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Homebrew club QUAFF celebrates 30 years

MARCH 7, 2019 BY SHELDON KAPLAN



QUAFF celebrated 30 years at AleSmith. Photo: Tim Stahl

On a Saturday night in late February, numerous members of QUAFF (QQuality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity), San Diego's oldest homebrew club, gathered at AleSmith Brewing Co to celebrate the club's 30th Anniversary. It was an appropriate venue for the celebration, as AleSmith was founded by two QUAFF members, Skip Virgilio and Ted Newcomb, and then bought in the early oughts by yet another QUAFF member, current owner Peter Zien.



President Emeritus x 3: Harold Gulbransen, Peter Zien, and Bob MacKay. Photo: Tim Stahl

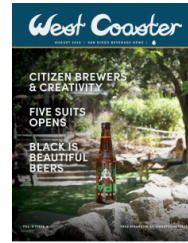
The club grew out of informal gatherings of homebrewers during the 1980s, whose original connection was through the now long defunct Beer and Wine Crafts (formerly Wine Arts), San Diego's first homebrew store. From these humble origins and a handful of members, the club has grown to currently having more than 330 members. Along the way, the club has won the coveted American Homebrewers Association's Homebrew Club of the Year award on nine occasions, and placed second an additional nine years.

A lot of this growth and success has been witnessed by party attendee and longtime QUAFF member Rich Link, who was San Diego's first craft beer journalist, reporting on the local scene for a number of years for The Celebrator.

"First of all, wow! It's crazy when you think back of where we were thirty years ago, and where we are today, it's amazing," noted Link. "We were like thirty guys brewing mediocre-to-good beers and now we've got hundreds of guys brewing amazing beers and owning breweries. It's just an incredible scene here in San Diego now, and just amazing to be a part of it."



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Kelsey McNair of North Park Beer Co with the author Sheldon M. Kaplan. Photo: Tim Stahl

The host of the evening AleSmith's Peter Zien added, "I am honored and thrilled that QUAFF wanted to have their anniversary here. I owe my career to this club, I owe everything to QUAFF. It's fun to have them in the house."



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In "Beer Events"



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January 20, 2012
In "San Diego Beer & Beverage News"



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In "Homebrewing"