

MIDWEST GLASS CHATTER MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

Since 1972

Midwest Glass Chatter
March 2009

Club Officers

- Dave Rittenhouse, Pres.
1008 CR 900 W.
Farmland, IN 47340
765-468-8091
- Jean Harbron, V.P.
245 E. Oak St.
Anderson, IN 46012
765-644-4333
- Anne Szopa, Treas.
11199 U.S. Highway 35
Economy, IN 47339
- Joe Coulson, Sec.
10515 Collingswood Ln.
Fishers, IN 46037
- Norman Barnett, Pres. Emeritus
P.O. Box 38
Flat Rock, IN 47234
812-587-5560

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: Joe Coulson, 10515 Collingswood Ln, Fishers, IN 46037

Next Club Show

July 12, 2009

Make your reservation now! The hotel's phone number is 765-284-4200

Meeting Minutes, March 1st, 2009

The March club meeting was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Club President Dave Rittenhouse opened the meeting and welcomed 12 members plus 1 guest.

Anne Szopa gave the Treasurer's report for February. All of the expenses from the January show have been received and taken care of.

Dave told us about his trip to the Columbus, Ohio show. He mentioned that he recognized a half dozen different club members who had sales tables there. Dave also told us that Ned Pennington passed away just before heading to the show. Ned will be greatly missed.

Dick Cole gave us an update on the club Lending Library. Everything is organized now and an up-to-date list of the books is on the club website. Dick donated a few additional books to the club library, which consisted of several titles on glass technology. These were books that he received for free when Ball Corporation was relocating its headquarters from Muncie to Denver.

Joe Coulson provided a copy of the club Membership Directory to each of the club

officers. It's always a good idea to have multiple backups in case an emergency might happen.

Joe also reported that he had received a note from Mary Lou Koontz indicating that club member Tom Koontz passed away suddenly on December 3, 2008. Mary Lou wrote that "He loved your organization and Ball jars."

Club members are invited to participate in the preview of Minnetrista's "Can It!" exhibit, which celebrates 125 years of the Ball Jar. The special preview is Friday, April 3, and is open from 5:30pm to 7:30pm.

The MAFJBC will introduce attendees to the hobby of fruit jar collecting, and will have two tables with many items to share.

If you are going to attend this special Friday event you will need to call ahead and make a reservation. You may call Karen Vincent (Director of Collections) at 800-428-5887.

Upcoming meetings:

April 5—Minnetrista Cantina at 1:30pm. Show and Tell: Bring metal lids and screw caps.

May 3—Minnetrista Can-



Valentine's candy in a Ball jar

tina at 1:30pm. Show and Tell: Bring amber jars and bottles.

June 14—Minnetrista Cantina at 1:30pm. Note that this is the 2nd Sunday of the month instead of the 1st. Shown and Tell: Bring jelly jars and related items.

July 11—This will be the Fruit Jar Get-Together at the Signature Inn, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 1:30pm.

August 2—Annual Club Picnic. Location To Be Determined. Show and Tell: Bring purchases from the July Show.

Sept. 13—Minnetrista Cantina at 1:30pm. Note that this is the 2nd Sunday of the month instead of the 1st. Show and Tell: Bring Product jars.

See you all at the next meeting.

Joe Coulson, Secretary

Show and Tell

Club members were asked to bring jars or bottles made outside of the United States, or other recent purchases or findings.

Joe Coulson displayed an olive amber QT Crown (Canadian) fruit jar. Joe said that the Crown jar is a fun jar to collect, because you can get many nice colors for a very reasonable price (\$US 100 give or take).

Joe also displayed a dark amber midget PT Beaver (facing left) (chips at mouth). Joe mentioned that this is the rarest of the Beaver jars.



According to Dick Roller in the Standard Fruit Jar Reference [1984]: "Made circa 1901 by Ontario Glass Co., Kingsville, Ontario, Canada, and circa 1902 Sydenham Glass Co., Wallaceburg, Ontario, Canada. These jars were made after the newly designed Frank O'Neill machines had been installed at the Kingsville plant in the Spring of 1901. By September 28, 1901, the Commoner & Glassworker reported that

D.A. Gordon, of Sydenham Glass Co., had dismantled the Kingsville plant and taken the tools and machinery to Wallaceburg. The short span of time that machines were used at the Kingsville plant may account for the rarity of these jars. So far, all of the left-facing Beaver jars checked have been machine-made, with offset neck seams and interrupted threads."

