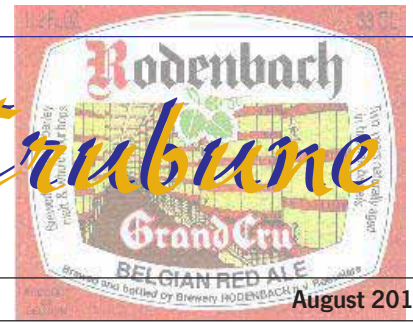




# The Herald Tribune



Volume # 24 Issue #8

Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

August 2010

## August Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG Friday August 13th. It will be hosted by **Patti Smith and Jeff Bletch**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **Sour Ales**.

## 17. Sour Ales

- 17A. Berliner Weisse
- 17B. Flanders Red Ale
- 17C. Flanders Brown Ale/Oud Bruin
- 17D. Straight (Unblended) Lambic
- 17E. Gueuze
- 17F. Fruit Lambic

## 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](mailto:picobrew@comcast.net)

Access the AABG Club System forum at:

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

## 17B. Flanders Red Ale

**Aroma:** Complex fruitiness with complementary malt. Fruitiness is high, and reminiscent of black cherries, oranges, plums or red currants. There is often some vanilla and/or chocolate notes. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. The sour, acidic aroma ranges from complementary to intense. No hop aroma. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary aroma.

**Appearance:** Deep red, burgundy to reddish-brown in color. Good clarity. White to very pale tan head. Average to good head retention.

**Flavor:** Intense fruitiness commonly includes plum, orange, black cherry or red currant flavors. A mild vanilla and/or chocolate character is often present. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. Sour, acidic character ranges from complementary to intense. Malty flavors range from complementary to prominent. Generally as the sour character increases, the sweet character blends to more of a background flavor (and vice versa). No hop flavor. Restrained hop bitterness. An acidic, tannic bitterness is often present in low to moderate amounts, and adds an aged red wine-like character with a long, dry finish. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary flavor.



**Mouthfeel:** Medium bodied. Low to medium carbonation. Low to medium astringency, like a well-aged red wine, often with a prickly acidity. Deceivingly light and crisp on the palate although a somewhat sweet finish is not uncommon.

**Overall Impression:** A complex, sour, red wine-like Belgian-style ale.

**History:** The indigenous beer of West Flanders, typified by the products of the Rodenbach brewery, established in 1820 in West Flanders but reflective of earlier brewing traditions. The beer is aged for up to two years, often in huge oaken barrels which contain the resident bacteria necessary to sour the beer. It was once common in Belgium and England to blend old beer with young to balance the sourness and acidity found in aged beer. While blending of batches for consistency is now common among larger breweries, this type of blending is a fading art.

**Comments:** Long aging and blending of young and well-aged beer often occurs, adding to the smoothness and complexity, though the aged product is sometimes released as a connoisseur's beer. Known as the Burgundy of Belgium, it is more wine-like than any other beer style. The reddish color is a product of the malt although an extended, less-than-rolling portion of the boil may help add an attractive Burgundy hue. Aging will also darken the beer. The Flanders red is more acetic and the fruity flavors more reminiscent of a red wine than an Oud Bruin. Can have an apparent attenuation of up to 98%.

**Ingredients:** A base of Vienna and/or Munich malts, light to medium cara-malts, and a small amount of Special B are used with up to 20% maize. Low alpha acid continental hops are commonly used (avoid high alpha or distinctive American hops). *Saccharomyces*, *Lactobacillus* and *Brettanomyces* (and *acetobacter*) contribute to the fermentation and eventual flavor.

### Vital Statistics:

OG: ..	1.048 - 1.057
FG: ..	1.002 - 1.012
IBUs: .....	10 - 25
ABV: ....	4.6 - 6.5%
SRM: .....	10 - 16

**Commercial Examples:** Rodenbach Klassiek, Rodenbach Grand Cru, Bellegems Bruin, Duchesse de Bourgogne, New Belgium La Folie, Petrus Oud Bruin, Southampton Flanders Red Ale, Verhaege Vichtenaar, Monk's Cafe Flanders Red Ale, New Glarus Enigma, Panil Barriquee, Mestreechs Aajt.

