Good afternoon, and welcome to the Filson Historical Society. I'm Mark Wetherington, director and I first of all, I want to thank you for coming today because we've got a great program. And it's a wonderful day outside. So we appreciate your attendance very much. We're going to talk today about the golden age of bourbon. And our program is led by Mike Veatch. This is a part of our Filson Friday series. And each summer on Friday, we ask a member of the curatorial staff to update us talk to us about an area of interest or, or care or conservation that they're working on. And, and as most of you know, in this room, Mike's area is bourbon, you wouldn't be here. The only regret I have to say today is that we don't have a tasting, paired with this program. But we can fix that pretty soon because something will be on the horizon before too much longer. Our mission is to collect, preserve and tell the significant stories of Kentucky and the Ohio Valley history and culture and bourbon is certainly one of those significant stories. And before I introduce Mike, I want to mention a couple of things. First of all, we have a lot of non members here today. Members, thank you very much for your support. non members, Sarah strapped our membership coordinators in the back of the room, waving her hand she has membership information, we would love to have you join us. Our members help us in a lot of ways, not only through membership, but through donations of collections. And I just wanted to mention recently that we were very, very fortunate to receive through a bequest of Mr. Fred Whaley. This painting on the center of the wall back here of Louisville skyline in 1852, is approximately when that was taken and painted. And the bequest also took care of the conservation to that painting is a beautiful painting. And it's connected with our program today because so much of the bourbon that was produced in this region went down river and on down to New Orleans. So with without generosity of members and supporters like that we would not have the kind of collections we have probably 90% of our material here that Felson is donated by members, or the general public. So we thank you for your support. And we thank you for your membership. Now, Mike Veatch grew up here in Jefferson County. He received his bachelor's degree in history from the University of Louisville, and his master's degree in history from the University of Louisville. He worked at United distillers as the North American archivist in the early 90s. And he's worked at the Filson since 1997. He has written numerous articles and publications, and of course, his recent book which you will have an opportunity to buy after the program history of bourbon so I would encourage you to get a copy if you have not received that book. He is currently working on other distilling histories. He consulted for Oscar gets
Museum of whiskey history Brown Forman distilleries, Buffalo Trace distilleries, Mike's done a lot in the field of bourbon. He served on the boards of many boards of directors, the friends of Farnley Norman house and the Kentucky Council of archives. And he has done an incredible amount of bourbon tasting Mike is very philanthropic and he has a very, very philanthropic nature about him. He set a goal in his life to volunteer to work with other organizations. He didn't know I was going to talk about this to help them meet some fundraising goals by giving of his time and some some bourbon to do fundraisers for a lot of community organizations. So Mike, without further ado, I will only mention another thing he was inducted into the Kentucky bourbon Hall of Fame. He was very important in 2006. So I'm going to turn the microphone over to you are you You are late pilled. Okay. All right.

Michael Veach 04:18

Thank you all for coming. And I do want to re emphasize what Dr. Worthington said, if you're not a member, please consider joining because members is what makes the Filson so great. So, with that said, this talk is actually inspired by Bill Samuels. Right after my book came out. We had lunch together and we were talking about the golden age of bourbon because in my book, I kind of kind of mentioned that, you know, the 50s and early 60s 1960s might be considered the golden age of bourbon and he pointed out some things or I may want to reconsider that and I got to think about this and make a great talk with when was the golden age of bourbon? Or has it even been here yet? So let's just talk about you know, the early age of bourbon since the earliest written mention of bourbon is 1821. Let's look at the period from 1821 to the end of the Civil War, was that the golden age of bourbon? It was definitely an interesting time for bourbon. You know, a lot of people would love to cut time travel back and try some of the Bourbons from that time. You had James crow jamesy Crow, making old crow whiskey at the old Oscar pepper distillery, not to mention, you know, the other brands that were made there. You had people like McBrayer making great whiskey at that time. But was it a golden age? Well, not necessarily. Because all these distillers that were out there were very small and capacity. So the really good ones that had the great reputations had been probably been fairly hard to get. And you couldn't buy a bottle of it, because they you know, the packaging at this time was really the barrel. And you would have take your jug or your bottle or flask or whatever that you had, you know, bucket to your local supplier and get it filled right out of the barrel. Well, that sounds pretty good too. Because just think every bourbon you got was barrel strength and unfiltered. You know, they're paying a lot of money for that