

About Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club

The Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club was founded in the year 2000 by three friends (Larry Rathburn, Andy Spencer, and Dan Hudson) as a way for pipesmokers and enthusiasts to get together on a regular basis and share their fondness of pipes and tobacco.

Our members are from all over the greater Fort Wayne, Indiana area. Our informal meetings take place about 5:30 pm around the middle of each month in an area restaurant--one that is pipesmoker friendly of course.

Among our members are pipemakers, shop owners, estate pipe dealers, serious collectors and pipe smokers. Meeting nights are social events with pipes sold, bought, traded and more importantly smoked. Many tobaccos can be sampled and purchased. The informal discussions include pipemaking methods & materials, tobacco blends, pipemakers, new acquisitions and more. Members show their newly acquired pipes and the old favorites, including some one of kind pipes.

Our membership is somewhere around 20-25. We get anywhere from 8-15 on meeting nights. Our meetings are open to anyone who is interested and newcomers are always made to feel welcome. So if you are interested in stopping by, check our website or call one of our club leaders listed on the front of this newsletter for meeting information.

Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club recommends:



Fresh Handmade Cigars
Custom Blend Tobaccos
Maps-Magazines

Pipes & Tobaccos

3 Fort Wayne Locations

Downtown: 624 S Calhoun (260) 424-1429
6410 W Jefferson Blvd (260) 432-0002
George Square (260) 493-2806

<http://www.riegelspipeandtobaccos.com>

10% off pipe purchase with this ad

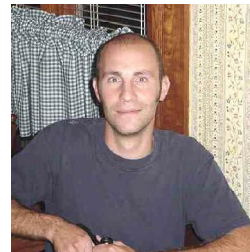
Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club



Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 3

"An informal society of pipe smoking friends" July, 2003

"Nowhere in the world will such a brotherly feeling of confidence be experienced as amongst those who sit together smoking their pipes. The results and merits of tobacco" 1844 Dr. Barnstein



Like Father Like Son by Paul Hubartt:

I find it very interesting how a son becomes like his father. Whether a son willingly tries to follow in his fathers footsteps, or tries to develop his individual self, somewhere, perhaps only deep inside, is always a reflection of Dad. More and more, when I look at my reflection in the mirror, I see an image of my father. We share many physical

attributes and many natural talents. We think a lot alike and approach life in many similar ways.

Dad and I are pretty tight. We have spent a lot of time together doing interesting things. We have taken college classes together, created exercise regimes, walked railways, fasted till we felt sick, and our favourite activity, driving around on Saturday mornings exploring new back roads. The best part of our relationship is all the great conversations. We share our inner struggles and day to day problems on a deep level. Somewhere along the way we quit being father and

Gentlemen "Start your engines!" "Light your Pipes!" TSPTC's First Freeform Pipe Smoking Contest

any pipe, any size, 3 grams any tobacco (scale will be available)

Next club meeting, Thursday July 10, 6 pm,

Bob Evans Restaurant, 5785 Coventry Pky, (US 24 & I69) Fort Wayne, IN

\$5 entry fee - 1st prize wins a pipe from Reigels

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Larry Hubartt (574) 566-2796 lhubartt@tsptc.org

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(Like Father Like Son, continued) son and started being best friends. The "father and son" relationship never disappears, however, nor would I ever want it to. I have often heard that other men are envious of our relationship, because of how often Dad and I are seen doing things together. We have figured out how to communicate and respect each other. I am very proud to have a dad like Dad.

My best and most recent times with Dad have been our adventures in the pipe world. We have attended numerous pipe shows and club meetings together. We have taken long road trips where we sampled and discussed various tobaccos for hours at a time. Dad and I have taken many trips to Chicago to sort out my visas so I could live here in England. Those were great pipe smoking trips. We dropped in on Iwan Ries and left with different blends from GL Pease among other goodies. We ate at an exotic Indian restaurant one trip and ate cold spaghetti on the back of my pickup on another. They were all good times. Good company, good tobacco and good conversations. Those are my latest memories of Dad before moving to England, and I cherish them more than all my pipes put together.

