

Greater Kansas City Pipe Club

News from the November Meeting

Our last meeting had 21 members in attendance as well as 4 guests. We are now up to 75 paid members. Our newest members are Phil Morgan, Shawn Lancelot, and Cletus Lichte.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is the **Christmas Pot Luck Supper** meeting. It will be on the **second** Thursday rather than the third. That's **December 8th** at 8PM at Cigar & Tabac. If possible bring a dish to share with the other members. We have a number of fine cooks in the club so you can look forward to some good eats.

GKPC Pipe Show Update

The work on the upcoming pipe show continues. We want to market the show as "Destination DoubleTree" to emphasize the change in venue and the additional activities available to our guests.

We have just about finalized our Friday night activities. First, of course, will be the BBQ Buffet. Once the buffet is over we will

adjourn to the smoking courtyard directly adjacent to the show area. In addition the cash bar we will have a table of vintage tobaccos for people to sample, a cigar roller will be there to provide for those who would like one after their meal, and a demonstration of the Burr King grinder. The Burr King is an amazing device for shaping and sharpening. We think the carvers in attendance will be drooling when they see this device in action. It could radically reduce the time a carver spends on making stems. If you are not aware it usually takes as long to make the stem as it does the pipe itself for a handmade pipe.

Dues Renewal

Its that time of year for dues renewal. Even if you have difficulty attending any of the meetings your dues are really needed to operate the club.

It is very simple to pay your dues. If you can't do it in person you can login to the website (www.gkcpipeclub.com) and go into your member profile. You should see a button about

renewing you dues. You can then use Paypal or a credit card to pay your dues.

2012 Pipe of the Year

We are still taking reservations for the 2012 Pipe of the Year from Thomas James.

The dimensions of the pipe are:

Length: 5 inches

Width: 2 inches at widest point

Height: 2.15 inches at point (highest point on the pipe)

Chamber .75 x 1.50

All measurements are approximate and will vary from pipe to pipe.



Ace of Spades - Front View

From the view above you can really see how the pipe got its name.



Ace of Spades Bottom View

This is a sensational pipe from a great young carver at an attractive price. If you are interested in one of these let me know. A \$100 deposit would be appreciated.

Programs

We justifiably pride ourselves on the quality of programs that we offer to the membership. What we need are new ideas for shows. If you have an idea for a program contact Dan Coomer or Steve Butler. We particularly would like some program suggestions from/for the younger members.

NASPC Dues

Those of you who want to subscribe to the "*Pipe Collector*" can pay your dues to the treasurer and he will forward it to the NASPC. The North American Society of Pipe Collectors (NASPC) is the group behind this bi-monthly newsletter. If you are in to pipe collecting at all this is something

you really need to subscribe. The NASPC has always been highly supportive of the GKPC.

Broken Pipe

By now most of you have heard of the passing of Jay Jones of Hermit Tobacco.



Jay Jones and Louise Pavonetti

Jay and his partner, Louise Pavonetti, were fixtures at our annual show. Jay was the creator of the Hermit blend of tobaccos. You might want to go over to <http://pipestyle.com/> and learn more about Hermit Tobacco.

Our deepest condolences to Louise, the family and their friends.

The club did send a formal note of condolence to Louise.

Barleywine Program

By Steve Butler

As winter approaches our thoughts turn to the comforts that we enjoy. Some of us change our pipe tobacco regular blends. Some of us increase the amount of food we eat preparing for the long winter. Some of us lower the specific gravity of our blends by increasing the alcohol content in our systems.

In this vein the meeting program revolves around higher alcohol beers. These beers happen to be ales. The question was asked as to how many members at the meeting had tasted ales. A surprising number of members had tasted ales of one kind or another. We briefly discussed the difference between the two kinds of beers-lagers and ales. Lagers are chill fermented beers that render a clean, crisp taste and also mask the flavors of the sundry grains that are used (usually to save money on the grain bill).

There is no doubt that the first beers that humans drank were ales. The first beers were probably made by Egyptians or Babylonians. Urns that contained beer were found in the tombs of pharaohs. One company in fact took the GC mass spectrometer readings of the residue found in said urns and have produced a beer using the same ingredients. I have not tasted this beer, but I have colleagues that are true beer aficionados and the reviews are mixed. Those grains used included spelt (primitive wheat and millet much like the round white seeds we feed our birds in winter and our budgies (parakeets as we call them in the US) and canaries in cages.

