



The Herald Tribune



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Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

December 2005

December Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG is Friday the 11th and will be hosted by **Rolf Wucherer**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **Cider and Fruit/Herb/Spice/Veggie**.

Kruidentbier

Dutch-language term for spiced beer.



Gose laced with various syrups

AABG 2005

Jan	Bridget O'Brien	Irish Red* & Bock
Feb	Jeff Renner	Dark Lagers
Mar	Roger Burns	Sour Beers*
Apr	Bob Scholl	Porter & Stout
May	Stephen Krebs	Extract Beers*
Jun	Scott Miller	Ale/Kölsch
Jul	Randy deBeauclair	Mead
Aug	Tom Roach	Pale Ales
Sept	Jeff Renner	German Wheat/Rye
Oct	Scott Yoder	Oktoberfest
Nov	Chris Frey	Hops, hops & More Hops
Dec.....	Rolf Wucherer.....	Cider & Fruit/Herb/Spice/Veggie

* 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 Chris Frey. Anyone wishing to rent it should contact him at: 734-944-6618 or e-mail: cfrey@ford.com

Style of the Month

22. Spice/Herb/Vegetable

Aroma – The character of the particular spices, herbs and/or vegetables (SHV) should be distinctive in the aroma. Overall the aroma should be a balanced combination of malt, hops and the featured SHV(s) as appropriate to the specific type of beer being presented. If the base beer is an ale then general fruitiness and other fermentation byproducts such as diacetyl may be present as appropriate for the warmer fermentation. If the base beer is a lager, then overall less fermentation byproducts would be appropriate. Some malt aroma preferable, especially in dark styles; hop aroma absent or balanced with the SHVs used, depending on style. The overall aroma should be balanced and harmonious.

Appearance – Appearance should be appropriate to the base beer being presented and will vary depending on the base beer. For lighter beers with spices, herbs or vegetables that exhibit distinctive colors, the colors should be noticeable.

Flavor – The character of the particular SHV(s) should be distinctive in the flavor profile. Hop bitterness, flavor, malt flavors, alcohol content, and fermentation byproducts, such as diacetyl, should be appropriate to the base beer and harmonious and balanced with the distinctive SHV flavors present.

Mouthfeel – Mouthfeel may vary depending on the base beer selected and as appropriate to that base beer. Body and carbonation levels should be appropriate to the base beer style being presented.

Overall Impression – A harmonious marriage of spices, herbs and/or vegetables and beer.

Comments – Overall balance is the key to presenting a well-made spice, herb or vegetable (SHV) beer. The SHV should complement the original style and not overwhelm it. The brewer should recognize that some combinations of base beer styles and SHVs work well together while others do not make for harmonious combinations. The entrant must specify the underlying beer style as well as the type of SHV(s) used. If the base beer is a classic style,

the original style should come through in aroma and flavor. Additionally, whenever multiple spices, herbs or vegetables are used each should be distinctive in their own way.

Vital Statistics – OG, FG, IBUs, SRM and ABV will vary depending on the underlying base beer.

Commercial Examples – Harpoon Winter Warmer, Ed's Cave Creek Chili Beer, Buffalo Bill's Pumpkin Ale, Anchor Our Special Ale, Wild Onion Pumpkin Ale.

Going for Gose

Reviving a classic style

A further big step forward for the revived German beer-style Gose, once the local brew of Leipzig. A new brewery and pub specialising in this salty, coriander-spiced, acidic, wheat beer is the centrepiece in the restoration of a city landmark: the former starting point and terminal for one of Germany's most important north-south routes, the Saxony-to-Bavaria Railroad (Saechs-Bayerische Staats Eisenbahn, in the old spellings on the front of the building).

Leipzig's 'Bavaria Station', coincidentally, this station was built in 1842, a landmark year in brewing. In that year, unbeknown to brewers in Leipzig, a new style of beer was being born farther south, in Pilsen, Bohemia. Local specialities like Gose, in Leipzig and elsewhere in Saxony, would soon be under threat from the spread of Pilsener beers in Continental Europe and eventually worldwide.

