

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
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3 Fort Wayne Locations

Downtown: 624 S Calhoun (260) 424-1429
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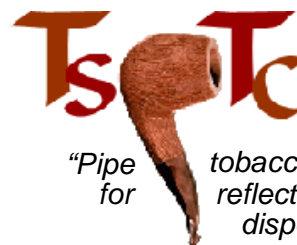
10% off pipe purchase with this ad

Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 6

Feb 2004

"An informal society of
pipe smoking friends"



"Pipe
for

*tobacco is a companion in solitude; it is a storehouse
reflection and gives time for the fumes of wrath to
disperse."*

-- Japanese author

What makes a Good Smoke?

by Mark Tinsley, American Smoking Pipe Co.



In the past few weeks posters have been discussing and evaluating the relative importance of briar in smoking pipes. I think there are other factors equally important that while obvious to the experienced smoker may not be evident to the newbie. There are times when the experience of pipe smoking is indescribable. The subtle, textured taste of your favorite tobacco is a pleasure to behold.

Unfortunately every smoke is not like that.

Of foremost importance in getting a good smoke is finding a tobacco that tastes good and smokes well. When I first started smoking a pipe I started on, what else, Middleton's Cherry Blend and a corncob. I still remember glimmers of good taste before my tongue was reduced to char by that hot burning blend. I think it was that hint of good taste that kept me smoking. While working for Jack Weinberger I was exposed to Tinder Box blends and smoked their Crown Royale. Working for a pipe maker I had a free supply of good pipes too. However, while Crown Royale was better than Cherry Blend, that elusive good smoke wasn't there for me yet.

Sometime in the early 80's I discovered Georgetown Tobacco. I wound up smoking one of their blends for a while that was made by Lane Ltd. Its trade name is I-Q. That blend tasted similar to the Vanilla flavored Crown Royale but it burnt better. I remember CR as being kind of gooey toward

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CLUB OFFICERS

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“Pipe and Pen”

by clubmember Andy Spencer (our resident philosopher)



Winter: To borrow a phrase, winter is the time of year which breeds a general sense of discontent in me. Oh sure, I enjoy logs burning in the fireplace as they give off a cheerful glow. Who could not enjoy family and friends coming together as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ during the Christmas season, or the celebration of a New Year—hopefully filled with the promise of all the things we had

planned to do and and accomplish the previous 12 months?

Still, after those hope-filled, inspiring holidays pass and the winter cold settles in it becomes a waiting game. Obligations, activities and commitments take up much of what had formerly been free time, and I do savor those rare moments when I’m able to enjoy a pipeful of tobacco in quiet contemplation. At least with the days once again becoming longer there is more daylight, which buoys my spirits somewhat.

For many of us, though, winter is a span of several months through which we are essentially marking time. It is generally too cold to spend much time out-of-doors, let alone with a pipe which may become cracked or otherwise damaged by allowing the heated bowl to have prolonged exposure to the cold outside air. In that way autumn seems more ideal, as one can putter about the yard while performing chores and still enjoy their pipe as they work. Fall is also an ideal time to take long walks with the family dog, or to sit out and gaze at the stars in cool of the evening. It is a contemplative time, and fairly cries out for a pipe as a companion for our musings and activities.

Then again I very much look forward to springtime. It is a period of rebirth and renewal as the land once again turns green, and life-giving rains descend to help that process along. Some of my favorite memories are of sitting out on my parents’ covered back porch (down south we have “porches” in lieu of the patios and decks) during spring thunderstorms, taking in nature’s sound and fury while puffing away on a favorite pipe in a state of complete contentment. (continued pg 4)



From your club president, Larry Hubartt: Ladies & Gentlemen, Welcome to the Feb 2004 issue of the TSPTC Newsletter! At our club meeting earlier this month, I was chatting with Jim Wolf who mentioned to me that one of his original interests in our club was learning more of the skills and techniques of the gentle art of pipe smoking—like “how to properly pack a pipe”, for example.