Joe also brought a clear QT Agee Ideal. He purchased two of these jars several years ago on Ebay from an Australian seller. So far, these are the only two reported examples known. Perhaps they were meant to compete with the Ball Ideal jar? They look very similar and have the Lightning beaded neck!

Mike and Gusti Monaghan shared three Wheaton jars: a clear PT with product label for Aged Grated Cheese; a tall clear PT unembossed; and a tall blue QT with a label space (apothecary jar). Gusti also showed us several cookbooks and a Ball freezer book.



Ruth Nestleroad displayed a light green QT Trade Mark VR Lightning (Australian). She purchased the jar from her brother. The jar has very attractive embossing.



Anne Szopa displayed an emerald green, 1 liter, #531 Bulach Universal (on lid) (Switzerland); a tall clear #1028-1 Fowler's No. 36 (lid: Fowler's Reg No 28195 Vacola) (purchased at Muncie January show from someone whose son brought it back from Australia); a clear 60oz #806 Dominion Wide Mouth Special Made in Canada; and an unlisted modern Weck (in strawberry figure) jelly jar (lid: Weck Rundrand-Glas 60).

Anne also displayed a clear QT #652-8 Consol Preserve Jar - Inmaakbottel (six ribs, looks very similar to a Ball Special jar) (South Africa).



Sue Wilson shared a clear #1036-3 Frauenlob (missing lid). Sue told us that this jar was hand carried from Germany to the U.S. many years ago! She also showed us a clear unlisted jar (German?) (base: ¾ Ltr) (indentation on either side, for clamp?).



Dick Cole brought a pack of six plastic HP Ball freezer jars. He pointed out that they say "Made in China" on the base. Dick gave these away at the meeting to members who wanted one. He told us that the pack of six freezer jars can be purchased at Meijer for \$3. Dick also shared a clear HG The Rose.



Show and Tell, cont'd

Dave Rittenhouse displayed a clear HP jar with a fish emblem on it. He purchased the jar from a box lot at the inventory remainder auction of Phil Robinson's museum. The jar had a maker's mark for Consumer Glass.

Dave shared a clear 1/4L #1237-5 Hercules jar (Sweden). Dave said that he had gone to a rummage sale and saw the jar. It was not reported in the Red Book at the time. He went to Phil's and talked about it. He went back to the rummage sale and the price came down a little and he bought it. Phil also went to the rummage sale later, and the jar was gone

(because Dave had beat him)!

Dave also displayed a nice bluish aqua QT Mason's Patent Nov. 30TH 1858 jar that he purchased at the Columbus, Ohio show. The jar had amazing whittled glass.

Dave brought a trio of Sun-Colored Amethyst (SCA/Purple) QT Canadian jars: a #1087 Gem; a #1088 New Gem; and a #1090 Wallaceburg Gem.



Norman Barnett dis-

played a clear HG+ Le Pratique (base: Made in France) with toggle clamp closure.

Norm also brought a letter from Mutual China Company (formerly Hollweg & Reese, in Indianapolis) announcing that they were going out of business (many years ago). Norm went to the sale, and he saw a large jar that looked like black glass, but it was dark because it was filled with preserved pears.

The jar was a 4 gallon (Hero cross) Mason's Patent Nov. 30TH 1858. The jar was not for sale, because the store owner thought that a family member wanted it. Norm left his phone number and was

eventually contacted about buying the jar. He was finally able to purchase it after some negotiation. Norm says that he will give us a detailed story in a future newsletter article.

Mike Keith brought quite a few jars to share with everyone. He showed us his set of four different Ball (3-L loop) Standards from the same mold but ranging in color from aqua to a dark olive.



Mike also showed a QT and HG with ghosted Economy; and a Ball 3-L & Ball 3-L Mason in a nice olive green.