Ales are prepared around normal ambient temperatures and they ferment at pretty standard temperatures around 21 degrees Celsius (70 degrees F). The beers (barley wine) for this program are actually made using higher gravity wort (cooked grain juice) so that the yeast have the ability to make a lot of alcohol. The regular beers we see are usually around 4-5% alcohol by volume (abv). The standard for these higher gravity beers is 9-14% abv.

These beers require a lot of skill as the amount of hops and water have to be just so in order that the tasting of the beers is a pleasant experience. One can make alcoholic beverages using

just sugar, water and yeast, but the results are not particularly attractive or tasty. For the making of barley wines the process many times includes fermenting the beer in wooden containers to allow the savory flavors of the wood to donate some character to the final brew.

For the program 4 beers were presented for the tasting in order:

- 1) Samuel Adams Griffin's Bow Oaked Blonder Barleywine Ale 11.5% abv
- 2) Dubuisson Scaldis refermentee Amber Ale 12% abv
- 3) Unibroue trois pistols Dark Ale on Lees 9% abv
- 4) Mikkeler frelser Trippelbock 11% abv

The tasting was conducted in the usual informal manner and several club members tasted and remarked on the various beers' attributes. The club members that participated seemed to enjoy determining their particular favorites and commenting on the aspects of the beer presented.



January Program – Mike McNiel

Mike & Mary McNiel will be our guest speakers for the January meeting.

They will be introducing McClelland's new line of tobaccos at the meeting.

You might want to recall the last time they did this. I believe it was three years ago when they came to a meeting with samples of their soon-to-be-released Grand Orientals line of tobaccos. They were simply to die for. To check these tobaccos out go to:

McClelland's Grand Orientals

One can only wonder what they have come up with this time.

Anthony Harris in Pipes & Tobacco

The GKPC scored big in the very latest issue of "*Pipes & Tobacco*" magazine. First, there was a letter to the editor from a pipesmoker in Iowa (a non-member) praising the 2011 American Carvers Contest at the last pipeshow. Second, there was an article on Andy Peterson which prominently mentioned that his rise to national stature begin with his entry to the 2010 American Carvers Contest and being selected as one of the seven winners.

And the biggest deal was an article by Anthony Harris on how one goes about making a double chambered pipe. This was an extensive multi-page article with lots of photos. The photos were taken by member David Birkman. And the cover photo was taken from this article. Is that cool or what.

In the article, much like Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotis, Anthony declares his Four Laws of Wood Turning. They are a hoot.

Once again this is another reason why you should subscribe to *P&T*.

For obvious reasons we cannot publish the content of the *P&T* article at this

time. Next is an article by Anthony on a clever pocket pipe.

Double Chambered Pocket Pipe

By Anthony Harris

It was Sunday evening. The Las Vegas show had ended a couple of hours earlier. The tables in front of the honky tonk were filled with participants who had not yet departed. Some were drinking, a few eating, a couple had luggage, and all were smoking.

Behind the voices, "have you tried this English?" Or, "did you see how the button on that one is rounded...", the ding ding di-ding ding of the slot machines mixed with the piped in music. Some people stared at us as they walked past.

I was relaxing. The show was over. Nothing to do for nineteen hours. There were four or five guys at the table with me. I was smoking one of the double-chambers – and it was good.

I had been having conversations about baccy-flaps with one of the guys sitting at the table a week or two previously. I have had the same discussion with others several times over the last few years. Never very hot on the idea, it had seemed more feasible after I started turning boxes out of briar.

I started looking at the baccy-flap that he had his tobacco in. I had seen one at another time, but did not think that I could do the job any better. That and when I responded to queries that it would cost 150 bucks, people abruptly became less enthusiastic about the idea.

I had my notebook out showing drawings of in-progress pipe designs, and an idea came to me. A baccy-flap deserved a baccy-pipe. What good

was a nifty pocket tobacco container if you didn't have a easy, safe way to carry a pipe as well. If you are going to carry a leather bag around for your pipes, you might as well put the tobacco in it as well.

I started thinking. My head started getting hot. Then I started drawing. I had to wipe the steam off my glasses. Others at the table told me about the vest pipe and a couple of other pocket pipe designs. It seemed to me that they were all of limited value. Yeah, you could put them in your pocket, but you wouldn't really want to smoke one. If I was going to make a pipe that fit in a pocket, it had to be worth smoking.

Forty minutes later I had the drawing and work sequence mostly figured out. You have heard the adage, "To a man with a hammer, the whole world looks like a nail." Well, I had been making double-chamber pipes for the last while, so this one was also. It was all done except for one thing. What in the world was I going to do with the stem? And then it hit me. The stem has to fit inside the pipe when not in use. That means the pipe was actually a box. I know how to make boxes. Ten more minutes, a new drawing, and the work sequence revised - I had a baccy-pipe. One of my table companions stood up and said in effect, "Yeah, lets see you do it." Oh, my!