Well Jim, (and the rest of us as well), this month’s issue contains two such articles: Mark Tinskey’s “*What Makes a Good Smoke*” and “*Learning How to Pack a Pipe*” by yours truly. Hope you all enjoy this issue! If you’d like to write an article or musing for the newsletter (long or short) don’t hesitate. It’s your newsletter! LH

Cloud 9

Pipe Blend Reviews, by Sherman Carver

McClelland’s “Virginia 2010”

This is a great tobacco for many reasons and the best part is that it’s available in bulk at Reigel’s Georgetown store, so you can try out one or two ounces before buying a larger quantity. (so many tins on the market today don’t give much of a description on the label and you can waste a lot of money trying out blends that you end up not liking).

Classic “Virginia 2010” is a smooth, sweet, zesty tobacco which should be pleasing to any lover of Virginia tobaccos. Clean burning and naturally sweet, this blending of Eastern and Western belt Virginias is not cased but is still sweet enough to make aromatic fans happy. 2010 burned perfectly in the bowl, not too hot, with almost no tounge bite. Still, as with most McClelland Virginias, it requires careful smoking. This is probably not a blend for new pipe smokers but more for experienced slow smokers. It could easily be an all day smoke.

Another reason I like this tobacco is that since it’s so naturally sweet it mixes well into other blends without altering their distinctiveness.



(*Good Smoke cont.*) the bottom. As I became a more experienced smoker I was able to consistently pack a pipe better, draw the smoke more evenly and control the burn. Though the good smoke, wasn't consistent yet. While I was able to get I-Q at almost any good shop it suffered from a lot of the problems associated with aromatics.

In my quest to find a better burning tobacco that still has a sweet taste I experimented and liked Mac Barren's Golden Extra and a few years later their Navy Flake. I now smoke these blends exclusively and one in one set of pipes and one in another. When I get a new pipe I smoke it with the Golden Extra, if its not sweet it usually works great for the Navy Flake. Golden Extra seems to smoke best in shorter straighter bowls, Navy Flake in tapers. I m very happy with this two tobacco, two set of pipes situation. Most of the time I get a really fine smoking experience with it.

I realize there are other factors involved. One I rotate my pipes a lot. I try not to smoke one more than once a week. Is this strictly necessary? Probably not, but I usually get a good smoke when I do this

I think a great factor in tobacco tasting good is temperature. Many people talk about Canadians smoking cool. As an experiment a few years back I made sort of a water pipe without the water. I used a briar free standing bowl connected to a three foot tube that I fitted over a regular bit. It smoked cool, very cool, but tasted lousy. Kind of like cold pizza tastes. Tobacco needs some heat to bring out its flavor. Too much or too little and its unpalatable. I've never heard any studies done on this but I would bet there is a certain temperature envelope where tobacco tastes the best. I think this is why I prefer smoking indoors where I can control the airflow into the pipe better.

In summary I think the most important factors in a good smoke are a good tasting, good burning tobacco, and a good pipe. When I say good pipe I mean one that is broken in, dry, and not sealed with lacquer and soaked in stain. I think for a pipe to function well in the long run it needs to have some grain which facilitates the pipes drying function. For a newbie I'd recommend pipes without any stain in the bowls or even any coloring on the outside. Don't worry about the fills. Peterson makes a nice line of Natural seconds that are excellent starter pipes. Lastly, experience in controlling the burn, keeping the tobacco warm enough to taste good but not so hot as to burn

I guess if this was easy there would be a lot more pipe smokers. A great smoke is the result of experimenting and practice. People who are seeking immediate gratification generally aren't pipe smokers. For those who take the time to find a Good Smoke, the wait is well worth it. *MT*

