

# MIDWEST GLASS CHATTER

MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

Since 1972

Midwest Glass Chatter  
February 2013

## Club Officers

- *Richard Cole, President*  
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765-288-8717
- *Dave Rittenhouse, Vice Pres.*  
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317-485-5854
- *Joe Coulson, Secretary/Editor*  
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An Index to the Club Lending Library is available online. Please contact Dick Cole about items which you would like to check out.

## 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: James Durr, 500 W. Ohio St., Fortville, IN 46040

## Meeting Minutes, February 3rd, 2013

The February club meeting was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Club President Dick Cole opened the meeting and welcomed 14 members. This was an excellent turnout considering it was Super Bowl Sunday.

Dick reviewed the list of upcoming regional bottle shows. Dick also mentioned that there are no plans to have a summer event at the hotel in Muncie this summer.

Jim Durr gave the Treasurer's report for February. Income included money received from January Show sales tables and general admissions. The expenses for the show

have not yet all come in.



Dave Rittenhouse mentioned that he has a couple of extra pottery award jars. These are the ones given to people who have a display at the January Show. Contact Dave if you are interested in one.

The next club meeting



will be on March 3rd.

Hope to see you all at the next club meeting,

Joe Coulson, Secretary

## President's Message

Don't forget that we will meet at the Charlie Williams Memorial Library at 2702 W. Euclid Ave. in Muncie. If you have not been there, check out the map on the club website [www.fruitjar.org](http://www.fruitjar.org). Click on "Upcoming Meetings" and scroll all the way down to find the map. Or call Dick Cole at 765-288-8717.

If you get lost on Sunday on the way over, call me on my cell - 765-212-9889. Hopefully I will have the phone charged up, and I will have remembered to take it with

me. I realize that is a lot for me to do, but I think that I am up to the task. You can stop laughing now.

We will meet at the regular time - 1:30pm. And the date is Sunday, March 3. Bring any food you would like to share, but this is not required.

Show and Tell will be any sort of presentation container that you would like to bring. And, as usual, we will not report you to the fruit jar police if you bring something that

does not fit into this category.

Check out the Library Listings on the website, too. Most of these books are available for you to take home until you get tired of them laying around your house. It is a lending library, after all.

The program consist of looking at all the presentation containers that the field mice who occupy the house in which the library is located have collected.

—Dick Cole

## Show and Tell

The theme for Show and Tell for the February club meeting was to bring recent purchases, particularly those made at the January Show.

Lou Ebert displayed a complete set of Red Book #2661 Smalley's (crown) Royal Trademark Nu-Seal (Royal on crown) (base: Smalley Fruit Jar Co. Boston Mass. Patented Jan 5, 1904). These jars were made circa 1914–1918 by the Marion Flint Glass Co. of Marion, Indiana. Lou displayed a half gallon, quart, pint, and half pint.

Mike Mosier brought a clear quart RB #357 Ball Mason commemorative jar for the retirement of Art Herron. The design on the jar included a fishing pole with a fishing line connected to a fish.

Mike also shared a pottery jar with the following wording on it: "Cruikshank Bros. Co. / Preserves, Jellies, Fruit Butters / Allegheny, PA." The jar is similar in style to the H.A. Johnson Preserves jars (RB #1260).

Joe Coulson displayed a wooden shipping box for one dozen pint GLOBE jars. The lettering on the box indicated that the jars were AMBER. The box just happened to be filled with one dozen amber pint GLOBE jars. These jars were collected in recent years in order to fill the box.

Jean Harbron brought an aqua quart Ball (3-L loop) Standard with embossing very low on the jar. It was unusual to see the embossing this close to the heel.

Jean also shared a clear

quart Mason (with lasso loop). This jar was made by the Pennsylvania Glass Co. in Anderson, Indiana. This particular jar easily turns purple, so it was unusual to find an example that is still clear.

Monty Foust displayed an amber quart Safety that he acquired for his collection of Indiana jars. Monty also brought a citron quart wax sealer (base: MGCo).