Please Join Us!

Opens at Minnetrista April 4

<http://www.minnetrista.net/>

Presented by:

LEGENDS OF THE JAR!

[Editor's Note: This article is the result of a weekend personal visit by author and long time collector Bruce W. Schank with friend and long time collector Phil Alvarez]

I've known Phil for thirty-one years now and the one thing I know about Phil and his incredible collection is this; "it's not about quantity at all, instead it's all about quality!"

Phil was a very instrumental person in helping me get a start as a young collector. When I met Phil he was already a ten year seasoned collector with a huge knowledge base. We first met at a NJABC Show & Sale in Oakland, N.J. and just recently after a long period of considerable inactivity, we have



re-acquainted ourselves once again.

Phil Alvarez was born in 1935. His parents migrated from Spain after WW1 and settled in Dover, NJ, a community of mostly blue collar immigrants looking for a better life in America. He came from a musical family and his parents encouraged him to study music. Eventually, he pursued a musical career, earning degrees from Oberlin College and Indiana University.

He is now retired as a music educator and is very active in his hobbies; primarily collecting fruit jars and classical records.



LEGENDS OF THE JAR!



Phil started collecting fruit jars in the late 60's approx., 1968. He started going to country auctions and the first jars he bought were for Kitchen canisters; hg's to put rice and other items in. At one of the auctions a fruit jar collector asked him if he ever collected jars and Phil said no, so he invited Phil to his house to see his collection. That was the first time Phil ever saw "collectible" fruit jars. The collector had many interesting jars including a Van Vliet, Lafayette with Block Letters, amber globes and interesting closed jars. He led Phil in the right direction by giving him a copy of an Old Bottle Magazine that had Show Calendars, so Phil started going to Shows. That same collector also showed Creswick's Red Book #1 to Phil. The first show Phil ever went to was Williamstown in South Jersey which was one of the Best Shows in New Jersey. There are a lot of collectors in that area Phil told me and it was there that he met George McConnell and how he was quite impressed with him. One thing that

Phil started collecting fruit jars in the late 60's approx., 1968. He started going to country auctions and the first jars he bought were for Kitchen canisters; hg's to put rice and other items in. At one of the auctions a fruit jar collector asked him if he ever

caught his attention at one particular show was that George had a hg Salem jar and he was tossing it up in the air again and again; up and down, up and down and all he could say was someone had brought it to the show. I suppose George was known for having a cavalier attitude towards jars. It was then that Phil decided he needed to be inside the Show itself too.



If George could get great jars such as that one then he could too. So Phil started to inquire about contracts for bottle shows and the first show he attended as a dealer was Yardville, NJ. There he started buying a lot of jars and closures. He also bought many from other shows too and the nice thing according to Phil was this; there weren't a lot of collectors in northern N.J. to compete with at that time.

The main two sources for fruit jars at that time were country auctions in Hunterdon County, NJ and Bottle Shows. There were a lot of things to buy at those two events. Later on He started going to high profile shows.



LEGENDS OF THE JAR!



He went to the Guernsey Barn in Lancaster, P.A. and was astonished at the waiting line of people to get into the show the first time he went there. He remembers well over 250 people waiting six abreast to get into the show and they weren't even early buyers. That was also the first time he came across a lot of dealers from out of his area ranging from the

Midwest and north-



ern N.Y. State. At one such show he ran around and picked up every basic amber jar he could find which included globe, lightning, leader and safety jars because in his area he was coming across rare closure jars but not colored jars. The next year he began selling at that show and it went pretty much like that for the next ten years, buying and selling at Bottle Shows and country auctions.

The first really good jar that Phil ever bought was an H & S clear quart with no shoulders. He still has that jar by the way. According to Phil,

he knew some antique people that he bought jars from and they contacted him about that jar and how it was going to be in an auction and asked whether he would be interested in buying it for the RB price. He told them if they get the jar then he'd be interested in

buying it. They called him back to say they had gotten the jar and the woman who bought the jar said that the jar was on the cement floor



under a table at the auction house. No one seemed to pay any attention to it and actually many people were kicking it around with their feet. When they put the jar up for sale she got so excited bidding on it that she was trembling and so much so that when they brought it out to her she couldn't even hold it. She sold it to Phil as promised

LEGENDS OF THE JAR!

for the Red Book price at that time. Phil noticed many collectors then as well as collectors now use the Red Book as a Bible for pricing.

