



Brian Kinzie

James River Homebrewers

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Brian Kinzie: [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: That's exactly what we want. My name is Sarah Rodriguez. I'm with the Southern Foodways Alliance. It is March 15th, 2023. I'm here in Richmond, Virginia. And could you introduce yourself, and tell me who you are and what you do?

Brian Kinzie: Sure. My name is Brian Kinzie. I'm a resident of Richmond, Virginia. [Laughter] And professionally, I'm a human resources consultant. I work with a bunch of small businesses around Richmond, basically acting as a fractional HR resource for them.

Sarah Rodriguez: Very cool. Nice.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah.

Sarah Rodriguez: And what has been your role currently or in the past with the James River Homebrewers?

Brian Kinzie: I've been a member for probably close to 20 years now, somewhere in that neighborhood. I'm a past president of the club. I was president for about four years. I've been on the board in a bunch of different roles for a bunch of years.

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And right now, I'm currently the member at large on the board, which means I'm on the board, but I don't have any actual responsibilities, which is fantastic. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: I would like that. That sounds pretty nice.

Brian Kinzie: It's ideal. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter] And could you share your birthday, for the record?

Brian Kinzie: November 18, 1971.

Sarah Rodriguez: Cool. And now going back, where were you born? Where'd you grow up? Tell me about that.

Brian Kinzie: I'm born here in Richmond, at St. Mary's Hospital so [Laughter] grew up in the far, far west end. Went to Tucker High School, that's where I graduated from, and left, went to College of William & Mary at Williamsburg. Came back to Richmond. Never intended to spend my entire life here. It's just kind of happened. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, so I'm here in Richmond ever since.

Sarah Rodriguez: Nice. And tell me a bit about your family. Who were you growing up with?

Brian Kinzie: I'm an only child, so I grew up with Mom and Dad. My father was a chemist. My mother was basically a stay-at-home mother until a few years before she passed away.

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She worked at the library as a librarian aide with Henrico County libraries.

Sarah Rodriguez: And tell me a bit about what was food like in your home kind of growing up —

Brian Kinzie: [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: —either in your home or kind of in the area.

Brian Kinzie: Food was interesting. My parents, I'm gonna go on the record with this, not great cooks. [Laughter] Breakfast was always good. They did a solid breakfast. My dad, in particular, was really good at breakfast stuff. Food wasn't that good. They did some things that really were horrifying. Dessert, for instance, would be a piece of lettuce with a half of a canned pear on it, and a lump of cottage cheese in the pit of where the pear was.

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: That was dessert.

Sarah Rodriguez: A bold choice.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: So dessert not the best.

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So food in our house was—the funny thing was my parents liked good food. I mean, they would go out to eat. We would go out to eat in various places around Richmond and Fairmont. And it wasn't like they didn't enjoy good food, but they were not particularly great cooks, let's put it nicely.

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: What places do you remember kind of going out? Any family favorites?

Brian Kinzie: Went to Nick's Roman Terrace a lot, which still exists. New ownership now. But went to Nick's a lot. Back in the day, the chain restaurants that were big were like Houlihan's and Darryl's. We used to go to those places a fair amount. For breakfast, Aunt Sarah's, which is pretty much dying off at this point. I think the last one closed, if I remember correctly. We used to go to Aunt Sarah's in the mornings, so on weekends. Those are the ones that stick out kind of top most of my mind right off the bat.

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Sarah Rodriguez: How were you exposed to beer growing up? Did your parents drink it?

Brian Kinzie: My parents were teetotalers, so did not drink at all. So first exposure to beer, I didn't drink at all until I got to college. So that was my first exposure to beer. And most of my exposure to beer then was bad, fizzy, yellow Milwaukee's Best Light, the Beast. It was terrible, so I didn't really care for a beer that much. And then friend of ours, my sophomore year, he got a six pack of Pete's Wicked Ale, which was a brown ale, one of the early beers in the craft movement in the U.S. And he despised it, and said, "Here, y'all, take it. I don't want it." My roommate and I cracked it open, and it's like, this is actually really good. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: So from there, we kind of figured out like, oh, okay, there are some good beers out there, and so we started kind of trying to track them down when we could. And then my junior year is when we started home brewing.

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One of my housemates came in one day. He's like, "We can make our own beer," and had a copy of Charlie Papazian's *Complete Joy of Homebrewing*. We found out that there was a bakery supply store down in Portsmouth that sold primarily baking goods, like specialty pans and flours and all that stuff, almost all for baking home bakers. Really actually a neat store, in retrospect. I didn't bake then. I appreciate it more now, but it doesn't exist anymore. [Laughter] But they had like this whole tiny corner of home brew stuff, and this was in the dark ages of home brewing where it's not like today where you can buy commercial quality stuff, and make it at home. I mean, you had cans of malt extract with a packet of yeast stuck on top underneath the lid, and that was your kit.

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Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: But we went in. We got the equipment we needed, and the ingredients. We're all underage. So the lady at the counter looked at us, and she looked down to the ingredients, and she looked back at us, and she's like, "It's all legal till you put the yeast in." Sold it. Rang it up. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter] Not her problem.

Brian Kinzie: Not my problem. It's like what they do with this stuff is on their own at that point. So we took it back, and we brewed our first batch. Actually, it was a brown ale. I remember that. It turned out pretty well, actually. It wasn't bad. And from then on, we brewed relatively consistently through the rest of college.

Sarah Rodriguez: What was your setup like for those first few periods?

Brian Kinzie: A pot on the stove top. I mean, that was really common back then. You didn't have systems like you do now. I mean, the equipment we have now is awesome. It's incredible. I still brew a little bit old-school, and don't have all that stuff.

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No one was boiling five gallons' worth of beer. You'd make a five-gallon batch with the biggest stockpot you could find, which is probably gonna be a three-gallon pot. It's a college setup, so there's not exactly this huge kitchen with lots of toys. It's a little tiny kitchen; a little tiny stove top. You'd do all your boiling and the hops and everything in that little pot, and then you would like siphon it off over into a carboy. We were able to get carboys from the Williamsburg Pottery. They had actually like, back then, this was—they had literally—I don't know why they had this. They had a like wall of carboys like stacked up by the road, like a mount...

Sarah Rodriguez: Like glass or . . . ?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, glass carboys. But they were like just a pyramid piled up on top of each other, and you just walked over, and pulled one off, and hoped you didn't knock over the whole thing. But they were like five bucks. I mean, they were really cheap.