I got home shortly before midnight Monday, didn't move much on Tuesday, started in on the pipe late Wednesday. The pipe was finished Thursday. It still has some problems, but the idea is sound, I think. Here is the first draft. It isn't really as orange in real life as it looks in the photos - still working with the new camera.

2.75" tall x 1.875" wide stored

3.125" tall by 3.625" long ready for use

The next version needs to be an inch taller when stored. Maybe 3/8" for the bowl, and 5/8" for the base. That lets the stem be a full inch longer. ...or, give up on the idea of having the stem stored inside the pipe which seems like crying, "Uncle!" to me. A couple of really crazy people think the answer is a two part stem. That might require some experimentation.

The diameter can't come down too much without changing thread sizes, and even then it wouldn't change much. There is a lot happening inside the box. It could be made much more egg-shaped with the bottom of the tobacco bowl being the pointy end. I have not seen any good way to cover the thread at the bottom of the bowl without generating an extra piece to get lost. Stay tuned.



Pocket Pipe with Stem in Bowl



Pocket Pipe Ready to Go



Pocket Pipe Ready to Travel 1



Fred Hanna Pipe Biography

Our guest speaker at our next pipe show will be Fred Hanna. Those of us who have been in the hobby for a while know of Fred as one of the outstanding figures in the hobby. However, Many of our younger members are not aware of who Fred is so I thought I would publish a brief pipe biography of Fred. This bio was provided by Fred himself.

Fred Hanna began smoking a pipe in 1967. By 1974 he was smoking and

collecting high grades and by 1975 he was collecting Charatan straight grains exclusively. Soon after, he was working in a pipe and tobacco retail shop for several years. Fred is best known for his provocative and thoughtful articles published in *Pipes and Tobaccos* magazine and *The Pipe Collector*, newsletter of the North American Society of Pipe Collectors (NASPC).

Fred has applied his unique approach to pipe smoking and collecting in a variety of ways, being the originator of popular methods such as air pocket packing, the pipe mud technique, and tin baking, which is a method for simulating the aging process or otherwise improving many tobaccos. Fred has been a guest speaker for pipe clubs from Baltimore and Minneapolis to Denver and Seattle, as well as having been a speaker for the Chicago and Las Vegas Pipe Shows.

Some of his articles focused upon how to taste tobacco blends; a compilation of a quiz for pipe collectors; pipe smoking and problem solving; briar vs. brand; and he wrote a humorous essay on expensive pipe tampers that had the pipe world in stitches. Fred was named Member number 50 of the Pipe Smokers Hall of Fame, and was honored with the prestigious title of Doctor of Pipes by the Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club in 2010. His award winning collection of straight grain pipes is well known among collectors.

Perhaps his finest achievement was the blending of two highly regarded tobacco blends, Legends and Wilderness, both of which are commercially available from the McClelland Tobacco Company. Fred is currently nearing completion of a book with the tentative title of, *The Quest for the Perfect Smoke: Pipe Smoking for Contentment, Contemplation, and Community*.

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You can read Fred's latest article in the the latest issue of *P&T* magazine.



Fred Hanna Holding his Doctor of Pipes Award

Below is an article by Fred that was originally published in the "*Pipe Collector*". Reprinted here by permission of the NASPC.

THE BEST SANDBLASTED PIPES ARE BEING MADE BY AMERICANS

By Fred Hanna

Now and then, someone will point to a particular country, such as Denmark or Italy, and remark upon the quality of their pipe makers as a group. This may be in terms of design, finish, mouthpieces, engineering, or what have you. Let's add another such assessment.

I have been watching the quality of sandblasting by Americans for the last couple of years, and I don't think there can be any doubt about it. The best sandblasted pipes OVERALL are now coming out of the USA. I don't say this with any sort of nationalistic pride, only as an observation. On the whole, American pipe makers are making some simply astonishing, amazing, and sometimes staggering sandblasts. Compare them, OVERALL, to the brands well known for their blasts, such as Dunhill, Castello, Ashton, or any other brands from any country, and, in my opinion, one sees that there has been little real improvement

in blasting quality in those countries in recent years. All one has to do to be convinced of certain American pipe makers' strides and advancements in this aspect of pipe making is to check out recent efforts by the following list of pipe makers, in no particular order. These guys make deep sandblasts and somehow achieve fine detail within the graining that enhances the perception of depth. Their individual styles are distinctive, as sandblasts go. When looking at the pipes of these makers, one immediately recognizes that a sandblast to these guys is not just a tragic solution for a pipe with a flaw. That flaw is viewed as an opportunity to produce a unique and fantastic finish. These American pipe makers deserve to be acknowledged for their great work: Jim Cooke (Best in the World); Paul Bonaquisti; Lee Van Erck; Larry Roush; Trever Talbert; John Eells; Brian Ruthenberg.