I was in Leipzig at the Bayrischer Bahnhof the most popular beer is the Gose. This is made principally from grains grown locally and malted in nearby Krostitz. The grist comprises between 50 and 60 per cent malted wheat. The other malts are a Pilsener and a small proportion of Munich. The hops are Northern Brewer (for bitterness) and Perle, from the nearby Elbe-Saale growing area. Like most wheat beers, Gose has a low hop bitterness. In this particular style, the balancing dryness is provided by the ground coriander seeds and salt, which are added in the whirlpool.

See *Gose* continued on next page...

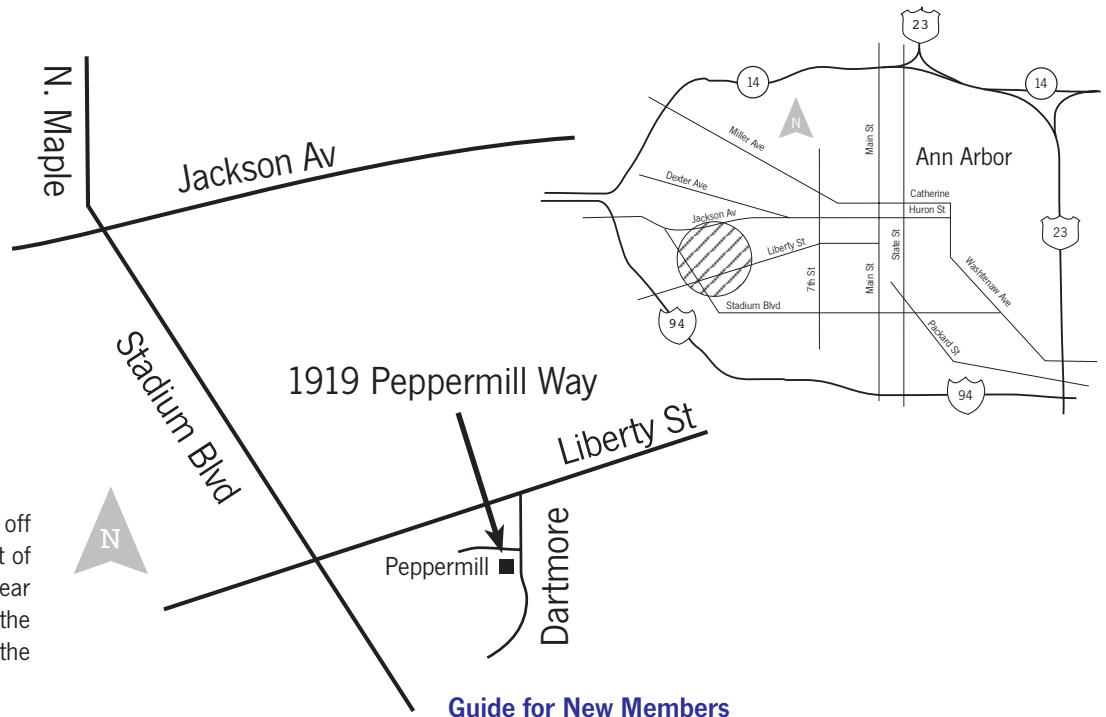
When and Where

Friday, Dec. 9, 7:30 pm

Rolf Wucherer
1919 Peppermill Way
Ann Arbor MI
665-5184

Directions

Rolf's house is the first right off Dartmoor, which is off Liberty east of Stadium (and west of Seventh), near Eberwhite Woods. The house is the first one on the left. Park around the cul-de-sac and in the street.



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 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.

Gose continued ...

When I tasted a prototype Gose, four years ago, I felt that its refreshing acidity was too overtly citric, and that a lactobacillus should be used. This was a passing comment — I am not a technical consultant — and I was gratified to be told by proprietor Schneider that he had taken up my suggestion. The main fermentation is with a Weihenstephan wheat beer yeast, but both this and the secondary are in cylindrical tanks. These are used as unitanks, with a cold lagering.

Again, the wheat should provide crispness but the typically estery flavours from the yeast must not overpower the spicing. The beer has a starting gravity of 11.0–11.25 (1044–45), and emerges with an alcohol content of 4.6 per cent by volume (3.7w).

All the beers at Bayerischer Bahnhof are unfiltered. The Gose has a full haze; a yellowish color; a fine, sustained, bead; a hint of apple-skin aroma on the nose; a light but smooth, textured, body; restrained ripe-plum fruitiness in the palate; and a dry, herbal, coriander finish. The tangy, refreshing, sharpness of the salt is quite subtle. The use of coriander and salt in this beer is contrary to the the German Beer Purity Law, the Reinheitsgebot, and this posed a difficulty when the style was revived. Now that the beer is on a

firm footing, the state of Saxony has been persuaded to grant an exemption. After all, Gose existed before Northern Germany had accepted the Beer Purity Law, which was originally a Bavarian measure.

