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Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

November 2008

November Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG is Friday Nov. 14th and will be hosted by **Chris Frey**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **English Brown Ale**.

The Wychwood Brewery

Wychwood Brewery & Wychwood Beers draw their inspiration and unique imagery from the legend of the ancient medieval Wychwood forest, which borders the brewery site in Witney in the heart of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. Wychwood has succeeded in establishing a unique fan base for the artwork and imagery of their beer labels as well as an established and growing following for their beers.

Wychwood Brewery's current range of beers include their legendary flagship ale, Hobgoblin in cask, bottle and can formats, an annual calendar of limited edition seasonal cask ales and a range of bottled premium ales.

AABG 2008

January	Randy deBeauclair	Dark Lager*
February	Matt & Rene Greff	Belgian & French Ale
March	Mike O'Brien	Porter*
April	Alex Pettit	Light Hybrid Beer
May	Stephen Krebs	Extract*
June	Mark Zadvinskis	Smoke
July	Dave Griese	Mead*
August	Jeff Renner	Light Lager
September	Joe Walters	Imperial Anything*
	Liberty St Brewing Co.	
October	Jason Henning	European Amber Lager
November	Chris Frey	English Brown Ale
December	Randy deBeauclair	Cider/Specialty

* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style

All meetings are the second Friday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m., except for the July meeting (BeerBQ) which is the second Saturday.

AABG Pico System

The guardian of the club's pico system is Mike O'Brien. Anyone wishing to use it should contact him at: 734.637.2532 or e-mail: mbrien315221MI@comcast.net

English Brown Ale

11A. Mild

11B. Southern English Brown Ale

11C. Northern English Brown Ale

Aroma: Light, sweet malt aroma with toffee, nutty and/or caramel notes. A light but appealing fresh hop aroma (UK varieties) may also be noticed. A light fruity ester aroma may be evident in these beers, but should not dominate. Very low to no diacetyl.

Appearance: Dark amber to reddish-brown color. Clear. Low to moderate off-white to light tan head.

Flavor: Gentle to moderate malt sweetness, with a nutty, lightly caramelly character and a medium-dry to dry finish. Malt may also have a toasted, biscuity, or toffee-like character. Medium to medium-low bitterness. Malt-hop balance is nearly even, with hop flavor low to none (UK varieties). Some fruity esters can be present; low diacetyl (especially butterscotch) is optional but acceptable.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium body. Medium to medium-high carbonation.

Overall Impression: Drier and more hop-oriented than southern English brown ale, with a nutty character rather than caramel.

History/Comments: English brown ales are generally split into sub-styles along geographic lines.

Ingredients: English mild ale or pale ale malt base with caramel malts. May also have small amounts darker malts (e.g., chocolate) to provide color and the nutty character. English hop varieties are most authentic. Moderate carbonate water.

Vital Statistics

OG . . .	1.040 – 1.052
FG . . .	1.008 – 1.013
IBUs	20 – 30
ABV	4.2 – 5.4%
SRM	12 – 22

Commercial Examples: Newcastle Brown Ale, Samuel Smith's Nut Brown Ale, Riggwelter Yorkshire Ale, Wychwood Hobgoblin, Tröegs Rugged Trail Ale, Alesmith Nautical Nut Brown Ale, Avery Ellie's Brown Ale, Goose Island Nut Brown Ale, Samuel Adams Brown Ale.

History

There have been brown beers around for hundreds of years. The term "Brown Ale" was first used commercially at the beginning of the twentieth century in England as a bottled beer since the diffusion of bottles was increasing. North American brown ales trace their heritage to American home brewing adaptations of certain northern English beers.

Description

English brown ales range from beers such as Manns Original Brown Ale, which is quite sweet and low in alcohol, to North Eastern brown ale such as Newcastle Brown Ale, Double Maxim and Samuel Smith's Nut Brown Ale.

They range from deep amber to brown in colour. Caramel and chocolate flavours are evident, due to the use of roasted malt. Brown ales from northeastern England tend to be strong and malty, often nutty, while those from southern England are usually darker, sweeter and lower in alcohol. North American brown ales are usually drier than their English counterparts, with a slight citrus accent and an aroma, bitterness, and medium body due to American varieties of hops. Fruitiness from esters are subdued. When chilled to cold temperatures, some haziness may be noticed.

