

# MIDWEST GLASS CHATTER

MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

Since 1972

Midwest Glass Chatter  
December 2010

## Club Officers

- *Dave Rittenhouse, Pres.*  
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- *Richard Cole, Vice Pres./Lib*  
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- *Joe Coulson, Sec./Editor*  
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## TIME TO RENEW !!!

Please send in your club membership dues for 2011 to Anne Szopa

## Membership

The Midwest Glass Chatter is a monthly publication and is a forum through which collectors can share information.

Membership cost is \$15.00 per year, per family, due each December 31. All jar/bottle related collectors are welcome. Send to MAFJBC, Attn: Anne Szopa, 11199 U.S. Highway 35, Economy, IN 47339

## Meeting Minutes, December 5, 2010

The December club meeting was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. President Dave Rittenhouse opened the meeting and welcomed 17 members.

Dave mentioned that there was a nice article remembering Norm Barnett in the December issue of the Antique Bottle & Glass Collector.

Anne Szopa gave the Treasurer's report for December. We had a little income from membership dues. Expenses included advertising for the Winter Show and publishing the newsletter. The club continues to maintain a positive bank balance.

Dave gave an update on the Winter Show. He said that 35 dealer contracts had already come in. We have done a lot of advertising, and many flyers have been handed out. Dave encouraged everyone to take advantage of free advertising opportunities in their local areas. Marianne Dow reminded us to make sure we get listed on all of the online bottle show calendars.

Dick Cole told us about a special Internet project that is underway. John Straw (head of Special Collections at Ball State University) is involved in a project to create an online virtual Muncie. There is a 1 year grant in the Art Depart-

ment. The very first online building will be a 1927 rendition of the Ball Brothers factory! Jim Connolly (Director of Middletown Studies) will be involved too. Visitors will be able to interact with avatars during certain hours. If the project is successful then more of Muncie will be virtually created. Other time periods will also be represented.

Dick mentioned that he was invited by John Straw to give a talk at a recent "Friends of Bracken Library" meeting. There were over 40 people in attendance, including students and other people interested in jars. Dick's talk lasted a little over an hour, and his topic was "How the Fruit Jar Changed Muncie".

Jeff Klingler and Marianne Dow joined us for our Christmas Pitch-In dinner. Jeff brought several clear jars for a quick show and tell. He also told us about his recent visit to see the collections of Jerry McCann (Chicago) and Don Burkett (Michigan).

Club members enjoyed a wonderful Pitch-in dinner. Afterwards we had a lively "dirty bingo" gift exchange. Several gifts traded hands multiple times!

Our club meeting in January will be replaced by the Janu-



ary Show. There will be a Fruit Jar Get-Together and Auction on Saturday, January 8th starting at 1:30pm. If you know anyone who is interested in jelly glasses or jam jars then make sure to tell them about the Jelly Jammers club meeting at 10am that same day at the Signature Inn. Of course, don't forget about room-hopping too. Many of the attendees will have their hotel room doors open and signs posted inviting you to come in and chat and view items for sale. Room-hopping typically happens Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The actual Show will be at the Horizon Convention Center on Sunday, January 9th from 9am to 2pm. Admission is \$2, and there is plenty of free parking.



## Pictures from Christmas Pitch-in Dinner



Jeff Klingler & Marianne Dow



Santa's Helper, Kay Rittenhouse



Mike & Gusty Monaghan



Colleen Dixon



Anne Szopa



Jean Harbron



Amethyst midget pint  
Mason's Patent Nov 30<sup>th</sup> 58



Amethyst pint  
Sealfast Sold By



Amethyst quart  
Pacific Coast Syrup Co.

## LEGENDS OF THE JAR!

[Editor's Note: This article is a result of long time collector and author Bruce W. Schank reaching out to long time collector "Mr. Hemingray", Bill Dudley]

I have wanted to get over to Bill Dudley's home for quite some time now. It's obvious to anyone who has been in the hobby for any substantial amount of time that Bill of all people is a "True" Jar Legend! I don't know of anyone alive or gone now that started collecting fruit jars as long ago as Bill did, because he put his first jars on shelves way back in 1956, and that is simply amazing to say the least. Let's see, what was I doing in 1956, oh yes, I was running around in diapers, and believe me when I tell you I don't even remember anything from when I was a terrible two. There are so many people in the hobby that have a fantastic jar or jars in their collection right now due to Bill. He always found, sold and traded the best jars imaginable.



Rare Gray, Hemingray water bottle.



Bill was born on June 9, 1923 in Dayton, Ohio. He served our great country for seven years in the U.S. Navy and during World War II on the USS Portland. Bill was in the thick of the battle at Guadalcanal, and his ship took two 14" projectiles on one side and a torpedo to the rear. He luckily happened to be directly on the other side of the ship from where it was hit. The ship was only able to turn in a circle after that, and after a lot of work they managed to get it to steer normally and went to Australia for repairs. The next time you see Bill, remember to thank him for your freedom. After leaving the Navy Bill served as Fire Chief at Wright Paterson Air Force Base until retiring in 1974. Bill and Wanda will be married 55 years next March 2012 which is an amazing statistic if I do say so myself.