type of whiskey nowadays. But there was also a lot of distilleries out there that weren't so good. And their their product was aftertaste. Sometimes it was really just a crapshoot as to what you were going to get. So I'm not really sure that we could really be considered a golden age, you know, distribution was very limited. Supply supplies were very limited, be hard to really define it as a golden age. So let's look at the period right after the Civil War all the way up to the beginning of prohibition. You know, a lot of historians consider the 19th century. You know, starting with the French Revolution and ending with the First World War, I always say the 19th century in distilling history starts with the Whiskey Rebellion and ends with the prohibition. So we'll just look at this period between the Civil War and probation. Now this is got some definite possibilities for being a golden age. You had lots of distilleries, it started up here and lots of distilleries have huge capacity, because in the 1840s, the column still was invented. And by the 1870s, there were a lot of people investing in column steel, so they were making more than one or two barrels a day. So there was a lot of whiskey out there, people were supply had plenty of supply. Once again, at the beginning, it started off, you know, the major package was still the barrel. But by the end of this period, you're starting to see bottled whiskey for sale, you could still get both, you could go and buy a bottle or if you decide you wanted some right out of the barrel, you
could go still go and get it right out of the barrel. You know, that sounds really good for the consumers. The bad news for the consumers is that this is also the period of the rectifiers. And you have rectifiers that some of them were making very good product, a lot of very reputable people, made their money and built their business starting off as a rectifier. You know, this includes Brown Forman, Isaac Wolfe, Bernheim and Paul Jones, who later goes on to become part of Frankfort distilleries in his four roses brand. They were making good products, but at the same time, you had people that were making rectified whiskey that was more questionable quality. You know, my favorite is is that right? And Taylor, you know, had a advertisement asked if they would make a old Kentucky Taylor nine year old whiskey while you waited.

**Question 09:08**

Now, it's really interesting to read some of the transcripts from the Trademark Trial because you know, Colonel, eh, Taylor took some exception to this, you know, especially the fact that the label was old big letters, Kentucky, small letters and abbreviated, big letters, Taylor. And of course, currently H Taylor had the brand old Taylor. So he took quite a bit of exception to this and the trial transcripts are really pretty good because, you know, the judge asked Mary and Taylor it says so, you know, you say this is nine year old whiskey. How can you say his nine year old whiskey if you're making it up that day, you just, well, it tastes like nine year old whiskey. And the judge says, Oh, really? Can I have a sample and he didn't agree with me Mary Ann Taylor, I think it'd be hard to find anybody that could really say that a rectified night product like that would taste like a real nine year old bourbon. So you had the rectifiers. And you also had the temperance movement. So it was really a hard time for both the manual manufacturers and, and the consumers at this point, you know, the manufacturers had to deal with the the temperance movement, trying to eliminate them. And the consumers had to deal with the temperance movement, you know, with people like Carrie nation coming into the saloon and smashing it up with their hatchets. So, you know, it still has some great possibilities, because like I said, you could get fined bottled whiskey, you know, by 1897, you have the bottle and Bond Act to get you great bonded whiskey, there were plenty of distilleries out there. And they were making a lot of whiskey, and it was available to the public. But it wasn't such a great time for the industry and other ways, too, because not only did you have the temperance movement and such, you had a bit of infighting between the distillers of st whiskey in the rectifiers. And you had these rectifiers that were making some questionable product. But the thing that hurt the straight whiskey people the most was you had these rectifiers that were making a lot of very cheap products and keeping the prices down. You know, if they could say they could sell, you know, label a product, a nine year old whiskey, you know, even though they made it up while you were waiting, and sell it for, you know, 20 cents a quart. You know, it was hard to advertise a nine year old straight whiskey for 70 cents a quart and actually sell it. So it was it was rough on the industry. And a lot of a lot of people didn't make it because of that, you know, there are a lot of prices where it's a matter of fact, eh, Taylor actually started off not at the old Taylor distillery, but at the OFC distillery, the distillery that's now a Buffalo Trace. And because of this overproduction by the rectifiers and they combined with the the unsettled financial situation in the late 1870s, a lot of it caused by the presidential election. He went bankrupt. As a matter of fact, he got so desperate that he even considered moving to Bolivia to escape his his debts. So he ends up the only reason that he they he did not lose the OSC Distillerie. Completely on paper was is that Gregory and Stagg a firm out of St. Louis, and were his best customers bailed him out. But then very quickly, he realized when by bailing him out, they really just bought the distillery without it having to go on auction. So he ends up quitting that firm and starting up the old Taylor distillery. So let's it's some rough times, like I said, with the consumers even, you didn't really know what you were getting, if you were, if you were