North American commercial examples include Pete's Wicked Ale, Smuttynose Old Brown Dog Ale, Abita Turbo Dog, Duck-Rabbit Brown Ale, Sam Adams Brown Ale, Moose Drool, and Brooklyn Brown Ale. 🍷

Sweet Seduction – English Brown Ale, Mild Ale and ESB

The "Pub" as we know it today, has become the heart of the English countryside, a reflection of casual attitude and fine breeding throughout the villages, towns and cities of Great Britain. Its rich history overflows with tales of invading armies, controlling royalty, religious rites, and hospitable alewives, while creating a tradition of fine brews known as **English Brown Ales, Bitters and Mild Ales**.

Brown continued on next page...

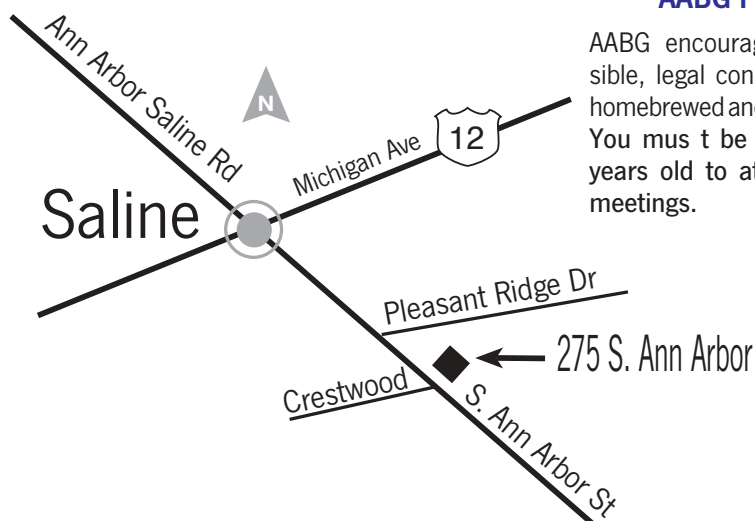
When and Where

Friday, Nov. 14, 7:30pm

Chris Frey
275 S. Ann Arbor St.
Saline, Michigan
734.944.0469

Directions

Chris's house is at the intersection of Crestwood and Ann Arbor Street on the east side. It is a light color with a square cupola. There is no parking on Ann Arbor but plenty on Crestwood.



AABG Policy

AABG encourages responsible, legal consumption of homebrewed and craft beers. You must be at least 21 years old to attend AABG meetings.

Guide for New Members

Bring 1 to 2 bottles per batch of your beer that you'd like to share, or an interesting commercial beer. Bring tasty munchies to cleanse the palate and sop up the alcohol and a small sampling glass to keep your host from having to provide one. Feel free to share and sample with other members and make and accept constructive comments. Please use good judgment while imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated.

...Brown continued

The first pubs in England were casual enclaves set up by the Romans over two thousand years ago. These "tabernae" displayed wine leaves around the perimeter of their doors, a primitive style of advertising that implied the serving of victuals, wine and local ale. As invaders came and went throughout the next centuries, the brewing of ale became a mastery of skill, due to the fondness for drinking exhibited by clansmen. These ales were brewed with malted barley, water and yeast, producing a sweet, yet powerful beverage that was prone to souring quickly. As brewers became more skilled, they developed brews with more "staying power" and passed these secrets on to their tightly-knit family units.

Traditionally, these ales were consumed at the house of the brewer – thus these homes became known as "alehouses" – and their chief brewers were "alewives." These alewives had become so successful, that by the 7th century, Ethelbert, King of Kent, enacted laws to restrict the number of ale sellers within the region.

During the 10th century, regulations were placed on the size of the drinking vessel itself. Since drinking vessels were shared, the new law required that a "measure" of ale would be marked by a peg on the vessel. According to the law, the drinker was required to drink to the peg

–then, pass it on. Occasionally, the drinker would imbibe beyond his measure, taking the next drinker "down a peg or two."

As Christianity grew throughout the region, rituals involving drinking (similar to the pagan rituals they replaced) were adopted by the churches. Beer was brewed for church festivals or to raise money to fund Church projects. These brews became known as "scot ales." As the levies on these ales increased with the ambitions of the church, a portion of the populace brewed in secret to divert these funds from the church treasury, thus the term "scot free" was developed.

