

About Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club

The Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club was founded in 1999 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.

Most of our members are from 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 35. 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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Pipes & Tobaccos

3 Fort Wayne Locations

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<http://www.riegelspipeandtobaccos.com>

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Tri State Pipe & Tobacco Club Newsletter



"An informal society
of pipe smoking friends"

October 2006

"If'n I
a long

had known how much fun smokin' was, I would have started
time ago". --Tom Sawyer, the Movie, 1973

Larry Rathburn voted Club President, Emeritus



Welcome to the October 2006 issue of the Tri-State Pipe and Tobacco Club newsletter! It is our great pleasure to announce that, in appreciation of TSPTC co-founder and first president Larry Rathburn, club members unanimously voted at our June meeting to honor his numerous contributions to TSPTC by declaring him President Emeritus.

The original concept for a pipe club serving the tri-state area of Indiana, Michigan and Ohio was Larry Rathburn's vision. Thus it was in the year 1999 that Larry, along with friends Andy Spencer and Dan Hudson, established Fort Wayne-based Tri-State Pipe and Tobacco Club for area pipesmokers and enthusiasts to get together on a regular basis so as to share their experiences with and fondness for pipes and pipe tobaccos. TSPTC membership has now grown to 35 members, some as far away as Arizona, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and even England! Our long distance members participate and stay in touch through our club bulletin board on the Worldwide Web (www.tsptc.org/phpBB) as well as via our club newsletter.

Larry Rathburn is an accomplished pipesmoker, as well as being a highly knowledgeable pipe-and-tobacciana historian who has performed extensive research on the tobacco history of the northern Indiana region. He has authored "The History of the Fort Wayne Falcon Featherweight, Fine Pipes Designed and Manufactured by Kenly C. Bugg, Fort Wayne, Indiana." Indeed, Larry's exhaustive research of all things tobacciana, including the many Fort Wayne-manufactured cigar brands in the city's past, along with his incredible collection encompassing pipes, cigars, tobaccos, presses, related literature and other tobacciana are displayed in an astonishingly authentic recreation of a classic pipe-and-cigar store. Housed as a large, comfortably appointed enclosed room in his basement, Larry's labor of love is in reality so very much more than a simple storefront recreation thanks to the many years of collecting and research which he poured into that effort. (Continued page 2)

President Emeritus, continued In recent years Larry has also developed into a talented pipemaker, and although he does not produce pipes commercially but rather for (continued on page 2)his own enjoyment Larry's constant quest for excellence is quite evident in the fine pipes which he has thus far turned out.

The current leadership and general membership of Tri-State Pipe and Tobacco are forever indebted to Larry Rathburn's contributions to this organization, and are extremely grateful for the role he has played over the years in leading and directing the club from which we derive so much pleasure and fellowship. We are therefore delighted to permanently honor him as TSPTC President Emeritus.

" Off the Rack" Interview with Dennis Hills
by club secretary, Ray Franklin



Well everyone, another pipe so to speak has been removed from the shelf this month for the TSPTC "Off the Rack" article. This person is very special to me in many different ways. It was very hard for me to write this because with my writing skills I did not think I could do this person the justice he deserved. Who I am talking about it is just one Mr. Dennis Hills.

This man is one of the most outstanding people I know. He is caring and very much a part of Riegels. I received most of my knowledge about packing and smoking a pipe from Dennis. This is probably why I have to relight all the time (just kidding). I was a new pipe smoker and went to the Low Bob's and bought myself a cheap \$15.00 pipe and some Cherry blend tobacco. And going off what I had seen on television began to smoke my pipe. I was so proud of myself. Self taught! The problem was I kept getting these headaches. Finally I figured it out. The pipe was not packed right so the draw was wrong. I looked like a fish trying to draw off the stupid thing.

So I woke up the next morning and ran over to Riegels where I first began my strong relationship with Dennis. He took so much of his time teaching and showing me the way. I bet I spent at least four hours with him every time I went in there, which was pretty often. I learned a lot about Dennis. We knew some of the same folks. Some good and some--well you know.