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

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Brian Kinzie: They were actually pretty—they were large, like, six-gallon carboys. I don't know why I remember that. So we siphoned it off into the carboy, which is where I was going with this, and then you added water back into it to bring it up to your five-gallon amount, and let it ferment. And we bottled everything, so it's all bottled. We would [Laughter]—I was in the

recycling group in college, so I would go through the bins when I was doing the recycling, and the yank out the bottles that weren't looking too horrible, like, ones people hadn't put like cigarettes out, and things like that. [Laughter] So it's like, okay, no, it looks clean. Put that one to the side. So I would hold onto the good-looking bottles so we'd have enough for bottling, so then we would use that.

Sarah Rodriguez: So you said you were doing this with your friends. Did your other friends either get into it, get into drinking your beer, and what was that like?

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Brian Kinzie: Yeah, we could always give away our beer. That was never a problem. And people actually liked it. We would start getting requests like, "Hey, can you make us a batch for a party?" Blah, blah, blah, blah. And we weren't getting paid for it, which was good, 'cause that would've been another level of illegal, other than being underage. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: It's like let's just pile on the—yeah, as opposed to being a misdemeanor, that would've gone into felonies. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: So we'd be making beers for parties. We'd get like, "Hey, can you"—most people didn't know anything about beer styles back then but, every now and then, we'd get a request for a style, and we're like, "Okay, yeah, we can try to do that." My college roommates that I brewed with, two of them became Anglican priests, so that's what two of them are doing. One of them

worked for years doing—he worked for a place that did repairs on classic Mustangs, like parts for classic Mustangs, and now he's doing home renovation work.

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So that's what you do when you have English degrees and —

Sarah Rodriguez: And home brewing experience.

Brian Kinzie: —and home brewing experience, yeah. So you did stuff like that. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: Let's see. One of the people we brewed with, he went into comp sci [computer science], so that's what they're doing nowadays. I'm probably the only one in that group that's still actively brewing, that I know of. I don't take any of the others from that group are at this point.

Sarah Rodriguez: And so you get through college. What are you studying, and what do you end up doing afterwards —

Brian Kinzie: [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: —when you're not brewing?

Brian Kinzie: Well, I went through college. I spent my first two years in college thinking I was a biology major. I finally figured out I wasn't a biology major, switched over to being a history major, and graduated with a history major. What do you do with the history major if you aren't planning on going to graduate school to be a historian or a teacher?

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Well, I had no idea. So in college, I worked at the grocery store Farm Fresh in Williamsburg as a cashier just to make some extra money. So after we graduated, I got married to my wife like immediately after college. We dated all through college and right afterwards. We moved back up to Richmond and, to just have a job, I just transferred to the store in Richmond. So I was like a front-end supervisor at the grocery store for two or three years. And at the same time, I was working at the library also. So I was working two jobs, and not using my degree at all, obviously. And it's only 70 hours a week, both part-time jobs, so 35 hours at one, 35 hours at the other, just enough back then not to get any benefits [Laughter], and I was like, "This is terrible. I gotta figure out something."

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So I actually applied for work with a temp agency as a staff member 'cause one of the things I liked with my job was like when people would apply for the grocery store, I'd go through the applications, and fish out the ones that looked half-decent. And I liked that, and I was like, "Well, maybe I could do that for a job." So I applied, got a position there, and that was kind of how I ended up getting into human resources.

Sarah Rodriguez: Nice.

Brian Kinzie: So after, I worked there, and then one of my clients I worked with, they said, "Hey, we'd like you to come work directly for us as our HR person." So after I've been doing HR for, at that point, probably about five years or so, that's when I went back to school at University of Richmond at nighttime, and got a Post-Bacc in HR management. And after I finished that, I just went and got my MBA also.

Sarah Rodriguez: From U of R as well?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, from U of R also. So I got all the [coughs] excuse me, I got all the letters after my name and stuff. I got my certification from the Society for Human Resource Management and all that stuff.

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So I've been doing HR ever since. I spent 20 years doing corporate HR type roles, and then I went out on my own as a consultant after that. So I've been doing that for the past six years now.

Sarah Rodriguez: Oh, okay. That's cool.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, it's been great.

Sarah Rodriguez: Yeah, that's awesome.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: So tell me about your involvement, how you got involved with James River Homebrewers.

Brian Kinzie: I kept brewing throughout, like, even after I graduated and everything, so I was still brewing on my own, like, not nearly with the frequency but at least a couple batches here I would do. And my hobby was still sampling beers from all around, wherever I could get them from the U.S. There's a few stores here in Richmond that specialize that have got some really nice beers. And I always had, I mean, I had like—this was nerdy.

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I had pages of notes on beers I'd sampled, like, they were just literally an old-school yellow legal pad. I'd write down my impressions of it, scored it myself, and did it. So that's something I just did completely on my own. And then I found ratebeer.com actually fairly early on when RateBeer was first getting started, and then through the time when it was the big beer rating site. That was before Untappd came around and all that stuff. So I was really active on RateBeer.

Sarah Rodriguez: Around when did you get involved with that?

Brian Kinzie: Early 2000s, I'm guessing, off the top of my head. I graduated in '93 from college, so probably early 2000s. It sounds about right, give or take a decade. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: That's all right.

Brian Kinzie: It's a problem with getting older. You're like, yeah, I don't know. If I could remember my login to RateBeer, which I haven't been on RateBeer in ages now, but if I could remember my login, I could literally go back, and find my first entry probably.

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Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: It would have the date on it. [Laughter] So I was active on RateBeer, and, through that, I met other people who were in the area who were also doing the same thing I was, as far as doing it. So we'd get together for, like, we do meetups. We all bring bottles, and share and sample, and all that stuff.

Sarah Rodriguez: They were home brewing as well?

Brian Kinzie: And some of them were home brewing also. And so the way I got involved with James River is I was actually meeting up with my friends who I knew RateBeer over at Legend for a beer one day, and he's like, "Oh yeah, the Home Brew Club meeting's tonight, and it's gonna be like in a couple of hours." I was like, "Okay, well, I'll just hang out and go to the club meeting." So that was my first club meeting.

Sarah Rodriguez: Was that meeting and some of the early meetings at Legend?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. The club used to meet at Legend.

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They met in what was the dart room. If you've ever been in the Legend bar, they've got the main bar, and they had this little room off to the side for darts. I can remember when Legend first opened, and they didn't even have the upstairs [Laughter]; just the downstairs back in the day.