getting really a true straight whiskey or one of these rectified products, at least not until the end of this period when the Pure Food and Drug Act kicks in. And you start getting definitions and truth and labels where you have straight whiskey and Android. Straight whiskey, blended whiskey and imitation whiskey, you know, the problem is, is this whole thing is not settled until 1909. And then in 1920, you have prohibition. So it's really kind of hard to say that this period is a golden age as well, even though it probably comes pretty close. I think we can eliminate the period of prohibition completely. Obviously, not a golden age for for whiskey. So let's look at the period right after Prohibition, say from 1930 up through the end of the for the Second World War. It's really hard to say that this was a golden age for bourbon either. Prohibition just came to an end, most of these distilleries were just starting up. They were dealing with trying to get aged product out there and they had competition from Canada and Scotland and Ireland that had age products already because their production was never interrupted. A lot of companies started up a lot of companies immediately failed. So you really can't look at this period. Riya as a, as a golden age for the industry at all. And for the consumer, the fact that you know, when you're looking at bourbons that are, you know, six months old or a year old or you know, whatever until they finally get the the fully age product on the on the market. It's hard to say that this was a golden age. So let's look at the period right after the Second World War up through the 1960s. Now, this is the period that bill you know, that I kind of said was probably a good golden age of whiskey because for bourbon because there was plenty of distilleries still out there. They were making all the whiskey that they could make they'll nobody no limitations because of the war or anything. And consumers had plenty of choices to do so. But then Bill reminded me of something that I should have realized earlier. It all starts with the Korean War. And that's when Louis Rosenstiel at chinley panics and says this is going to turn into another world war. They're going to ask us to quit making beverage alcohol, and we're going to be stuck in the same situation we were during the Second World War. So he ordered every one of his distilleries, and he had about 12 at that time to go on a 24/7 production, right. They filled their warehouses. National distillers did the same thing for on a lesser degree. They they didn't go quite the extent that Rosenstiel but they they upped their production to you know, just in case. They didn't fill their warehouses, but they still had a lot of extra whiskey that they really hadn't planned on making more than what their demand was calling for. So what happened out of this? After the war, or with the war went on, they realized that it wasn't going to be another world war. And the government never asked them to quit production. And Louis Rosenstiel was like all of a sudden, oh, crap. I've got warehouses full of whiskey, and at the end of eight years, when the bonding period ends, I have to pay the taxes on it. And there's no way I can sell it all. So he goes to the government and convinces Congress to raise the bonding period from eight to 20 years to keep them from going bankrupt. But what happens is, is that you've got the big companies National Insurance li which were the two biggest in the nation at the time, with more whiskey than they need. So they're artificially keeping the prices low, trying to sell it. And this has an effect on the smaller producers. Because they don't have this extra bulk whiskey, they have to sell the whiskey for the price. That's more economic forum. And they can't compete price wise with shimmery and national and a lot of them ended up going out of business. But not only that. It's also in this period that Shin Lee says, well, we don't need this production. We've got all this extra whiskey. And they went from like 12 distilleries down to like four. So they were closing down their distillery. So it was a bad time for the distillery. It's hard to call it a golden age for the distilleries. It was great for the consumers. But you could hardly call it the golden age for, for the distilleries at all. Because there were people losing their jobs and distilleries closing left and right. So that brings us up to the 1960s. And there's no way you can say that this was a golden age for American whiskey for for bourbon. You know, this was a generation, the 60s and the 70s, all the way through the 80s, where you had a generation that said we're not going to trust anyone over 30 And we're not going to drink what our parents drank. And their parents were drinking whiskey, Bourbon rye scotch, they
started experimenting with new products such as vodka and tequila two products, the
government didn't even keep track of the total amount of sales until 1970. Because there
wasn't enough sold not hardly not enough vodka sold between 1933 when prohibition ended,
up to 1970 for the government to put in their yearly report on how much was sold. And now
vodka is the biggest selling spirit in the world. But distilleries once again, we're closing left and
right because there was a overproduction shouldn't but the overproduction was because of a
lack of demand, yet a whole generation that wasn't drinking whiskey. This didn't turn around.
