

# Malted Barley Appreciation Society

September 2017 Newsletter

<http://www.mbas.hbd.org>

The [Malted Barley Appreciation Society \(MBAS\)](#) meets in the back room (or back yard in summer) of [Mugs Ale House](#), 125 Bedford Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn on the second Wednesday of each month. We feature at least one guest from the craft beer industry who shares samples of their beers with everyone there for the club meeting. Start time 7.30, but it is good to arrive a little earlier to secure a good seat. Mugs Ale House serves a full food menu, and always has a top beer list.

Full Mugs review - <http://www.beerguidenyc.com/pubs.136>

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday, 13th September 2017**

Our September meeting will be a triple-header. Our guests will be Jesse Ferguson of Interboro Spirits and Ales, Paul Sullivan of Two Roads Brewing Company and Gwen Sanchirico of Sacre Brew. Everyone is welcome to attend and enjoy their fine beers, plus Mugs' generally fine selection of beers on tap, cask, and bottle/can. If you have homebrew and would like to share it with us, there will be an opportunity to pour what you bring after our guest slots. As there is no longer an annual subscription fee please be aware that we ask for a \$2 cover charge from everyone attending each meeting to fund future print runs of club t-shirts, which we award to our trade guests.

## MALTED BARLEY APPRECIATION SOCIETY 2017 COMMITTEE

President: Alex Hall [alex37407@gmail.com](mailto:alex37407@gmail.com)

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Sophie the Poodle, Otto the Dachshund



## AUGUST MEETING RECAP

by Alex Hall

August saw the club's first triple-header of guests of 2017. We first welcomed Chuck Williamson, founder and brewer, Butternuts Beer and Ale, followed by Jeff Wells, National Director of Sales, Global Brewers Guild, and rounding off with Danny Bruckert, Head Brewer, Circa Brewing Company of Brooklyn.

Chuck told us a bit about the brewery's history. He started homebrewing about 1991, and went on to brew professionally in 1994. From 1999 he worked at the long defunct Park Slope Brewing Company when it was in its final incarnation in Red Hook, the site is now the home of Sixpoint Brewery. Chuck founded Butternuts in 2005 in Garrattsville, upstate NY. I have known him for a long time, indeed he reached out to me about ten years ago for advice on cask-conditioning his beer. He describes himself as "a traditionalist brewer", meaning the brewery is largely about core flagship products that people want to drink all the time - although specials are also brewed. The four original core beers are Porkslap Pale Ale (4.8%), Heinnieweisse (a 5.0% weissebier), Moo Thunder (a 5.0% milk stout), and Snapperhead (a 6.8% double IPA). Butternuts entered into the now burgeoning canning scene very early on, about the same time that Oskar Blues did so. The brewery's name is derived from the location in the Butternut Valley.



The first beer sampled was Heinnieweisse, which is brewed with 60% wheat malt, two-row barley, and Weihenstephaner yeast. This pleasant beer was pale and had hints of banana in the aroma and on the palate. At the brewery, yeast is 'top cropped' for quality and clarity.



Porkslap Pale Ale came next, which we found to be a pleasant session pale ale brewed with ginger for spicing. The hop variety used is Crystal. The unusual name is a play on Park Slope (both the area and the former brewery), and the basic but clever logo is of two pigs high-fiving. The beer was very drinkable, quite malty for a pale ale. The ginger character was subtle.

Fans of both heavy metal music and good beer should be excited about the next offering from Chuck, which took a whopping 17 months of planning. 'Anthrax War Dance Pale Ale' (5.5% ABV) is a collaboration with the New York based band Anthrax. This tasty brew is brewed with at least 20% New York State grown Centennial and East Kent Goldings hops, and the malt bill includes Briess Special Roast and Munich 60 Caramel. Discussions between Chuck and Anthrax co-founder and guitarist Scott Ian on what the beer should be protracted as most of the band members wanted a lager, which would not appeal to some. To encompass both music fans and craft beer people, a pale ale was eventually agreed upon. Apparently, lead singer Joey Belladonna is tee-

total, however the rest of the band (Scott, drummer Charlie Benante, and bassist Frank Bello) all appreciate quality craft beer. Initially there were worries that The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (T.T.B.) would reject the name, but no problems were encountered.



The final Butternuts beer to be enjoyed was a rare special very recently released, namely 'Strawberry Rhubarb Saison' (ABV not stated). Chuck took the trouble to specially can a six pack of this normally draft only beer, and send it to Mugs Ale House for our club. This refreshing new beer uses New York State grown strawberries and rhubarb, and is fermented with a blend of Dupont and Wye Saison yeast strains. This beer is the current release of the brewery's program of bi-monthly specials.







Our next guest was Jeff Wells, National Director of Sales of the Global Brewers Guild. The Guild represents beer brands from a number of craft breweries, both domestic and imported as the name would suggest, and has roots in the former Craft Brewers Guild division of Brooklyn Brewery. Jeff's last time as guest of our club was back in 2004, and he has been working in the craft beer industry for twenty years. Butternuts is one of the breweries represented, others include Chimay and (aptly) Wells & Youngs.