Sarah Rodriguez: I've seen that downstairs. It's tiny.

Brian Kinzie: That was the original Legend. I was there right when it opened. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: Oh yeah. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. Well, it was a brewery opening in Richmond. I mean —

Sarah Rodriguez: Very exciting.

Brian Kinzie: —for me, that was huge. [Laughter] And now they open like every 15 minutes, it seems like. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: But we met in that dart room. I mean, the club really grew over the years. We outgrew the dart room at Legend because we were putting like 30–40 people in there, and that dart room was not meant for 30–40 people. We had people like literally spilling out of the dart room out into the restaurant area. It was bad.

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: And that's when we ended up moving over to Mekong for meetings.

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And we've been at Mekong ever since.

Sarah Rodriguez: Around when did y'all move to Mekong?

Brian Kinzie: Probably about 10 years ago now, I would guess. That's roughly. So, yeah, we've been meeting at Mekong for a long time. We started meeting at Mekong right—I can tell you that started right before the brewery explosion took place in Richmond because one of our first meetings at Mekong, I can remember, two guys from Hardywood, Patrick and Eric —

Sarah Rodriguez: Eric?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. Patrick and Eric came to one of our meetings, and they're like, "Hey, we're Patrick and Eric. We're gonna be starting a brewery." And we're like, "Yeah, right. No one ever starts a brewery in Richmond." [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter] Good luck.

Brian Kinzie: But they had some samples of little brews that they'd made with them, and the both of 'em are actually certified as beer judges, I mean, so they were pretty hardcore brewers. So they came to me, and talked about what they were gonna do. And I'm like, "Yeah, okay. All right. Good luck with that." But it was cool. I mean, we had a lot of people who were some of the early people who started breweries up in Richmond who either were members of the club or who would drop by and visit the club from time to time.

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And then a lot of our members have gone on to become professional brewers, so it's really kind of cool.

Sarah Rodriguez: That is pretty cool. Just 'cause I'm curious, what do you remember about kind of Legend opening?

Brian Kinzie: I remember it really distinctly. You walked in, and it was just this little tiny bar area with probably less than 10 seats total, like two tables, like little tiny tables for two, and then just some seats around the bar. They had four beers. They had their Brown; same Brown as today. They had a porter, a lager, and a pilsner. Those were their four core beers that they started off with. Since they were serving beer there, they also had to have a food menu, and so you could order a bowl of chili.

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That was their food menu. It was like, "Would you like the chili?" "Why, yes, I would like the chili," [Laughter] because that's all we have. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Very bare bones.

Brian Kinzie: They got other stuff fairly quickly after that, but it was very bare bones for that. Back then, if you were starting up a brewer, I mean, you either had to be a brew pub, which is why they opened up the restaurant above, or you had to have distribution, which is why the Legend Brown ended up everywhere around town. And so they worked really hard at getting it in taps in places because, back then, tap selection in Richmond was awful. I mean, you walked into a place, it was Bud, Bud Light, and Miller Lite. That was your three taps. The only exceptions to that back in the day were Penny Lane. Penny Lane was awesome. The second iteration of Richbrau, which was a brew pub that was on Cary Street at that point in time, they had some quality control issues with their beers.

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[Laughter] So sometimes they were really good. Sometimes there were issues. Anywhere else, it was Commercial Tap House. Those were like the only places. I can remember when Cap Ale House first opened up with the downtown location. That was a huge deal because, all of a sudden, you had 40-some beers on tap, and they had the ice rail down the bar, and all that stuff.

Sarah Rodriguez: What was that like, going to see that after the options you had had?

Brian Kinzie: It was amazing. And also, you were sitting there because, again, the beer community in Richmond at that time was really small, so if you didn't know the person who was in it, you knew someone who knew them. If you went to a gathering, you either knew everybody there or you recognized their face. I mean, it was the same twenty to forty people, you felt like, and so you'd go to—you'd walk in Cap Ale House, and they have—it was gorgeous.

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And you're like, "Are there enough people in Richmond to support this?" Obviously, that question was answered. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: But at the time, you weren't sure —

Brian Kinzie: At the time, you really didn't know.

Sarah Rodriguez: —how many people would be interested.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, we had no idea. I mean, you knew Legend had been around for a while at that point, and done well, and had gotten itself on taps all over town, which was impressive 'cause that was not an easy thing for them to do. And I remember back then, I drank a lot of Legend Brown just because you'd go out if you wanted a beer, well —

Sarah Rodriguez: That was your option.

Brian Kinzie: —that was the option. [Laughter] Luckily I liked it, so that made it a lot easier.

But you also wanted to support the local brewery too. But, no, going to Cap Ale House back then was incredible. Jacob Brunow was their buyer at the time.

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: And Jacob did a brilliant job of getting beers in from all over the place that were rare, one-off types of things.

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I mean, he really was a good beer buyer, so he did a nice job, and I give him a lot of the credit for the success they had back in those days.

Sarah Rodriguez: That's interesting. Could you talk a bit about kind of the growth of your role in James River Homebrewers?

Brian Kinzie: The big thing that the club does from, I mean, we have our monthly meetings and all that stuff, but our big annual event is the Dominion Cup, which is a home brew competition, and the —

Sarah Rodriguez: The Homebrewers host it? James River hosts it?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, we host it. People from all over the U.S. send in entries. We'll typically get entries in from like twenty or thirty different states.

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

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Brian Kinzie: And so putting on that event takes a lot of volunteers, and so I got sucked into, "Hey, can you help out?" "Sure, I'll help out." And a few years later, I'm running the Dominion Cup.

Sarah Rodriguez: Great. As it goes.

Brian Kinzie: So I had to have my turn as—yeah, exactly [Laughter]—I had my turn as competition coordinator. That was the first year that we broke 400 entries, was the year that I ran it. Pre-COVID, we'd gotten it up over 700 entries, which made it- I think at the time, it might have been the largest beer competition on the East Coast that was a home brew competition. So COVID hit, we scaled it back dramatically [Laughter], and quite purposefully have not gotten it back up to that 700 level, mostly because of getting judges is hard. If you wanna have good

quality judges for a home brew competition, it's difficult. But also just the logistics of trying to handle that many entries is a pain.

Sarah Rodriguez: For sure.

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Brian Kinzie: Do we really need to kill ourselves like this? [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: That's a lot.

