

TRI STATE PIPE & TOBACCO CLUB

Volume 1, Issue 3



February 2001

OFFICERS:

President Larry Rathburn

219 672 8802 rathpipe@aol.com

Vice President Andy Spencer

219 747 5726 aspencer@gateway.net

Sec/Tres Danny Hudson

219 423 3572 thepotterswife@hotmail.com

BEHIND THE COUNTER

by Danny Hudson

Looking back over our first year, I become nostalgic regarding the evolution of our group. As a club, we have enjoyed a series of activities. Our pipe shows have featured Savinelli, Ardor, Ashton, Brebbia, Ascorti, Don Carlos and McClelland. a great deal of enthusiasm regarding the hobby has been the result.

Another milestone and eminent tradition going forward is the TSPTC club pipe. Most will concur, the smoking qualities of our Charter member Ardor is superb. The offering this year, a Savinelli, should be just as rewarding and promises to be another exciting development for the club. Please direct inquiries to Frank Bougher for more information.

Our informal dinners at Bob Evans have proven to be a social event embraced by all including a few spouses. We have been fortunate to find a restaurant allowing us to fill the air with pipe smoke. Certainly, a location destined for further meetings. Riegel's put on a superb smoking contest; I believe all that attended had a great time. Many thanks go out to Dennis Hills for putting that event together, and allowing us to be his guest at Georgetown Riegel's. (I am still amazed at how a pipe can smolder that long).

Our current funds have steadily grown, allowing us to publish this newsletter and better plan for annual events like the Buy-Sell-Swap. Initiatives being discussed for this year include a bonafide .com Internet address and creating a greater following through active promotion of the club at various pipe shows. Those who have purchased club shirts, wear them with confidence knowing that we are growing and evolving. I recently discussed with Mark Fore the protocol for additional orders. Please contact me with your interest should you like a TSPTC denim shirt.

Please keep in mind that membership renewal is approaching. If you have enjoyed the club, consider signing on for our second year. Going forward, we will

FROM THE BASEMENT

of Larry Rathburn

On Sunday, October 21st Riegels's Georgetown hosted a pipe smoking contest. Everyone that made it to this event seemed to have a great time. Many of the club members showed up and did very well with the competition. Rob Catherwood did quite well for a new pipe smoker but did manage to burn a hole in the bottom of his pipe. As they say, eggs must be broken to make an omelette. I didn't do my Savinelli Autograph any favors either. There seems to be a bit of briar missing in the bottom of that bowl. For a lot of the members, this was the first pipe smoking contest they had ever attended and will probably choose a different pipe the next time. I for one will pick a large bowled pipe that I don't mind burning a hole thru and I think Rob will agree. For the guys that were there, you noticed that Dale Hively who was the winner, was a very mature pipe smoker. I am not referring to his age but his demeanor. He was quiet, sitting down, calmly and steadily puffing. The results are proof to his method with his bowl of tobacco lasting 157 minutes and 22 seconds. I had a great time and hope that we try this again, soon. Thank you Dennis, Tony and Frank of Riegels.

Robert Catherwood-77:21-\$32 humidor

Mike Mounts-57:48-One yr.P&T subs.

Marty Dodrill-56:49-One lb. tobacco



One picture of the smoke-off. More to come later in the newsletter.



The winner of the pipe smoking contest. Dave Hively with a time of 157 minutes and

The Winners

Dale Hively-157:22-\$350 Von Erck pipe

Larry Rathburn-110:00-\$200 #4 Auto

James Horine-104:37-Vitapaldi pipe

Dale Steinson-103:55-Mauro Armalini pipe

John Laird-103:01-\$50 Radici tamper

Aaron Belzner-93:05-\$35 Gargoyle tamper

be processing new members and renewals on a prorated basis. Dues remain at a modest 12.00 annually, and include discounts at various retail establishments in the Fort Wayne area. As officers, we have enjoyed serving you, and hope that our efforts have resulted in a solid foundation for the club.

Nominations for club officers for 2001 are being accepted immediately, with elections to be held when we convene in March. Should you be interested in serving on the board, or feel someone is especially suited to do so, please inform a current officer so we may record your suggestion.

As always, we welcome your comments, opinions and input regarding the club and its operation. Any suggestion, concern, or question should be voiced. We are committed to making TSPTC a success, and cannot be fully realized without your active participation. I look forward to 2001, and find encouragement in the support we have received to date. Our inaugural year was hands down, a definitive success for no other reason but through the support of the TSPTC membership.

Finally, I would like to extend a personal thanks to the entire membership, for having the confidence in the notion that together we can further the hobby of pipe smoking in our region. It has been a great deal of fun (and a privilege) for me to participate, and I look forward to the future as we move ahead. In my mind... quite the beginnings for a club in its infancy.



More pictures from the Smoke-Off at Georgetown Riegels.



