



# The Herald Tribune



Volume # 24 Issue # 7

Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

July 2010

## July Meeting BeerBQ

This month's meeting of the AABG BeerBQ is Saturday July 10th. It will be hosted by **Roger Burns**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **Mead**.

## Mead Etymology

The English word mead derives from the Old English *medu*, from Proto-Germanic *meduz*. Slavic *med/miod*, which means both "honey" and "mead", (Slovak, Serbian, Macedonian, Croatian: *med* vs. *medovina*, Polish 'miód' pronounce [mju:t] - honey, mead) and Baltic *midus*, which means "mead", also derive from the same Proto-Indo-European root (cf. Welsh *medd*, Old Irish *mid*, and Sanskrit *madhu*).

## AABG 2010

January .....	Randy deBeauclair .....	BBBW
February ....	Alex and Claudia Pettit .....	English Brown Ales*
March .....	Jack Carr. ....	American Ales*
April .....	Brad Sancho OG Brewing .....	Extract Beers*
May .....	Stephen Krebs .....	Cider/Specialty
June .....	Mark Zadvinskis .....	Wheat
July .....	Roger Burns .....	Mead*
August .....	Patti Smith Jeff Bletch .....	Sour Ale*
September .....	Jeff Renner .....	Oktoberfest
October .....	.....	Strong Ale
November .....	Chris Frey .....	Porter/Stout
December .....	Rolf Wucherer .....	I.P.A.

\* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style

All meeting 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 club's pico system is available to members for brewing. If you wish to borrow it contact Mike O'Brien at:

734.637.2532

picobrew@comcast.net

Access the AABG Club System forum at:

<http://tinyurl.com/29h7yxc>

## 24A. Dry Mead

**Aroma:** Honey aroma may be subtle, although not always identifiable. Sweetness or significant honey aromatics should not be expected. If a honey variety is declared, the variety should be distinctive (if noticeable). Different types of honey have different intensities and characters. Standard description applies for remainder of characteristics.

**Appearance:** Standard description applies.

**Flavor:** Subtle (if any) honey character, and may feature subtle to noticeable varietal character if a varietal honey is declared (different varieties have different intensities). No to minimal residual sweetness with a dry finish. Sulfury, harsh or yeasty fermentation characteristics are undesirable. Standard description applies for remainder of characteristics.

**Mouthfeel:** Standard description applies, although the body is generally light to medium. Note that stronger meads will have a fuller body. Sensations of body should not be accompanied by noticeable residual sweetness.

**Overall Impression:** Similar in balance, body, finish and flavor intensity to a dry white wine, with a pleasant mixture of subtle honey character, soft fruity esters, and clean alcohol. Complexity, harmony, and balance of sensory elements are most desirable, with no inconsistencies in color, aroma, flavor or aftertaste. The proper balance of sweetness, acidity, alcohol and honey character is the essential final measure of any mead.

**Ingredients:** Standard description applies. Traditional Meads feature the character of a blended honey or a blend of honeys. Varietal meads feature the distinctive character of certain honeys. "Show meads" feature no additives, but this distinction is usually not obvious to judges.

**Comments:** See standard description for entrance requirements. *Entrants MUST specify carbonation level and strength.*

*Sweetness is assumed to be DRY in this category. Entrants MAY specify honey varieties.*

**Commercial Examples:** White Winter Dry Mead, Sky River Dry Mead, Intermiel Bouquet Printanier

## Style List

24. Traditional Mead

24A. Dry Mead

24B. Semi-sweet Mead

24C. Sweet Mead

25. Melomel - Fruit Mead

25A. Cyser

25B. Pyment

25C. Other Fruit Melomel

26. Other Mead

26A. Metheglin

26B. Braggot

26C. Open Category Mead

## Camelot Mead

**Brand:** Oliver

**Size:** 750 ml

**Price:** \$7.50/Bottle

The wine that put us on the map! We have been making Camelot Mead since 1972, and have learned all the tricks to make a rich flavorful classic mead. Give it a taste!