Jeff brought a trio of beers for us to sample, starting with Brasserie De Saint-Sylvestre '3 Monts' (8.5% ABV). This Bière de Garde from the Flanders region of France didn't seem to taste its strength, with hints of grass, pepper, and smoke blending in on the palate. I found this beer to be of very high quality, pouring clear and being reconditioned in the bottle (750ml). It is also available in kegs. This beer was one of the first Bière de Gardes to be imported into America, and was awarded a coveted 4 stars by the late Michael Jackson in his early writings. The name translates as 'Three Mountains', which refers to three steep hills equidistant

from the brewery which could not be ascended by horse drawn drays in times past. Impressively, the brewery has been in the same family for nearly a century.



We then sampled Brouwerij Anders 'Thorberg' (6.5% ABV), a punchy Belgian I.P.A. coming in at 40 I.B.U.s. Hops used are mainly American: Willamette, Equinox, Mosaic, and Citra. European East Kent Goldings are also in the recipe, and Tripel yeast is used for fermentation. A citrusy aroma leads to a crisp hoppiness on the palate. Anders translates from the Flemish and Dutch as 'Otherwise', and the brewery is located about 25 miles east of Brussels.

Our last beer was St. Peter's 'Cream Stout' (6.7% ABV), brewed in Eastern England in former agricultural buildings on the grounds of the historic St. Peter's Hall (the earliest part dating from c1280). The green bottles used by this brewery are distinctive and unique, thin at the front and back to resemble an old medicine bottle. Kegs and cans will also be coming across the Atlantic soon. The brewery was founded in 1996, and uses yeast from Black Sheep Brewery in Masham, North Yorkshire.





Our third guest was Danny Bruckert, Head Brewer at Circa Brewing Company. This new, local brewpub in Brooklyn Heights is modern and impressive, with twelve beers on tap all named by style only. The instantly popular brewpub had only been open for two weeks on the date of our meeting, as a result Danny was unable to bring any beer for us to try. However, he did talk in detail about Circa and his own history. Initially homebrewing until his wife wanted to rid their home of brewing equipment, Danny offered to wash kegs for free (and some beer I presume) at Sixpoint Brewery. He gradually worked up to brewer, and later head brewer, when people left Sixpoint's employment. Gerry Rooney, owner of Putnam's Pub and Cooker in Clinton Hill (who has been financing Circa), asked Danny if he wanted the brewing job at Circa. Incorporated within the brewpub's 6000 square feet is a kitchen with a wood fired pizza oven, the head pizza chef being Danny's brother Luke - who was previously at Little Oven Pizza in Portland, OR, which is also wood fired. I can clearly see this brewpub and pizza restaurant combination to be an instant success. The actual opening of Circa was plagued with various hitches, enduring about eight months of delays. Three different yeast strains are used, and there are six fermenting vessels and six bright tanks in operation - five of the latter are connected to taps while the sixth is reserved for kegging. The majority of the beers are sessionable as the aim is that multiple pints can be imbibed. Circa doesn't need label registration, but a T.T.B. report will be submitted at year's end. A couple of quotes from Danny: "Brewpubs are the future of the craft brewing industry" and "Being lazy will make you a great brewer as you want to get the maximum out of each brew". I attended the pre-opening press night at Circa, and was duly impressed - the beer quality was great and one of the two DJs was an Englishman. None other than Andy Rourke, bassist in The Smiths! (See the photo below, he is on the right.)







I would like to thank Chuck, Jeff, and Danny for giving their time to be guests at our August meeting.



## SAT. 7TH OCTOBER - MBAS BREWERY CRAWL

We meet at Circa Brewing Company between 12 noon and about 2pm, which gives plenty of time for beer and pizza from their wood-fired oven. Then we head to Folksbier Brauerei for about 2.20. This entails a 30 minute walk, or a short ride on the F train or B57 bus (the bus can be tracked in real time, so we can leave Circa when one is close). The third and final stop will be the new taproom at Other Half Brewing Company, arriving about 4pm. There is no cover charge for this crawl, everybody is welcome. This crawl is arranged in conjunction with Craft Beers & Brews.

Circa Brewing Co. -

<http://www.beerguidenyc.com/pubs.362>

Folksbier Brauerei -

<http://www.beerguidenyc.com/pubs.358>

Other Half Brewing Co. -

<http://www.beerguidenyc.com/pubs.151>

## SAT. 14TH OCT. - HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY TO MUGS ALE HOUSE!

Join the MBAS crew on the afternoon of the 14th to celebrate this big milestone for Brooklyn's pioneering craft beer bar. Owner Ed Berestecki will have some special beers on tap, including an anniversary one-off brewed specially by Barrier Brewery.

## FRIEND WEBSITES ASSOCIATED WITH THE MBAS

**Fuhmentaboutit** -

<http://heritageradionetwork.org/series/fuhmentaboutit/>

Chris Cuzme and Mary Izett's homebrewing podcast.

**Beer Sessions Radio** -

<http://heritageradionetwork.org/series/beer-sessions-radio-tm/>

Craft beer podcast hosted by Jimmy Carbone.

**The Gotham Imbiber** -

<http://www.gotham-imbiber.com/>

Alex Hall's 'from the street' NYC craft beer site.

**A New York Beer and Pub Guide** -

<http://www.beerguidenyc.com/>

Over 300 NYC beer destinations with multiple search options.

**BrewYorkNewYork** -

<http://brewyorknewyork.com/>

Local craft news by Chris O'Leary

**NYC Craft Beer Club** -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/166404453379990/>

<http://www.mbas.hbd.org>