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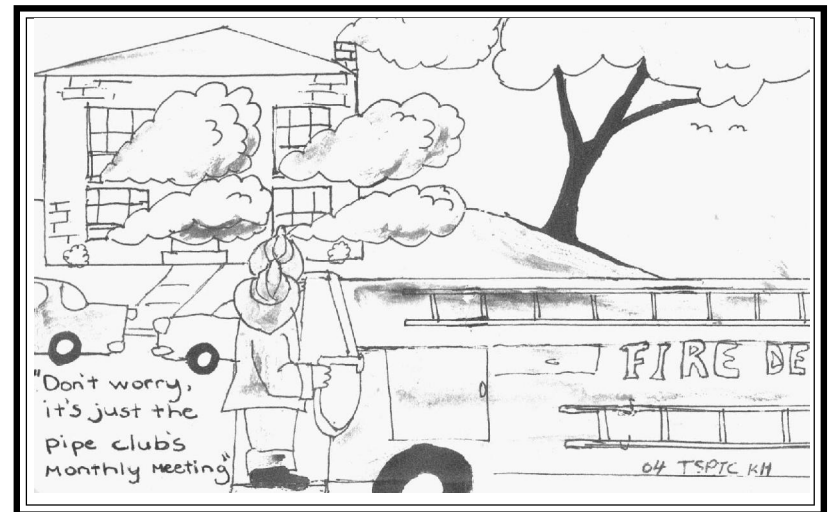
"Diplomacy is entirely a question of the weed. I can always settle a quarrel if I know beforehand whether the plenipotentiary smokes Cavendish, Latakia, or Shag." -Lord Clarendon (English Foreign Secretary)

Some Blends of Note

I recently made the "mistake" of insisting that Al Geyer try some Patriot Flake tobacco that I had on hand. In order to fully appreciate what happened, you first need some background. Al had previously tried several flakes yours truly had recommended, but was wholly unimpressed with them. Even MacBaren's Navy Flake, one of my very favorites, failed to excite his palate. Then again, Al is less taken with burley than am I and probably thought the virginia leaf was too thoroughly subdued by the burley in that MacBaren's product even though to my tastes it is just about perfect.

Well, Al seems to have had an entirely different reaction to CAO's excellent Patriot Flake as he e-mailed to extol its virtues. He closed his commentary by declaring that I would not be seeing the rest of my tin of Patriot Flake. Something about possession being 9/10's of the law or some similar nonsense. Had an almost maniacal laugh, too, as he claimed possession of the tin. Our Mr. Hyde had become Dr. Jekyll, all apparently because of coveting the rest of my tin of Patriot Flake! You never really know some people...

Luckily my sons had gotten me a gift certificate from Riegel's, and so I used that thoughtful present to acquire another tin of Patriot Flake to age for a few months before sampling. What is amazing about this blend, at least to me, is that it is very cool-smoking for a virginia-based tobacco yet it brings to the party all of the flavor and complexity of a good virginia. If you haven't tried this one yet I heartily recommend it. I'm pretty certain Al will be glad to have you try some of his supply of it.
AS



Cartoon by Kevin Hooley

(*Pipe & Pen cont.*) Sometimes we must snap out of our reverie and self-pity, however. We are all inclined toward “the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence” syndrome. Better to enjoy the snowball fights and build snowforts with youngsters than to grumble about how the winter brings on aches and pains. Carpe diem, seize the day! And so I shall endeavor to do, even now as I have loaded and lit a just-arrived Dunhill estate pipe with an unmarked latakia blend (possibly some well-aged EMP—it certainly has an aroma and taste which is evocative of that blend) and am relishing every gentle, effortless puff. To your health and your friendship, gentlemen. ‘Sides, springtime will be here soon enough...just in time for us to complain about the rain, and tornado warnings, and, well, you get my drift. AS

Perique Tobacco from Nichols & Brown Tobacco Co.

What is Perique Tobacco? Perique is a spice tobacco, usually used in Virginia blends. It has a dark, oily appearance, and a taste of pepper and figs. Its flavor is very strong, so it isn't usually found in high percentages in a blend. It can be smoked straight, but isn't intended to be.