## WHEN AND WHERE

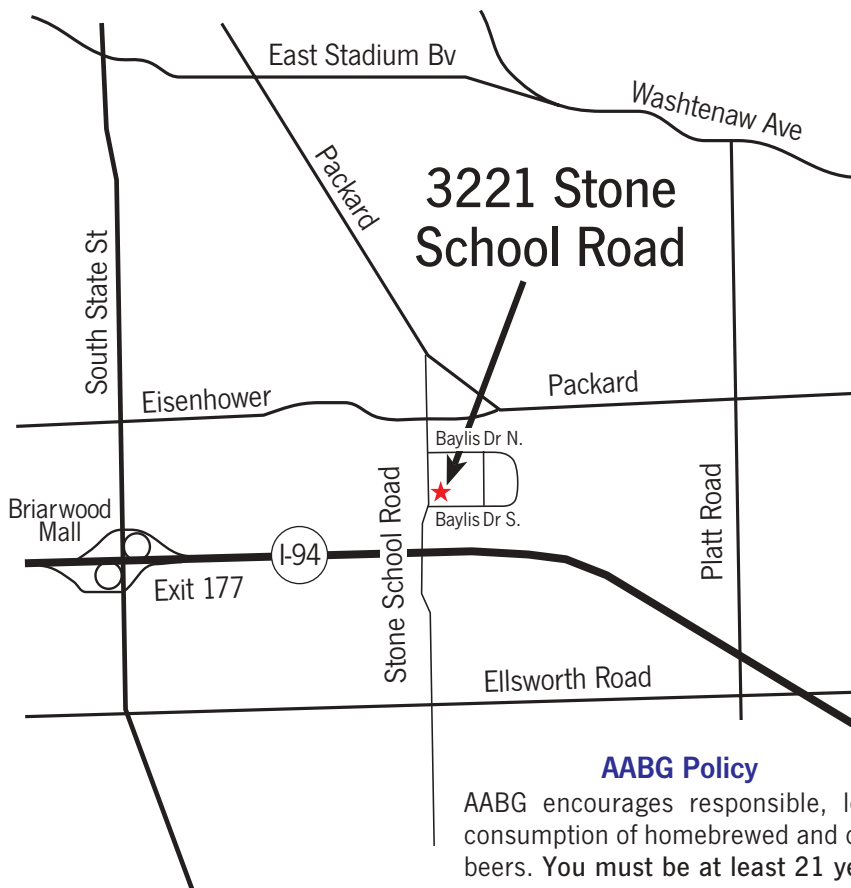
**Friday August 13, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Patti Smith and Jeff Bletch**  
**3221 Stone School Road**  
**Ann Arbor, MI 48108**  
**649.4647**

### Directions

Patti and Jeff live on Stone School between two Baylis streets, which is one big loop. So you pass one Baylis, but if you pass a second Baylis, you've gone too far. Their house has front yard garden beds and a windsock and a big driveway, but additional parking can be found on the Baylis.

### 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.



### AABG Policy

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

## Flanders Red Ae

Flanders red ale is a style of sour ale usually brewed in Belgium. Although sharing a common ancestor with English porters of the 17th century[1], the Flanders red ale has evolved along a different track: the beer is often fermented with organisms other than *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *Lactobacillus* being common to produce a sour character attributable to lactic acid; long periods of aging are employed, a year or more, often in oaken barrels, to impart an acetic acid character to the beer; special red malt is used to give the beer its unique color; and often the matured beer is blended with a younger batch before bottling to balance and round the character.

The beer appears deep red to brown in color, and should remain fairly clear in a glass. The aroma is a complex mixture of fruits: citrus, cherries, plum, raisin as well as some vanilla or chocolate undertones. The sourness of the beer can also be apparent in the aroma.



Flanders reds have a strong fruit flavor similar to the aroma, but more intense. Plum, prune, raisin and black cherry are the most common flavors, followed by orange and some spiciness. All Flanders red ales have an obvious sour or acidic taste, but this characteristic can range from moderate to strong. There is no hop bitterness, but tannins are common. Consequently, Flanders red ales are often described as the most "wine-like" of all beers.

## Berliner Weissbier

### Festina Pêche – Dogfish Head, Milton

Dogfish Head's Festina Pêche sounds like it'd be a one trick fruit beer. Judging by the name and this beer's label you'd expect it to be something like Pyramid's Apricot Weizen. That isn't necessarily meant as a dig to either beer, I like Pyramid's Apricot quite a bit. Like many fruit beers though, it's just that... a beer with some fruit in it, nothing terribly special. The Festina Pêche is a bit different

than other fruit beers because it is based off of the Berliner Weissbier style that is quite unique. A stock Berliner Weisse is very tart like a hard cider. Dogfish Head took the Berliner Weissbier and added their peaches to that to create an even more unique beer.



