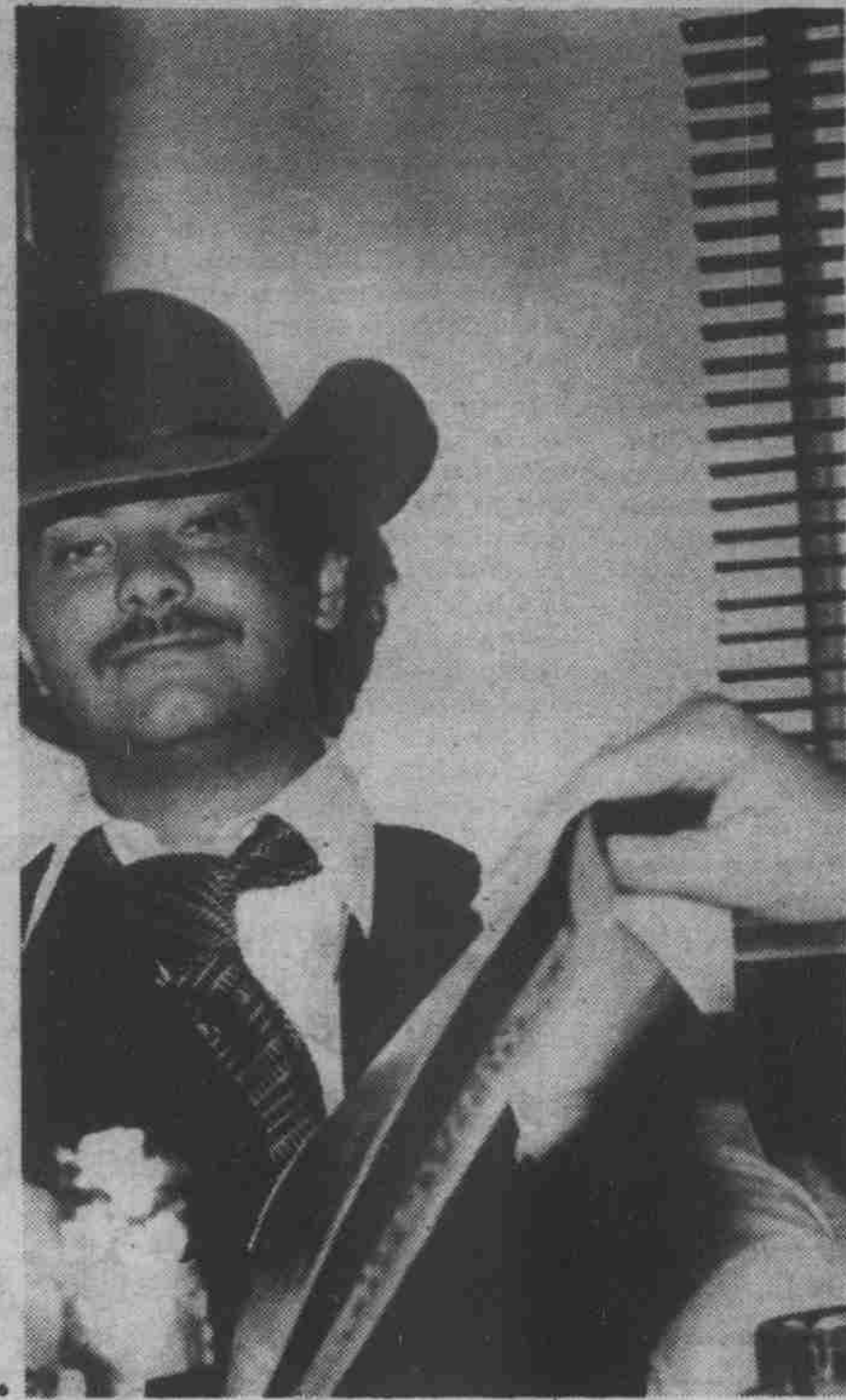
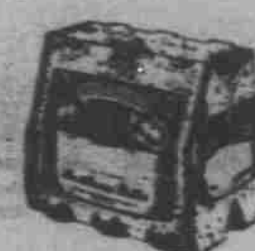


A guide to night life



Roberson and Hampton get down to serious drinking at Molly McGuire's (photos above)... At Tijuana Fats, totally oblivious to waitress (right)... At Crook's, pledging to stick it out to the end (far right). Staff photos by Sharon Clarke

to chug their way through beer-drinking capital of the world

by Bill Roberson and Gary Hampton

on Tuesday, July 22, 1980, on, a graduate student in Gary Hampton, a third-year embarked on a 14-hour beer compassed 24 bars. Their conduct a survey of Chapel holes. (The formal survey shed later.)

ing narrative is a bar-by-bar trek. In all but a few cases, ors of the bars had been vance and provided the pair r.

