcade. The survivors and late comers finished the evening after 9:00pm at Spuyten Duyvil.

# The Good Captain's Maiden Voyage

by Alex Hall

A chance encounter with the homebrewing father of a schoolfriend would change the life and ambitions of a young Scott Vaccaro. Originally destined to become an accountant, the then teenage Scott discovered craft beer one day in November 1995 when he walked into his pal's kitchen and saw dad boiling up a batch of homebrew. "An odd twist of fate", Scott calls the life-changing moment.

Now at the grand old age of 27, Scott has founded the Captain Lawrence Brewing Company in Pleasantville, Westchester County. Inspired and fascinated, he strived to open his own brewery - he's now reached his long-awaited goal after stints at Colorado brewing, Danbury, Connecticut, and Sierra Nevada in California after attaining his BS in Fermentation Science. Prior to that, he undertook the 4 year professional brewing course at the University of California at Davis, joining the Fermentation Science program at age 19 after convincing his parents that brewing - not accountancy - was his natural path in life. With the course came two internships, one each at Bank Street Brewing in Connecticut and Adnams Brewery, Southwold, England. At Adnams, he learned about cask-conditioned ales and took this valuable knowledge to the West Coast - where he is credited with putting Sierra Nevada Pale Ale in casks for the first time (for local consumption only, unfortunately for us here in the East).

After two years brewing at Sierra Nevada, Scott returned to New York and undertook a "research and development" tour of Europe's best breweries - all the time expanding his knowledge of the world's classic beer styles, which can now be put to good use at Captain Lawrence.

Saturday 4th February 2006 was a notable day in Scott's career. This was the day he opened his brewery for public tours and growler fills for the first time (the brewery is now open every Saturday afternoon). Less than ten minutes after alighting from a Metro-North train after a painless meander through The Bronx, I found myself at 99 Castleton Street - an anonymous white 1950s warehouse building set back from one side of a cul-de-sac. A bunch of balloons tied outside and a banner declaring "open" indicated something was happening, so onward into New York's newest brewery I ventured.

The entrance opens into a smart tap room fronting a smart brewing space, I had never seen such a pristine brewery. The tap room was bustling with Scott's friends and relatives, and a fair few imbibers strolled in for growlers while I was there - a very promising start for future regular take-home business. Two beers were on tap: Pale Ale (aka Freshchester P.A.) and Liquid Gold - a highly-drinkable Belgian-style strong pale ale. Former Wynkoop Beer Drinker of the Year Gary Steinel, a resident of nearby White Plains, was doing the honours behind the bar, as was Scott's mother Linda who I had a pleasant chat with.

Going back to the beers, the Pale Ale is a clean-tasting, refreshing brew with Columbus, Cascade, and Crystal hops in the recipe.

IBUs come in at a respectable 35, while alcohol is around 5% ABV. Scott suggests pairing this with pizza or Mexican food. The Liquid Gold (6.5%), of which I took home a growler, is made solely with imported German Pilsner and Vienna Malts, and Crystal, Sterling, and Cascade hops. Apart from these two which were on tap, there will be two other regulars - one of which I was lucky enough to try out of the tanks. Captain Lawrence Smoked Porter employs a variety of English and German malts, complemented by Goldings and Wilamette hops; Scott has a wooden cask for wood aging this beer. I found it delicious and assertive on the tongue at 45 IBUs, however Scott says he will in future tweak the recipe for a bolder smoky feel.

The final beer hadn't been brewed at the time of my visit, but that apparently would be remedied in the next week. Captain's Reserve is Scott's plunge into the deep end of American Double (or



Gary Steinel pouring in the tasting room.



A brewhouse tour.

'Imperial') IPAs, this is a huge citrus and pine-dominated hop monster (80 IBUs). Domestic and English malts are used, and the brew is bittered with Columbus, Chinook, and Cascade hops - all varieties with a high alpha-acid level. I look forward eagerly to trying this one, which Scott suggests pairing with assertive-tasting foods such as Blue Stilton cheese.

The first seasonal beer, another Belgian-style, should appear in late March or early April. Plans exist to brew a number of seasonals throughout the year.

Scott has always given the Captain Lawrence appellation to his own beers - he used to label his homebrew as such. The name derives from the street in South Salem where he grew up, Captain Lawrence Drive.