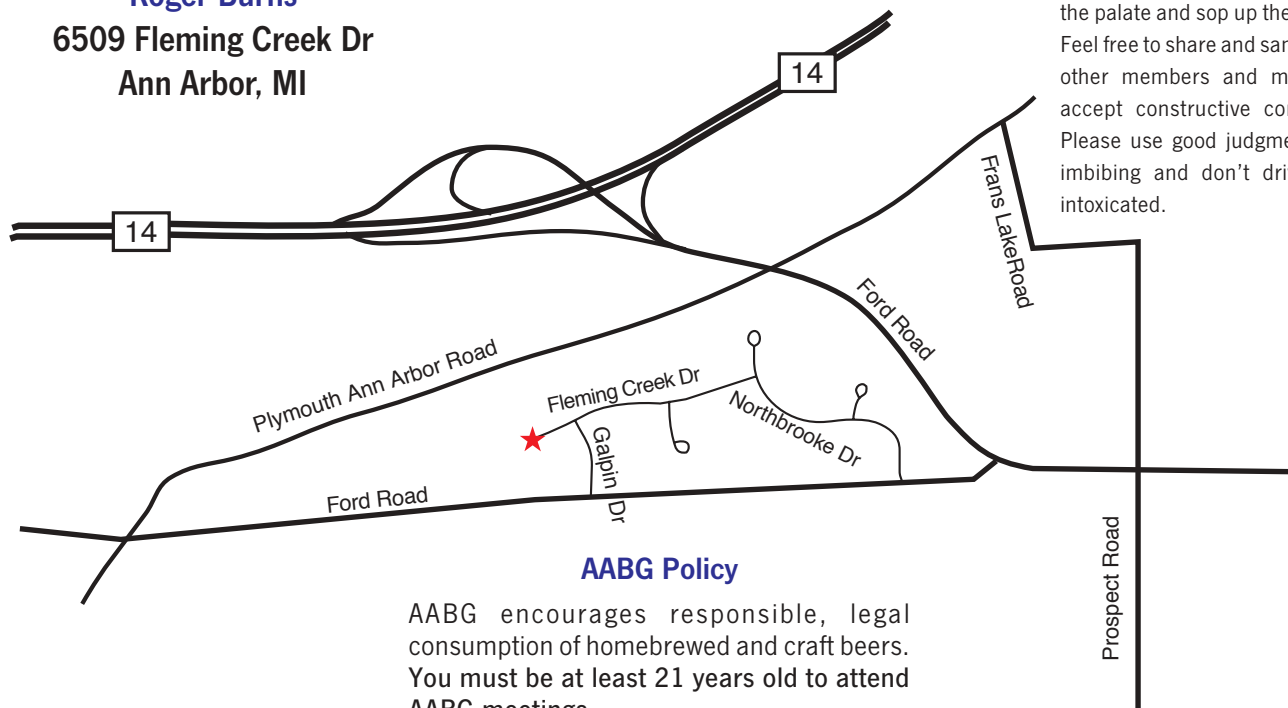
## About This Wine

Making mead is tough: the bee stings, the jousting, the suits of armor. But for you, the loyal consumer of this royal beverage, it is worth the pain and suffering to deliver a mead of such great smoothness and classic honey flavor. So the next time you set out to discover new continents or to plunder a neighboring country, provision yourself with plenty of Camelot Mead.



## WHEN AND WHERE

**Saturday, July 10, 1 p.m.**  
**Roger Burns**  
**6509 Fleming Creek Dr**  
**Ann Arbor, MI**



## Guide for New Members

Bring 1–2 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. 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.