"I wish I had more experience at that time," Phil told me because he would have looked at things much differently. He found out down the road that he had lost out on many a great jar simply because he stuck to the old rule of using the Red Book as an absolute guide for pricing. He had been told to always know how much you're willing to pay in an auction but use the RB as a guide. The only problem is that's not always necessarily how you should actually go about buying jars. According to Phil, having experience in buying jars makes a big difference when you have to purchase an expensive jar. Making a mistake on inexpensive jars is no big deal but making a mistake on expensive jars can cost you dearly. Phil's philosophy is simply this; if you really want a jar bad enough you have to bid until you get it. If you have the money you can't put a limit on the jar. A \$300 jar could go for as much \$600 so you have to make your own decision of how much you're



willing to pay.

Phil told me in the early years that when it came to bottle shows he found that the best shows to buy jars inexpensively were the ones in the New England States simply because there weren't any major collectors there at the time. "You couldn't sell a jar in New England but you could buy greatly!" He also remembers

doing a show in Wolcott, CT and next to him was Dick Vanderlaan of Brockport, NY. It was a typical New England show because he didn't sell a single jar there but he bought \$400 worth of jars. And in the early 70's, \$400 in New England bought you a whole lot of jars. At one point Dick was talking to him and he was tapping on his foot telling him how he was a "real" collector. Phil thought Dick was referring to the fact he had bought \$400 worth of jars but didn't sell anything. "I wasn't really into Dealer mode, I was buying as a Collector" Phil said to me. What Dick was actually referring to was the fact that Phil had

LEGENDS OF THE JAR!

a great big hole in the sole of his shoe covered over with a piece of cardboard and what he was trying to say was he didn't bother to fix his shoe but he was buying \$400 worth of jars.

Phil also related another story to me about an experience he had at a country auction in his area of Hunterdon County and Hunterdon County, NJ many years ago. It was at a twilight country auction that started at six o'clock at a farm and there were six big boxes of fruit jars there.

Most of them were very common jars except in one box there was an A. Stone and it was the type with the glass lug closure but without the closure. The jar was perfect but it kept playing musical boxes and ended up in different boxes under other jars. People were moving the jar around hoping it wouldn't get noticed so they could get it for nothing. So he approached the auctioneer and told him that there was a jar there that he would start the bidding off at \$75 and that people were moving it around and it would either get broken or stolen.

The auctioneer told him to put the jar on the shelf in his podium, which Phil did.



After that it was hilarious according to Phil because everyone was looking for that jar and they quickly became frantic since it wasn't there anymore. Finally they must have thought it was stolen because they all went home. He waited for the auctioneer to put it up and it eventually became pitch black. They had to put spot lights on the auctioneer and all of the bidders were standing in the pitch dark. There were only about twenty people left

and the auctioneer had a microphone hanging from his neck so you could hear his bids or comments and he said, "Oh I forgot about that jar, give me that jar" and he puts up the jar and asks for a bid of \$10. Phil put his hand up and get's it for \$10 because nobody bid against him.

Phil doesn't know what year it was exactly but finding jars and closures became increasingly more and more difficult when the absentee auctions kicked in. There was Hagenbuch's and Heckler's auction so a lot of jars were then being siphoned off and put directly into those auctions. It was also



LEGENDS OF THE JAR!