When I arrived I was greeted by Wanda as if she has known me for a very long time, only this was the first time I had ever met her. Bill and Wanda's hospitality was simply wonderful. Wanda even went through the trouble of making delicious homemade potato soup. So, being hungry, it was an easy decision to enjoy hot soup and a sandwich. As I sat there eating and talking with Bill and Wanda, the conversation naturally was about jars, and the people whom Bill has known through his many years in the hobby. It was obvious to me listening to Bill that he missed the old days, and who can blame him after all. He had so many good friends and so many good times, and he misses all of those friends who over the many years helped make the hobby a worthwhile venture for him.

Just about every famous big name came up in our conversation, and I fortunately either knew many of them too, to a much lesser degree of course, or I knew something about

Bill explaining a gorgeous black glass wax seal Fruit Jar.



them. It was such a pleasure talking with Bill and my mind wandered to a time that, simply put, seemed a heck of a lot more simple, genuine and real. As I listened intently to everything he had to say and all of the greats he personally knew, I felt honored that he would invite me of all people into his home and share with this humble author some of his

escapades and a view of his fabulous jars. Out of all of those hallowed jar collectors, it came out that Bill's best friend all of these years has been Bob Rhineberger.

From what I was told, Bill at one time had a gigantic fruit jar collection, and he was even known as "Mr. Wax Sealer". Bill claims he wanted every fruit jar made (sound familiar?), but realized that wasn't going to be a reality, so he decided to specialize and color was that specialty. I have been told that Bill had the best and the most fabulous colored wax sealers that



Fabulous lineup of Rare black glass Hemingway Fruit Jars.

Rare Ohio wax Seal Fruit Jar.

could be found and money could buy. Sadly, he sold them all as well as many other fantastic jars simply because he didn't have the room and his interests changed. Bill for the longest time now has specialized in Hemingray made glass, and his collection is simply incredible to say the least. Anything and everything Hemingray is on the shelves in his Jar Room. I, being a mere mortal in the realm of fruit jar collecting, was in awe as he showed me many of his favorite jars sitting on the shelves in that hallowed Room.

I was fascinated by the sheer raw beauty of all of the wonderful glass, and being a Ball jar collector I soon realized Hemingray glass is just so much different in color and character. The black glass jars were astonishing, and to see a lineup of them, let alone one, was beyond my fruit jar cognitive reasoning capabilities. I believe Bill has an example of every known Hemingray jar that exists, and it was only recently that he finally put in the collection that one jar that had eluded him for so many long years. Surprisingly, it came from a neighbor who lived just down the street. Imagine that!

Bill has a lot more than Hemingray on the shelves in the Jar Room. He has fabulous examples of very rare and extremely scarce jars, tins, wax sealers, stoneware and box ends. Wanda told me about the fantastic Ravenna wax sealer she bought for Bill way back in 1974 from Arleta Rodriguez. The jar is without a doubt a rare and fabulously colored example, and



when Wanda told me she paid \$1,000 for it, I was floored. This was the first time I can remember being told about an old timer getting a trophy jar, but not getting it for a song. The price paid for that time had to be just about the top amount anyone had ever paid for a fruit jar, bar none, and if you take inflation into consideration and what the dollar was worth then verses now it might even top any jar sold in recent memory too.

After seeing Bill's collection, I realized once again it really isn't about the amount of jars you can fill the room with, but about what jars you fill the room with if you get my drift.

Every jar in Bill's Jar Room was top notch, and many with beautiful original closures. It was kind of a reassurance to me that you don't have to have thousands of jars to have a great collection, because it's quality over quantity.

Nice Wall Display of very Rare and scarce Fruit Jars.



If anyone can remember Frank Thrine, and how he pioneered rare repro fruit jar closures, well Mr. Dudley took over were Frank left off, after Frank gave it up. During the mid to late 80's and the early 90's, before Rev. Phil Robinson, Bill was the premier fruit jar closure maker. Bill's closures were fantastic and as true to original detail as humanly possible. Many people prized his closures, because they were so well done. Bill knew a guy who worked in the foundry not far from where he lived. That person, with Bill's help, was able to make sand moulds of many closures, and from those moulds make almost exact perfect replicas. When he died, Bill lost a valuable asset and gave up the closure business, but what Bill gave back to the hobby over that time span was nothing short of phenomenal.

Bill told me his favorite all time Bottle Show happened to be the now defunct York, PA show. I must agree that as a New Jersey boy I truly enjoyed the York show myself. It was outside, and people camped on the ground, and it had a really rustic country feel about it

Rare SFGW wax seal jar.



that will never be recreated, I'm afraid, now that it's gone. He told me a hilarious story about how one year when Wanda didn't come with him, he was there with his friend Larry Hensen, and how one night when they went to sleep their pants were taken from them. Bill and Larry had the foresight to put their wallets inside their pillow cases before retiring on their cots for the night. They hung their pants over the rail next to them, and when they woke up their pants were nowhere to be found. Bill and Larry were a bit confused and embarrassed by it all, and luckily they found their britches only a few stalls down. Someone took them and removed the

change and other assorted articles they had left in the pockets, and then threw the pants to the side. Bill called Wanda and told her about the incident, and Wanda remembers only being able to laugh out loud about it, because it struck her so funny. Bill was not amused though at all, and was glad he came out of it unscathed and with wallets intact.