CONTEST

The first member to identify this particular pipe being smoked at a future meeting will win this original block print that has been donated by one of the TSPTC members.



2000 Ardor Club Pipe

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

Danny sent me a note a couple weeks ago sort of suggesting that I write an article for the newsletter. I must admit that at first I was a little flattered but then it hit me. What the heck am I going to write about!! I stand pale compared to most of the membership today. I've only been enjoying the 'root' for just over a year now. Boy do I have a lot to learn.

I've told some of you this story already, but some I haven't. I actually started smoking pipes in the early 70's while in college. I normally smoked cigarettes, but your fraternity brothers can't bum a pipe, so I thought this to be great solution. I really wasn't very knowledgeable then but I looked the part. I bought some decent pipes but smoked drug store tobacco. This is probably why I didn't stick with it. Got awfully tired of having a burnt tongue. One day while my wife and I were cleaning out a basement closet, I decided to throw away my pipes. She tried to talk me out of it, but sometimes I just won't listen to her. Out went a GBD, Kirsten, Falcon (sorry Larry) and about 4 - 5 other friends. I did keep my pipe rack though. I kind of liked the wood. After a few smokeless years, I started smoking cigars while chasing a little stupid white ball around the fields. My wife bought me a humidor from Danny and I even attended a couple cigar smokers. Then last year while in Columbus, I visited a tobacco store and bought a couple seconds with some good tobacco. Hooked again. Now I can't pass an out of town tobacco store without stopping in to buy a new pipe or two. The poor old humidor sits gathering dust and has only been visited twice since. With my collection hovering around 40 my friends ask, 'What do you do with so many pipes?' Naturally the answer is, 'Smoke 'em.'

-Dave Stewart

AN ADVENTURE IN SAMPLING PIPE TOBACCOS

by Andy Spencer

The past few months have been a real adventure in smoking a wide variety of different and sometimes new (to me, anyway) pipe tobaccos in preparation for this review. For a change, I can honestly

state that none were "bad" tobaccos. Some pleased my palate more than others, but my own bias for blends heavily based in Syrian Latakia aside I truly enjoyed some of the Virginias I have sampled, much to my surprise. This review is a compilation of "rearview mirror" looks at a number of pipe tobaccos, all of which I intend to include as permanent additions to the rotation of blends which I regularly smoke.

Let's begin with Dunhill's Three-Year Matured Virginia. This tinned tobacco is a very high quality blend of Virginias, and if it contains much else such a recipe was not readily discernable to my Latakia-deadened tastebuds. What was evident was a marriage of pure tobacco flavor through the tobacco having been pressed. It was enjoyable to rub the tobacco out and relish its tinned aroma, heady yet smooth and without any of what some view as the unpleasant traces of Latakia. I was genuinely surprised at how much I enjoyed this blend, as I used to not care much for Virginias. This is simply a superior smoke, unusually cool and even-smoking for a Virginia. Another plus is that this tobacco seems to smoke equally well in both larger, "stay-at-home" pipes and in smaller pieces which tuck neatly into a coat pocket when out and about. A definite winner!

Another tobacco of which I have but limited experience—although I plan to correct that problem as soon as I can hurry down to Riegel's to check their stock—is "Gordon Pym" from Dan Tobaccos in Germany. I actually came across this blend quite by accident. I had read a review of this blend in Pipes & Tobaccos magazine some while back, and had been meaning to obtain a sample to try. While visiting with fellow TSP&TC member James Horine, I was pleasantly surprised when a tin of this tobacco materialized onto his table. After being granted the honors of opening the new tin, looks of curiosity soon became grins as both of us took in the pleasing tin aroma. Make no mistake, this is most definitely not an aromatic, but rather had a much more honest, genuinely appealing tobacco quality which proved most pleasing to both of our noses. It only got better when we lit up, savoring the silky smooth aspect of its even-burning nature. It also proved to be a cool

smoke, not once threatening to bite the tongue despite the presence of some Virginia leaf in the blend. The Latakia in this blend may be Cyprian, although I cannot state that for a fact. It did seem somewhat smoother and sweeter than Syrian Latakia is usually, and lacked the latter's innate "smokiness." All in all, this blend may prove to be one of my very favorite smokes if it is consistent from tin to tin. It is also worth noting that Dan Tobacco produces a very high quality range of tobaccos, with even those blends which I do not care so much for being made of the very best ingredients. Another winner in Gordon Pym, for certain!

One of the more unusual and interesting blends I have sampled over the recent months came to me courtesy of TSP&TC member Mike Redding, who buys it from Dennis Hills at Riegel's Georgetown store on the northeast side of Fort Wayne. It is called "20-30 Blend," and Mike smokes little else in his pipes.