Sometimes, we seem to be so much alike that it causes tension between us. Dad is a Bible teacher, and his true North direction in life is developing into the man God wants him to be. I like to learn about the Bible, but sometimes I get frustrated about spiritual things and have difficulty discussing my struggles. I tend to get very upset and defensive when talking about such subjects. Pipe smoking, for whatever reason, makes it easier to discuss heavy topics. Perhaps it creates a more relaxing, lighter atmosphere. Perhaps I feel closest to Dad when we smoke together. Some of our best discussions were times we drove home together after a club meeting.

It was Dad that rekindled my interest in pipes. A few years ago our family began vacationing each Memorial weekend at Mongo, Indiana on the Pigeon river. At first, it was a "men only" fishing retreat until the women folk horned in on it! It was a very wet spring in '97. The Pigeon river had swollen far out of it's banks. Even the surrounding wood was deep in flood water, which made navigation by boat very difficult. The water was so high that the river seemed to vanish in thickly wooded areas. Dad, Bart (my brother in law), and I decided to explore the flooded river. It turned into an unexpected but wonderful adventure! Several miles from camp, the trolling motor quit working, so we had to resort to using the oars. Then one of the oar brackets broke. Dad lost his hat while trying to navigate a rough section of river with the one oar. Our one saving grace was a box of tobacco (continued on page 6)

"...if I had not smoked I should have been dead ten years ago."

-Francois Guizot (French historian), upon being asked how he lived so long despite his smoking

Cloud 9

Pipe Blend Reviews

by Sherman Carver

Solani Red Label, Blend 131 Scotch Whiskey



This aromatic blend contains bright and red Virginias, burley, sweet black cavendish, and a touch of single malt scotch whiskey. Blend 131 has a nice pleasant aroma in the can before smoking. It packs well with no problems in big or small pipes but my best result was in a medium size pipe. In smoking the 1st half of the bowl I found it to be a very interesting smoke-- nice and smooth and easy on the tongue. But by the middle of the pipe but it started getting hot from (maybe from the whiskey flavoring) and toward the end of the pipe it was definitely hot and not what I was expecting--and I bought the 100 gram tin instead of the 50 gram since I'm an adventurous person. Oh well, this doesn't mean that I won't try other Solani tobaccos .

Til next time, keep puffing away and maybe one of these days you'll find a blend that is your CLOUD NINE...

(Like Father Like Son, continued) pre-drilled briar block and started the research necessary to find out how to make pipes. General information is limited, so I started writing to several pipe makers. Thanks to all the great info they provided, I successfully made my first pipe. I have made several pipes now, some better than others. I enjoy it so much, and I find pipe making very fulfilling. My hope is that I will make a name for myself and turn the art into a full time career. Pipe making is very difficult, but well rewarding. I won't go into the details now, but I plan on writing a separate column on pipe making.

That's the story of my pipe smoking journey as I remember it. I'm glad I discovered pipes. I'm glad I have such a great dad to share the hobby with. Living in England is a wonderful experience. Every day is a new adventure, and the landscape never ceases to hold my attention. I sure do think a lot about Indiana, though. I miss the club. I miss driving around with my Dad. I miss smoking with him. I plain ol' miss him. I guess these good memories will have to do until we see each other again. -- Paul Hubartt

(Like Father Like Son, continued from page 2) items Dad stowed away. Among the "Backwoods" and "Middleton" cigars were two pipes and loose tobacco. I picked up a Missouri Meerschaum and filled it (incorrectly) with a sweet smelling tobacco. We guys smoked until our tongues were raw. I wasn't all too impressed with that pipe smoking experience, but the fond memory of a great day with Dad made it all worthwhile.

I wasn't interested in pipes again until the following spring. Bart and I decided to go camping and do a little fishing. Thinking about the previous year's pipe adventure, I wanted to get my own pipe. I bought a Freedom Smoking Pipe. It was made of hard maple, and had a leather cap and stainless steel mesh bottom. The pipe is designed to light from the bottom, and burn upwards. It is supposed to stay bone dry and deliver a very cool smoke. Well, it did burn dry, but I still walked away with a severely blistered tongue.