## Mead Background

Polish mead produced in Lublin Mead was once very popular in Northern Europe, often produced by monks in monasteries in areas where grapes could not be grown. It faded in popularity, however, once wine imports became economical. Especially partial to it were the Slavs. In Polish it is called miód pitny (pronounced [mjut pi:tni]), meaning "drinkable honey". Mead was a favored drink among the Polish-Lithuanian szlachta (nobility). During the Crusades, Polish Prince Leszek I the White explained to the Pope that Polish knights could not participate in the Crusades because there was no mead in Palestine.

In Norse mythology, mead was the favorite drink of the Norse gods and heroes, e.g. in Valhalla, and the mead of the giant (Jotun) Suttung, made from the blood of Kvasir, was the source of wisdom and poetry. The nectar and ambrosia of the Greek gods are often thought of as draughts of fermented honey.

In Russia, mead remained popular as medovukha and sbiten long after its popularity declined in the West. Sbiten is often

mentioned in the works by 19th-century Russian writers, including Gogol, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy. Some beer producers attempt to revive sbiten' as a mass-produced drink in Russia.

In Finland, a sweet mead called Sima (cognate with zymurgy), is still an essential seasonal brew connected with the Finnish Vappu (May Day) festival. It is usually spiced by adding both the pulp and rind of a lemon. During secondary fermentation raisins are added to control the amount of sugars and to act as an indicator of readiness for consumption — they will rise to the top of the bottle when the drink is ready.

Ethiopian mead is called tej and is usually home-made. It is flavored with the powdered leaves and bark of gesho, a hops-like bittering agent which is a species of buckthorn. A sweeter, less-alcoholic version called berz, aged for a shorter time, is also made. The traditional vessel for drinking tej is a rounded vase-shaped container called a berele.

Evidence exists that mead was also made in India, Southeast Asia, China, Japan, and Central Africa. Mead is also mentioned in

many old north Anglo-Saxon stories, including in the epic poem Beowulf, and in early Welsh poetry such as Y Gododdin.

Mead is still manufactured in Britain, France, and various other locations, though the traditional status of most such manufacture is dubious. One of the most famous producers is the Holy Island of Lindisfarne in North East England, where mead has been produced since Anglo-Saxon times.

### Varieties of mead

Mead can have a wide range of flavors, depending on the source of the honey, additives called "adjuncts" or "gruit" (including fruit and spices), yeast employed during fermentation, and aging procedure. Mead can be difficult to find commercially, though some producers have been successful marketing it. Consumers must bear in mind that some producers have marketed white wine with added honey as mead, often spelling it "meade." Blended varieties of mead can be known by either style represented. For instance, a mead made with cinnamon and apples can be referred to as a cinnamon cyser or as an apple metheglin.

*Background continued on next page...*

... *Background continued*

Some meads retain some measure of the sweetness of the original honey, and some can even be considered as dessert wines. Drier meads are also available, and some producers offer sparkling meads, which (like champagne) can make for a delightful celebratory toast. There are a number of faux-meads, which are actually cheap wines with large amounts of honey added, to produce a cloyingly sweet liqueur. It has been said that "a mead that tastes of honey is as good as a wine that still tastes of grape".

Historically, meads would have been fermented by wild yeasts and bacteria residing on the skins of the fruit or within the honey itself. Wild yeasts generally provide inconsistent results, and in modern times various brewing interests have isolated the strains now in use. Certain strains have gradually become associated with certain styles of mead. Mostly, these are strains that are also used in beer or wine production. Several commercial labs, such as White Labs, WYeast, Vierka, and others have gone so far as to develop strains specifically for mead.

Mead can also be distilled to a brandy or liqueur strength. Krupnik is a sweet Polish liqueur made through just such a process.

Different types of mead include, but are not limited to:

**Braggot** - Braggot (also called bracket or brackett) marks the invention of Ale. Originally brewed with honey and hops, later with honey and malt - with or without hops added.

