

## **Squaw Point, Ron's- Mug Club History:**

This history is being patched together from 2 different Facebook threads, and what little memory I have remaining.

2016/May: Andy Larson, on his own page.

2016/June 4: Sharon Hidveghy, on Andy Walsh's [Share History of Brainerd Lakes Area](#) page.

2019/2: Andy Larson breaks his mug, goes into a panic and sarts a flurry of mug activity on the above pages.

As is the case with most histories that are written, they are never really done, especially in a Facebook format where new info can come in every minute, or 4 months later. Then you have the memory jog, and as this new news comes in it jogs something up there and you need to re-write what you earlier thought for SURE was how it went back then! So, this history will be modified as needed, maybe forever! Disregard my 2 previous FB posts that are now OLD news...3 days old, in favor of the below info.

**2016/6/4:** I visited this ancient Mug Club topic on another FB page a while back, but of a different Andy [Larson]! Here is a bit of info on this Club. -Facebook (FB) This is important stuff!

Fert: My dad and I had a part in starting the mug club in about 1970...sort of. I don't know if Ron came up with the idea, or we did...likely Ron. He was an innovator. Either way, we had the mugs and the beer (Faust Beverage Co., dist. Grain Belt Beer, 1955-1976), and he had the perfect bar for it! (Years, anyone?) After MUCH thought, I do now recall that I delivered the first case of mugs after work, and we took out a few mugs to make sure they worked. They worked. These were standard brewery-issued mugs. Ron had not started the numbering as yet that day, but it must have gone fast as he called like the next day for another case of 24. We only kept a few cases on hand in those days, so got more from the brewery later that week. I still have mine, but the number has been changed many times. We used to bring them on the boat and forget to bring them back. At some point Ron started to need more room for mugs and wall space was getting short, and harder to reach! Some had to be hung under beams, or from window frames. The problem was tourists would come in for the summer and buy a mug, then take it back to Florida. So now here he had all these empty hooks taking up valuable space, so he started to scan the place on a regular basis, maybe weekly, and if a peg was empty, that spot AND NUMBER was used by someone else. Ron did not care, as that 50 cent mug, he sold for about 5 bucks! (Mug Club membership & refill pricing needed.) Later on, you had to leave your mug there that day, and if you did like me and left it in the boat all the time, by the next weekend your peg slot was gone. Not only that you lost your number. Apparently, the pegs were numbered in a numerical fashion so the bartender could easily put it back in the same spot, and patrons could find it without wandering all over the bar. Bear used to walk in and send his right hand back of him up and over the door jam and grab it, and never look or break his stride. If you brought your mug back too late, you got a new number and new home on the wall!

I'm not sure who was in the bar when he started the numbering system, so have no clue who has number one and those lower numbers. Looking at the chart below that I am assembling via FB posts and the mugs I have here, it appears the Grain Belt Wrecking Crew (GBWC) members came in about around the 120s. This gobbled up 26 numbers. I see one is green and way up in the 700's, so Gravel must have taken his mug from the bar and lost it, and had to buy a new one, one of the green ones by that time. About three years later we could no longer get the amber mugs from the brewery, which came from Siesta Ware out of Florida, and we could only get them in that ugly green directly from Siesta Ware...at least I think. I just recall that we were in a pickle as he was using them faster than we could get them. Ron was way ahead of his time out there at Squaw Point, and the first one to have more than three beers on tap. We thought it was nuts, and he soon had a dozen or more, but in fact, he was a trailblazer. About 1987 the health department shut them down on account of the wooden handles from what I heard...a sanitation thing perhaps since the varnish was wearing off on the most-used mugs. It could be that ANY mug hanging not upside-down was taboo...they were dandy dust and fly traps. It could also

be that they just became too much of a hassle replacing a hundred or so each day back on the pegs, or maybe Ron was selling the place and the new owner didn't want to mess with them. Maybe Ron can enlighten us on this. The rest is, as they say, history.

The GBWC also had some made into candles, but not the ones we first wood-burned, possibly by the Crew's Quarters...the wives. I still have mine, but they were not numbered of course.

The 1970's version used at Squaw Point was preceded by two others, both with Stanley and Albert, from the 1960s. These are quite rare now. There is one that has a later label yet. Ron used to advertise it as the "world's largest mug club", and I have no doubt about that. I think he had several thousand. I have 5 that I recovered before they were taken out of the bar. Ike's is marked, of course, "Ikeesh". Come and get it, Ike! I found my candle too.

There are some for sale on [Grain Belt Heaven](#) on the web. Disclaimer: This is not an advertisement, just a PSA. Please send in your number and whether the glass is green, so we can determine when these started. So far the only green one I know of for sure is Gravel's #750. It is possible that the green ones were a temporary thing, and we later somehow went back to the amber. More submissions of numbers and color will help determine this. Send photos if possible! Send in your stories, too, so I can better patch together the chronology of this WAY important part of the Lakes Area history! Perhaps some former employees can tell us more!

UPDATE, 6/7/2016: [NEW Facebook page](#) JUST for this mug club. Thank you, Becky Wheeler!!! This spinoff of Andy's site is the Knot's Landing of Dallas fame!

6/9/2016: Becky reports that the wooden mug handle was engraved with a Dremel engraver, and written over with a Sharpie marker. Some of mine have been written over many times with ink pen...I suppose due to REPEATED washing!

UPDATED mug number chart below:

NUMBER	NAME	COLOR	NOTES	Photo provided
1	Could be Ron! ???			
3	Jo Trebil		MIA/RIP	
8	Josh Hanks' father		Name?	
9	Doug Dale		Confirmed?	
26	Sandy Kaminski Berg's dad			
34	Chuck Pickar			
38	Steve Borders			
64	Elaine Niemann		Ron's mom	
65	Doug Niemann		Ron's dad	
124	Don Sprau?		Photo from Jessica Pearl Drake	photo
152	Ron Jenkins		From Lynda Hummel	
156	Hopper (Randy Thoe)		Deceased, but relatives can sure Come & get it!	
174	Big Nuts		Who was this? Come & get it!	
175	Beaver (Ronnie Siekert)		Come & get it!	
241	Pudley (Dan Faust)			
434	Ikeesh (Ed Isackson)		Come & get it!	
602	Andy Larson		Still in use! WAIT: Broken, replaced 2/20/2019, bought a spare!	photo
627	Randy Powers		MIA/RIP, the mug, not Randy!	
750	Gravel (Paul Gravidahl)	green	Come & get it!	
878	Fert (Fert)		Several over-stamped #s.	photo
Numbers?	Becky Wheeler, 2 mugs	green		
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1563	Sue Fletcher Holmes			photo
1688	Allie Toumi			photo
2345	Heather Ross Meyer			photo
2701	Rattlesnake		from Sharon Hidveghy	photo
2702	Grumpy		from Sharon Hidveghy	photo
	Daryl Rubbelke		Has 2. Photos?	
	-CWF, 6/4/2016		UPDATED: 2/20/2019	

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