Its role as a complement to VA's is not just because of its flavor. Being acidic, it tends to alleviate alkaline tongue bite, which is so often a problem with Virginia tobacco.

What is the History of Perique? The process by which this tobacco is produced pre-dates Columbus. The Choctaw Indians of (what would later be) Louisiana would make it by pressing it into hollow logs with a long pole, and securing it with weights.

After the Acadians (Cajuns) settled the area in the mid-1700's, the Choctaws taught this process to a French colonist by the name of Pierre Chenet. The finished product was referred to as Perique, a Cajun variation on the word "prick". This referred either to the phallic shape of the carottes (the tight bundles of market-ready Perique), or Chenet himself, as it was his nickname!

Where is Perique Grown? The only place in the world Perique can be grown is in a small section of Louisiana called St. James Parish. Inside St. James Parish, the best location for growing (and the only place it's grown now) is a very small area called Grande Pointe Ridge, which can be found in the town (*Continued pg.7*)

Hermit Tobacco Works Company
P.O.Box 669, Pioneer, Ohio 43554
Phone: 517.567.2202 Jay@PipeStyle.com

All Hermit Tobacco blends are all natural, chemical and preservative free, making them perfect for storing. Each blend is carefully blended in small batches, stoved and aged in antique containers, and then hand tinned to insure the highest quality.

www.pipestyle.com

Pipe World News in Focus

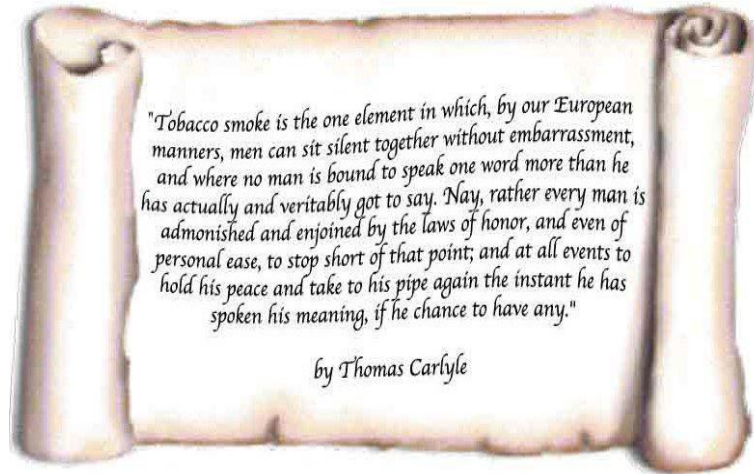
Some sad news to pass along in this newsletter. Florida-based tamper maker Fred Loveland has passed away after a courageous fight with cancer. I met Fred several years back at the NASPC pipe and tobacco show in Columbus, Ohio. Fred was a friendly, easy-going fellow who could take just about any castoff material or object and make it into an objet d'art type tamper. A very creative, innovative sort of gentleman, Fred had more recently devoted much of his time to crafting handmade stringed musical instruments, and doubtless excelled in that endeavor, as well. He will definitely be missed, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his brother and to the rest of his family.

Also heard of another sort of “passing” the other day as the Georg Jensen pipe factory has closed, apparently for good. Some flux is to be expected in any marketplace, but I was particularly sorry to hear about the demise of Jensen pipes. While the quality of their product had not always been consistent, most Jensens are very well-liked by their owners. Jensen pipes represented one of the very best pipes for a reasonable (less than \$100, and often sub-\$50 range) price to be found.

The good news is that there apparently exists such a surplus of Jensens in European pipe shops that there should be an available supply for the foreseeable future. I don't as of yet know of a specific source for these pipes, but for anyone looking for a relatively inexpensive new pipe which offers good value and a fine smoking experience I would recommend getting ahold of a Jensen and giving it a try. It is doubtful that they will ever become collector items but there just aren't that many pipes in that price-range which offer as good a smoke as do Jensen pipes. Good thing we still have Stanwell, Karl Erik, Nording, and Willmer to occupy that niche! AS

Learning How to Pack a Pipe

by Larry Hubartt



Welcome to new members

who have joined TSTPC during the past year: **Stan Edwards** of Ft. Wayne; **Kevin Hooley** of Delphos, OH; **Scott Curtis** of Mishawaka, IN; **Jeff Madaus** of Culver, IN; **Jay & Louise Jones** (Hermit Tobacco) of Pioneer OH. A warm "welcome aboard" to all of you!