**Black mead** - A name sometimes given to the blend of honey and black currants.

**Cyser** - Cyser is a blend of honey and apple juice fermented together.

**Great mead** - Any mead that is intended to be aged several years, like vintage wine. The designation is meant to distinguish this type of mead from "short mead"

**Hydromel** - Hydromel literally means "water-honey" in Greek. It is also the French name for mead. (Compare with the Spanish hidromiel and aquamiel, Italian idromele and Portuguese hidromel). It is also used as a name for a very light or low-alcohol mead.

**Melomel** - Melomel is made from honey and any fruit. Depending on the fruit-base used, certain melomels may also be known by more specific names.

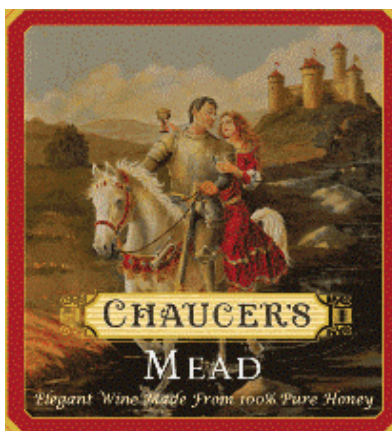


**Metheglin** - Metheglin starts with traditional mead but has herbs and spices added. Some of the most common metheglins are ginger, tea, orange peel, coriander, cinnamon, cloves, or vanilla. Its name indicates that many metheglins were originally employed as folk medicines. (Though the Welsh word for honey is medd, the word "metheglin" actually derives from meddeglyn, a compound word comprised of meddyg, "healing" + llyn, "liquor".)

**Morat** - Morat blends honey and mulberries.

**Omphacomele** - A medieval mead recipe that blends honey with verjuice; could therefore be considered a variety of pyment.

**Oxymel** - Another historical mead recipe, blending honey with wine vinegar.



**Perry** - Perry-mead blends honey with milled, ripe pears. (See entry for the modern drink Babycham.)

**Pyment** - Pyment blends honey and red or white grapes. Pyment made with white grape juice is sometimes called "white mead."

**Rhodomel** - Rhodomel is made from honey, rose hips, petals, or rose attar, and water.

**Sack mead** - This refers to mead that is made with more copious amounts of honey than usual. The finished product retains an extremely high specific gravity and elevated levels of sweetness. It derives its name from the fortified dessert wine Sherry (which is sometimes sweetened after fermentation, and in England once bore the nickname of "sack".)

**Short mead** - Also called "quick mead". A type of mead recipe that is meant to age quickly, for immediate consumption. Because of the techniques used in its creation, short mead shares some qualities found in cider (or even light ale): primarily that it is effervescent, and often has a cidery taste.

**Show mead** - A term which has come to mean "plain" mead; that which has honey and water as a base, with no fruits, spices or extra flavorings. (Since honey alone does not provide enough nourishment for the yeast to carry on its life-cycle, a mead that is devoid of fruit, etc. will require a special yeast nutrient and other enzymes to produce an acceptable finished product.)

**Tej** - Tej is an Ethiopian mead, fermented with wild yeasts (and bacteria), and with the addition of gesho. Recipes vary from family to family, with some recipes leaning towards braggot with the inclusion of grains.

**Mulsum** - Mulsum is not a true mead, but is unfermented honey blended with a high-alcohol wine.

**Medovina** - Macedonian (of the Republic of Macedonia) for mead. Unfortunately, very few people still brew this for their own consumption. It is not available commercially.

**Medovukha** - Eastern Slavic variant, very alcoholic. In principle, a vodka with distilled honey addition.

**Pótorak** - A Polish mead, made using two units of honey for each unit of water

**Dwójniak** - A Polish mead, made using equal amounts of water and honey

**Trójniak** - A Polish mead, made using two units of water for each unit of honey

**Czwórniak** - A Polish mead, made using three units of water for each unit of honey

**Gverc or Medovina** - Croatian mead prepared in Samobor and many other places. Word "gverc" or "gvrnc" is from German "Gewürze" and it refers to different spices added to mead.