Dennis loves his job and I could certainly tell that I was not they only young man that had crossed Dennis's door looking for some direction. He never wavered. As I sat back and did the interview with Dennis we both enjoyed our pipes. That was only the second time I have ever seen Dennis smoke a pipe. It truly made me feel good. We were two close friends sitting around and talking and doing what we both love and care about, smoking pipes. I hope you all enjoy this article on Dennis Hills as much as I enjoyed writing it. (Continued, page 6)

(Irv's & Deb's Trip West Continued) CAO was our stop in Nashville, as the Grand Ole Opry wasn't having a show until the weekend (The visit to CAO was more than we could ever have expected. They gave us the "grand" tour of the entire complex, including a sit down and cigar. We viewed a DVD on the family and business and the rest of the visit was with the owner's daughter, Aylin herself. She was so kind and explained everything we saw, including offering us a sample of a new tobacco just introduced this fall. We didn't want to leave, but time was short and we were on our way to Chattanooga and Lookout Mountain.

What a breath taking view atop the mountain. I did it as a little girl, and it was better the second time around. Irv enjoyed listening to the information in a show at the battle museum. They did a very nice job of explaining the position Chattanooga played in the war. And a visit to Chattanooga wouldn't be complete without walking through Rock City and traveling underground to Ruby Falls.

From there our last stop was with friends. Barb and Randy lived across from us for a couple of years before his company, once again moved him. We were with them for two days and nights and loved every minute. We visited Oak Ridge, the "fenced in" city during the building and work on the first Nuclear Reactor. What a piece of history, and we were able to join the last tour of the season.

Chuck Wooten's Pipe Furniture

Chuck says: I live in Lancaster PA. I have been smoking pipes since november 2002 and making pipe furniture since spring of 2004, I can make custom racks and cabinets just let me know what you are looking for and I will try to make it just the way you want it. You can Email me at chksbak@comcast.net or visit my website at www.chucksracks.com.



Cloud 9

Pipe Blend Reviews,
by Sherman Carver

McClelland's
"Royal Cajun, Ebony"



Black, smooth, sweet, smoky and absolutely rich. This blend of Virginias and Kentucky leaf demonstrates the magic that occurs when flue-curing, stoving and Perique-style processing meet in a gloriously complex explosion of flavor.

McClelland has come up with an exciting new leaf using their expertise and special techniques of flue-curing, stoving, and Perique-Style processing. Cajun Black starts as Virginia seed, grown in Kentucky. Then smoked and finally pressed and cured in barrels, the same as Perique tobacco.

When I opened the tin the aroma was sweet and subtle but not overly-sweet. Royal Cajun also has the tangy smell of perique but not over the top like true Perique. The tin label says it's smoky; it does taste a little smokey but not at all like Latakia,

I tried this in several sizes of pipes including a meer that I only smoke Virginia in. In a small pipe it was nice and sweet. It burned very slowly all the way down to the bottom. When I tried it in a medium and large size pipe it was very good at first but half way through it seemed kind of boring. When I tried it my meerschaum I noticed somewhat of a change in flavor--more complex but I still missed the smoky taste it was supposed to have. But the flavor was still better in a meer.

My final thoughts on the Royal Cajun Ebony is that it really is a good blend of excellent Virginia sweetness with a touch of salt and sour taste--probably from the perique. I like this tobacco, it's different, rich, but not overwhelming and it smokes surprisingly well when smoked with attention. I don't consider it a daily smoke,

Columbus Show Mini Report by club member Paul Hubartt



I was fortunate to have the Columbus show fall within my holiday to the states. Larry (Dad to me), Roger (by bro-in-law) were there to share the day with me. I brought a few pipes to trade with Andy S. I traded a Mickles, Weiner and Dunhill for two Crosbys. I tried to sell two Matzholds and a Von Erck, but it seemed nobody was in the mood to buy. I was, though! My party arrived at about 10 am. JT Cooke's table was the very first table I saw through the door, and as I

walked up to the table he laid down a beautiful sandblast Lovat that JT modeled after a 834 Dunhill. He said it took him two days to blast the pipe. I was the very first to pick it up, and knew if I laid it down it would be gone forever. So naturally I didn't let it go. Talk about counting the chickens before they hatch! I thought I would sell the Matzholds by the end of the day and recoup my purchase, but it just didn't happen.