And actually until the late 70s, when this scotch whisky industry introduced single malt Scots,
scotch whiskey to the United States. They decided that the best way to handle this because we
were talking about a generation, so they were drinking vodka and tequila, but they were also
beer and wine drinkers. And the big thing was to have wine tastings and have wine and cheese
pairings and things like that wine dinners. They decided to Okay, well, we'll play that game.
We'll come in and we will start having single mock tastings and showing people that Scotch
whiskey single malt whiskies are not something that you just shoot back and or mix in a
cocktail. It's something that you can enjoy with fever, with food and other things, you can enjoy
the flavor of it. And it caught off. So by the end of the 1980s, you have the bourbon industry
saying, Well, you know, we need to do this too, we need to do something to increase our
appeal. So that's when they created the single barrel bourbons and the small batch bourbons
and the extra age bourbons that we all know and love today. So starting in 1990, up to the
present was a you know, is this period of the Golden Age. Not too many distillers out there. But
they are making a lot of products, and they're making it at a reasonable price. And the
consumers have a lot of choices now. It is a sort of a golden age. But once again, I really don't
think it was quite there. I think that the golden age might actually we might just be on the cusp
of it right now. We have a era right now in the last two years, there have been more distilling
license issued in the United States, then there had been since prohibition, all the years between
prohibition and up to about two years ago. Or five years ago, not to you. More licenses were
issued in the last five years and all those years before. So we have a growth of the craft
distilling industry. And you know, that is hopeful because we are looking at the fact that maybe
10 years from now, once again, we will have 30 distilleries or more out there making bourbon
and selling a good fine age product. The competition between all these will help keep prices
low, and we will possibly be in a golden age of bourbon again. So that's my talk. Do we have
any questions? Yes, sir. Rectifier. rectifier is a person that doesn't actually own a distillery and
they buy bulk whiskey and alcohol and rectify it to create a flavor profile that they think is
good. So would you say that a lot of the Bourbons that are being marketed now in small batch
bourbons are rectified products. Oh, yeah. There are they're actually operating under a
rectifiers license and that in distilling license. Yeah. And I know Julian Van Winkle probably
wouldn't like we like to hear this, that that's what he's operated on. You know, and for many
years, that's what the course of aims were doing. Julian Van Winkle, Pappy Van Winkle. Well Rip
Van Winkle. Yeah. Yes. In the 50s and 60s. Old first. Gera was a premium brand, but it's not
anymore. What's happened in this boiler Stitzel. Weller is closed down in 1992. And the brand
was sold to heaven Hill and 1999. And it's still a very good brand. Yeah. It's a good quality
brand. But I agree with you. It's not near the reputation that it had in the 50s and 60s. Old fans
and well are basically were the same. No Avondale bato Fitzgerald Buffalo Trace bought Weller.