Like I said, this list is in no particular order. Please forgive me for those pipe makers whom I have forgotten to name in the list above, and I am sure there are several. Allow me to add an additional point. A well-known collector has stated in print in the last year that Jim Cooke's sandblasted pipes are actually "sand carved." Some have interpreted this as implying that Jim's method has deteriorated the sandblasting art into a form of rustication. I trust that this was not the collector's actual intention, but it might have been the result of his comment nevertheless. This is misleading and possibly denigrates and negates Jim's excellent work, which I believe is simply the best there is.

Actually, the remark is quite puzzling in many ways. When one thinks about it, all sandblasted pipes are "sand carved" to some degree. That is why the blasting is done! In making a single pipe, Jim spends from 12 to 15 hours on sandblasting alone, quite in

addition to all the other steps that go into that pipe. Does this make his sandblasts somehow different than most others? Of course it does! He seems to consistently bring out more detail, depth, and definition, in my opinion, than anyone. That is why his pipes are so damned much in demand. Jim Cooke is the "Bo Nordh of the Blast." Jim does not create false graining patterns with his technique. In fact, he told me that his first pass is done specifically to expose the grain patterns, which he further exposes and details in his following steps. Jim does not do any sort of rustication using the blasting process, other than the blasting itself, which could be seen as the most true and pure form of rustication there is.

To hell with all those dremels and weird rustication tools. Rusticated pipes, while attractive, cannot begin to compare with the awe-inspiring, stark, austere, naked beauty of the great blast. What the American blasters are doing is not just providing a finish. They are bringing the true and often hidden graining patterns of our beloved briar into the boldest relief, pleasing to the eye and palpable to the touch. The highly treasured, steeply priced, smooth straight grains are incapable of providing such an experience.

Please understand that I am aware that there are always individual exceptions to this view of sandblasting expressed here, such as the occasional Dunhill or Ashton. But OVERALL, I believe that American pipe makers have become the best in the world in this category, by far.

By the way, I have been trying to get Jim Cooke to make me a smooth, perfect straight grain for several years now. He just snickers and says, "Those are my seconds."

A Smoky Toast to Art

By George Dibos

Showing my pipe collection to new acquaintances is always fun, in part because it is so predictable. After invariably pointing out the gourd calabash as their favorite, they ask how much a good pipe costs. That's when I get to see if they have amalgam or cosmetic fillings.

Briar, I explain, ranges in value from worthless to immense, just like a gemstone, and for exactly the same reason: the rarity of perfection in Nature. "Diamonds aren't as scarce as most people think," I say. "You can buy a bucket of them for a few hundred dollars if you don't mind them brownish-black and filled with imperfections... A blue-white one without flaws, though, is another matter."



Then they ask which of my pipes comes closest to perfection, and I hand them the one in the accompanying photo. "This is very nearly as good as briar gets," I say, showing them a run-of-the-mill pipe for comparison. "How much did it cost?" comes next, and I tell them it was free. A gift. "Wow... what is it worth, then?" "There's a story that goes with it," I say. "Afterward, maybe you can tell me. Would you like to hear it?"



Arthur Englander, I begin, was a very old man--well into his nineties--when we met in 1978. He still worked a few hours every day in his smoke shop in downtown Kansas City, and though I was a relative youngster of 25, and as ignorant of pipes and tobacco as anyone who had ever walked through his door, he patiently answered my questions and showed me his merchandise as if I was his most valued customer. My having taken a job around the corner had quickly made me a regular, and I was eager to expand my newfound love of pipes and tobacco under his guidance.

Several months later, while lingering my customary minute over the case of Charatan and Dunhill high grades before returning to work, he held up a brown chunk of something and asked if I knew what it was. "This is briar," he said, "As it comes to the artist. Are you an artist?" I shook my head. "No, no... I don't mean have you ever worked as one, I mean are you an artist in here?" And he pointed to his chest. I could tell it was important to him that I answer honestly. "Yes," I said, meaning it, but with no idea what to do with the feeling. "Then take this briar," he said, holding out the block, "And turn your heart loose on it."