Brian Kinzie: It's like we're all volunteers. So I got involved with—I was the competition coordinator. Well, what have I done? I've been vice president of the club, been president of the club, member of large, I've been just a regular board member, so a bunch of different roles over the years. I haven't been secretary yet, and I haven't been treasurer. I'll never be treasurer.

[Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: I don't want that job.

Sarah Rodriguez: You would never? [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: No, I don't want that job at all. I don't really wanna be secretary either. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Sure, member at large, it sounds pretty good.

Brian Kinzie: Member at large is perfect. And the one thing I've found though is I like being an officer in a club because it makes me be involved. It's really easy. It's a Wednesday night in your home, and you're helping the kids with their homework, and you look down your watch, and it's like, oh, time to go to the meeting.

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If you don't have any responsibility whatsoever, it's really easy to say, ah, I'll skip it this month. And then you look down, and it's like, oh wow, four months have gone by, and I haven't been to a meeting, and then you start feeling bad. [Laughter] But if I'm an officer, it's like, all right, I have to show up.

Sarah Rodriguez: It kind of keeps you involved.

Brian Kinzie: And it keeps me going, which I enjoy it, and I'd rather keep myself involved that way than have apathy set in [Laughter], especially after I have just finished being president. I took one year off where I wasn't on the board, I wasn't an officer, nothing. I'd spent four years as president. I'm scaling back. I think at one point, I was like, yeah, it's been like three months since I've been to a meeting. I really need to get back out there. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter] Could you talk about your time a little bit more as president? What were y'all working on? What was kind of some of the focus? What'd you see?

Brian Kinzie: The big thing while I was president was COVID hit in the middle of it. We're a group that meets in person on a monthly basis. How do we keep ourselves going while we're in lockdown?

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Now, the funny thing is, during the lockdown, a lot of people got into home brewing because you were stuck at home, and you can't do anything.

Sarah Rodriguez: What else are you going to do?

Brian Kinzie: Hey, I'll make beer. So from that standpoint, it's actually good for the hobby, because it brought a lot of people into it. For us, I was having—we basically met by Zoom, and so we did Zoom meetings, and tried to do a Zoom meeting with everybody, trying to arrange for someone to come in and be like a guest speaker for us. I mean, a lot of times, it'd be a club member talking about a particular brewing topic. But then I tried to get professional brewers to come in and talk about various things. I can remember, we had Brian from over at Hardywood gave a talk to us about a bunch of the stuff they had going on over there. I'm trying to remember who all did stuff for us. I can remember somebody from one of these, I think it was a White Yeast Lab rep who gave a talk on Yeast.

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We had people from—we did a panel on New England IPAs where I had Tony [Ammendolia] from Final Gravity. I'm trying to remember who all was on it. This is bad. I'm gonna get it wrong. I'm pretty sure Stefan [Mcfayden], who is—I think he might have still been over at Three Notch'd at that point. He might have gone over to Väsen. I'm not sure. I can't remember. They were there. Who was my third person? It might have been Sean [O'Hern] from that time at Bingo. I might be wrong about that. [Laughter] I feel bad. That's terrible.

Sarah Rodriguez: It's so hard to remember that time period.

Brian Kinzie: I'm terrible with that. Yeah, exactly. So we had them do a thing on New England. That was a really good one. But basically just trying to keep the club going, and then like kind of doing a round robin around the Zoom call with like, "What have you been brewing? What have you been drinking?" kind of thing, to try and get—make everybody talk and participate as opposed to just sitting there like a lump on a Zoom call.

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Try to get some interaction going on between people. I guess being in HR helped with that because I was used to having to do it for companies. [Laughter] It's like, all right, I got this down. I know how this works. That was the highlight of my four years of being president. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: What years were you president?

Brian Kinzie: Let's see. This is 2023, so it would've been '17 to '21, I would guess, somewhere in that neighborhood; two 2-year terms.

Sarah Rodriguez: Okay. That makes sense. Nice. And so going back to kind of when the brewery explosion happened after 2012-ish, what was that like after being in the scene for so long and then seeing that happen?

Brian Kinzie: It was so weird.

Sarah Rodriguez: Did you know that it was gonna be what it was or?

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Brian Kinzie: No. I mean, I could tell that we were getting breweries opening in Richmond, obviously, and I knew some of the people who were involved with it, so that was neat. The interesting thing with it was watching—back then, the only town that was comparable in one sense was Asheville. They were a good benchmark. Asheville had had a really robust scene for a long time at that point. They were a few years ahead of us, really. And Asheville's 20,000-some people, 20–25, somewhere in that neighborhood, and they had like 20-plus breweries, and they were doing fine. And so when we were getting like 10 breweries in Richmond, people were like,

"Oh, can we support this?" At that point, I was like, "No, we're good." If Asheville can support that many, there's an Asheville within Richmond, so we can support this number of breweries.

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It was really cool seeing Scott's Addition take off. I would never, ever in my life have thought that Scott's Addition would turn into the hot neighborhood in Richmond. I played volleyball at Richmond Volleyball Club. I've been playing there for years. And at that point in time, they had two locations, and their east club was in Scott's Addition. It was right on Marshall Street. And at that time, the only thing in Scott's Addition, there was the Coca-Cola bottling plant kind of at the end of it, the volleyball club had their building, and then there was like the meth clinic that was right around the corner from the volleyball club, which meant that if you didn't have your car locked up, it was gonna get broken into, and all your stuff was gonna get sold. [Laughter] It happened to people all the time down there. But it was a dead, dead area.

Sarah Rodriguez: That was not a place you were gonna go hang out?

Brian Kinzie: No, hell no. The only reason, like, when Isley opened up down there, it was because the space was dirt cheap.

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I mean, it's like no one wanted to be there. So they opened up, and that was like the first one. Then Ardent came in pretty quickly after that with Sullivan. So that was cool. We knew some of the Ardent people because they used to come to home brew meetings sometimes. And then from there, it just exploded, and I never would've thought that would happen. That and whenever the HB3 or whatever was, the House Bill that allowed them to sell on premise without selling food,

Hardywood pivoted their business model overnight, literally, because they had been, "We've gotta distribute. We've gotta distribute. We've gotta distribute." And then all of a sudden, it's like

—

Sarah Rodriguez: You don't have to.

Brian Kinzie: Not nearly as more. I mean, they kept distributing. But, all of a sudden, they were like, "Okay, we need to have a beer garden, and change out everything to be focused on selling beer on-premise, as opposed to trying to push into taps everywhere."

