

MIDWEST GLASS CHATTER

MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

Since 1972

Midwest Glass Chatter
March 2011

Club Officers

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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: Anne Szopa, 11199 U.S. Highway 35, Economy, IN 47339

Meeting Minutes, March 6th, 2011

The March club meeting was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. President Dave Rittenhouse opened the meeting and welcomed 13 members.

Anne Szopa gave the Treasurer's report for March. Expenses included the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, as well as the bill for the convention center where our January Show was held. The club continues to maintain a positive bank balance.

Dave told everyone that if you enjoyed your time at the Signature Inn hotel for our January Show experience then you should give positive feedback to the hotel. Dave provided contact information (you can go to their website too). The staff at the hotel works closely with our club to make it the best possible event. We need to do our part, and let the hotel chain management know that their local staff is doing a good job.

Dave made several comments on the recent passing of club member Bill Dudley. Bill was one of the pioneers of the fruit jar hobby. He had lots of knowledge and was always eager to share. Bill was an early make of fruit jar closures. Dave said that the funeral home was packed for the Viewing and the Funeral. Wanda

Dudley renewed her club membership and donated an extra amount in honor of Bill. We will all miss him and will cherish the memories of our time spent with him in the hobby. He touched many lives.

Dave reported that he had a good time at the Columbus, Ohio bottle show. Joe Coulson and Bruce Schank also had a sales table and good time at this show. They reported that they added a few jars to their collections. You just never know what might turn up at a bottle show. Don Burkett acquired a damaged aqua quart F&A Masons Jar Patented June 27, 1876. There are only two examples known, and the other one is in a museum. Don "Mr. Mason" was very happy to get this jar at a fair price at the Columbus Show.

Dick Cole gave an update on the Club Lending Library. A copy of the 2011 Fruit Jar



Annual has been added to the library. The 2011 FJA includes the numbering system used in the Standard Fruit Jar Reference.

Bruce Schank reported on his recent Iowa Adventure. We will publish the full story in the April Glass Chatter. Thanks go to Bruce for the time and effort he puts into sharing his hobby experiences. We all enjoy living vicariously through him.

See you all at the next meeting.

Joe Coulson, Secretary



This van is owned by Minnetrista and was in the parking lot.
Notice the fruit jar in the logo!

Show and Tell

The theme for the March club meeting was Bottles and Jars with Streaks or Swirls (any kind).

Anne started us off by showing a green Depression glass, swirled Jelly glass (or Snuff or Tumbler) made by the Federal Glass Company (logo, F in shield). Anne also displayed a light purple quart wax sealer that had "swirled" imperfections in the glass, and an indentation on the side (unembossed); a Ball blue half gallon RB #238 Ball Mason, "swirled" like a Bingham-made jar, possible ghosting over double L's; and a Ball blue quart #238 Ball Mason, wavy glass, with a "swirl" below the lip.

Sue Wilson shared a Ball blue half gallon RB #193 Ball, swirled fold in the glass near the base, jar leans to the right. Sue also displayed a multi-colored glass shard.



Anne and Sue brought another interesting fruit jar. It contained a butterfly that "does swirls" in the jar. If you touch the lid of the jar then the butterfly becomes animated for a little while (battery operated). It looks very realistic. Joe Coulson mentioned that he also bought one of the butterfly jars recently. These were a new and very popular item in the U.S. during the Christmas shopping season of 2010.



Lou Ebert displayed an aqua with amber swirls half gallon RB #1787 Mason's Patent Nov 30th 1858, smooth lip, base: 15/16" valve mark and two raised 1/4" round dots. Lou also showed us a notebook of drawings of a United States Glass Company building. The building was factory "U" at Gas City, which include an office. The prints were made from the architect Bert L. French's original drawings. They showed the floor plans of the building in 1912. Also included was the 1917 proposal, and the completed plans for the building of 1918 with minor variations.



Jean Harbron shared an aqua with amber streaks quart RB #161 -Atlas- Strong Shoulder Mason. Jean also displayed a green with amber streaks pint RB #111 Atlas E-Z Seal.



Colleen Dixon shared a clear with heavy cobalt blue streaks quart RB #1387 Kerr "Self Sealing" Mason (reverse: 65th Anniversary 1903-1968). These jars were made in limited quantities (with intentional streaking) to celebrate the 65th anniversary of Kerr Glass Manufacturing Co. and were made at the Santa Anna, California plant.



Colleen also displayed an emerald green half gallon (or slightly bigger) water bottle. It was made in a three piece mold. There were concentric circles (swirl pattern) around the top and bottom on the sides. The bottle was 10" tall, football-shaped with a flat bottom and a pouring spout on top.

Dave Rittenhouse brought an aqua with amber

swirls quart RB #1787 Mason's Patent Nov 30th 1858; an aqua with milkglass swirls quart RB #1787 Mason's Patent Nov 30th 1858; a Ball blue half gallon with strong glass swirling RB #1787 Mason's Patent Nov 30th 1858; a light green half gallon RB #790 Dillon (on base) with strong glass swirling; and an aqua with strong amber swirls pint RB #1934 Mason's (GCCo monogram) Patent Nov 30th 1858.



Dave brought a "question jar". It was an amber quart in a barrel shape.



Show and Tell, cont'd

Dave brought two nice Go Withs. One was a glass hammer, and the other was a big glass paperweight.

Dick Cole brought copies of some of Dick Roller's research records. He abstracted out what fruit jars were made during a certain time period by studying original production records. Some decoding of terms had to be done in order to figure out which jars were being made.