Colleen Dixon brought a clear quart RB #351 Ball Mason (reverse: Williamsburg Capital 1776–1976) (one of six different designs); a clear quart RB #351 Ball Mason (reverse: Fort Ticonderoga New York 1776–1976); a light purple RB #1013 Flaccus Bros Steers Head Fruit Jar (no lid); an aqua half gallon RB #1685 Mason Improved (reverse: CFJCo monogram) (wide mouth butter jar); an aqua midget pint RB #1814 Mason's Patent Nov. 30<sup>TH</sup> 1858 (reverse: cross); an aqua half gallon RB #1958 Mason's (KGBCo monogram) Patent Nov. 30<sup>TH</sup> 1858; and a clear 26 oz. RB #2962-1 White House Vinegar (in script) (glass insert: White House emblem).

Lee Wilson shared an aqua half gallon Mason's Patent Nov. 30<sup>TH</sup> 1858 (smooth lip) (reverse: Port). She lives near the original Port factory site that was located in Muncie, Indiana. Lee also shared an aqua wax sealer.

Dick Cole displayed a watch that commemorated the retirement of an Owens Illinois employee.

Dick also shared a small

advertising thimble for Alvin Owsley that probably dates to 1928 when he attempted an unsuccessful campaign for the Democratic nomination to the United States Senate. Alvin married Lucy Ball, daughter of Frank Ball of the Ball Brothers in May 1925. In 1941, Owsley started work for his father-in-law at the Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing Company, first in Muncie, Indiana and in 1944 moving to Dallas, Texas where he retired as vice president.

Dick also brought two small clear jars with metal screw caps. One cap said "refrigerator jar", and the other said "ice-box jar". The refrigerator jar had the Ball logo on the base. It is interesting to note that refrigerators were not common until after World War II.

Dick once again showed the "Knurl & Stipple Guide" from the club library. This time he also showed a clear sample bottle from the Overmyer mould company that had multiple styles of knurls and stipples. This bottle would

have been shown to potential customers who wanted moulds made. Monty Foust described the scientific difference between knurls and stipples based on his experience as an engineer at Guide Corporation in Anderson, Indiana.

Jim Durr showed his Kindle computer device. The last issue of the Glass Chatter was shown on the Kindle. Jim described how you could send email to your Kindle through your Amazon account. This process converts the newsletter to the native format that the Kindle uses. This means you can take advantage of the features of the Kindle to read the Glass Chatter.

Dave Rittenhouse showed an amber bottle "Rittenhouse Bottled in Bond". Dave owns several different styles of these bottles. Dave also showed an aqua quart The Empire.



Lou Ebert shared this set of Smalley's Royal Nu-Seal jars



## Show and Tell Pictures



Lou Ebert describes the set of Smalley's Nu-Seal jars that he brought



Mike Mosier displayed a Cruikshank Bros. Co. preserves jar



Joe Coulson brought a wooden shipping box for one dozen amber pint GLOBE jars



A clear quart Ball Mason for Art Herron that has a fishing theme



Dave Rittenhouse displayed an amber liquor bottle with his last name on it



Jean Harbron showed a Ball Standard with very low embossing



Gusty and Mike Monaghan brought a couple of modern Ball jars with slightly different designs



"Rittenhouse Bottled in Bond"



The Empire aqua quart

## Show and Tell Pictures, cont'd



Colleen Dixon brought a nice array of jars that were purchases at the January Show