0:32:02

I can remember when Hardywood came out, and their flagship beer was their Singel, and actually I really like that beer. It's a good beer. But I remember thinking like, you picked a Belgian singel as your flagship? Are you crazy? [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: It's funny. It's still around.

Brian Kinzie: It's still around, yeah. I mean, it's not their flagship anymore. You don't see it on tap. Well, you still see it a little bit but not like you used to because for a while there, you could get a Legend Brown or you could get a Hardywood single, if you wanted to drink something that was local. So they changed their model entirely really quickly, which was a good move on their part. But once you could sell on-premise, that's when it really took off. That became a huge deal, and that's what led Scott's Addition to go crazy. And then you started seeing the cideries pop up, and meaderies, and all that cool stuff also.

Sarah Rodriguez: Yeah, for sure.

0:33:00

How do you think that, in your experience, impacted? You were involved in the beer community at that point.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah.

Sarah Rodriguez: How did the kind of growth of breweries impact the way you went to breweries, the way your friends went to breweries, and the community side of it?

Brian Kinzie: For me, it didn't change that much because I was always into the beer, and so I would always go out and want to sample all the different beers they had and all that.

Sarah Rodriguez: It just gave you more options, I guess.

Brian Kinzie: It gave me a lot more options. It used to be like a brewery opened up, I would be there the opening week. And then it got to the point where another one opened. When did this one open up? I can't remember which one. I can't remember what's the first. I used to at least know about a brewery ahead of time. A lot of times, I'd know the people who were involved with opening and all that stuff. And then I can remember, I can't remember which one it was now, but a place opened up, and I remember hearing about it after it had already opened.

0:33:59

And I was like, "I know nobody who's involved with this whatsoever." I didn't even know it was happening. How?

Sarah Rodriguez: Which was unusual?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, but then that got to be just the norm. It's like, oh, there's another brewery opening up in Richmond, which is a good place for us to be at. Sorry, I lost track on the question.

[Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: How the growth of breweries impacted the beer community, do you think?

Brian Kinzie: It's interesting because when the breweries were first opening, they were just gonna brewing what they liked for themselves. I would say that as they suddenly realized that they had non-beer geeks coming in, there was the realization like, hey, I might need to brew some things for the general public, for lack of better ways putting it, as opposed to just brewing what I like. I know one local brewer here in town who really doesn't like IPAs particularly, and was like, "I'm not doing a hazy IPA."

0:35:04

"I'm just not doing it, just not doing it." And he finally was like, "All right, fine, I'll brew one." And he's a good brewer. He made a really nice hazy IPA. He was pissed because he's like, "The kegs kicked in less than a week."

Sarah Rodriguez: It did well?

Brian Kinzie: It did really, really well. And he's like, "I guess I gotta keep brewing these stupid hazy IPAs" [Laughter] That was a huge change though, because it used to be that people didn't—they could brew whatever. Now they feel like they need to cater to the tastes of the community. I'm not saying that's a bad thing even. And there's always a tendency within the craft brewing industry as a whole that there was almost a fear that like Allagash, for instance, they're like, "We do not wanna become Allagash White Brewing."

0:35:58

Now, there was a sort of recognition on their part though that the success of Allagash White is what fueled all the other stuff they could do. So they're like, "All right, let's just go with it, in a sense. But as long as Allagash White's selling like crazy, we can make these weird one-off lambics with blueberries in our backyard, and no one's gonna—we can get away with it." It basically funds the fun stuff for the brewers. But that's been interesting, seeing The Veil blow up and become as big as it is as far as being trade bait for people who are into the secondary markets and stuff like that. That's been interesting to see happen. That I probably wouldn't have picked as something that I would've thought would've happened, but it's worked out nicely for them.

[Laughter] I'm not surprised that An eventually opened up a brewery at all. That just made sense.

[Laughter]

0:36:56

I can remember going to Mekong before they even had taps.

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. But we live really close by, and it's like I can remember walking there. It's like, okay, I can go a bowl of phở and a bottle of Saison DuPont, and we're good to go. So that was really cool. We used to go there a lot, with my wife. We lived right about five minutes from there, and so we were eating there probably once a week, and probably also getting carryout there another night a week. [Laughter] We had a lot of Mekong back then. But seeing the breweries turn into like kind of the hangout spot for people, especially like the whole Scott's Addition neighborhood, and just the brewers in general. I mean, Richmond, you always had a bar

scene, but it wasn't the same. It's definitely different. And it's kind of come along with the food scene in Richmond. It kind of grew up at the same time. There are definitely some parallels there.

0:38:00

We used not to have that many great restaurants, and now there's fantastic restaurants all over the place, I mean, everywhere. We're spoiled. Actually, when I do visit other towns, and I sample at the breweries there, Richmond has great breweries. The quality of what we have here is excellent overall. There's a few that are like meh. But, overall, the breweries here are doing really, really top-notch stuff, and I don't know if we realize how good we have it. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: I lived here for a couple of years, and then I moved, and I really realized what I had taken for a granted.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. And I like to think in some way that James River Home Brewery had some impact on that because a lot of the people were involved with the club, and we learned from each other what made good beer and what not to do, which is an important part of home brewing, is figuring out what not to do. [Laughter]

0:39:09

Brian Kinzie: A lot of the people who were involved early on were members of the club, so it was cool.

Sarah Rodriguez: Could you talk about some of those folks, just off the top of your head, who went on to do breweries?

Brian Kinzie: Sure. Dylan Brooks brewed over at The Answer, and then he went over to Extra Billy's, and he's still brewing at Extra Billy's now. Karl Homburg, a member of the club, he started Castleburg up. Stefan McFayden went from being a member of the club to brewing with Three Notch'd Collab House, and then from Three Notch'd, went over to Väsen. Sean O'Hern, a member of the club, he'd been involved with the Commercial Tap House, and then now he's at—I think he's still involved with Cask Cafe.

0:40:04

He was definitely involved when they first opened. I'm pretty sure he's still with them also. But he brewed for The Answer for a while, then went to Bingo, and now he's over at Ardent. The Ardent guys have been members of the club. Let's see here. Courtney over at Blue Bee was a member of the club at one point, kind of randomly, but it was cool. [Laughter] Let's see. I'm missing people. Anna Shore, Anna was a former president of the club actually. When she and her husband retired, they have opened up their own brewery, actually, Solstice.