Yes. What do you think this promotion of the, I guess small discoveries downtown. On one
secretary is going to have an impact on the industry as you're going to work? Well, I'm hoping
it's going to have a positive influence and I think it's all Ready, had a positive influence. The
fact that craft distilling industry as the fact that heaven Hill is actually willing to put one end
down there on Main Street is very encouraging. But I'm hoping that the craft industry, the craft
distilling industry, is not only going to offer new innovations, but I'm hoping you know, that'd be
sorry, sort of like the beer industry, the secret to the beer industry, the craft brewers were the
ones that the reason they started up, is because they wanted beer like it used to be made in
the old days, you know, full bodied and flavorful, and things like that. So that's what I'm hoping happens with the distilling industry that it will not only, you know, maybe offer some new innovation, something like the angels envy with their port wine finish and things like that. But it'll also bring back some of the, the old practices too, such as distilling at a lower proof and putting it into a barrel of a lower proof. So you get a more flavorful, full bodied bourbon at a younger age. Let's go over here first. Things like angels can be as far as aging their whiskey. Go with what's before angel in the sales a bottle hell. Oh, with what they're making down there. I can't answer how old it'll be, because that'll be up to them. But I suspect it will be at least five, six years before they'll have bourbon that they can put into the port wine cast to let them let it age that they actually made. You know, the bourbon they're selling now comes from a different distillery. Obviously, because they don't own one, go there. Once again, they're operating under a rectifiers license at this point. It's not until their distillery gets up and going, will they be shifting over to a distillers license? Four to six year old whiskey Yeah. Yeah, I knew that I just and actually, I think I know where the where the whiskey comes from. But I know Wes would shoot me if I told you that. Yeah. But yeah, I think that is that's gonna be the problem with any of the craft distilleries. We I was talking last night, I gave a talk down in Bowling Green to the fortnightly club. And the biggest problem the industry has right now, in my opinion is is that most of the distilleries are publicly owned corporations. And the publicly owned corporations controlled by stockholders aren't interested in long term growth, they want money now. But the whole nature of the whiskey industry is long term growth, because you're making a product that you really can't even sell for four or 568 10 years. So it'll be interesting to see how some of these survive. And such. I really think that angels envy will do well, Lincoln Henderson is just a knowledge of bourbon production, Neil, just a great guy. And I think his son and grandson are following in his footsteps with their marketing ability. And hopefully, Kyle will inherit all of Lincoln's production ability as well. So I think they'll do well. But there are some of these others like this new peerless distillery down here, I really don't know anything about them, you know, do they really even have the knowledge to make a good product, we will wait and see. And that's going to be the real thing. You can't just open up a distillery and expect people to flock to your doors to buy your product. They may do it once. But if it ain't a good product, they're not going to come back. And that's what they need. Actually, I think I had a question in the back here first. Taste of the early whiskey. found an old bottle or barrel that's been stored somewhere for 100 years. Well, first of all, you won't find a barrel. Because barrels are, you know, they may look solid with their pores, and that's where you get the angel share the evaporation out of the barrel by 100 years. I don't care where you put it in the warehouse. After 100 years, it's gone. old bottles, you do find occasional bottles that date back into the 1870s. But that's about the earliest that I've ever seen. Back in the 1960s National distillers held a contest to find the oldest bottle with a label on it that said bourbon because they were hoping to be a no grow bottle. But Crowe was hardly ever bottled. In this period, it was sold By the barrel, and the oldest bottle actually turned out to be an 1849 bottle from vinegars grocery store in New York City. Okay, I think we had a question here was given the opportunity to taste products that were still mighty 30 smiting for you two, those whiskeys to me are foreign. For example, Kentucky still might be 42 involvement and 46. Kentucky tavern then comparable to the product now are two completely different animal. Right? It seems, it appears to me that the care and quality of the crafts back then is far more superior than what a lot of your mass produced whiskies are, right? Well see, once again, we're looking at most of the distilleries back in the 30s and 40s. We're not publicly on corporations. And when you own your own distillery, you have less the captains have less of an influence on you. And you know, one of my favorite quotes comes from OVA, Haney, who used to be the master distiller at four roses passed away here about 10 years ago, we were at the Getty Museum, and someone asked him, you know, on the panel that he was on, who's going to be the master distillers of the of the future, and his quote was the effing cat accountants. And, you know, the, the, if the accountants had their
way, everybody would be drinking the exact same whiskey because they would figure out the cheapest, absolute cheapest way to make it. And that's what everybody would make. So because of that, you know, back in the 1930s, and 40s, in the 50s, actually all the way up to 1964. The maximum barrel proof back then was 110, proof, not 125. And even in 1964, when the government said you could raise it up to 125, it didn't really happen for another 20 years. And 1 can tell you this right now, just let you know, a little secret distillers are pretty high bail. They don't like to change things. So you had to do you know, in 1964, the government said you can raise up to 195, you had people saying, I ain't gonna do that. This is why we've always made it and this is the way we're going to make it and if they weren't controlled by the accountants, that's what happened. You did what the distiller had said to do. You know, I've talked with Parker beam Parker being said was the one that raised the barrel proof up to 125 at heaven hill because his dad refused to do it. So you had a lot of other quality control things at that period, and you know, which causes the whiskey to really taste. I have had four and five year old products from the 30s 40s and 50s. That tastes better than eight year old products today, and I'm quite convinced that a lot of it is the fact that they were using a lower barrel proof and a lower distillation proof giving you a more full-bodied and flavorful product.

