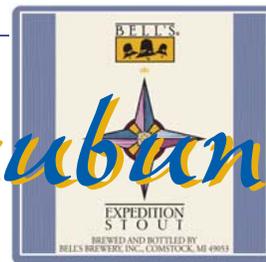


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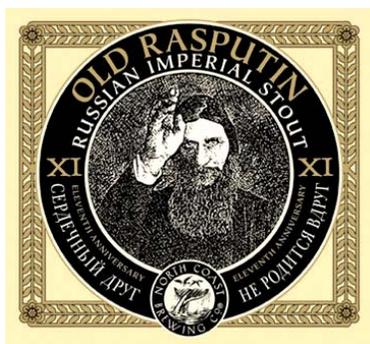
Volume # 26 Issue # 4

Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

April 2012

March Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG is Friday **April 13th**. It will be hosted by **Geoff Billiu and Annie Zipser**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is still **Stout**.



AABG 2012

January	Adventures in Homebrewing	Dark Lagers*
February	Adventures in Homebrewing	Dark Lagers*
March	Adventures in Homebrewing	Stout*
April	Geoff Billiu and Annie Zipser	Stout*
May	Stephen Krebs	Scottish/Irish*
June		Wheat Beers
July BeerBQ	Dave Olds	Mead
August	Chris Frey	Porter*
September		Light Hybrid*
October		Light Hybrid*
November		Old Ale*
December	Rolf Wucherer	Old Ale*

* 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 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>

13. STOUT

- 13A. Dry Stout
- 13B. Sweet Stout
- 13C. Oatmeal Stout
- 13D. Foreign Extra Stout
- 13E. American Stout
- 13F. Russian Imperial Stout

13F. Russian Imperial Stout

Aroma: Rich and complex, with variable amounts of roasted grains, maltiness, fruity esters, hops, and alcohol. The roasted malt character can take on coffee, dark chocolate, or slightly burnt tones and can be light to moderately strong. The malt aroma can be subtle to rich and barleywine-like, depending on the gravity and grain bill. May optionally show a slight specialty malt character (e.g., caramel), but this should only add complexity and not dominate. Fruity esters may be low to moderately strong, and may take on a complex, dark fruit (e.g., plums, prunes, raisins) character. Hop aroma can be very low to quite aggressive, and may contain any hop variety. An alcohol character may be present, but shouldn't be sharp, hot or solventy. Aged versions may have a slight vinous or port-like quality, but shouldn't be sour. No diacetyl. The balance can vary with any of the aroma elements taking center stage. Not all possible aromas described need be present; many interpretations are possible. Aging affects the intensity, balance and smoothness of aromatics.

Appearance: Color may range from very dark reddish-brown to jet black. Opaque. Deep tan to dark brown head. Generally has a well-formed head, although head retention may be low to moderate. High alcohol and viscosity may be visible in "legs" when beer is swirled in a glass.

Flavor: Rich, deep, complex and frequently quite intense, with variable amounts of roasted malt/grains, maltiness, fruity esters, hop bitterness and flavor, and alcohol.

Medium to aggressively high bitterness. Medium-low to high hop flavor (any variety). Moderate to aggressively high roasted malt/grain flavors can suggest bittersweet or unsweetened chocolate, cocoa, and/or strong coffee. A slightly burnt grain, burnt currant or tarry character may be evident. Fruity esters may be low to intense, and can take on a dark fruit character (raisins, plums, or prunes). Malt backbone can be balanced and supportive to rich and barleywine-like, and may optionally show some supporting caramel, bready or toasty flavors. Alcohol strength should be evident, but not hot, sharp, or solventy. No diacetyl. The palate and finish can vary from relatively dry to moderately sweet, usually with some lingering roastiness, hop bitterness and warming character. The balance and intensity of flavors can be affected by aging, with some flavors becoming more subdued over time and some aged, vinous or port-like qualities developing.

Mouthfeel: Full to very full-bodied and chewy, with a velvety, luscious texture (although the body may decline with long conditioning). Gentle smooth warmth from alcohol should be present and noticeable. Should not be syrupy and under-attenuated. Carbonation may be low to moderate, depending on age and conditioning.

Overall Impression: An intensely flavored, big, dark ale. Roasty, fruity, and bittersweet, with a noticeable alcohol presence. Dark fruit flavors meld with roasty, burnt, or almost tar-like sensations. Like a black barleywine with every dimension of flavor coming into play.