Monty Foust brought several jars to sell



Amber quart  
SAFETY



Citron quart  
Base: MGC



Ball (3-L Loop) Standard  
Aqua quart



Mason (Lasso Loop)  
Clear quart



Colleen Dixon shared this light  
purple pint Flaccus fruit jar



Lee Wilson displayed an aqua half  
gallon Port jar



More of Colleen Dixon's recent purchases



A "Root Mason" was the  
January Show pottery award jar



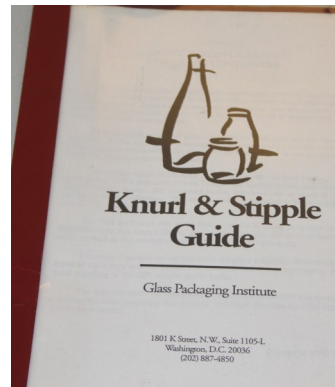
## Show and Tell Pictures, cont'd



Dick Cole describes several go-withs that he brought



Alvin Owsley advertising thimble



Knurl & Stipple Guide book



Stipple Bottle from Overmyer



Ice-box Jar and Refrigerator Jar



The Refrigerator Jar was made by Ball



Jim Durr describes the process to convert the newsletter to Kindle format



Glass Chatter shown on the Kindle



Jars that members brought to the February club meeting to sell

## **The Rarest Ball Retirement Glass Container? Or Maybe Just the Hardest One to Find**

*by Richard Cole*

Among the stuff that I acquired when I bought the left-overs of club-member Gene Kozuk's collection were many documents, a couple of jars from Gene's employment with Metro Glass, and quite a few run-of-the-mill canning jars. Gene grew up in Hillsboro, Illinois, the site of a glass plant that was owned successively by Schram, Ball Brothers and Hiram Walker. Built in 1906, the factory was purchased by Ball Brothers in 1925. They operated it on-and-off until 1960, when Ball sold it to their main bottle customer, liquor-maker Hiram Walker, who ran the plant as the Hillsboro Glass Company.

As his mother worked at the Hillsboro plant, it was natural for Gene to get a job there, too. Gene rose in the ranks of management, and when Hillsboro was sold to Hiram Walker, Ball offered Gene a job at their new Mundelein, Illinois plant. I don't know if he was the first plant manager or not, but he was a plant manager there. He was so successful that Mannie Turner, owner of the Metro Glass Company, offered him a job, and Gene took it. Metro was headquartered in Jersey City, New Jersey, so Gene and his family moved there.

Ironically, in 1980 Ball Corporation bought out Metro, bringing Gene Kozuk back into the fold, and back to the Midwest. He was one of the very few Metro corporate employees to be offered a job, and was by far the most successful. He worked in Ball's Quality Control Department, under Russ Simpson, and took over Russ' job when he retired. The fact that Gene Kozuk, Russ Simpson and co-worker Bill Wade all had multiple glass containers created for them upon their retirement is not a coincidence. These men worked closely with the plants on a daily basis, and often made plant visits to help solve problems.

Every new design of a glass container had to be approved by Corporate Quality Control before it could be produced for customers. After the moulds were cut, an "index sample" run of jars would be made and some of these would be sent back to Muncie for testing and examination. Often, minor mould changes were made to correct the problems that were encountered.

This practice of sending samples to Muncie also applied to the retirement jars that were ordered by management to honor the retirement of key employees. So the El Monte plant, for example, had to send back samples of the round upside-down jars that they made for their retirees. I had the good fortune to have made friends with Gene and Russ. Gene was involved in collecting fruit jars – Russ was more into model railroading – and so I would sometimes

return to my desk at Ball to find an example of one of the newly-issued retirement jars sitting there, having been thoughtfully placed there by Gene. (Yes, I am gloating.)

When Gene retired he kept his collection, but as his health deteriorated, he began to sell off the most valuable items. So when he died, there was not a great deal of value remaining. The “goodies” were gone. I attended Gene’s funeral, and was approached by his son who offered to sell the left-overs of the collection to me. We worked out a deal after I took a look at what was left, and I thus became the proud owner of lots of low-priced jars, both old and new.

Unfortunately, Gene’s family kept most of the Kozuk Retirement Mugs as remembrances. Gene was always proud of the fact that the official name of the color that the Seattle plant used to make the mug was “dead leaf green.” He thought that to be highly amusing. Because of the color, his mug is among the more desirable of the Ball retirement mugs and sippers. The most common items in the collection that I got were lots of Bill Wade Retirement Mugs, Bull-and-Bear Mugs, Guest House Jars, and the like. Nice items that are by no means trash, but they are not worth a lot.