As population and industry increased in England, the water supply became increasingly polluted, and ales became the only safe beverage. Alehouses captured a more permanent role – evolving into inns, taverns, and coach houses, each with a more specialized role in service to the public. The pubs remain as the hub of English society, providing centers for the gathering of associates, negotiating deals, celebrating successes, playing games, or relaxing in quiet ambience.

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Nut Brown Ale

Often called "mild" if it is on draft, brown ale is a walnut-colored specialty of the North of England. A festive-occasion beer, brown ale is one of the oldest English brewing styles, mentioned in literature in the 16th century. Beers brewed at the old brewery have a round, nutty flavor because of the Yorkshire square system of fermentation.

Walnut-like color and palate of hazelnuts. Wonderful balance of roasted crystal malt and aromatic hops. Long clean finish.

Stilton cheese, grouse and roasted game hen, barbecued duck, pepper steak; spicy food, paella, stir-fry, teriyaki, Thai food, Chinese food, creamy chicken and pineapple curry. Serve at 55 degrees.

Gold Medal and "Top-Rated English Brown Ale" –World Beer Championships, 2004

Twelve 18.7-ounce "Victorian Pint" bottles. Twenty-four 12 ounce bottles.



What might you expect in an English-style Ale?

Mild Ale is considered the traditional style of brew. This style is characterized by darker tones, with a sweet malty palate and subtle hoppiness. These are “session beers,” providing full flavor and low alcohol content (3.5% ABV).

Bitters are the English specialty. It is important to note that in England, “Bitters” refers to a trademarked name and style, while in the United States, it is a style of beer. The name implies that this is “standard ale” or “session beer.” Hues glow from deep gold to shining copper, and are light to medium-bodied with a fruitiness that is accented by the seductive aroma of hops. It is not particularly bitter, as the name might imply. Although **English ESB** or **Extra-Special Bitter** is full-bodied, it is not as assertive as the **American ESBs** that are brewed using the highest quality domestic hops.

English-Style Brown Ale is more closely defined by the region from which it springs. In Northern England, particularly in Tadcaster and Newcastle, these ales are medium bodied with hues of mahogany-brown. They are accented by nuttiness and malt, with a supple fruitiness, almost devoid of bitterness. Highly drinkable, they max out at about 5% ABV. The Southern English Brown Ales are darker in color, yet sweeter on the palate. Despite their dark color, they are lighter in style than the Northern versions.

Milds

Young’s Dirty Dick’s Ale – Young & Co.’s Brewery PLC, Wandsworth, London, U.K. – Coppery amber in hue with small tan head, this **Mild** is steeped in aromas of bready caramel with hints of toffee and fruit. Flavors reflect a light malt profile, with a symphony of fruit and roasty notes. Finish is bready, touched with yeast, but dry and enticing.

Victory Dark Mild – Victory Brewing Company, Downingtown, PA, USA – A deep mahogany, like an exquisite, well-stained import, with soft, even head. Light bodied, with delicate tones of toffee, earthiness, and mild lemon hops. You can detect the Belgian roots in this **Mild**, complete with sweet toffee, roasted chocolate malt, a kiss of hops and select toastiness at the finish. A superb offering!

Harbor Lighthouse Ale – Bar Harbor Brewing Company, Bar Harbor, Maine, USA – Rich coppery brown hue with creamy, tawny head, touched with a light, malt aroma. Flavors dance

in the light sweetness of malt and bread, with a grain husk aftertaste. Incredibly addicting velvet mouthfeel adds to the high drinkability.

English Bitters

Fuller’s ESB – Fuller Smith & Turner PLC, Chiswick, London, U.K. – Amber with tangerine highlights and good head that thins out, leaving delicate wisps of lace. Rich malt with mild graininess and a distinct, hop bitterness. This work of art is a smooth and mellow blend of caramel and toffee sweetness, but on the drier edge. Very drinkable!

Brutal Bitter – Rogue Ales Brewery, Newport, Oregon, USA – Color is of light amber, with reflective hints of orange sunset and blondes on the beach. Aroma is both sugary sweet and hoppy, with hints of pine. Palate is characterized by a pleasant wash of hop bitterness, with a hint of sweetness in the background. Smooth mouthfeel adds to the aura!