It took a lot of work trying to trade the Von Erck for a Castello, which is what I was after, but no one was interested. I must like pipes that other people don't like. I did spot a must have Castello early in the day. It was a kkkk Occhio Di Pernice with a white mouthpiece. There is loads of birdseye one one side, and a sunburst affect on the opposite, having the grain exploding out of a central cluster of birdseye. It was still there at the end of the day, and managed to get the piece for 100 off the asking price.

I sold a Larysson pipe to Chuck which was a surprise to me. It is always a good feeling when a fellow chooses your pipe out of the thousands of pipes at a show. Thanks, Chuck, and enjoy! Andy and Al sat at the club table displaying their pipes for sale. I fancied a Lasse and a Joura pipe of Al's but knew I couldn't have every pipe I wanted that day. These guys have great taste in pipes. Ken Lamb was right next to the club table and I got to talking with him and Larry Rathburn about pipe making for a length of time. A very valuable conversation!

John Crosby was there with a few of his pipes along with pipes from Brad Pollman. Both these guys are improving leaps and bounds.

The day ended at the GL Pease tobacco display, where Dad (Larry) got me 4 tins to take back to the UK. Thanks, Dad!

"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.

The President's Corner by Andy Spencer

Sitting and watching the rain fall as the temperatures cool off seems to fairly call for a pipe in hand, and so it was with little prodding other than the dark rainy pre-autumnal weather that I rose from my chair to pick out my third pipe for the day. With leaves falling and Halloween not too many days distant pipes are a natural, and surely we are coming onto the best time of year for enjoying a favorite briar and blend.



Or when traveling solo, something I seem to do a considerable amount of with two aged and increasingly infirm parents residing out-of-stat, again a pipe or two along the way seems to ease the pains of travel somewhat. In fact, I just returned from a brief jaunt to help out my folks and my travel down and back was made much more pleasant by having a couple of large pipes, a Moretti bulldog and a Von Erck '05 POY (pipe-of-the-year) along for company. Oh, I had other pipes with me as well, and although several were a good bit lighter than the bigger ones I enjoyed as I drove along it was a luxury to not have to constantly refill or otherwise mess with smaller pipes. One great aspect of largish pipes when you are driving a distance is that they tend to be relatively low maintenance "load, light and go" propositions.

Speaking of travels, I just heard back from TSPTC members Irv and Deb Collins of Dayton, Ohio, as they returned to their home following several weeks of travel out west. Hopefully we can cajole them into providing a summary of their trip and any smoking or other pipe activity which took place during their much longer (than mine) travels through a number of states. The Collins' were kind enough to send a e-photo of them standing at an overlook in the Grand Canyon. It has been over a decade-and-a-half since I was there, and the photo both recalled those memories and made me want to take my sons back out there so they too can enjoy the immensity and splendor of that natural wonder. There is probably some park law against smoking there—I noticed in the photo that Deb and Irv sent that neither of them were smoking a pipe at the moment—but it truly is a sight worth seeing nonetheless.

With this time of year (is it REALLY October already?!) it is none too soon to once again mark the Riegel's Pipe Smoking Contest on your calendar. The contest will be held at the Georgetown Plaza Riegel's store on Sunday, November 12th. The store's doors will be opened at one o'clock that day, with the contest commencing at two p.m. Lee Von Erck will be coming down, according to Goergetown Riegel's manager Dennis Hills, and will undoubtedly have more of his fabulous works of smokeable art with him.

Clubmembers Irv & Deb Collins recently returned from vacationing out west



We had a great trip with only stopping for short times in MO, OK, TX, NM on the way out. Our destination was the Grand Canyon with a trip through the Petrified Forrest, Painted Dessert, and the Meteor Crater. We stayed at the Williams Railroad Station Hotel for one night, rode the Steam Engine to the Canyon, spent one night at the Canyon, and then enjoyed the ride back on the train with fruit, and champaign all around. Of course, a train ride wouldn't be complete without a robbery!