The brewery has been in the planning and construction stages for the best part of two years, a time which included many frustrations for Scott. For instance, the floor of what is now the brewhouse was found to be not strong enough for adequate support of the heavy brewing and fermenting vessels - so this had to be torn up and reinforced in strips where the tanks would stand. Plus he had to cut open the ceiling in a major way to install some of the vessels. And I doubt Scott will quickly forget the time that a truck delivering a large tank came to grief when the poorly-secured load shifted and began to hang precariously over the side of the trailer.

As for finding the beers, distribution will be limited to Westchester County for the moment, but plans are afoot to break into the NYC market in a few months time. Prior to that, I can wholeheartedly recommend jumping on the train at Grand Central on a Saturday afternoon and investing in a growler or two at the brewery. From Pleasantville Station, turn left, left again on Marble Avenue (passing Paulie's Bar which sells one of the Captain's beers - they kicked out Killian's to make room), then right on Castleton Street.

# Lucky Seven Split Thy Brooklyn Skull VII

BY WARREN BECKER

For most people, the term “lucky seven” connotes an element of risk. With this year’s Split Thy Brooklyn Skull VII, there was nothing left to chance. Mugs Ale House in Williamsburg, Brooklyn has hosted this impressive line-up of strong ales as a one day event for the previous six years. This year’s format was different, as Ed Berestecki of Mugs and Phil Richman, a Beer Advocate, organized, coordinated, and hosted a phenomenal selection of some 30 cask and draft beers over the two day weekend of March 4-5, with another 8 “on deck” beers, to be served, if and when, the beers on the main list kicked. No longer content with local and regional favorites for this annual big beer event, Phil convinced Ed to have rare and special kegs delivered from award winning breweries like Pizza Port, Thomas Hooker and Russian River. It was these unique offerings that created a truly one-of-a-kind event. For most, to sample well-crafted beer styles such as barley wines, old ales, doppelbocks, and imperial stouts side-by-side would call for a super human imbibing constitution. But for this year’s event, no such feats were necessary. The Split Thy Brooklyn Skull’s diverse selections, offered in appropriate 5.5 oz. size snifter glasses, were set for each day, and clearly noted in the event hand-outs as well as on the STBS blackboard. There were only 6 drafts out of the 16 beers available on both days, with no event finish deadline.

The highlights of the Split Thy Skull weekend were Thomas Hooker Liberator Oak Aged Doppelbock, a 8% dark color, wood flavor, and smooth malty finish; St. Bernardus Abt 12 from 2003, big bodied 10% abbey strong dark ale; Russian River Pliny The Elder, a hoppy 8% IPA with orange and caramel notes; Chelsea XXL



Saturday's List



Sunday's List

Stout on cask, smooth chocolaty notes throughout; Thomas Hooker Old Marley Bourbon Aged Barley Wine, 10% beauty with caramel and charred wood aroma & flavor; Southern Tier Java Stout, a big, chewy 13% super-coffee flavored ale; Sierra Nevada Bigfoot Barley Wine 2002, 9.6% smooth toffee notes, with balanced hop bitterness; Bluepoint Five Old Bastards Barley Wine on cask, a sensational blend of five different years that creates this 10% gem; Legacy Brewing Euphoria Belgian Strong Ale, a golden 11% ale with semi-dry, spicy flavors; Dogfish Head World Wide Stout, a huge 21% big-bodied stout; Allagash Curieux Triple Aged in Bourbon, a smooth 9.5% woody, spicy ale; Pizzeria Uno Scotch Ale, a malty 8% ale with clean, full-flavors; Pizza Port Revelations Belgian Golden Ale, a spicy, citrusy 8.5% refreshing Belgian ale with an explosion of flavor; North Coast Old Stock Ale, at 11.4%, this beer has lots of body and, alcohol with smooth lingering caramel notes.

Split Thy Brooklyn Skull VII was an impressive endeavor, that displayed a wide array of big beer offerings in its “inaugural” two-day format. This annual barley wine festival should be a must on all local beer-lovers’ event calendars. I have been lucky (and fortunate) to have been able to attend them each year.



*Crowd shot by Warren Becker. Photo of Jill Burnett by Glenn Burnett. For more of Glenn's STS photos, including the 100 year old beer, go to <http://www.cal-lzia.info/BBB/06%20Mugs%20STS/index.htm>*



## World Wide Wednesday

I attended Split Thy Skull on Saturday. I was happy, but not surprised, to see many of the Sunday beers still up on Wednesday. I sampled a few of the rare beers before the MBAS meeting, and had just enough. But I happened to be sitting next to Elizabeth, the rep. from Dogfish Head. She told me that they had the last keg of the World Wide Stout 2003 batch, and it was about to kick. It came in at a ridiculous 23% ABV. All the rest were brewed at 18%. I remembered it as being hot, but she twisted my arm, and I went for a glass. What a treat! For something that strong to be so smooth and delicious was amazing. But it went down too fast, and while Scott Vacarro was speaking. My notes are barely legible near the end, and I apologize for any inaccuracies!