Okay, we had a question, this lady was rectified. All right, for roses has an interesting history. Paul Jones started off as a rectifier in Atlanta, Georgia, buying whiskey from the rose distillery down there as a matter of fact, one of the possibilities for the real origin for the name for roses loves is they had four different whiskies they made and he blended them all together and created for roses eventually moves to Louisville, after the bottom and bond back passes all of these rectifiers that were successful, started looking into buying distilleries and making a straight product. And that's exactly what they did. And for Roses was a straight bourbon. Right up to prohibition, it becomes the mainstay of Frankfort distilleries, which is one of the six companies that were allowed to sell for medicinal purposes during during Prohibition. After prohibition, it's still a bourbon and it remains a bourbon up until 1943 When Frankfort distillery sells out to Seagrams Seagram has been a Canadian whiskey company, and Canadian whiskies are all blended whiskies. They thought they do four roses a favor and turn it into an American blend. And it was an American blend and it was actually a pretty decent American blend when they first started but by By the time the 80s rolled around, it was a very cheap American blend. And finally, in the 1990s when the bourbon festival was created, I should say it's American blend in America, overseas in Europe and Japan, it was still a bourbon for Roses was and when the bourbon festival started up, they actually convinced the groom's to allow them to sell for roses yellow label in Kentucky. And then when Seagrams went, went, went up for sale, and Kieran beer ended up ownership of the four roses distillery. They started allowing them to create single barrels and small batch products of straight bourbons they took the blend off the market completely. And that's where we are today they they've come kind of rectifier to distiller back to a kind of a rectified product and back to a straight product. It's Anderson County, or near Lawrenceburg. Very beautiful distillery I one of my favorite tours, I highly recommend you go out there. Yes. Okay, a blend. Okay, bourbon, cannot have anything except pure water added to it at any stage. When you bring it off, the still, only thing you can add to the spirit before he goes into the barrel is pure water. That's why Jack Daniels and George decal are not bourbons, because they alter the flavor by running it through that charcoal mellowing process. Then, when it comes out of the bear, to be a bourbon, you cannot add anything except pure water to just the proof. So that's my biggest complaint about angels envy. I love Lincoln Anderson in them, but they need to at least take straight off their bottle because straight whiskey does not have any other flavoring, artificial colors or anything like that. So they need to take at least take straight off. I personally if I had my way, would make them take bourbon off as well because bourbon cannot have any other flavors added to it. You know, once they put it into a port wine as far as I'm concerned, it's no longer a bourbon. It's a whiskey. And I'm not blaming angels, maybe they're not doing anything that hasn't been done
for 20 years or more since Jim Beam first introduced their port wine finished distillers masterpiece, but you know, my opinion whoever allowed Jim Beam to do that made a big mistake. Yes. What was the political process that allowed the lipstick for distillers are five to remain? There were six. There were six and actually from what I understand there was actually 10 permits out there that people could get, but only six people ever applied for because there just wasn't that much money in it. The six companies that were allowed to sell during Prohibition were Brown Forman, the only one that's still around as a company today in its present form. Everybody else has been bought up by somebody else. James Thompson and brother which later became Glenmore distilleries. Frankfort distilleries that I've already talked about a man American medicinal spirits, which later became national distillers shenley distilleries and Arthur Phillips ditzel distillery. Now WL Weller and Sons piggybacked off of this ditzel license because the president of Sitzel distillery was Arthur Phillips ditzel Vice President was Alex De Farnley, and Secretary Treasurer with Julian P. Van Winkle. President of WL Weller and son was Julian P. Van Winkle. Vice President was Alex De Farnley. And secretary treasurer was Arthur Phillips. ditzel. So it was the same three people on both companies but they weren't officially merged not until after Prohibition. Yes. Oh, granddad was one of the brands so but national. Yes. sales increasing today? Yes. They have. Yeah, during the 1980s the only thing that really saved the bourbon industry was the Japanese market. And like I said, By the