Our next stop was Sedona where we spent two nights. Rode out into the desert in a Red Jeep and watched the sunset in the middle of no where. Very beautiful indeed. While in the area, we drove to Jerome, the old copper mining town on the mountainside. What a wonder view of the valley.

Next was Tombstone! Graveyard and all and my first and hopefully, last experience with a scorpion. Dirty, to be sure, but a wonderful time eating and drinking in the old saloon.

Las Cruces, NM was next with a dinner at LaPosta (sp) one of the oldest Mexican resturants in NM. Good food and we found a small tobacco shop located inside a Ramada Inn.

Our next big stop was in Little Rock AK, where we visited the Clinton Presidential Library. Figure we won't be close to another one for some time, so we took advantage of being so close to it and stopped for the day. It really is a very nice library and so much to see! Had dinner at the Flying Fish--some of the best seafood on the trip. (continued page 11)

Larrysson Pipe Raffle

Proceeds to go to Compassion International
for a needy child



Pipemaker Paul Hubartt has donated this beautiful new rusticated straight--one of his latest creations.

Paul and his wife, Nicky, are sponsors of a needy child through Compassion International. Compassion International exists as a Christian child advocacy

ministry that releases children from spiritual, economic, social and physical poverty and enables them to become responsible, fulfilled Christian adults.

Founded by Rev. Everett Swanson in 1952, Compassion began providing Korean war orphans with food, shelter, education and health care, as well as Christian training. Today, Compassion helps more than 770,000 children in more than 20 countries.

Paul and Nicky want very much to provide the child they support with a nice Christmas present this year, so Paul made this fine pipe to raise some cash for this purpose.

Raffle Tickets are \$5 each. Simply mail cash or check to: Larry Hubartt, PO Box 695, Winona Lake, IN 46590. You will receive your tickets by return mail. The drawing will be at our next meeting, Tues. Nov 7. The pipe will be shipped to the winner by Priority Mail. A stamped, pre-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Checkout our Club Bulletin Board

Be sure to log in to our club bulletin board at <http://tsptc.org/phpBB/> to keep in touch with your fellow club-members.

Our Next Club Meeting - November 7

Tues, Nov 7, 5:30 p.m.

Wayndale Pizza Hut 6809 Bluffton Rd.

for more info call (260) 747-5726

President's Corner, continued. For certain I am looking forward to getting my 2006 TSPTC club pipe, a bent sandblasted Von Erck, in my grubby mitts! Lee's pipes are fantastic smokers, and at just \$200 for the club pipe—a very special price which Lee is very generously offering to TSPTC members—these club pipes represent a tremendous deal. Lee has previously informed me that he will never again make pipes, let alone a number of club pipes (IF he makes club pipes anymore) at such an incredibly low (for Von Erck pipes) price. Always good to get to visit with Lee, as well, who has done so much to support Fort Wayne area pipesmoking by coming down for the contest and also for our pipe show each year!

Again, remember that you must be a TSPTC member in order to purchase a Von Erck club pipe. That said, since TSPTC's fiscal year renews each April membership dues for new members joining at this point in time are just seven dollars! Not much expense for being able to purchase a Von Erck sandblasted pipe for what is essentially half price!

Speaking of TSPTC memberships, the club will be offering a free membership as one of the prizes at the Riegel's pipesmoking contest. In addition to that person being eligible to then buy a Von Erck club pipe for 2006, their membership will also enable them to read the tobacco and pipe show reviews, other articles, and, of course, my rambling dissertations.

Look for an article from yours truly on the mysterious and now, sadly defunct, Huybrecht pipes which were for years produced in England. Until then, I look forward to seeing you at club meetings and at the Riegel's pipesmoking contest. Until then, keep that bowl lit!

Announcing our 2007 Pipe & Tobcciana Show

Saturday, April 21, 2007

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Quality Hotel Ballroom

3330 W Coleseum Blvd, Fort Wayne, IN 46808

(260) 484-7711 Fax: (260) 482-1856

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Larry Hubartt (574) 566-2796 tsptc@tsptc.org
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Treasurer: Dennis Nichols (260) 744-4797 dennisnichols@hotmail.com
Secretary: Ray Franklin (260) 490-3195 rayjewels2803@msn.com

www.tsptc.org

Off the Rack, continued. Ray: Give us some background information on your interesting life.