Bottled World Wide Stout is available at New Beer in Manhattan and Thrifty in Brooklyn. It is usually released in November. According to Elizabeth, the 2003 23% has a brass cap. The 2004 has a neon cap with no date. The 2005 has a neon cap and the date on the neck. If you are lucky enough to find a bottle with a black marker obliterating unapproved words (Vim and Vigor?) on the label, it is the original 2001 batch.—Ed.

## On the Beer Train to Capitol City Brewing Company

BY B.R. ROLYA

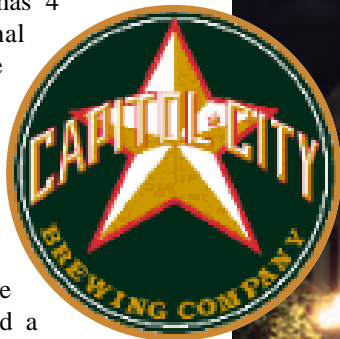
During a recent trip to Washington, DC, Bob and I had a chance to drop by the Capitol City Brewing Company near Union Station before getting the train back to New York. Capitol City now has 4 branches including the original location downtown near the Convention Center (with which I am most familiar) and 2 in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs (which I have never visited). The one near Union Station is located in an old post office which has a suitably grand facade for its Capitol Hill location and a soaring interior which almost dwarfs the serving tanks.

The bartender warned us that the beers would all be served warmer than usual due to a problem with the glycol for the serving tanks but the temperature was not unappealingly warm; rather, it was closer to cellar temperature.

The beers on tap that day were: Capitol Kölsch, Pale Rider Ale, Amber Waves Ale, Hefeweizen, Munich Lager, ESB, and Oatmeal Stout.

We were able to try 4 of the beers and while none of them stood out as exemplars of their style, all were tasty. When the Munich Lager arrived we first thought that we had been served the wrong beer due to its surprising copper color.

Expecting a Bavarian-style helles, the darkness was confusing. We confirmed that it was indeed the lager but found it more like a



*Their Capitol Hill location is housed in the historic Postal Square Building.*

malty märzen and lacking the crispness of a true Munich lager (this was one beer that perhaps suffered from the cask-like temperatures).

The grainy aroma in the nose led into some toasted biscuit flavor with hop bitterness in the finish; overall, an enjoyable beer. There was also a hint of smoke in the finish which was probably more readily apparent due to the warmer serving temperature.

The Kölsch was a traditional straw yellow color with a clean flavor. There was a bit of corn in the flavor and nose followed by a quite bitter finish but with a soft texture nonetheless. Not exactly a true kölsch but still tasty and very drinkable.

Their Hefeweizen (5.2%) had a light caramel color with a haziness bordering on murkiness. There were pleasant clove-like phenolics both in the nose and in the flavor and it had a good body.

The Oatmeal Stout (5%) came with a thick, creamy head and tasted sweet but with a nice contrasting roastiness. Aside from an odd soy

sauce-like characteristic, it was a tasty beer with a full mouthfeel and a long finish which ended in a medium roasty bitterness.

Overall, there were no beers which made us want to catch a later train so that we could drink another but all of them were definitely drinkable and worth another trip the next time we're waiting for a train.

Brooklyn Brewery will be opening their doors to American Homebrewers Association members on April 22, 2006. Steve Hindy and/or Garrett Oliver will be in attendance, there will be a tour, 8 beers on tap, a chance to get to know other brewers in your state and the opportunity to join the American Homebrewers Association or renew your current membership for a discounted rate. Furthermore, if you'd like to represent your club and recruit more members, we can set up a table for you! Here's a link to all the information about the upcoming AHA Rally at Brooklyn Brewery:

[http://www.beertown.org/email/aha/membership\\_drive/brooklyn.html](http://www.beertown.org/email/aha/membership_drive/brooklyn.html)

There is no admission fee, but you must be a member to attend. So join now and RSVP through the link. Kathryn Porter, AHA's Membership Coordinator, is looking for a few people to help out at the door, sign-up members, pass out name tags and hand out raffle tickets. If you or someone else you know would like to help, call her at (303) 447-0816 x 123. You'll get some cool AHA gear for your time.