He loaned me a few old tools, and together with an electric hand drill clamped to a vise in my spare room, I began to work. The block turned out to be a fair mixed grain, but went unfinished because of a large flaw in the heel of the pipe. "It was shaping up nicely, wasn't it?" Art said when I brought it to him the following week. "Bad wood, but that's not your fault... Here, try again." And he handed me another block.

The second pipe came more easily, but the briar was poorly grained and had a number of small flaws. But I'd finished it and was pleased with the overall result. Art's only comment after looking at it from several angles for a long time was, "Wait here!" And he disappeared. He was gone maybe ten minutes, and if it hadn't been for the occasional shuffling and stirring from the back room I would have begun to worry.



Several other customers came in during this time, and I could only shrug and point to the door at the rear of the shop where Art had

gone. We all waited. When he finally reappeared, he was smiling in a way I'd never seen before and his eyes were on fire.

"Come over here in the light!" he commanded in his wispy, gravelly voice, uncharacteristically ignoring the other customers who had come in, and held me fast by the upper arm as I entered into a huddle with him over the rearmost counter. "This," he said, holding an espresso-colored block larger than any I'd seen before, "is briar that was the very best available over fifty years ago when I tried my hand at carving, and was already old then. I wasn't any good at it--no patience--but I saved the wood hoping someday to find it a home. Please take it. Give it life. All I ask is that you bring it back for me to see, so I know what it became."

I did. Art never had the heart to point out that I had carved the pipe backward. Reversed 180 degrees the bowl would have had truly straight "straight" grain, and the 45 degree elbow in the grain would have coincided perfectly with the shank making its grain straight as well. But then, maybe a flaw would have been uncovered, turning the whole thing into scrap. I'll never know. (As is, there isn't so much as a sand speck visible under 10X magnification anywhere on it.)



After showing Art the pipe, which he held and beamed over like a new father, asking to keep it for a few days to show some friends, I was

transferred to a job in the suburbs and found it difficult to get downtown regularly. After a lapse of about a month, I walked into his shop and knew instantly what had happened. His nephew was behind the counter, looking tired, and told me that Art had passed away in his sleep several days earlier.

I finish the story by saying that if the pipe is properly cared for, I'll be able to give it to my son, and he'll be able to pass it on to his. And that each time I light it up--it smokes as dry and sweet as a dream, by the way--I always let out the first puff while holding the briar high in a silent toast to Arthur Englander and those like him, who make the world a gentler, better place.

They usually still have the pipe in their hands when I stop, and are quiet for a minute, not knowing just what to do with it. Then (virtually all are fast living, 1990's conscious, non-pipe smokers), they say something like, "I had no idea... smoking these is nothing like cigarettes, is it?" and hand it back gently.

Silently, I score one for our side.

Hot Links:

Below are some links to various web sites that I think you might be interested in. Some are informational, some are vendors/carvers, and some are friends of the GKPC. By no means is this list inclusive.



Bob Oswald's Leather Site



Anthony Harris' Pipe Site





Mike Sull's Website





Joe Stackowicz & Sid Steinhäufel looking at Joe's ship building photos.



Walt McKenzie discussing his knee replacement



Quinton Wells, Bob Oswald, And Roscoe Yoder look at some vintage pens.



Cletus Lichte aka #75



George Dibos & Jared Rooks Relax



John Cermal Calls Meeting to Order



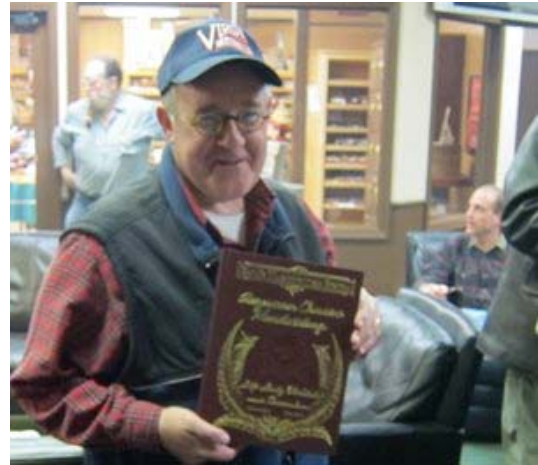
Steve Butler, Bill Miller, Carl Staudenmyer before the meeting



Jeff Williams listens to program



**Steven Haas, Mike Sull, & Walt Mckenzie
Enjoy the program**



**Mike Sull holding a leatherbound version of
his new book**



Steve Butler talking about Barleywine



Mike McNeil chatting about the barleywine



**Quinton Wells & Tom Fletcher show off the
Jeff Gracik demo video**



Steve Butler Gets ready to begin the program



Members around the Barleywine tasting table