History: Brewed to high gravity and hopping level in England for export to the Baltic States and Russia. Said to be popular with the Russian Imperial Court. Today is even more popular with American craft brewers, who have extended the style with unique American characteristics.

Imperial continued on next page...

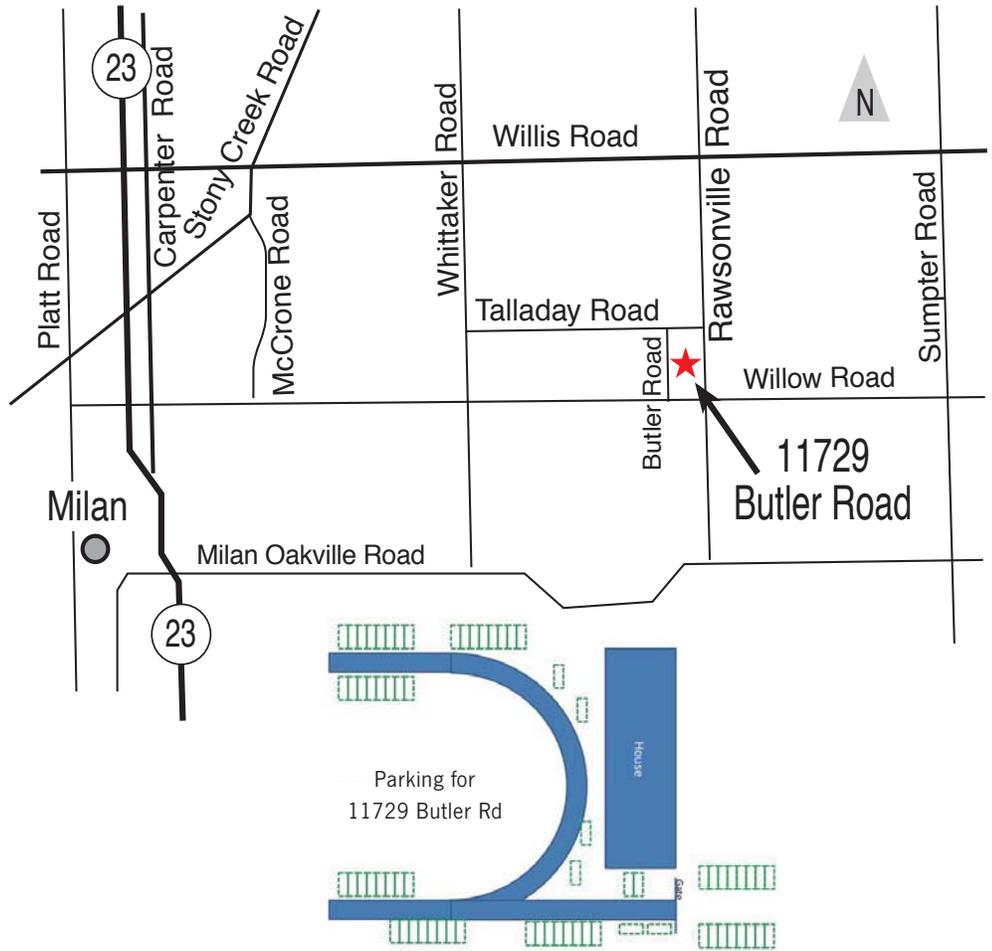
When and Where
Friday, April 13, 7:30 pm
Geoff Billiu and Annie Zapser
11729 Butler Road
Willis MI

Additional Information

We're in the country, so parking anywhere on the property is okay as long as there isn't any snow (yeah, it's 70 outside, but we know better!). I'd like to note that people should park on the grass and not to block the driveway. Lots of additional parking is available in the backyard. People can walk right in from the front door or through the back doorwall on the deck. The 7:00 technical presentation will be set up in the basement. We'll start the 7:30 meeting upstairs and spread out to the basement and deck from there.

AABG Policy

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



Guide for New Members

Bring a tasting glass and 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.

... *Imperial continued*

Comments: Variations exist, with English and American interpretations (predictably, the American versions have more bitterness, roasted character, and finishing hops, while the English varieties reflect a more complex specialty malt character and a more forward ester profile). The wide range of allowable characteristics allow for maximum brewer creativity.