## HOMEBREW EVENTS

**Brewers Unlimited Zany Zymurgists (BUZZ)** is proud to announce that the 13th annual BUZZ Off home brew competition will be held on Saturday, June 3rd at Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant in West Chester, PA. For another year we will be a qualifying event for the prestigious Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing (MCAB) as well as the Delaware Valley Homebrewer of the Year. All BJCP recognized styles (2004 guidelines) including meads and ciders are eligible for entry. We are also having a special bottle label category this year. For complete details and forms, please visit the BUZZ web site at <http://hbd.org/buzz>, Entries will be accepted between May 13th and May 26th. For drop off and mail in locations please refer to the BUZZ web site. Please, do not mail entries to Iron Hill. BJCP Judges and stewards will be needed. If you are interested please contact Christopher Clair or another committee member (see web site, or e-mail [buzzclub@verizon.net](mailto:buzzclub@verizon.net) ). All judges must be BJCP certified (any ranking).

## BEER EVENTS

**Wednesday April 12, 2006**, 7:30pm - MBAS monthly meeting, Mugs Ale House. The guest speaker will be Steve Bayconich, NYC Sales Manager for Blue Point Brewery.

**Saturday April 15, 2006**, 1:00pm - Split Thy Skull, Sugar Mom's Church Street Lounge, Philadelphia, PA.

**Wednesday April 19, 2006**, Stone Coast Brewery, Hop Devil Grill. The brewers at Stone Coast Brewery from Portland, Maine will be driving all the way down I-95 with a truckload of beers never before poured in the state of New York.

**Friday April 21- Sunday April 23, 2006**, 9th 'Cask Head' Cask Ale Festival, Brazen Head. At least 18 casks will pour over the weekend.

**Saturday April 29 and Sunday 30, 2006**, Tap NY Beer Festival, Hunter Mountain. See <http://www.tap-ny.com/>

**Wednesday May 3, - Saturday, May 6, 2006**, NERAX. The 10th annual New England cask ale extravaganza. See <http://www.nerax.org/>

**Tuesday May 16, 2006**, Triple Threat, Hop Devil Grill. Sixpoint vs. Smuttynose and Southern Tier in a blind tasting.

**June 2- 4 Glastonwick 2006**, Shoreham-by-Sea, England. The 11th annual cask ale and music festival, the beer range (50+ rare casks) is courtesy of your MBAS President! See <http://www.cask-ale.co.uk/>



## LOCAL BEER EVENT VENUES

**Barcade**, 388 Union Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. Tel. 718 302 6464. <http://www.barcadebrooklyn.com/> .

**Brazen Head**, 228 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn 11201. Tel. 718 488 0430. <http://www.brazenheadbrooklyn.com/> .

**Collins Bar**, 735 8th Avenue, Manhattan 10036. Tel. 212 541 4206. <http://collinsbar.com/> .

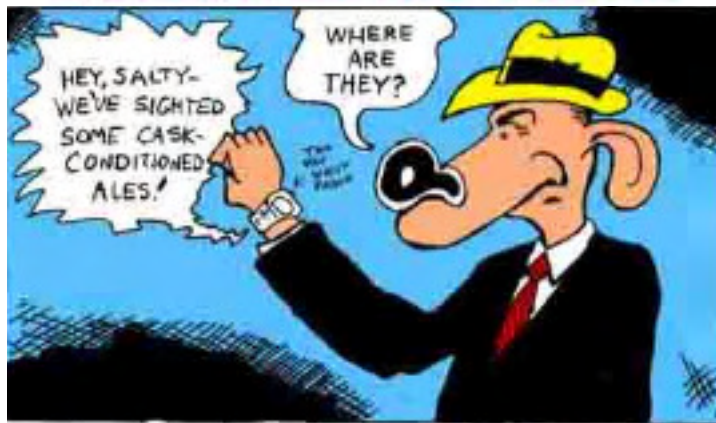
**David Copperfield's**, 1394 York Avenue, Manhattan 10021. Tel 212 734 6152. <http://www.davidcopperfields.com/> .

**Hop Devil Grill**, 129 St. Marks Place, Manhattan 10009. Tel. 212 533 4467. <http://www.hopdevil.com/> .

**Mugs Ale House**, 125 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. Tel. 718 384 8494. <http://www.mugsalehouse.com/> .

**Spuyten Duyvil**, 359 Metropolitan Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. Tel. 718 963 4140. <http://www.spuytenduyvilnyc.com/> .

# CHECK OUT YOUR BEER ALERT PAGE



<http://hbd.org/mbas/beer.html>