It wasn't until I met Danny Hudson that I ventured into pipe smoking again. He showed me a few pipes, mostly Stanwells. I liked the look of one in particular and bought it the next day. Dan also told me about the pipe club. I wasn't really interested in that sort of thing at the time. After reading through a couple back issues of Pipes and Tobaccos magazines, I realized that there was a lot more to smoking pipes than I had ever imagined. I was fascinated by all the unique shapes and textures of pipes. My true fascination was with the articles about pipe makers. I decided I wanted to learn all about the pipe world, and the first step was to join TSPTC.

Through the club, I met a lot of fine fellows that have influenced me today. I have always been a bit of an anti-social creature, but that bad characteristic has greatly diminished through my involvement TSPTC. I often came home from a meeting all excited and told Dad all about it. I think my excitement interested him. Dad would also look through my PT magazines, and was keen to try all the tobaccos I would bring home. Dad had dusted off his old pipes and was trying new blends.

After attending his first TSPTC show, he was hooked. That is when we started enjoying our new hobby together. As I learned more about the hobby, it opened up a new world of excitement that brushed off on Dad. I suppose you could say that we fired each other up for the hobby.

I can't really explain why pipes are important to me. I don't even smoke them every day. Mostly, I like to hold the wood and examine the lines and curves. It is the quality craftsmanship that I appreciate so much. Most of my collection now consists of American hand made pipes, such as JT Cooke, Roush, Mickles, Weiner, Riley and Bonaquisti. I sit and study the design and texture of my pipes every day. One day, it dawned on me, "I can make a good pipe." After much encouragement from my wife, I bought a (continued on page 7)

"Pipe and Pen"

by clubmember Andy Spencer (our resident philosopher)



Children can be remarkably accurate in their observations of the adults around them. All too often we dismissively remark that "children say the darndest things," but in truth they often see us as we are unable to see ourselves. This can be either a positive or a negative thing, in my opinion, as kids can be rather blunt, even starkly so, in their honest appraisals of those around them.

Just the other day my oldest son, Trevor, commented that he knew an individual who personified his ideal of a pipe-smoker- in other words, a person who just "looked right" with a pipe. Without even having to think about it I asked him if he was referring to TSPTC founder and good friend Larry Rathburn, to which he looked surprised that I had figured his reference out so quickly.

Truth is, I really didn't have to stop and think at all. Though some of us may have smoked a pipe as long as has Larry, very few will ever look as "natural" with one. I bring this subject up because Larry has just recently undergone a successful double transplant, receiving both a new kidney and a pancreas, as well. I am certain that all club members will join me in keeping Larry at the top of our prayer list and foremost in their thoughts. Even when everything goes right organ transplants are still complex trials, requiring much time and adjustment as the patient recuperates.

Back to pipes and appearances, however. Despite protestations on the part of many pipesters that they aren't vain, enough pipe shops have mirrors on hand- presumably so that prospective pipe buyers can see how they look while grasping (or, with protective plastic sleeves, holding in their mouth) a given pipe. Although "pride of ownership" and (our own subjective) aesthetic sensibilities come into play and thus influence our taste in pipes, nonetheless most of us wouldn't be at all concerned with how a pipe looks, let alone how we look with said pipe, if we weren't just a tad bit vain.

Perhaps no one looks more at home with a pipe than do farmers who feed their stock and get in crops in all sorts of weather. I've known a number of such hardy individuals, and frankly envy them their ability to puff unhurriedly on their pipes as they turned a wrench while working on their tractor. Sadly, I cannot even carry on a decent conversation without inadvertently allowing my pipe to sputter and die out, let alone complete more complex tasks like, say, puffing while strolling about on an autumn day or any of the other functions which other pipesters seem to be adept enough to do.

Conversely, I do tend to "baby" my pipes somewhat. I certainly don't think that a favored Castello or Dunhill would be well treated (continued next page)

(Pipe and Pen continued from page 3) to tap out the dottle on a fencepost or a boot heel, as some of my aforementioned farming friends have been known to do. For outdoor use, I would really like to see more rusticated pipes and sandblasts with hinged windcaps. I prefer the hinged variety because you can adjust the angle of the opening, thereby optimizing airflow for the conditions (actually, a combination of variables such as the wind, type of tobacco, smoking style of owner, etc.) at hand. Likewise, I strongly prefer rusticated and sandblast pipes for traveling in cars or outdoor use, as well, because one need not be constantly worried about scratching or otherwise marring a high-grade smooth piece.

