



Old Bakery Beer Company in Alton celebrates Robert Wadlow's 100th birthday, releases new Gentle Giant IPA

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - Happy birthday, Robert Wadlow!

Old Bakery Beer Company in Alton is celebrating what would have been the 100th birthday of Wadlow - the tallest man on record, standing nearly nine feet tall. The brewery is having a birthday party for him, which coincides with their annual release of the Gentle Giant West Coast IPA.

"It's one of our coolest historical facts about Alton," Old Bakery Beer Company co-owner Lauren Patton said.

She said the beer is released around his birthday every year. They did 98-cent beers for his 98th birthday, but that did not go well, so no dollar beers this year, she said.

Music was provided by St. Louis based Miss Jubilee, who performs music from the 1920s and 30s - the heyday of Wadlow.

Miss Jubilee said her bandmates from Belleville to New York City were familiar with Alton's Gentle Giant. They were invited to play by Patton, and will perform from 6-8 p. m.

A life-size charcoal drawing of Wadlow was also made by Old Bakery Beer Company employee C Fleck. It is on sale for \$3,000. Prints of a mural of Alton heroes from Wadlow to Miles Davis to the Piasa Bird were also on sale by artist Eric Stevens, who painted it on the wall of one of the brewery's entrances.

Patton said those prints were on sale only when Stevens was available.

Other Wadlow memorabilia was available Thursday evening, including glasses, t-shirts and a \$14 Wadlow burger.

"I told Coop to make the tallest burger he could," she said.

That burger's height is made by a half-pound steakburger, a slab of friend chicken breast, a fried onion ring, fried cheese curds and bacon. It is only available that night at the brewery.

Music was from 6-8 p.m., and the kitchen closed at 9 p.m. The bar shut down at 10 p.m.

Old Bakery Beer Company releases its Gentle Giant West Coast IPA

Old Bakery Beer Company is releasing its Gentle Giant West Coast IPA on Robert Wadlow's birthday yet again, keeping with tradition.

The Gentle Giant West Coast IPA is described on being "big on aroma and ABV (alcohol by volume)." In fact, the pale ale boasts an impressive 8.0 percent ABV. It was added again to the brewery's beer list Thursday night during a celebration of Wadlow's 100th birthday at Old Bakery Beer Company.

It has brewer's malt as well as black malt, which builds a sweetness. The black malt gives it its dark color. Centennial, cascade, citra, and Simcoe hops.

It is sweeter than typical IPA, which is typical for a West Coast IPA, and has more balance than a typical IPA," Roy Morse of Old Bakery Beer Company said at Thursday night's full house event.

Wadlow would be turning 100 today if he did not die at 22 of an infection caused by a blister on his foot incurred from marching in a parade in Michigan.

Morse said the beer will be available as supplies last, which could be a while as the beer is sought year round. This year, Gentle Giant will be available exclusively at the brewery. Only 42 cases are available, which is only around 250 six packs.

While the can numbers may be low, Morse said it will be on draft at the brewery for "quite some time."