Extremely difficult complete set of Hemingray jelly jars with beautiful original lids.

Pair of extremely rare fruit jars.



Bill and Wanda can remember how one time many years ago, early on in Bill's collecting career, how they went to an auction out in the country not far from where they lived in Ohio. The auction was in an old barn, and there were some odd jars as well as some nice amber jars, and Bill decided he was going to take them all home. He paid \$5 and \$10 a piece for the jars, and when he got into the car, all Wanda could say was "what were you thinking about?" It's all relative, and was so even back then. Because of Bill's work schedule having three days off between work weeks, both he and Wanda traveled quite a lot. There was hardly a Bottle Show that they would miss, and Bill still tries to go to the major shows now if he can.

Bill says to each their own, because everyone has their own peculiar tastes in fruit jars, and that's what makes the hobby so good. Money doesn't matter as far as Bill is concerned when it comes to good jars, because he feels either you're going to pay and get it, or someone else will pay and get it. It's a matter of first come first serve, especially when it comes to rare one-of-a-kind jars. Bill always has felt that the friendships he has made over the years are far more important than money.

Bill told me he really enjoyed Jim Chamberlain's company, and they got along very well. They were both Navy veterans, and although Jim was a former Commander and Bill a Boatswain's Mate, both shared the fruit jar passion. Bill told me that just like Jim, if he heard about a good jar, he would drive 500 miles without stopping to go get it. Man, those were definitely the good old days.

I found Bill to be a down to earth, incredibly sincere, warm, engaging and a truly knowledgeable collector. He has without a doubt helped shape the hobby as we know it today. Folks, it's people like Bill that younger collectors should befriend. Ask questions, listen and learn. The day is soon coming when these giants of the hobby will be gone, and who will replace them?



Cabinet of rare Hemingray fruit jars.

Rare Dudley food bottle left, Rare clear Dalbey's qt fruit jar with complete original closure center, and Mr. Hemingray and your humble author right.



Photo of rare Globe wooden box, left and rare Wax Strings Advertisement, right.



Extremely difficult to find stoneware jars left, rare Xenia baby bottle center, and rare 1863 tin can right.

## **MAFJ&BC**

### **January 9, 2011 Show & Sale**

### **Muncie, Indiana**

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The Show and Sale on Sunday, January 9, 2011 will be the culmination of several days of fruit jar-related happenings. Some people will start arriving at the Signature Inn, 3400 N. Chadam Lane, Muncie (765-284-4200) as early as Thursday to get their rooms set up and start room-hopping. If you haven't been room-hopping, you don't know what you have missed. Dealers set their jars up in their rooms and you can hop from room to room in the motel, looking for that special find. Thursday and Friday nights will be the prime time for action in the rooms. You must make your reservations by December 9 to get a room. The Fruit Jar Get-Together and Auction also will be held at the Signature Inn.

### **Events**

#### **Saturday, January 8, 2011**

##### **JELLY JAMMERS MEETING**

At 10:00am in the Conference Room on the second floor of the Signature Inn. Buy, sell and show jelly jars and related items. Everyone is welcome.

##### **FRUIT JAR GET-TOGETHER**

At 1:30pm in the Conference Room on the second floor of the Signature Inn. Collectors from all over the United States and Canada show off their latest finds, and put jars up for auction.

##### **FRUIT JAR AUCTION**

Immediately following the Get-Together, the jars put up for auction will be sold off to the highest bidder. Here's a chance to find some jars that you won't find on a table the next day.

#### **Sunday, January 9, 2011**

##### **MAFJ&BC SHOW AND SALE**

Horizon Convention Center is in downtown Muncie, at 401 South High Street. Displayers set up at 6:30 am, dealers at 7:00 am and the doors open to the public at 9:00 am. Show lasts until 2:00 pm. Admission is \$2.

MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT  
JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

*A jarrific place to share and learn*

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.FRUITJAR.ORG

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One of the many beautiful Christmas decorations at the Minnetrista museum celebrating the holiday season. Notice the original "Garfield" illustration on the wall. Jim Davis (creator of Garfield) is from the Muncie area.

## Announcements

- Our dear friend, Bill Dudley, has been in poor health recently. You can send him and his wife Wanda your best wishes at: 1947 Tahoe Dr., Xenia, OH 45385; phone: 937-372-8567
- More details will be available in the future on "Virtual Middletown". Keep checking Ball State University's "Center for Middletown Studies / Virtual Experiences" website for updates. <http://cms.bsu.edu/Academics/CentersandInstitutes/Middletown/Research/Virtual.aspx>
- Our club is a member and supporter of the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (the national bottle club). The FOHBC website: <http://www.fohbc.com>
- The Ball Jar Collectors Community Center (BJCCC) website: <http://balljarcollectorscommunitycenter.yuku.com/>