Sarah Rodriguez: Solstice.

Brian Kinzie: Solstice Brewery. That's not in Richmond; that's out, you know, Virginia Tech, outside Roanoke But it's like a seasonal brewery. So they opened, reopened.

0:41:00

Their first year was last year. They're reopening April 1 this year.

Sarah Rodriguez: Oh wow.

Brian Kinzie: So that's another member that started up a brewery. Chad Ritter, a former president of the club, he's opened up—well, not opened up. He's brewing for Molly's Blind Dog. And when Hidden Wit opens up, he's gonna be the head brewer over at Hidden Wit.

Sarah Rodriguez: Where's that gonna be opening up?

Brian Kinzie: It's out at [inaudible 0:41:27], if I'm remembering correctly, way out, way out there. I haven't been to Fine Creek yet. I need to go to Fine Creek. [Laughter] Sorry. Let's see here. I know I'm blanking on somebody.

Sarah Rodriguez: Was Tony?

Brian Kinzie: Tony, duh, yes.

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: Tony was a member of the club for a long time. Then he opened up the home brew shop, so we finally had a home brew shop on this side of town, but the only one prior to that had been down in Chester with Bob's WeekEnd Brewer. So it was really nice having something up on this side of town. And then when Bob retired, we still had a home brew shop after that. [Laughter]

0:42:02

But Tony had the home brew shop, and then he opened up Final Gravity. So that's an obvious one I should've gotten. [Laughter] An's been a huge support of the club for years. Even before we were meeting over there, he was a big supporter of the club. We always appreciated that. And [Laughter] when he heard that we were running outta space at Legend, he was like, "Come on over. [Laughter] We have plenty of room here." [Laughter] Not a bad move on his part to get—at

that point in time, we didn't—at one point in time, the club was having like 70 people show up at meetings, which was almost too much. We were even packed to the gills at Mekong in that front room off to the left.

Sarah Rodriguez: That's pretty good.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, but we were filling it, I mean, more than filling it. It was like standing room kind of filling.

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: It was a good problem to have. [Laughter]

0:43:00

There was a lot of people in the meeting. I know I'm forgetting people.

Sarah Rodriguez: That's a good list.

Brian Kinzie: That's just off the top of my head. [Laughter] I think Eric and I'm pretty sure that the Ardent guys were members at one point. I think they paid dues. So it's like we're not expensive to join. They hosted some of the Dominion Cups for a while also. We had a Dominion Cup. Well, the Dominion Cup, we can't do all the judging on Saturday. We have to have judging on multiple nights of the week before that as well, leading up to Saturday. But it used to just be the whole competition was on Saturday. In the old days, they used to hold it at Legend. We used Cap Ale House's Music Hall for a long time. We did that for a few years. We've held it at Center of the Universe for a while.

0:44:01

That was nice up there actually. They keep changing their space around. But we had a couple years where we had a good space there. Let's see here. Now we're actually doing it at Richmond Volleyball Club.

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: There's tons of space, and they have a good tap section, so that works out well.

And then we have other places that'll host during the middle of the week. Blue Bee's hosted.

Castleburg's hosted. Väsen's hosted. Mekong, well, The Answer hosts usually upstairs there. I'm trying to think of who all's—we've done it at a bunch of different breweries around town for the midweek stuff.

Sarah Rodriguez: Nice. Could you talk what a typical day of kind of brewing looks like for you when you do it?

Brian Kinzie: Sure.

0:44:59

Usually, sometime the week before, I'm gonna go and get all my ingredients. Usually I go visit Tony, get all my stuff for that. I'll start up a yeast starter a few days ahead of time so the yeast will be ready to pitch on the day that I brew. Brew day, I get up, fire up a burner, get your water heated up for doing your mash and —

Sarah Rodriguez: Around what time do you get up for that?

Brian Kinzie: I don't get up early. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Oh right, you're —

Brian Kinzie: I'm not a morning person. [Laughter] If you're doing a full mash brew, it's usually around, for me, because I'm not that fast, it's usually about a six-hour process with all the cleaning and everything, which means I usually wanna get started around 10 or 11 just so I —

Sarah Rodriguez: Not doing it super late?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, exactly. And, believe me, there's been plenty of times I've been brewing where I've been cleaning up at nighttime, where it's like I can't even see what I'm doing out here. [Laughter] But that's not ideal though. I'll usually start around 10 or 11. Get the water heated up. My phone's ringing.

0:46:00

Sarah Rodriguez: You can take that if you need to.

Brian Kinzie: I don't have to. I can make them go away. There we go. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: I'll call him back later. It's okay. So, yeah, I'll got the water heated, get the mash going, finish out the mash. That usually takes around 45 minutes to an hour. Then start heating that up to a boil, and pitching the hops, and all that fun stuff. And then gotta cool it down. Put it into fermenters, and drop the yeast, and it takes a while.

Sarah Rodriguez: Yeah. [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: That's the drawback for brewing. It's not a speedy hobby, which is why I don't brew that often. I'm just too busy, which is terrible. I'm still active with judging and all that fun

stuff for home brew competitions, which is great. But the brewing, I don't have enough time to do it nearly as much as I'd like to.

Sarah Rodriguez: It takes a while.

Brian Kinzie: It just takes a while.

0:46:57

But the good thing is, I mean, the quality of ingredients you can get now is fantastic. If you want to save time and use extracts, the quality of them is so much better than it used to be. You can make a beer using extract if you're doing like a partial mash or something where you can't tell the difference.

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah.

Sarah Rodriguez: That's amazing —

Brian Kinzie: Yeah.

Sarah Rodriguez: —amazing to, I'm sure, see that change in the craft.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. The stuff that you can buy now to brew with also, I mean, I haven't upgraded my system because the equipment is not cheap. But it's interesting to see the people, like, if you go on Craigslist, people try the hobby out for a few years, and decide they didn't have time for it, and they're selling off this incredible equipment now —

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: —on secondary. Yeah. It's like, wow, you spent that much on it? [Laughter] I bought a pot. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: It's like I bought a pot and a carboy. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: That's it. But the stuff they have now, you can get full stainless steel fermenters with the coils around them to maintain temperature and all that stuff.