Great Lakes York Street Bitter – Great Lakes Brewing Company, Cleveland, Ohio, USA – Crystal lights of copper with a frothy, white head, this ESB fills the nose with fruit and grassiness. The palate speaks of a pale malt character with a crisp, refreshing balance of citrus, adding a clean bitterness to the end.

Old Marcus – Middle Ages Brewing Company Ltd., Syracuse, New York, USA – Hues of iridescent amber are painted with coppery fire around the edges, topped with a pillowy, white head. Fruit esters of grape are greeted with floral presence, creating a beautiful balance between hop bitterness and malt sweetness. A light alcohol backbone enhances the dry raisin character, making for a highly drinkable bitter.

English Brown Ales

Newcastle Brown Ale – Newcastle Breweries Ltd., Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K. – rich brown-walnut coloring with slight head that dissipates quickly. Roasted barley and malt builds itself around a nutty character and light sweetness. Background flavors of plum and grain wrap themselves within the medium-bodied profile, and end with a dry finish.

Naughty Goose – Goose Island, Chicago, Illinois, USA – Lovely brown with red and purple highlights encircle the caramel sweet aroma with citrus hops. A flavor profile of caramel, toast and chocolate are perfectly balanced by an earthy, spritzy, citric hoppiness within its smooth, medium body.

Samuel Smith’s Nut Brown Ale – Samuel Smith Old Brewery, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, U.K. – Emanates a rich, chestnut glow of mahogany, with little to no head. A nutty aroma immediately fills the nose with anticipation, blended with a slight graininess. Flavors of caramel nuttiness and molasses seduce you into spending a serious session with this best buddy! You may wish to keep a notebook on your tastings as you explore the smooth characteristics and elegant bodies in these English wonders!

–The Writer

Carolyn Smagalski is an enthusiastic personality with a penchant for the new and the bold. She is an alchemist extraordinaire, pairing over 30 years of cooking experience with delicate blends of magical craft beer. As “The Beer Fox,” she presents to you the world of flavorful craft beer, zesty beer cuisine, grand brewing establishments and the landscapes that inspire great brewmasters. 🍷

11B. Southern English Brown

Flavor: Deep, caramel- or toffee-like malty sweetness on the palate and lasting into the finish. Hints of biscuit and coffee are common. May have a moderate dark fruit complexity. Low hop bitterness. Hop flavor is low to non-existent. Little or no perceivable roasty or bitter black malt flavor. Moderately sweet finish with a smooth, malty aftertaste. Low to no diacetyl.

Overall Impression: A luscious, malt-oriented brown ale, with a caramel, dark fruit complexity of malt flavor. May seem somewhat like a smaller version of a sweet stout or a sweet version of a dark mild.

Comments: Increasingly rare; Mann’s has over 90% market share in Britain. Some consider it a bottled version of dark mild, but this style is sweeter than virtually all modern examples of mild.

Vital Statistics

OG . . .	1.033 – 1.042
FG . . .	1.011 – 1.014
IBUs	12 – 20
ABV	2.8 – 4.1%
SRM	19 – 35

Commercial Examples: Mann’s Brown Ale (bottled, but not available in the US), Harvey’s Nut Brown Ale, Woodeforde’s Norfolk Nog.

Newcastle Brown

Newcastle Brown Ale is a brand of dark brown ale. It has been brewed in Tyne & Wear, England, since April 1927 by Newcastle Breweries (now Newcastle Federation Breweries), a division of Heineken International.

In August 2005, Scottish and Newcastle closed the Tyne Brewery. The last Brown Ale was brewed at Tyne in April; production was moved across the river to the Federation Brewery in Dunston, Gateshead, where it is brewed by Newcastle Federation Breweries Ltd.

Newcastle Brown Ale had originally been granted Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) status by the EU. Since Scottish and Newcastle moved production outside of the city its PGI has been removed.