## Wood Chips and Aging: Mr. Wizard

B.Y.O. – Jul/Aug 2002

Dear Mr. Wizard,

If I wanted to use oak or beechwood chips in brewing a 5.5 gallon batch of beer, how would I go about it? How many ounces would I use and how would they be handled in the mash or fermentation containers? How long would they be left there? I realize that they would have to be steamed for 15 minutes before using.

Mr. Wizard replies:

You have really asked two different questions here: How to add oak for flavor and how to add beechwood for aging. Beechwood does not add flavor. Adding oak chips — which is done in the fermenter, not the mash tun — can add some interesting flavors to your homebrew as well as acting as a surface area to accelerate aging.

Whether using oak for flavor or beechwood to help with aging, the weight of the wood chip is not the most important consideration. Rather, the surface area is the key factor to consider. The flavor from the chip is released into the beer only where the beer and the chip are in contact. You could have a bag of thin oak chips and a bag of thick oak chips that both weigh the same, but the thin chips would have a greater surface-area-to-weight ratio. So the thin chips would add more flavor than the same weight of thick chips.

I recently made some oak-aged hard cider and got an incredible aroma from the wood during the aging process. The barrels I used are about three feet in diameter, four feet long and contain 50 gallons of liquid. To put this in beer-geek terms, the barrels have about 149 square inches of oak area per gallon of contents. This statistic is the barrel's surface-to-volume ratio. That's a good number to keep in mind, since most barrels used for aging wine are in this size range. As the capacity of a barrel increases, its surface-to-volume ratio decreases and the time required



for the oak to flavor the contents of the barrel increases.

When I decided to do an oak-aged cider, I had to make a few decisions. To begin with, I had to choose between new and used barrels. I wanted to flavor my cider with oak and nothing more, so I chose new barrels. I then had to choose among several different levels of "toast." Toast refers to the firing the inside of the barrel receives during the manufacturing process, similar to the toasting or roasting of malt during kilning. I also had an option of interior surface roughness and could buy American or French oak.

I chose American oak, with a medium toast and a "normal" surface roughness. According to the barrel maker, this would give me nice vanilla notes from the toast level, an aroma consistent with American oak. The roughness of the interior would result in a faster release of oak flavors than a barrel with a more polished finish.

To be honest, I felt pretty ignorant when faced with all these options. So I asked, "What barrels are used by winemakers producing aggressively-oaked Chardonnays?" "Most of our customers use American oak with medium-plus toast with a normal roughness," was the reply. "Very well," I said, "I'll buy two of those!"

Most of these same options are available when buying oak chips that are added to the aging vessel. You may also choose used barrels because used barrels may add more than oak flavors. There are many stouts available these days, for example, that have been aged in used bourbon barrels. As a result, these bourbon stouts have complex bourbon flavors. Sam Adams uses port and sherry barrels to age their triple bock family of beers. Used barrels open up a whole world of options that can be explored to create new and interesting beers. If the barrel contained whiskey, most brewers don't worry about sanitation. Used wine barrels, however, can pose problems and must be sanitized prior to use.

## Panil Barriquée

Save the wild yeasts! From senseless abuse and pasteurization.

Suddenly beer-lovers here in the States are all a-titter over dark, sour, wood-aged ales. These complex, fruity-tasting beers, native to the Netherlands and Belgian Flanders, represent one of the oldest beer styles in the world. In their traditional form, these Sour Reds — also known as 'Flemish Red' or 'Oud Bruin' beers — are related to real lambic beers: a touch of wild yeast and bacteria coming from the wood give acidity, both lactic (sour) and acetic (vinegar).

Trouble is, it's become nearly impossible to find a true, traditional Sour Red, even in the place where the style was born. The spate of Sour Reds turning up here now leaves most drinkers crying in their beer. They're too damned sweet! Crass commercialization has brought even the generally recognized 'classics' of the style to their knees. They're pasteurized, and sometimes laced with sugar or artificial sweeteners to make them appealing to the less-discerning beer drinker. The traditional complexity, character, and dryness are missing in action.

But now comes Panil Barriquée, and not a minute too soon.

Barriquée is the only all-natural, traditionally-made example you will find today, and it comes from, of all places, Italy. This masterpiece is 'triple-fermented.' Primary fermentation is in stainless steel. The deep earthy, sour character results from three months of maturation in cognac barrels from Bordeaux, followed by re-fermentation and further aging in the bottle. Barriquée is not pasteurized or filtered, and no sweeteners are added, so it is uncompromisingly dry and complex, and endlessly interesting.