0:48:01

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: And you can set up and do it in the corner of your garage. It's not that hard, if you got the money for the equipment. And then brew in the bag technique, that was something that didn't exist when I first started, and now a lot of people are doing that, which is gonna save some time and space, so that's actually worth looking into for people as well. And now people are doing pressure fermenting, which is really interesting. It hasn't taken off. That's something that's taken off on the home brew side of the world but not the professional side of the world. But pressure fermenting is interesting because, again, you can do really, really fast turnarounds on your ferments with those. And you can brew a lager style in like a week and a half.

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, and not be able to tell that was rushed like that, which is amazing.

0:48:59

The other big things have changed, Kveik yeast, the Norwegian yeast strains, you're fermenting them at 95 degrees, ideally, and they're not producing off flavors and, again, incredibly fast turnarounds. Those have been really good for the breweries because they're perfect for hazy IPAs, and they can turn the beers around really, really fast. If you're making a traditional lager, let's say you made a really traditional lager, you've got your equipment tied up for six weeks. You're doing a Kveik, you got your equipment tied up for three to five days.

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow.

Brian Kinzie: Just from a business standpoint, and people want the hazies, so [Laughter] it's —

Sarah Rodriguez: They're very popular.

Brian Kinzie: —it makes sense to go that direction. So that's been interesting to see happen.

Sarah Rodriguez: Yeah, for sure. Could you talk a bit about some of the unexpected challenges that you've come across in your home brewing that stand out in your mind?

0:50:04

Brian Kinzie: Early on, and everyone learns this eventually, but sanitation is really, really, really, really important. And I think everyone usually ends up getting an infection once, and then they get religion after that.

Sarah Rodriguez: Is that all you need to —

Brian Kinzie: That's all you need.

Sarah Rodriguez: —have that once?

Brian Kinzie: That happened to us in college, and I remember this distinctly. Now, we bottled up our beer, and just sat it off in the—actually, we put it in my wife's—well, not wife, girlfriend at the time, in an old hutch in the living room of her apartment that she lived in. And we were hanging out one night, and just heard this pssh. And like, "What was that?" And eventually, after we heard that pssh sound like two or three times, we figured out it was the bottles exploding.

0:51:01

Sarah Rodriguez: Oh.

Brian Kinzie: Because if you do—if you had to dump with a bacterial infection, you still have active fermentation from the bacteria going on in your bottles, which causes the pressure in the bottle to build and build until it, boom, explodes.

Sarah Rodriguez: In your girlfriend's place?

Brian Kinzie: Yes. She still married me after that. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: I was about to say. [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: She still married me after that. So we had obviously some beers to clean up, which we did. It was fine. We got it all cleaned up and everything.

Sarah Rodriguez: Good.

Brian Kinzie: And I can remember, like, the rest of the—of course, you're sitting there like all the remaining bottles were like time bombs, and they're all like about to blow. And so I can remember, it's like I had on my chemistry goggles because I started off as a biology major. I had all my chemistry stuff.

Sarah Rodriguez: That's true, yeah.

Brian Kinzie: I had my chemistry goggles. I had like an oven mitt on to kind of try to protect my hands some.

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We had to take them into the bathroom in her place, and over the tub, and we were just like taking the bottle opener, and just barely getting the edge up on the—and as soon as you got that little thing, it'd like blow the cap off. The beer would be hitting the ceiling of the shower like geysers.

Sarah Rodriguez: [Laughter] It's a hard lesson.

Brian Kinzie: That's the one thing like, okay, we thought we were doing enough sanitation. Obviously, we weren't. [Laughter] And, again, back then, sanitizer was you got bleach. You did a bleach solution. That was it. Now there's like 15 different types of sanitizer out there. I mean, back then, it was bleach. If you were lucky, you'd get iodine, but it stained all your equipment, so you didn't really wanna use iodine. But, in any case, that's another thing that's improved tremendously with what you can buy that's available to you. That was the first and last and only time that ever happened. But that was the one bad lesson I had.

0:52:58

No one else that came by in the clubs ever injured themselves seriously brewing. But there's all sorts of—if you go on the internet, and look up "home brew injuries," you can see horror shows of people like with glass carboys having them break, and shhh, and burns from either—there's lots of hot liquids and flame and breakable things, and there's a lot of good ways to get yourself

hurt home brewing. [Laughter] As we get older, we start worrying about lifting in our backs and things like that, which we didn't worry about as much when we were younger. But, nowadays, again, you can just buy pumps, and not do lifting. You can just —

Sarah Rodriguez: There are ways to help with that?

Brian Kinzie: —put a pump on, yeah. So, I mean, there's Dan, who was one of the founders of the club, he's in his 70s now. He's still brews, but he's changed his brewing system around to accommodate what he's physically able to do these days.

0:54:00

But he was able to, which is cool. I think he ended up going with an all-electric system now. It's really cool. Those are neat. Those are cool. Eventually, one day maybe, but not yet. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: I'm going to talk to him, so I'll make sure to ask him about that.

Brian Kinzie: Ask him if he went all electric. I can remember him asking about it. I think he did.

Sarah Rodriguez: Very cool. Awesome. Are there any things that stand out in your mind as particular successes, like beers that you did that turned out really, really good, some of your favorites?

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. I consider myself a very middle-of-the-road home brewer. I mean, every now and then, I'll hit one that I'm really happy with. And sometimes I get one time sometimes, meh, yeah, it's okay. Yeah, I could probably get more there. Yeah, it's okay. That'll do. Because I definitely treat it more like cooking as opposed to a chemistry experiment. I think the people that are more rigorous with it, they're better brewers, frankly, than I am.

0:55:01

But they geek out on that stuff, and that's not what I have fun with. I just enjoy the creative process of it, and the final flavors of the end results. But I'm not as worried about trying to hit a style dead-on necessarily, which isn't the best thing if you're trying to have a competition-worthy beer. Beers I've had that have done well in competitions, I've had a weizenbock that did really well that turned out really nicely. I've typically never been that good with hoppy beers. But we had one big group brew day one time where I'd planned on making an IPA when I was there. And when I got there, I realized I'd forgotten to pack my hops up that morning. And one of the people there lived like really close by, and said, "Well, just scrounge some stuff out my freezer." And so it was a bunch of like his old leftover hops that had been sitting in his freezer for a couple of years.

Sarah Rodriguez: Oh wow.