BRIAR BOOKS: Ben Rapaport has written a book that belongs on the shelf or coffee table of every collector of tobacco related art objects. In large format, beautifully printed, bound, and copiously illustrated, *Collecting Antique Meerschaum Pipes* (Schiffer) has a short but definitive introductory text, a pricing guide, and many full color plates of some of the most exquisitely wrought, carved meerschaum pipes and cigar holders, most from the latter part of the 19th century.

Rapaport, an acknowledged authority on the subject, with several books and lots of articles to his credit, says that antique meerschaum is the "blue-chip stock of tobacco collectibles." The book is a pleasure to read or browse through. List priced at \$49.95, it is available from the publisher, (610) 593 1777, fax (610) 593 2002; or autographed by the author, from Antiquarian Tobacciana, (703) 435-8133 (evenings only).

A pipe must be packed properly to ensure a good smoke; However, learning to do this takes time and practice. In fact, the art of packing a pipe is the most difficult task associated with pipe smoking, and this can be very frustrating for the beginner. I suspect that most people who have given up on trying to learn to smoke a pipe did so primarily because they couldn't master packing a bowl quickly enough to suit them.

If you are having a hard time getting the hang of it, you might want to try a method suggested by Mike Butera of Butera Pipe Co. Mike recommends chopping the tobacco, reducing the ribbons into rectangles or squares about 1/4" long. This method can make the task of packing a bowl much easier. Mike describes the technique in the Winter 1996/97 issue of *Pipes & Tobacco Magazine*. He says:

The most common technique for packing a pipe is the "three layer" method. I like to start off new pipe smokers--or experienced pipe smokers trying a new cut--by having them chop their tobacco. To get an enjoyable smoke, you need to learn how to pack a pipe with your chosen tobacco. And chopping tobacco is the fastest, easiest way to move right to enjoyable smoking experiences.

I promise you can pack your bowl just right if you chop your tobacco. And I mean to literally chop it with a knife to the point you can grab a pinch of tobacco and gravity feed your pipe. In other words, you simply drop the tobacco into the bowl, and it falls directly to the bottom.

I use a wooden cutting board to chop my tobacco. I take a whole can of tobacco and grab a large cutting knife. Normally I take a medium handful of tobacco, squeeze it together tightly and then cut it quickly. Chop it up until you get the size of pieces you can gravity feed easily into your pipe, roughly one-fourth inch. You don't ever want to be in the situation where you feel you have to stuff the tobacco into the bowl by force.

After you chop your tobacco, toss it a little bit so that the different tobaccos in your blend become distributed in proper proportions. That way, when you light your pipe, you will get the full impact of the way the blend is supposed to taste. You will begin to get the feel of "proper packing" your pipe the very first time you gravity feed with chopped tobacco. Now that your tobacco is chopped, fill your pipe by the "three layer" method.

(continued on next page)

(Pack a Pipe cont.) Start by filling the pipe bowl to the top by gravity feeding only. Then press the tobacco half way down into the bowl using your finger or a tamper. This will teach you to avoid packing the tobacco too tight at the bottom of the bowl. Then gravity feed it to the top again; press it down to about a quarter of an inch from the top. Gravity feed it again a little above the top of the bowl and tamp it down tight, even with the top of the bowl.