beginning of the 1990s, you start seeing bourbon sales begin to quit declining. They weren't growing but they quit declining. And this is mostly because of the introduction of single barrel and small batch and the extra age products. By the mid 90s, they had stabilized. And they've been growing ever since. This was led mostly by the super what they call the super premium brands, the small batches and the single barrels and the, you know, the old Rip Van Winkle type extra age products. But it's been growing ever since. And there's been a trickle down effect, because as people tasted these high brand and brands, they got to thinking, Well, what else does this distillery make, and they started trying some of the, the stable brands in there and started bringing their sales up as well. So it's actually growing there. The distilleries are expanding at a rate that they haven't seen in a long time. But the sad truth is, they are still short of the amount of whiskey that they were making back in 1950. Export quite a bit of it. I don't know the exact figures. But, you know, Bourbon is still exporting quite a bit. But you know, the biggest whiskey market in the world is the United States. You know, that's why the scotch and the Canadians put so much emphasis on the United States market. Yes, for for us to be a premium brand. And then in my opinion, it still is I love Enforcer. was the lead Yeah, it was the brand that created Brown Forman basically maybe Larson prices I heard the story and suddenly had different perception in the public. Even during it was a great it was was a premium brand. It's always been a great brand Brown Forman should be proud of the brand. But in this period in the 19, mid 60s up through the 80s. You know, like said you got to Brown Forman is not privately owned anymore, even though the Brown family still controls the most of it. That other 49% Share is you know, they're responsible to stockholders. And like I said, stockholders want their money now. So when sales were decreasing, you know, their answers to the stockholders was a little decreased the price of our product, try to sell more that way. And of course, that was ultimately kind of defeating the purpose. But in my opinion, oak forest are still is a premium brand. And it's a great i i personally would rather drink it than Woodford. Yes. The story is that basil Aiden is made, we're using the old granddad recipe. And the only real difference is the the proof I tell you, I like Oh, Granddad a lot. I'm not a big fan of basil Hayden. And I think the main reason is the proof. When you lower the proof to 80 proof, you're not only adding more water, but you have to filter it more to prevent flocking. And flocking is simply the vegetable oils that are naturally in the whiskey that come through the distillation process. And when it gets real cold, they'll start to solidify and look cloudy. And the more alcohol in the product, the lower the temperature you have to go before this starts to happen. So but by the time you get 80 proof, you have to do a lot of filtering to prevent that from
happening. And the more you filter it, the more you flavor you're taking out. And that's my biggest problem with basil Hayden is to me, it's brown vodka, you get a little taste that to start with, and then it's gone. I would much rather have the 86 proof or the 100 proof. Oh, granddad and basil Hayden. And guess what? It's only about a third of the price, granddad was a fairly premium voice years ago. Oh, yeah. But he doesn't seem to get bored, but I can see. Yeah, and that's because, you know, through the 1960s and the 70s. There, the advertising theory was, well, they don't like our product product because it says old. You know, this is a young generation. You know, we got to get rid of this. Oh, you know, you see a lot of brands drop old from their name and you start seeing brands come out that don't have that word in it. You know, then trying to appeal to this younger generation, but I'll tell you, the people that really know whisky that nowadays the real aficionados, They look at old granddad and say, Yeah, I like it. And they hope the advertisers never catch on because when they do then the price is gonna start going up as more people start drinking it yes for there is no fruit added, but when you farm it grain, you're using yeast. And there are 1000s of different types of yeast out there. And some of the flavors that they produce, you know, each strain produces their own flavor. Like if you go to for roses, they have five different types of yeast. They make 10 Different whiskies they got to mash meals and five different types of yeast. They've got a floral yeast, they got an herbal yeast, they've got a spicy yeast, they got a lightly fruited yeast and a heavy fruit of yeast. And that's where these fruit flavors come from is from the yeast. So you can get like you already know forest but since we were talking