Like the lactic wheat beers of Berlin, this traditional Leipzig speciality is offered plain (the most popular version), or with a lacing of raspberry syrup or green essence of woodruff (Waldmeister). These summery quenchers are known as “sunshade” (Sonnenschirm) drinks. A version with an alcoholic cherry liqueur is much more rounded, with a more genuinely fruity flavor. I could enjoy it as an after-dinner beer, but it is identified on the menu as being more suitable for women (Frauenfreundliche). Such a proclamation might be deemed a trifle sexist in London or New York. I particularly like the combination of Gose with Allasch, the local, sweet, almond-flavoured version of the caraway liqueur Kümmel. More than one might be sickly, but the combination of the sour-ish, salty, beer with a spicy, sweet, liqueur is very lively. This is seen as a more wintry drink, and called an umbrella (Regenschirm). The Gose is also available to go, in the traditional “brandy flask”.

The Bayerischer Bahnhof bottles are fitted with a swing-top, but the original Gose vessels had no

stopper. The idea was that the yeasty head formed a natural bung in the long neck, just as it seems to have done in the terra-cotta amphorae of ancient times. Thus the beer would carbonate naturally.

The brewery also produces a wheat beer, using the same yeast but in the type of open fermenter typically used for that style: with a lip for the excess foam. This brew is called Kuppler Weissbier, the first word referring to the man who couples the carriages on a train. It has a full amber to tan color, reminiscent of the famous Weissbier made in Bavaria by the Schneider brewery. (There is no connection between that brewery and Thomas Schneider of the Bayerischer Bahnhof. Schneider is a very common name in Germany).

Kuppler has a good, toffeeish, malt character and an aniseedy spiciness, but I could have taken more clovey, fruity, notes. Although Thomas Schneider is a brewer himself, he has employed Bertram Rostock to man the kettles. Bertram, who studied in Berlin, is a young veteran of a start-up brewery in nearby Landsberg. He told me that he was not yet satisfied with Kuppler. He felt it needed more throughput before the yeast habituated itself.

See *Gose* continued on next page...

The old jargon of cidermaking

At one time, the craft of cidermaking was widespread in the southern part of Britain, but only in the western counties did it form an integral part of the farming year. The apple harvest in late Autumn and the pressing of the juice was one of the fixed points in the farming calendar. The slow fermentation of the cider in wooden casks in barns and cellars made it ready for drinking at the thirsty times of haymaking and harvest the following year. The source was not just any sort of apple, but varieties rich in tannins and sugar called bittersweets, or ones strong in acid called bittersharps. A related drink was perry, made from tiny rock-hard cider pears which grew on huge mistletoe-shrouded trees; this drink didn't keep so well and was consumed in the household, not by the farm labourers. Like any rural craft, cidermaking had its own vocabulary, strongly influenced by local dialect and extremely persistent.

Ripe fruit was knocked from the trees by long wooden staves called panking poles; sometimes these had metal hooks to shake the branches, termed hook poles or luggs. Harvested fruit was stored in tumps in the orchard to soften a little before being taken to the mill. The fruit was too hard to be pressed in a wine press and a circular stone mill was used, comprising a mill stone of about a ton in weight which stood upright in a trough and was pulled round by a pony. Fruit was placed in the trough or chase and mixed with a little water from the stream to stop it sticking (labourers referred to this sarcastically as brook apples if too much was used). About fifty turns of the mill, with the fruit continually being scraped off the sides and stirred with a stick called a rowing down stick ground the fruit to a pulp, the must.