Dennis: I was born in Goshen Indiana in the 1940's during a blistering cold winter month. I was the first of two children. I enjoyed sports and earning money at different jobs. At the ripe age of 13 I became very interested in fast pitch softball. The highlight of my softball career was catching for Eddie Feighner who was one of the best pitchers at that time. At 84 years of age I can still throw the ball over 80 MPH. I was married in 1963 and had two fine sons who were both born on Halloween.

The one thing I am most proud of in my life is my 40 years of teaching Sunday school. I recently retired from teaching, but am pleased with the number of children I was able to impact for the Lord. I am also a certified lay speaker and get the opportunity to do some preaching from time to time in the Methodist Church. I also teach classes in lay speaking.

I am thankful to my dad for my wonderful sense of humor. People often refer to me as a practical joker or the World's greatest prefatory of solid male bovine fertilizer.

Ray: Where did you go to college and what did you do after that?

Dennis: I attended Indiana University for two years, but my mother was sick and needed to be taken care of so I decided to drop out of college and start working. I got started in the tobacco business back in 1962 and have been involved in it ever since.

Ray: When did you start pipe smoking and why?

Dennis: I have never smoked a cigarette, but I have been smoking pipes for a long time. My college friend was a pipe smoker and I decided to give it a try. I smoked for a little while until one day I was walking and it went out, so I took the pipe and was going to tap it out in the palm of my hand. The shank broke so I tossed it into a well and did not return to smoking pipe for 11 years.

Ray: Dennis, in your long life what are some of your major accomplishments?

Dennis: When I was a salesman there were over 600 of us. For two years in a row I was the number two salesman in the nation. I was surpassed by people who fell into the accounts of 7-11 and Safeway. I worked hard to get to that position and created a lot of new business for the company. I am proud to say that my policy is to treat each customer with honesty and respect.

Ray: How did you end up with Riegels? (continued, next page)

Dennis: I have been at Riegels for twenty two years and counting. I used to sell cigars to Riegels while on the road, but decided to quit. When I told the man I sold them to he was thrilled. I asked him why he was so happy and he said that he needed help in the Riegels store. The rest as we know it is history. I still love my job and all of the people that I get to interact with.

Ray: How much longer do you see yourself as the figurehead of the Georgetown Riegels?

Dennis: I will be at Riegels for a long time to come. It is mentally challenging, but not physically. As long as people like you come to this store I will have customers to taunt.

Ray: If you thought about retiring, what would you do?

Dennis: I would become a full time pastor. This is truly what I wanted to do, but felt that God wanted me to be an outreach at Riegels. Maybe someday I will be able to achieve my life long dream and be behind the pulpit for good.

Ray: If you could do one thing different in your life what would it have been?

Dennis: I would not change a thing. I have a loving wife, two good sons and a job that I simply love. I firmly believe God puts us here for a reason and that He is fulfilling that purpose in my life. I am here to listen and help whenever I can.

Ray: With the strong following you have at Riegels, why not open your own store?

Dennis: I feel Riegels is a good fit with the history of the store. I reap the benefits of the historical name of Riegels. Riegels is old and I am old so we are a good fit.

Ray: Where do you see the tobacco industry going in the next few years?

Dennis: I think I am in the right end of it. The domestic end of it is in trouble, the premium is the future. We need to educate people of the differences. Business will be steady, but no rapid growth like we saw ten years ago. You will continue to see the prices going up due to fuel prices and the value of the American dollar in the World market.

Who ever said that "Knowledge is Power" must have known Dennis Hills. Dennis has so much information to share that he should sit down and write a book. I can tell you that Dennis has touched a lot of lives in his time and the beautiful thing about it is God is not done using Dennis yet. If you do not know Dennis Hills on a personal level I would strongly recommend you go and meet him. He is sure to touch your life as he has mine.