about earlier, I always get a lot of ripe apple and apricot and in the for roses flavor. To me I really like it when you combine that with vanilla and caramel and now it's just you know, really good bourbon. grains can be used. As long as it's 51% Corn you can use as many grains as you want. But it has to be at least 51% corn to be verb TO BE bourbon. Yes, burn out the other night. Yes. Bernheim is not a bourbon. It's a wheat whiskey. It's 51% wheat. And basically when Heaven Hill bought the Burnham distillery from United distillers, they bought it when they bought the they also got the old Fitzgerald Bran. But United distillers at that time was making not only old Fitzgerald, but WL Weller and that Lana products and Rebel Yell. All of them are what are known in the industry as weeded whiskies just like maker's mark. So all of a sudden, their grain bins were full of wheat, and they didn't need all that wheat. So they thought, what are we going to do with it? And basically, someone said, Let's make a wheat whiskey. So they did, and they rather liked what they got out of it. And that's when they created the Burnham brand. And it is a very tasty whiskey. It's not a bourbon. It's definitely different from bourbon, but it's very tasty but because it's only been made in small amounts up to this point. It's also rather expensive because there's not a whole lot of a lot of it out there. Any of the big liquor stores should have it. You know party Mart liquor outlet Old Town liquors on Bardstown road. Yeah, still around, huge warehouses out on Seventh Street, who's at Yellowstone. Yellowstone is actually owned by Lux co company. It was one of the brands that united distillers owned and that they sold off. They sold it to Heaven Hill, who turned around and sold it to David Sherman out of St. Louis, which later became Lux CO. So basically it is being bottled by them in St. St. Louis, buying their whiskey, most likely from Heaven hill. But they could be buying it from other places as well. Whatever happened to that J dub good day and once again, it was sold by United distillers to heaven Hill and I do believe heaven Hill still owns the brand. It's still out there. That it's a shadow of what it used to be JW Dan, when they had their own distillery and the family still owned it made some really good whiskey and gently bought the brand up in the 50s. They continue to make a pretty decent whiskey. But by the time you get to the 60s with the liquor glut, you know that was one of the distilleries that was closed down and the brand. They just started putting whatever whiskey they had into it and it declined. Yes. I'm just curious about the barrels. Was that a process attached to each distillery or was barrel baking subcontract? It's picky about the wood they use for the barrels. It's our back factory is about sluggers? Oh, I guess the the answer to your questions are yes and yes. The only distillery that actually owns a
cooperage is Brown Forman. And the round forming coop reach here and roval great tour. By the way, if you ever get a chance to go out there is so busy making barrels, mostly for Jack Daniels, that they're opening a second cooperage down in out Northern Alabama just to make barrels for Jack Daniels. And they are picky about their wood. They get their wood from three distinct regions, the Appalachian area, the Ozark area and the North Woods. And they do that for a reason because the wood just like you know, grapes in the wine industry, from each region has slightly different flavors. And by getting wood from all three, and making their barrels from wood from all three, if a disaster hits one area, it won't destroy the products flavor profile. When did they standardize what apparel was? Oh, that goes back into the early 1800s. And it really became standardized after Stitzel patented the method of rigging for barrel warehouses, because all of the sudden you see barrels used to be 48 gallons. Now they're 53. And the reason they're 53 and not bigger is because that was the biggest thing get and keep it fully functional and still fit into the workings yes here YouTubers out there so they call the bourbon drag county bourbon industry Yeah. Actually, I do that was one of the coop ridges that chinley You stone at one time. And they were making barrels and sending them out to the to their distilleries. The fact that was in a dry county didn't have any real effects and all they were making were barrels and not whiskey. But you know, my opinion, you know, the governor is always talking about that there's more barrels of whiskey in the state and there are people now my opinion you know, he says every person in the state has their own barrel basically, my opinion is is the hell with the dry counties. Well, I've got to any other questions? Well, if not, thank you all for coming. And if you do wish, if you do wish to get a book I will go downstairs and sign books for you.