According to the note card enclosed in the plastic baggie, "20-30" consists of one part Latakia, one part "Turkish," one part Oriental, and two parts of a Virginia. This is a reasonably cool smoke, although you need to watch the pace at which you are smoking it when you get toward the bottom of the bowl. Still, it is a fairly cool smoke, especially considering the Virginia content. Were I to have this blend "tweaked" to my exact tastes, I would probably increase slightly the portions of Latakia and Oriental, and commensurately decrease the percentage of Virginia. However, I cannot fault it as it is, and will probably return to this blend from time to time both because it is an interesting change of pace as well as because it is a quality smoke. Good stuff, and I now understand why Mike is so fond of it.

One blend which some club members had not previously tried was Peterson's Irish Whiskey. I have long felt that this blend is the very best offering from the Peterson's label, and was gratified to see Marty Dodrill and several other TSP&TC members joining me in sharing an appreciation for this unique and different smoke while we tried it at the January club dinner at the Waynewood Inn.

According to the label on the tin, "Irish Whiskey" is a marriage of both "orange

and mahogany Virginia with aromatic Thailand Burley and Fired Kentucky leaf." No doubt it is the Kentucky leaf which appeals to this hillbilly transplant. Now, I make no pretense of being an expert at anything, whether it be wine tasting, tobacco evaluations or just about anything else. However, the light casing of Irish Whiskey with which this blend is "kissed" before being sealed into tins provides just the right special quality to this tobacco. Make no mistake, smoking this blend is not especially evocative of downing Bushmills or some other distinctly Irish libations, but it does make this blend a unique smoke. The taste is really hard to describe, as it does not really equate to any other taste with which I am familiar. I would add that while this is not one of my everyday smokes, I really like it—a lot! I have smoked it for a couple of years now, off and on, and find it to be a tasty change from the more usual fare at the local tobacconist. I have found in the past that Riegel's usually has this blend in stock, and if not they have been willing to order it if a reasonable quantity is ordered. Tins are usually snapped up pretty quickly, judging from their stock shelves. I am not sure of its current importer, as it had been

brought into the states by Max Rohr, whose business is based out of California. However, as I understand it he is no longer involved in the importation of Peterson pipes, which are now handled by Ashton. Whether or not Rohr still imports the Peterson line of tobaccos, I cannot say with any certainty. I sincerely hope this unique and special blend remains available, as the pipe world has lost too many outstanding tobaccos as importers and customer tastes have changed over the years.

Other than Gordon Pym, perhaps the most recent and certainly the most suprising tobacco I have found of late is called "Original Skandinavik." I found a pouch of this blend in, of all places, our local Walgreen's when I was picking up some items for my grandmother-in-law. Drawn by the "velvet red" coloration of its pouch and by the unusual and unfamiliar name, I picked up a sample and turned it over to see who made it. Much to my surprise, this blend is made by Peter Stokkebye! That's right—fine quality Stokkebye tobacco available in a local pharmacy. The world is indeed getting better, at least in some respects.

This is a blending of what are predominantly mature Virginias with toasted Burley. The tobacco is then,

according to the label information, pressed into cakes and presumably sits for awhile to marinate in its own juices until it is cut and rubbed out for easier use straight from the pouch. All the mumbo jumbo aside, I can tell you that this is without doubt one of the tastier blends I have tried. That is not to say it is without fault. Due to the overwhelming presence of the sweet Virginia leaf, its savory flavor is somewhat counterbalanced by its tendency to bite. Which is to say that, if you become careless and puff to quickly, "Skandinavik" will bite like an angry bulldog! This tendency to be rough on the tongue can be easily handled by smoking it in a large bowled pipe, and carefully controlling your pace by drawing only often enough to keep this blend lit, once you have it tamped, relit and burning steadily.

I really, really like Skandinavik despite its quirky nature, and intend to keep it as a locally obtainable alternative to my everyday Latakia favorites such as LondonBlend 1000 and "Rucksack," the latter a blend of tobaccos heavily reliant on Syrian Latakia. Rucksack will be one of the tobaccos reviewed in the next edition of our newsletter, along with "Old Fort." TSP&TC President Larry Rathburn has a source for both of these fine blends, and should be able to help interested members in obtaining them. Also up for review will be "Patriot Flake," which is another quality offering

Brateman's Inc.

Work clothes, footwear & accessories
5326 Coldwater Road, Ft. Wayne, IN 46825
Phone @ 219-484-8665
Fax @ 219-484-8713
Online @ www.bratemans.com

10% off of purchase



10% off of purchase
1428 Wells St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46808
219-424-0197
800-264-6369



Show your
membership card at
these stores for

OLD CROWN Coffee Roasters

Fort Wayne's 1st "Micro Coffee Roaster"

10% off of purchase
3410 North Anthony Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46805
219-422-JAVA
Toll Free @ 1-888-ROASTER



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

10% off of pipe purchase
Downtown / 624 S. Calhoun
Fort Wayne, IN 46802 424-1429
or
Georgetown Square
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
493-2806