But it is amazing what you can find looking through stuff that you think is not worth much. Among the containers made by Metro that Gene had saved, reflecting his tenure there, was a bottle that I disregarded at first, since it was not a fruit jar. It was a retirement bottle, which did interest me, but I would rather have had a fruit jar. Metro had in fact made fruit jars during the shortage years of the mid-1970s, but that’s a story for another time.

When I finally got around to examining the bottle, which looks like a round salad dressing bottle, I was further disappointed to find that it was not a Metro employee who was retiring, but rather a General Foods Company employee. Presumably the bottle was one of the products that Metro Glass made for General Foods. The embossing says “Health & Happiness to a True Friend. Best Wishes” on the front with the General Foods logo and name on the back. The honoree’s name was Herm Schell, who worked there from 1947 to 1980. It was not uncommon for glass companies to make special containers for retiring employees of their customers or suppliers: Ball did the same thing for people at Gerber and Ross Labs, for example.







The making of commemorative glassware for retirements has dwindled in recent years. Companies began to figure out the costs associated with the practice, and decided against it. But the concept is not dead. As recently as last year, Verallia (the current name of what used to be Ball, Ball-Incon, Ball-Foster and Saint Gobain) made commemorative wine bottles for two of its retiring employees, one of whom is club member Mike James, former plant manager at Marion.

When I looked closely at the bottom of the bottle, I found that the Metro logo – the letter M in a hexagon – had lines both above and below it.



Base of Bottle



As the late Dick Roller stated in his Fruit Jar Newsletter in August 1987, the lines mean that the container was made after Ball purchased the Metro plant. Here is the article:


Page 384
FRUIT JAR NEWSLETTER
August 1987

## NOTES & NEWS

### Recent Ball Plant Codes (ca. July, 1981)

Several collectors have asked recently whether the numbers (83, 84, etc.) below the Ball logo on the bases of newer Ball jars represent the year the jars were made. This is a logical assumption to make, but in this case an incorrect one. Fortunately, the good folks at Ball have given us the necessary information to allow us to make correct decisions in this matter.

Code	Plant
03	El Monte, California
07	Asheville, North Carolina
08	Okmulgee, Oklahoma
09	Mundelein, Illinois (closed & dismantled 4/1/81)
81	Jersey City, New Jersey (mothballed 11/13/81)
83	Carteret, New Jersey
84	Dolton, Illinois
86	Washington, Pennsylvania



Also, a memo from March 1981 stated that Ball Containers, Inc. used lines above and below the old Metro Glass logo to designate the containers made in Metro plants after Ball acquired them in 1981. [prior to establishing the "80 series" numbers shown above.]

Note that Dick made a rare error in his article by stating that Metro was bought by Ball in 1981. It actually happened in 1980. Note that the bottle also has the year code "80" on the base.

The reason for the lines is simple - liability. As it is not cost-effective (or physically possible) to immediately change all the base plates on all the moulds at the stroke of midnight on the official day of the transfer of ownership, lawyers require that some sort of marking be used to define if a specific container was made by the old owner of the plant or the new owner. If a bottle explodes and injures someone (it happens more often than you might expect) the maker is liable for damages, because they made a defective product. Thus, the old owner demands that there be some marking that says that he was not the maker. The new owner does not want to shut down production to make new moulds that have the new logo. So a "quick fix" is used, consisting of a mark being added to the base plate. This is specified in the purchase contract. The existing logo continues to appear on the base until a new base plate is cut.

All glass plants have done this when their ownership changes. This practice accounts for some of the unusual markings that can be found on the base of a jar, including fruit jars. For

example, Ball-Incon used a star when it was spun off from Ball in 1986. Dick Roller tried to document as many of these as he could find, like he did in this instance. But don't look for this Metro/Ball mark on a fruit jar, because Metro was not making fruit jars at the time of the purchase.