0 a.m.—Arrive at Bill's; he's A portent of things to come.

—Arrive at Union to run off itinerary (we love crowd Bill departs the building to while I fire up my car, the whose thirst for gas is y by ours for brew.

—Bill goes to the Hobbit to ends and clear our arrival in the evening.

1 a.m.—Burger King. We our only hope is to eat help absorption. And we are long it will be before we r that serves palatable food adget.

—Arrive at Quicke Take-off toast. Friends are there to record the event. At the n we drink. Here, the only than the room temperature eer, obviously fresh off the It does not go down well.

—No time squandered at drive to the Yacht Club, are orgeous bartender serves us drink. Gary lusts. Does not I stress the tightness of our potential disappointment etors.

Gary is obstinate at first, then reluctantly surrenders, but not before pledging to return before the evening is over.

1 p.m.—Arrive at **The Pub**. A dark bar, small, congenial. We talk with proprietor who serves us cold Bud in frosted mugs. Play Charlie Rich and The Rolling Stones on juke box: no bigots, we.

Gary: 1:30 p.m.—**Four Corners**. We slide up to the bar while the patrons eye us casually and a murmur breaks out in awed, hushed tones. Obviously, word of our mission has preceded us.

We're on foot now, and at the mercy of Chapel Hill's public drunkenness ordinance. The atmosphere is great, but we are driven on by the need to fulfill our duty and the thought of another **BREWSKIE**.

Bill: 1:54 p.m.—Inconspicuous descent into **Harrison's**. I slide down three stairs. Am berated by Gary, who slides down remainder. Entire Harrison's staff looks on.

We approach bar amid misunderstanding of our purpose, questions as to its legitimacy. No one's fault, situation readily is rectified. I am buzzing. Pace is picking up noticeably.

Gary: 2:19 p.m.—**Carolina Coffee Shop**. Here we meet the sweet sounds of classical music, and a skeptical manager who tells us, "You'll never make it." My reply, "Urff!" We hurry on.

2:36 p.m.—**Papagayo's**. By now Bill has a goofy look on his face. He turns and says, "I think we're in trouble." I bite harder on my cigar and nod. Fortunately some friends meet us for moral support. Physical support might be more appropriate.

Bill: 2:59 p.m.—First checkpoint, **Molly McGuire's**. Sharon, a *Tar Heel* photographer, is there to document the occasion. So are several friends. I keep

calling people the wrong names, but do not feel embarrassed.

Beer is cold, fortunately. They are not going down easily. We think the bartenders are snickering at us, but the ringing in our ears makes it difficult to be certain.

3:23 p.m.—At **Troll's**. It is quiet, cool and dark, which is what we need. I want to stretch out in a booth. Gary will not let me. He is lusting after the bartender again. Gary wants to stay here and split a pitcher.

Gary: 3:45 p.m.—We lurch across the parking lot to **Back Streets** formerly **Youngblood's**. Thank God it's a short walk. Only my belief that Bill will collapse into a coma at any moment drives me on. Already he looks like the poster child for a gravediggers' convention.

Bill: 4:07 p.m.—The pace is intense. We approach the halfway mark. A quick beer at **Linda's**. I want to stay and drink with Kim, the bartender—we are the only ones here—but Gary kicks me and pushes me through the door.

Gary: 4:27 p.m.—**Spanky's**. It is fresh and cool. We saunter up the steps to the bar. Bill thanks the manager for the air conditioning. I say a silent prayer for someone to build an elevator so I can avoid the steps down. No elevator is built, but Bill and I manage to navigate down and out; lucky us.

4:45 p.m.—**Village Green**. We fall into the hands of enemy agents at this point. Quietly we are guided into the new downstairs section. The others are dressed in cut-offs and no shirt or open shirt. Bill and I wear formal attire.

There is nothing but the smell of fresh paint, two floor fans stolen from the set of *Casablanca* and heat. I know we are in trouble now. I feel my knees buckle and look at Bill. His eyes look like the center

of a doughnut, glazed and vacant; almost beyond pain, damn near beyond life.

Quickly we exit via the back gate. This is the crucial point. We stop as if we have just passed through the gates of hell. We look at each other; I almost throw up on his shoes. We decide to go on, to finish the survey, but to drink only when we safely can hold it.