0:55:58

Brian Kinzie: Best IPA I've ever done, by far. I mean, I was like, this is ridiculous. I'll never be able to recreate this, for one, because we winged it on the fly, and the hops were frankly way past their date. And it was the best tasting hoppy beer I've ever done. I'm like, okay, that shouldn't have worked. One other one that stands out is I made a one-gallon wheat ale batch one time. I don't know if you've ever seen them, but it's basically so you can do an all-grain. It's a kit for making an all-grain beer on a stove top. So it's literally a one-gallon batch of beer. It was a prize that had been donated to us for the Dominion Cup one year. The person who won the prize was Sean, who was a professional brewer, and he's like really a one-gallon thing here. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: That's hilarious.

Brian Kinzie: He literally was like, "Ha-ha," and handed it to me like, "You can take it." So I was like, "Well, why not? I'll make the kit."

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And that one turned out awful initially. Really, really lots of vinyl like phenols going on in it. It was actually like we used it in a study guide class for off flavors to be able to highlight what that flavor of phenol and vinyl is, so here's the flaw so you can detect it. So we used it in the class. And I entered a bottle. Well, you had to put a couple of bottles, so I entered a couple bottles in the CASK Competition with it just for kicks, because I had an entry. It was the only thing I had sitting around, like, "Here you go." I entered that, and ended up getting a medal.

Sarah Rodriguez: Really?

Brian Kinzie: It cleaned up in the bottle, which is not supposed to happen.

Sarah Rodriguez: Wow. I see. But I've heard that does happen.

Brian Kinzie: It does, but it's not supposed to happen that way for that style and that flaw. But since it's only a gallon batch, I only had two bottles left at the house after that.

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So I got like a silver medal off of it, and I'm like, "You gotta be kidding me." And I went home, and cracked open one of my only two that I had left, and I was like, "This batch is a pretty good wheat beer." [Laughter] So that'll never happen again. I won't be able to repeat that. Also,

brewing a one-gallon batch, I'll never do that again, also. It takes the exact same amount of time as it does to brew five or ten gallons.

Sarah Rodriguez: And you don't get as much.

Brian Kinzie: You're putting just as much effort in to only get a gallon. If I'm gonna put that much time into it, I want my five gallons. And five gallons is enough. That's actually a lot of beer, especially if like you're not—my wife and I, we're not like party people, with people coming over to our house and stuff.

Sarah Rodriguez: That's a lot of beer just for y'all.

Brian Kinzie: It's just for us. And my wife, if it's not a style she likes, she's not gonna drink it.

Sarah Rodriguez: Right. [Laughter]

Brian Kinzie: If I brew a white ale, she'll drink that. If I brew something Belgian, she'll go for that.

0:58:57

But if I brew something that's a stout or something like that, it's gonna just be for me. And five gallons of a beer, that's a lot of commitment for a beer.

Sarah Rodriguez: Yeah. I can imagine that you could get tired of it pretty quickly.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, you can. What else stands out for weird home brew stuff? I'm trying to think. There was my first attempt at doing an all-grain batch of beer. I tried to brew a brown ale just for kicks 'cause I hadn't done one in ages. And I missed on my gravity. I ended up with better efficiency than I was intending, so I ended up—frankly it was, we would say, a double

brown ale. It was like 8% or something. It was huge. Actually, it wasn't that bad. But I drank through a lot of those, and then just kinda got tired of it, and just kind of left some bottles laying back in the closet. And I was entering some beers in a competition, and I needed some extra bottles.

1:00:00

And I was like, oh yeah, I got those old brown ales back there. I'll just dump some of those out, and have some bottles. And so I popped the first one open, and was pouring it into the sink, and kind of smelled it. I'm like [sniffs], that kind of smells like an old ale now. And so went and poured a little bit into a glass, and went [sniffs]. It tastes like an old ale. So I took two of those bottles, and entered them in the competition, and got medals off that, for something that I was dumping. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: It's funny how that works.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. [Laughter] Like I said, I'm not a good brewer. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: You got very lucky then.

Brian Kinzie: I got lucky. I like white ales a lot. Always I'm some trying to brew one that I'm really happy with. I've never made one that I've been really happy with. Having said that, that's one of the beers that if I give them away to people, they'll be like, "Yeah, give me some more of that." So, apparently, people seem to like those.

1:01:02

But I've never made one I was that satisfied with. So I'm picky. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: That's all right. Well, that's, for the most part, my questions. Are there any other things that you thought of that you wanna share? Anything I didn't ask about?

Brian Kinzie: No, I mean—it's wild. I mean, James River Homebrewers has been around for 40 years now this year, which is a really long time for a home brew club. We're one of the oldest in the country. And the Dominion Cup's been going on for 30 years now, and this is both anniversaries this year. And it's been really cool to have seen home brewing evolve, and the craft beers take off as something that is appreciated by more than just like a handful of nerds, which is really what it was back then. [Laughter]

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So it's been cool just seeing, like, just hearing like a regular person who's not obsessed with beer, like, the knowledge that people have now about beer is way better than it used to be. And it's like people walking in, and they're talking about styles, and they're not necessarily going on Untappd, and putting in all their beers they've ever had, and all that kind of stuff. No, they're just a regular person that likes beers, which is really cool to see, as opposed to being all weird, and liking beers. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: That sounds pretty fun, too.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah. [Laughter] I'm fully aware that some of us are a little bit more obsessive about it than others. [Laughter]

Sarah Rodriguez: Well, it seems like it turns out good, doing that, anyways.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, it worked out well. It's been really cool to see the beer scene take off in Richmond. It's really nice. There's more beers being released here locally in Richmond than I could ever possibly keep up with sampling. Literally, could not do it.

1:03:01

I mean, I can remember a time where I had literally sampled every commercially available brew that was in Richmond, all of them.

Sarah Rodriguez: And there was a time where you could do that.

Brian Kinzie: I could do that, and not have to really work that hard at it. [Laughter] It's funny, it's like, okay. It's like once I'd exhausted what they had at the Wine & Beer Carytown, I was pretty much done. [Laughter] It's like now? No, I can't keep up with what's being released locally. That's one thing that's changed. I used to do the trading for beers and stuff like that, and shipping stuff all over the place, and I don't really do that anymore because why bother? There's more stuff here than I can possibly drink. It's like I'll trade every now and then with somebody who used to be in this area and has moved and just wants something, but that's about it.

Sarah Rodriguez: Things are so available now.

Brian Kinzie: Yeah, exactly. But that's about all I got.

Sarah Rodriguez: Awesome.

1:04:00

Well, thank you very much.

Brian Kinzie: [coughs] Excuse me.

[End]