Another point in favor of non-smooths with adornment, whether it be precious metals or what-not, is the interesting contrast between the rough finish of the pipe and the highlighted accents of the adornment. This contrast is equally interesting in a gold- or silver-banded pipe, a pipe with a windcap made of a precious metal, or one with a horn or bamboo ferrule. It has long been my contention that finely grained smooths need no such adornment, although I must confess I own a few exceptions to this view. Generally speaking, though, some pipes can be a bit too "overdone," with so much adornment as to be "over the top." I'd much prefer a pipe to be classy, even a touch understated, rather than so flashy and attention-grabbing as are some pipes intentionally made to be.

Some old-line British pipe companies, particular such conservatively influenced notables as Dunhill, have long stained even some of their more finely grained smooths with a relatively dark finish so as to reduce the impact of flashy grain and instead focus attention on the impeccable workmanship and lines. Art is indeed in the eye of the beholder, although I sometimes wish that Dunhill in particular would allow some of their better grained pipes to depart the factory without the equivalent of dark shoe polish for a finish. Actually, in all fairness I should point out that they do have some spectacular natural-finished straight-grains in their line, but they charge prices which are beyond what might charitably be referred to as "premium" for such pieces. Dummies are fine pipes, but at no point should they command the same prices as an S. Bang or a Chenowitsch. Indeed, one could quite reasonably observe that no pipes should occupy the rarified stratosphere of two-to-three thousand dollars apiece, but then that is an entirely separate topic. As my wife has so often observed, much to my and Al Geyer's amusement, "That's criminal!" -- Andy Spencer

Your invitation to get in print

Do you like to write? Got any thoughts or musings on the gentle art of pipe smoking? Do you have any good poems or quotes? I know some of you can write a good piece. Simply email whatever you have to lhubart@tsptc.org.

There can be no doubt that smoking nowadays is largely a miserable automatic business. People use tobacco without ever taking an intelligent interest in it. They do not experiment, compare, fit the tobacco to the occasion. A man should always be pleasantly conscious of the fact that he is smoking."

-John Boynton Priestley

Dottle and Ashes Pipe Notes by Andy Spencer

I recently read an item description on a huge meerschaum pipe for sale on ebay. The seller claimed that the highest quality meerschaum deposits are not found near any major body of water at all. This claim piqued my curiosity, as I had always read that meerschaum was mined from offshore deposits near land in the Mediterranean and also off coastal Africa (presumably in the western portion of that continent).

At any rate, the seller went on to write that the very best meerschaum only comes from the open plains of central Turkey which surrounds the small city of Eskisehir. Meerschaum there is mined from depths of up to 400 feet from what must be a small lake, although the pipe seller did not elaborate on that point. Carvers by the meerschaum in various sized blocks or lumps called "stones," then hand either immediately carve while the meerschaum is still wet or, if it has dried, apply water to soften the meerschaum right before carving.

This claim was of great interest to me, and although I've been too busy with other commitments to chase down that claim to see if it can be verified, someone else may wish to do so. I have always been puzzled that more of our merry bunch at TSPTC do not smoke meerschaums, at the very least on an occasional basis. I really enjoy my own modest collection of meers, and know that former club member (wherever he may be) Rob Catherwood and current TSPTC President Larry Hubartt also relish smoking their meerschaums. They are fragile, and some of the cheaper ones do not always have properly fitted stems are well-aligned draft holes.

These problems generally have not plagued the more expensive meers with which I have had any experience, though. I believe Riegel's has just a relatively few meerschaums at both their downtown and Georgetown stores, and maybe only one or two still left at Riegel's west after Brandon Becker bought a gorgeous, huge Sherlock Holmes meerschaum pipe there. If you haven't tried one, I would urge you to give it a go! Very cool smoking pipes!