The objective is to end up with a bowl that is evenly packed from top to bottom; this is done by packing each layer progressively tighter. Trickle tobacco into the bowl until it is slightly overfull, then press very lightly with your finger until the bowl appears half full. Fill the pipe again and press down until the pipe is 2/3 to 3/4 full. Then, overfill the pipe and press the top layer down fairly firmly. When finished the tobacco should feel “springy” to the touch. If it has no give at all, it’s packed too tight. If a touch leaves an indentation, it is packed too loosely.

Finally, test the “draw” by sucking air through the unlit pipe; the resistance should be about like that felt when sipping a drink through a straw. If the draw doesn’t feel right, then empty the bowl and start over. A slightly different touch must be used depending on the size of the bowl and the cut and moisture level of the tobacco, but this will become second nature with experience.

You will be surprised how delicious the pipe tobacco tastes because you get the full impact of the total blend from the first draw. A ribbon cut tobacco, for example, may consist of Turkish Oriental, Latakia and Virginia. The first pinch you grab from a fresh can of tobacco may be mainly Virginia or possibly one of the other tobaccos in the blend. Smoking a bowl of tobacco this way will not be representative of the total blend at all.

Another benefit of this system is that it will teach you not to pack the bowl too tightly; too tight can cause tongue bite. With a tightly packed bowl, you tend to pull too hard, which in turn creates a high concentration of hot, moist smoke. This steam (not the tobacco) directly hitting the tongue is what causes bite. The same steam problem comes from tobacco packed too loosely.

Using this system, you will probably progress toward enjoyable smoking much more quickly than the months of trial and error usually required to get th hang of properly packing your pipe. *LH*

Perique cont.) of Paulina. This is due to both the climate, and the unusual soil of the area, which is referred to as "Magnolia" soil. Nourished by the swamps that surround Grande Pointe, Magnolia is a dark and highly fertile alluvial soil.

The actual strain of tobacco can vary, although tobacco that isn't native to the soils of Louisiana doesn't yield a good product. Supposedly the most common strain used with Perique is something called "red burley". St. James Perique is extremely rare, so the tobacco is produced elsewhere to meet demands, though without the same results. Kentucky Green River Burley is most commonly used to make Perique. This particular version is the Perique that most pipe smokers are familiar with.

How Is Perique Made? At harvest time, the wilted leaves of the tobacco are hung up to dry for two weeks, stripped of hard veins, and packed into bundles (called torquettes). These torquettes are put into barrels under extreme pressure, and allowed to cure in their own juices (which collect as run-off at the top of the barrels). Over the course of many months, these bundles are periodically "turned", and then placed again under pressure in the barrels. Without any air to interact with the tobacco, Perique ferments anaerobically, producing the distinctive taste.

Is Perique Endangered? There is only one farm left that produces this leaf full-time: Percy Martin Farms in Grande Pointe Ridge, Louisiana. After two bad crop years in the late 1990's, there was a distinct possibility that Percy Martin would stop producing it also. But a partnership was formed in 1999 between Martin and New Orleans company Nichols and Brown, bringing badly needed stability to this tiny market.

With interest from cigarette manufacturers, as well as from pipe tobacco companies, it's possible that other farmers in Grande Pointe Ridge will begin growing Perique, though for the moment its future is uncertain. As a low-return, labor-intensive product, it doesn't appeal to most farmers.

Where Can I Buy Perique? Bulk perique can be purchased anywhere that offers blending tobaccos. Some commonly-known retailers of blending tobaccos are as follows: * Cornell and Diehl * Vegas Smokes * Tobacco Direct * Reigel's Pipe & Tobacco

What Are Some Popular Perique Blends? * Escudo Navy Deluxe, A&C Petersen * Black Parrot, Ashton * No. 2 Virginia Mixture, Astley's * * Three Nuns, Bell's * Kingfisher, Butera * Elizabethan Mixture, Dunhill * * Dorchester, Esoterica Tobacciana * Dunbar, Esoterica Tobacciana * Haddo's Delight, G.L. Pease * Roll Cake, Mac Baren * Bulk No. 2015 Virginia Flake, McClelland * St. James Woods, McClelland * 633, Solani