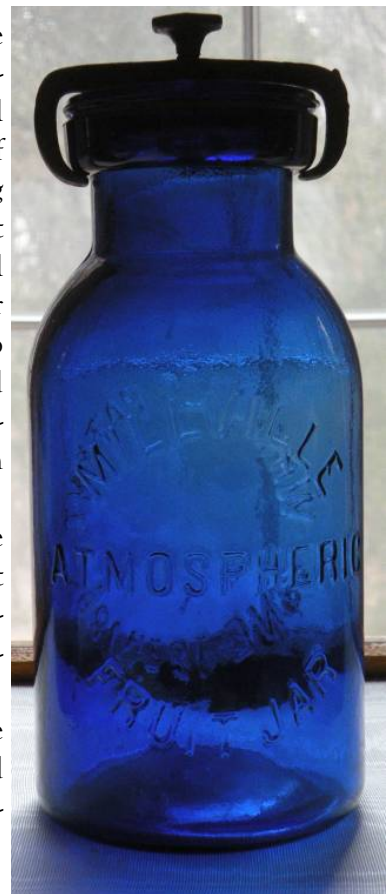
hard to find closures at the shows too and people just weren't selling the better jars as they used to at shows. From what he could tell the jars were just going straight into auction format. Then sometime after that eBay cut in and once people started selling on eBay, Phil saw jars he had been selling at shows going for three times as much on eBay. Between eBay auctions and absentee auctions it became increasing difficult to find good jars anymore or the ones that did show up were just the common ones or jars Phil already had.

Phil told me this too; "I found that in collecting jars everyone starts off slowly. Being a beginning collector they gather info on jars, lids and desirability but the one thing that seems to happen with a lot of collectors is if they have the money they quickly jump from beginner to advanced collector. They seem to omit that middle range which has so many good jars and at

that time there were a lot of really good jars going from between \$100 to \$300 that went ignored. People seemed to gravitate straight for jars \$500 and up and that seems to be the common trend ever since I've been collecting. That is unless people don't have the money then they buy those middle range jars. I just think it's a mistake because so many good jars in that middle range get ignored."

According to Phil, collecting fruit jars has been an exciting experience in his life but he told me what's more important has been his friendship with other collectors. "My advice to new jar collectors is to buy quality jars that they can afford. It is poor judgment to purchase inferior items because they are priced lower. Learn from experience. One will make mistakes, we all do; it's part of the learning process. Most collectors will share their knowledge so don't be afraid to ask for advice. When selling jars, make sure you point out any flaws, repairs, or reproduction parts. Welcome to the jar hobby and happy hunting." *Phil*

that time there were a lot of really good jars going from between \$100 to \$300 that went ignored. People seemed to gravitate straight for jars \$500 and up and that seems to be the common trend ever since I've been collecting. That is unless people don't have the money then they buy those middle range jars. I just think it's a mistake because so many good jars in that middle range get ignored."



MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT
JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

A jarrific place to share and learn

Send articles and info here:

Joe Coulson, Editor

10515 Collingswood Ln.

Fishers, IN 46037-9598

Email: JCoulson@LeaderJar.com

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.FRUITJAR.ORG



The club Lending Library is open for business. Contact Dick Cole if you would like to borrow a book. The inventory list was shown in the last newsletter. The club website is always up-to-date as well. You can reach Dick at 765-288-8717

Announcements

- Did you enjoy Bruce Schank's report on his trip to visit Phil Alvarez and his wonderful collection of some of the rarest fruit jars?! Want to see more stories like this? Bruce is willing to do more interviews within reasonable driving distance of his home in Pompton Plains, New Jersey—get in touch with him by email: balljars@balljars.net. Also consider doing your own interview and sharing it!
- The FOHBC 2009 National Bottle Show will be July 31 to August 2 in Pomona, California. Full details as well as contract information can be found here: <http://www.fohbc.com>
- Still thinking about visiting Mason Bright and his famous Ball jar collection after seeing a sneak peek in our February newsletter? Mason loves to have visitors—make an appointment: 734-241-0113
- Part III of the Robinson Museum auction has started. The auction is being conducted by North American Glass and there are 59 items up for bid. There are many wonderful jars for sale, including a deep cobalt quart FCGCo, a pint and quart Wm Haller Carlisle Pa with original stopples, a 1 gallon The Hero, and a 4 gallon Mason's Improved Whitney Glass Works.
<http://www.gregspurgeon.com/auction/>
- Full details on Can It! Exhibit at Minnetrista can be found here:
<http://www.minnetrista.net/Visit/Calendar/Exhibitions/CanIt.html>