The presence of this mark makes it relatively easy to figure out what happened. Metro, knowing of the pending retirement of Mr. Schell and wanting to honor him, made the moulds for this special bottle, obviously modifying one of the moulds for a bottle they made for General Foods. Before the bottles were produced, however, the acquisition of Metro by Ball occurred. This became official on March 1, 1980. So the mould-cutters at the former Metro plant (which plant I don't know) added the lines above and below the Metro logo as per the agreement in the sales contract. The commemorative bottles were made and were given out at the retirement celebration for Mr. Schell.

Gene Kozuk probably knew Mr. Schell and may have attended his retirement party. It took a while for the personnel at Jersey City to be transferred to Muncie. Or Gene may have gotten his bottle by being in Quality Control. In any event, an example of the container ended up in his collection, and now is in mine.

I consider this to be the rarest of the Ball retirement items, since it is not directly marked as being made by Ball. It does not honor a Ball or Metro employee nor is it a fruit jar. And I know of no one who collects Metro-made glassware. This obscurity does not make the bottle particularly valuable. Even if the Schell bottle came up on Ebay, few people would pay any attention to it. And no one would pay any money for it. So, I will just have to sit back and gloat over my treasure. And I will bore everyone to tears when I tell its story over and over again.

## 1st Annual Circle City Bottle Club Show in Indianapolis

The Indianapolis Circle City Antique Bottle Club will host its 1st annual show on Sunday, September 22nd, 2013. We have limited space of about 60 tables. Show hours: Setup 7:00am to 9:00am, Show hours, 9am - 3pm. The loca-

tion will be the Indianapolis Marriott East, 7202 East 21st Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46219. Special hotel rates are available, so make sure to mention the Circle City Bottle club for a discount. A Show Flyer will be available soon. This is a club

sponsored event - Guaranteed to happen :) Tables are already going fast. For dealer/show information contact the Show Chairman, Martin Van Zant at 812-841-9495 or 208 Urban St., Danville, Indiana.



*Quality Collectors from across the USA will be gathered for the FIRST National Show to be offered in New England!*

The Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors presents:

## **2013 National Antique Bottle Show**

### **Manchester NH**



## **Dealer Contract & Information**

**Radisson New Hampshire  
Expo Center**  
700 Elm Street,  
Manchester, NH 03101

<b>July 19</b>	Banquet
<b>July 20</b>	1-5 (early entry)
<b>July 21</b>	9-3 (general entry)



Full details on the National Show can be found at:  
<http://www.fohbc.org/2012/11/fohbc-2013-national-antique-bottle-show-manchester-new-hampshire/>

MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT  
JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

*A jarrific place to share and learn*

Send articles and info here:

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.FRUITJAR.ORG

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Love is in the air. Joe Coulson and Jennifer Schmidt were married on Sunday, February 17th in Greenwood, Indiana. Joe kept moving the wedding date up—it was going to be June and then March and then Joe decided to move it up as early as he could. Joe found something far more worth pursuing than rare fruit jars! The couple will reside in Greenwood, Indiana.

## Announcements

- The next club meeting will be March 3rd at the Charlie Williams Memorial Library, 2702 W. Euclid Ave., Muncie, Indiana. The meeting will begin at 1:30pm, and the theme will be "Presentation Glassware" (retirement, plant opening, open house, etc.). The Club Librarian will be sharing items from his collection. Call Dick Cole if you need directions or other meeting details: home phone, 765-288-8717; or cell phone, 765-212-9889.
- Tammy Johnson is migrating her fruit jar ring box reference material to a brand new website. It is in the beginning stages. Tammy would like your input on what features and reference material to add:  
<http://www.fruitjarrings.com>
- The Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors website is a great resource. Our club is a proud member of the FOHBC. Mark your calendar for July 20-21 to attend the National Antique Bottle Show in Manchester, New Hampshire. One of the useful tools on the Federation website is the bottle show listing:  
<http://www.fohbc.org/shows>
- The next North American Glass auction opens March 25th.  
<http://www.gregspurgeon.com/auction>