Ingredients: Well-modified pale malt, with generous quantities of roasted malts and/or grain. May have a complex grain bill using virtually any variety of malt. Any type of hops may be used. Alkaline water balances the abundance of acidic roasted grain in the grist. American or English ale yeast.

Vital Statistics:

OG: ... 1.075–1.115
FG: ... 1.018–1.030
IBUs: ... 50–90
ABV: ... 8–12%
SRM: ... 30–40



Stone Imperial
Russian Stout

Commercial Examples: Three Floyd's Dark Lord, Bell's Expedition Stout, North Coast Old Rasputin Imperial Stout, Stone Imperial Stout, Samuel Smith Imperial Stout, Scotch Irish Tsarina Katarina Imperial Stout, Thirsty Dog Siberian Night, Deschutes The Abyss, Great Divide Yeti, Southampton Russian Imperial Stout, Rogue Imperial Stout, Bear Republic Big Bear Black Stout, Great Lakes Blackout Stout, Avery The Czar, Founders Imperial Stout, Victory Storm King, Brooklyn Black Chocolate Stout.

Russian Imperial Stout: A Short History

The history of the Russian Imperial Stout traces back to a strong porter brewed at Anchor Brewery in Southwark Parish, London. Near the end of the eighteenth century, Henry Thrale developed a strong porter (the term stout not yet in use) that was popular not only in London, but found customers all across the globe. This beer known as Thrale's Intire (or Entire in modern spelling), was acknowledged in the History and Antiquities of the Parish of St. Saviour, Southwark for its worldwide reputation (emphasis mine):

The reputation and enjoyment of Porter is by no means confined to England. As proof of the truth of this assertion, this house exports annually very large quantities; so far extended are its commercial connections that Thrale's Intire is well known, as a delicious beverage, from the frozen regions of Russia to the burning sands of Bengal and Sumatra. The Empress of All Russia is indeed so partial to Porter that she has ordered repeatedly very large quantities for her own drinking and that of her court. It refreshes the brave soldiers who are fighting the battles of their country in Germany and animates with new ardour and activity the colonists of Sierra Leone and Botany Bay. It is not only evident from the exportation of other articles but likewise from the quantity of Porter sent abroad that Thrale's Intire extends the reputation of British produce to the most remote quarters of the Globe

And from here we get the first Russian connection. I've run into a few notes that say that the Russian Imperial Stout has a high gravity level to survive the brutal cold and long distances that it had to travel to make it to Russia. While there is no doubt that high gravities and high hopping rates allow a beer to travel and age well, I haven't found anything that can reliably back up that claim that this was the source of the recipe and not simply an



advantage of the recipe. It seems more likely that Thrale's beer was big because that's what people wanted to drink. And the fact that this beer was shipped to warmer climates also suggests that the recipe wasn't formulated just to keep it from freezing on its way to Russia. But the important part here, and the part that has become part of legend of this style, is that the Empress of All Russia bought this fine beer for her own court. That's a big deal and something you

want to play up if you're the brewer. Who cares that some colonist in Sierra Leone drink it, too? The Empress of All Russia! That's something you should put on the label. Sierra Leone Imperial Stout just doesn't sound as fancy.

Eventually the Anchor Brewery passed from Thrale to Barclay & Perkins who continued to make Thrale's strong porter, and the recipe continued to evolve and change. In Martin Cornell's book *Amber, Gold, and Black The History of Britain's Great Beers* there is a record of the 1851 recipe of this Imperial Stout: 63.6% pale malt, 23% brown malt, 10.8% amber malt and 2.6% roasted malt for an OG of 1085 and a hop rate of 9lbs per barrel (that's a lot, technically speaking).

Another figure who helped contribute to the history of this beer is a Belgian Albert Le Coq who exported Barclay & Perkins' porter throughout the Baltic. As import tariffs increased at the beginning of the twentieth century Albert Le Coq had a challenging task. The legend goes that Le Coq had donated porter to Russian soldiers fighting in the Crimean War. As an award for his generous gift, the Tzar invited Le Coq to found a brewery in Estonia that would be able to supply Imperial Stout to Russia and avoid the high tariffs. Unfortunately, A. Le Coq picked a bad time to open a brewery: World War I was around the corner and some people got together and decided it was a good time to rid Russia of the Tzar. A beer "brewed for the Tsarist government" didn't find much success under the Bolsheviks.

— *Jeremy Short*