In Newcastle, the beer is often called 'Dog' (or simply 'Broom'). The 'Dog' name comes from the euphemism "I'm going to walk the dog" or "I'm going to see a man about a dog" - meaning "I'm going to the pub" - and was further popularised by a 1980s advertising campaign. It is often referred to as "Newkie Brown," though this name is frowned upon in Newcastle itself. *[citation needed]*

Newcastle Brown Ale is traditionally sold in England by the pint (20 fl oz, 568 ml) and more recently in 500 ml (17.6 fl oz, 0.88 pint) bottles. Typically the ale is consumed from a 12 fl oz 'Wellington' glass. This allows the drinker to regularly top-up the beer and thereby maintain a frothy 'head'. In the United States, it is sold in standard 12 fl oz (355 ml) bottles. It is also available in 550ml bottles.

Newcastle Brown Ale was originally created by Colonel J. Porter in 1925. The recipe, however, was adapted over a period of three years to create the flavour that is distinct to the beer today. When first exhibited, Newcastle Brown Ale swept the board at the prestigious 1928 International Brewery Awards. The gold medals from these awards are still featured on the label.

The blue star logo was introduced to the Newcastle Brown Ale bottle in 1928, the year after the beer was launched. The five points of the star represent the five founding breweries of Newcastle. One of these, John Barras, is now commemorated in the pub chain of the same name.



In The Who's 1975 film adaptation of the album Tommy, drummer Keith Moon (as Uncle Ernie) is drinking a pint of Newcastle Brown Ale in the "Fiddle About" scene. Several scenes prior, actor Oliver Reed (as Frank Hobbs) is also drinking Newcastle in the "Christmas" scene.

In 2000, the beer was renamed "Newcastle Brown" with the "Ale" being removed from the front label. This change, only in the UK, was due to market research claiming that the term "ale" was outdated and costing the company sales in the youth drinking markets. The older name was reinstated with no fanfare in 2004, when it was realised that the change had made no difference to sales.

In 2006, a special "Shearer" edition with a black and white label was made in honour of the retiring Newcastle United striker Alan Shearer.

In 2007, a special Maximo Park edition with a special label designed by the band was made to celebrate the home coming show at Newcastle Metro Radio Arena on 15 December. Also in 2007, a special 80th anniversary themed bottle was distributed. 🍷



Hobgoblin folklore

Hobgoblins in legends are known to be large versions of their cousins the goblins. Versions of the legend can be found in Britain, Spain and in France.

By tradition, the best times for seeing Hobgoblins and other fairy creatures and forest dwellers are twilight and midnight when the moon is full, and some of the best days are Halloween (October 31st), May Day (May 1st), Midsummer Day (June 24th), Lady Day (March 25th) and Christmas Day (December 25th).

Guardian "fairies" or Hobgoblins

Brownies and other Hobgoblins are sometimes known as "guardian" fairies. They are usually depicted in legend and folklore along the lines of a small, solitary, shaggy-haired domestic spirits. They are said to do housework and odd jobs about the home. They will become attached to particular families or places. Though naturally helpful, these Hobgoblins are thought to become malicious if they are offended.

In Folklore there are also references to Hogboons, a guardian spirit of the farms. Shadowy figures who lived in nearly every big mound and protected domestic animals from the Trows (a sort of troll/ bogeyman type figure), and would also mend household articles left out for repair. As a reward people would pour ale and milk on mounds where he lived.

Hobgoblins and Brownies were also guardians of breweries, who in days gone by would offer them copious amounts of beer before starting to brew. In exchange the Hobgoblin would ensure that the ale produced had a bouquet and bitterness second to none.

Jack O'Lantern

There is a widespread belief in England in a highly dangerous fairy or Hobgoblin known by many names including Jack O'Lantern, Will O' The Wisp, Joan O' The Wild and Ignis Fatuus, meaning foolish folklore. This legend is said to come from the sight of small flames flickering over marshy ground, caused by self-igniting gases from decaying plants. In legend, Jack O'Lantern took great delight in making travellers lose their way, often at night. The Hobgoblin would take on the disguise of a beautiful young girl or a crock of gold, and lead the traveller floundering into a bog or ditch.

Continuing the Folklore Tradition

The Hobgoblin has become a much-beloved figure in literature thanks to Rudyard Kipling's Puck, who was depicted as immune to many of the traditional fairy weaknesses. More recently Dobby the House-Elf from J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter novels takes his name from the hobgoblin-related legends and certainly has some of the features of legendary hobs and hobgoblins. J.R.R. Tolkien's most famous creations, The Hobbits, are also distant cousins of the Hobgoblin. 🍷