This was transferred to the press in a series of layers separated by cloths called hairs (because they were originally made of woven horsehair) to form a stack, a cheese. A heavy wooden board called a chuter was placed on top and the press screwed down. The juice flowed out into a wooden or stone trough, from where it was transferred to casks by wooden buckets. To get the juice through the bung hole, a device like a small half cask with a tube on the bottom termed a tundish or tunpail was employed as a funnel. The word 'tundish' has had this sense since the fourteenth century at least; the first element in both words is tun, meaning 'cask', one of the oldest recorded words in the language. Once all the juice had been pressed out, the dry remains of the fruit, called pomace (a word derived from

the medieval Latin for 'apple'), was tipped out of the hairs and dumped. The juice began to ferment by itself in the cask using wild yeasts picked up from the earth of the orchard or which floated through the air to land in the juice, just as Belgian fruit beer is still made today. The juice bubbled and frothed through the open bung hole, and was said to be working or fretting. This second term is presumably connected with the old word meaning 'to eat, consume' (cognate with modern German 'fressen'), from which we also get our figurative sense of 'to worry, to vex oneself'.

Great care was taken to use only wooden utensils, as apple juice was extremely acidic and would dissolve metals. In the mid eighteenth century a severe illness called the Devonshire colic was traced to lead poisoning from the metal used to seal holes in mills and presses. Badly-made cider – and much of it must have been simply awful – was the traditional acidic low-alcohol scrumpy. Several farmers told me that they called it squeal pig cider because that was the noise you made when you drank it unawares. Nobody seems to know where the word scrumpy comes from, but it must surely be connected with that similar term to scrump – to steal fruit from an orchard. The good things that can be said for it are that it kept well and it was free from harmful bugs, something that could not often be said of the local water supply.

The vocabulary of wooden vessels is complicated. Brewers and cidermakers generally refer to them as casks; the term barrel to them is a technical term for a specific size of cask holding 36 Imperial gallons. Other sizes were the firkin (9 gallons; from medieval Dutch meaning 'a (little) fourth', that is, a quarter of a barrel), kilderkin (18 gallons; half a barrel) and hogshead (54 gallons). The pipe (104 gallons) and butt (108 gallons) were often confused, though in Herefordshire casks called pipes were always taller and slimmer than butts – more pipe-shaped, in fact. The tun itself came to mean a specific size equal to four hogsheads or about 208 gallons. Vats were even larger, static vessels for fermentation or storage, often holding five hundred gallons or more.

The labourers used to take their cider out to the fields in small casks holding about half a gallon. These were sometimes called costrels, a name possibly deriving from a word meaning a basket, but intriguingly perhaps from the Latin word meaning 'by the side' (which has also given us 'collateral') because they were carried at the side of one's belt.

Some cidermakers practiced a much more careful regime. Crushed fruit was left to macerate in open casks for a day to break down the cell walls and release more of the flavour. After pressing, the juice was again left in open vessels to let the pectins be thrown off in a thick crust before siphoning it into a cask. Periodically, the juice was racked into another cask, that is, the juice would be carefully taken off the deposit of yeasts at the bottom, the lees. The whole process was called keeving and produced a much superior product.

Gose continued ...

The Bayrischer Bahnhof is also supplying its Gose to half a dozen local pubs, notably including Ohne Bedenken, which pioneered the revival of the style. This is a less elaborate, more basic, pub, offering the Gose variations with hearty snacks of bread and cheese (typically a local counterpart to Camembert, made into fritters).

Thomas Schneider had previously used another brewery to produce a Gose for a Ohne Bedenken. It was the beer that gave the pub its name. When Gose was first reintroduced there, a customer, shocked by the taste, asked proprietor Hartmut Hennebach: "Is this stuff drinkable?" To which Dr Hennebach replied: Ohne Bedenken ("Without doubt").

Dr Hennebach had originally worked in the pub as a bartender after being fired from his job as micro-biologist for political dissent during the Communist period in East Germany. The pub had been a Communist political club in those days, but a "Gose House" until perhaps the 1930s. Around 1900s, Leipzig is said to have boasted 80 Gose houses, many of them student cafes offering inexpensive beer and food.

Gose is said to have been consumed in Leipzig since the 1700s, but to have taken its name from the smaller town of Goslar, its original home. The whole story sounds remarkably similar to that of Gueuze-Lambic, once typically served with bread and cheese in scrubbed-table bars in Brussels, but perhaps taking its name from the smaller town of Lembeek.

Both are wheat beers, distinctly acidic, and traditionally gaining their carbonation by bottle-conditioning. By European standards, Leipzig and Brussels are quite distant from one another, and culturally quite different, but far longer connections have been established in the world of food and drink.

– Published Aug. 31, 2000 in *Beer Hunter Online*