Bill: 5:25 p.m.—Inside **Kirkpatrick's**. We order two Cokes. I think the bartender is laughing at me, but I cannot be sure. He does magic tricks for us, diverting us from the profound misery of our condition. Pranav, an old friend, joins us and we all three leave together.

5:50 p.m.—I am feeling better, certain that I can go the distance solo, if need be.

5:51 p.m.—I am being carried down **Rosemary Street**. Gary on one side, Pranav on the other.

6:00 p.m.—We are at **Colonel Chutney's**. Gary and Pranav pour me into a booth. Food is put before me. I do not know what it is, but I eat. Sharon, the photographer, arrives with some other friends. She takes more pictures. I think she is trying to embarrass us.

Gary: 7:10 p.m.—**Tijuana Fats**. Bill has to be carried like a stricken knight to our destination. However, at this point he rallies, and orders a beer as I do. From now on my own path is set: heedless to the impending and total renal failure that faces me, I am determined to go out quaffing.

Bill: 7:56 p.m.—Playing pool at the **Cavern** with Gary and Rick, another friend who has come along for the laughs. I have yet to find amusement. If I had to pick a place to die, this would be it. Gary, who has never played pool in his life, soundly thrashes me. The alcohol has begun to take a noticeable effect.

Gary: 8:30 p.m.—**Hobbit Hoagie Factory**. Bill works here on the side as

opposed to on his face, so I must make some pretense to being civilized. Actually, I yearn to attack the counter workers and raid the food bin.

At this point Bill has no sensory perception and has to seek an aid for his propulsion and navigation systems between watering holes. All his nerves are drowned and I fear autism is upon him.

Bill: 9:05 p.m.—At the **Pyewacket** ahead of schedule. Outside, raining like hell. We decide to sit; and psyche ourselves for the welcoming ceremony at **Crook's**. All is well until the unexpected arrival of a certain person: Gary's ex-fiancee. Gary almost throws up in his glass. Leaves without me.

He is taking an awful risk. I am not sure he can remain standing with the added pressure of rain on his shoulders and head.

9:53 p.m.—At **Crook's Corner** we are reunited. Wet and sweating beer. The staff at **Crook's** is very kind to us and does not take offense. The welcoming committee is seated, waiting. I am persuaded to order a barbecue sandwich. It will not go down without jeopardizing the delicate balance in my stomach.

I reach to grab Gary's notes and knock a beer onto Sharon's camera. She is too kind to cram the soggy thing down my throat.

10:37 p.m.—Walking through **Carboro**. This is a new perspective—surreal. It is not raining, but I am still not drying out. Amazed that I can still make puns in this semi-comatose state.

Gary: 10:45 p.m.—**Bullwinkle's**. Bill and I shoot a few games of pool and savor some more beer. Since we are still in our formal attire we draw a few quick eyebrow liftings. As an offering of friendship, Bill and I break into a rousing

chorus of the "I was not a Nazi" Polka," and win the crowd.

Bill: 11:33 p.m.—Cross the street to **Side-track**. Beach music here. They tell me I am shagging. I do not remember ever having learned. Cigar keeps falling from my mouth. My partner, Karen, carries me to a seat, where I collapse.

Need to find my stamina. Looking on floor for it. Not here. These boards are very comfortable.

11:58 p.m.—In the stretch. The entourage has assembled and is waiting at the **Station**. We enter. *Merciful Heavens!* We are in the middle of a square dance. Dance my way to the bar. Try to interview bartender. He cannot understand what I am saying. An overflow of saliva is distorting my speech.

He gives me two beers and I try to find Gary. We drink, then grab our partners. Dance for 45 minutes. Am going to lose it all if we do not sit down soon. I learn that bluegrass music has no beginning nor end. Gary rescues me. We leave.

1 a.m.—Triumph! At **The Red Baron**, a much overlooked bar. Mike, the bartender, welcomes the whole entourage. Pitchers are placed before us. I am wearing a string of beads but do not recall how I obtained them. Someone, out of adulation, grabs my beads, pulls from behind. If he does not stop soon, it will be a day's work wasted.

Bill: 1:45 p.m.—Gary leans against me fondly, puts his arm around my shoulders, shows me his watch, and gurgles, "Time for one more at the **Yacht Club**".

Gary: Conclusion—Bill swears he is on the wagon until Christmas, I hope to make it to my birthday in September. In any event, look for the write-up in *Time*, *Newsweek* and four major journals on internal medicine