Dick pointed out a current auction on eBay that contained an old burlap potato sack. The potatoes were packed by Ball Bros. (not the fruit jar company) of Lewiston, Idaho. The problem is that the potato Ball Bros. used the identical logo of the fruit jar Ball Bros. on their burlap potato sacks. Dick told us that Minnetrista has the original letter where Alex Bracken (lawyer for the fruit jar Ball Bros.) told them not to use the logo or they would pursue legal action. The fruit jar Ball Bros. were never involved in the potato business.

Joe Coulson shared an image of a real-photo postcard of the F.C. Ball house. The postcard was postmarked 1911 and was distributed by the Applegate Advertising Company. The F.C. Ball

house burnt to the ground in 1967. Only the large column pillars from the front of the house remained (and are still standing on the Minnetrista museum property today).

Joe also shared a real photo postcard of the Hemingray Glass Company that he purchased recently. The postcard was postmarked 1911.



Joe displayed a green with many amber swirls quart RB #496 Genuine Boyds Mason. Joe mentioned that this is the only example of this jar he has seen in any color other than aqua.



Bruce Schank brought a Ball blue pint RB #272 Ball Perfect Mason with a nice amber swirl; an olive amber half gallon RB #274 Ball Perfect Mason with amber swirls; an aqua half gallon RB #234 Ball 3-L Mason with strong amber swirls; an aqua quart

RB #234 Ball 3-L Mason with milkglass swirls; a green quart RB #226-5 Ball 3-L Improved Mason with amber swirls; and

a green pint RB #234 Ball 3-L Mason with outrageous strong amber swirls (he named this jar "Mr. Swirly").



Minnetrista Museum Display

Swirls

Glass with swirls and streaks of color are highly desired by collectors. The mix of two-colors, creating swirls, is unusual. The more contrast, the more prized the combination is.

The swirls are typically caused by impurities, such as iron, getting mixed into the raw ingredients. The impurity doesn't dissolve before the glass is taken out of the furnace, resulting in swirls. Coal has a similar effect on glass, creating a beautiful amber color.

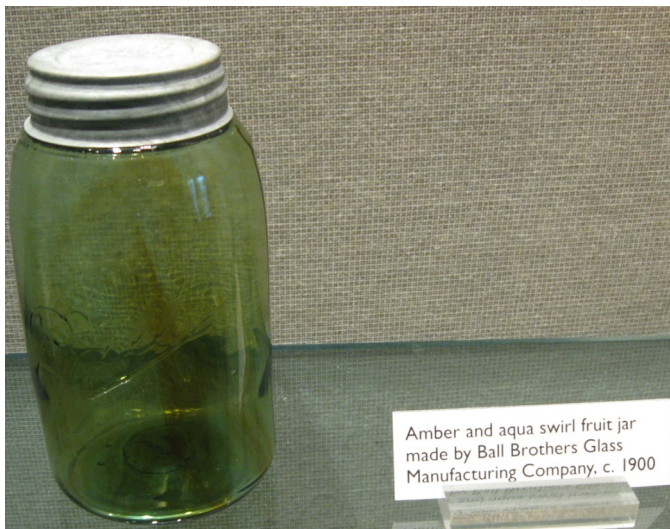
Sun-colored Amethyst

Glass made clear with manganese dioxide as a de-colorizer has an interesting property. Glass is clear when it is made but exposure to sunlight will cause the manganese dioxide to turn a shade of pink. The variation of the color depends on how much de-colorizer is used to neutralize the original aquamarine. A lot of de-colorizer creates a deep purple hue, while a small amount results in a light pink jar. Selenium is currently used to make clear glass.

Other Colors of Glass

To create a particular color of glass, minerals are added. Here are some of the additives and the resulting colored glass:

Iron Oxide	Green
Carbon oxides, sulfur compounds, iron oxides	Brown (amber)
Manganese dioxide, selenium, arsenic	Clear
Manganese oxide	Amethyst
Cobalt oxide	Deep blue
Copper compounds	Light blue
Gold chloride	Ruby Red
Selenium compounds, copper compounds	Red
Mixture of manganese, cobalt and iron	Black
Antimony oxide, tin compounds	White
Lead mixed with antimony	Yellow
Uranium oxides	Yellow-green glow



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 Dick Harris.]

I've known Dick Harris for a very long time now. Dick along with a few other notable old timers had a huge influence on me when I first started collecting. In all of the years I have known him I have never been to his home except this one time and I've never seen his collection before this article.

Dick was born in the town of Franklin, Sussex County, New Jersey in 1928. He grew up in Branchville, New Jersey and has remained there as a Sussex native all of his life. I really can't blame him for that because where he lives absolutely represents nothing but beautiful, spacious and laid back rural New Jersey at its finest. For those who don't know or only know New Jersey from what they see on the boob tube, the Turnpike is not representative of the entire State at all. There are actually many extremely beautiful rural areas that still survive, Sussex County being one of them.

Dick is a graduate of Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA. He is retired now from a very successful property and casualty Insurance career that he devoted most of his life to. Amazingly at his age, he is involved in the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars of shareholder assets in the stock market. Not



something for the faint of heart I might add.

According to Dick, he started collecting fruit jars during the "bottle craze" of the 1960's. He became very interested in bottles and such especially sodas but he very quickly gravitated to fruit jars. What drew him in were the varying



Nice grouping of rare and early fruit jars.

Rare milk bottle shaped fruit jars.



patents and closures and he just found that to be very interesting. Everything back in the 1960's was unknown until Toulouse came out with his book, Fruit Jars, A Collectors Manual in 1969. Dick read that with fascination and it just gave him even more of an incentive to go wherever it took and spend hours upon hours and day after day driving sometimes hundreds of miles looking for fruit jars. Dick at that time believes he was an integral part of and right in the middle too of the very inception and initial exploration of the fruit jar hobby as we know it today. And I would have to agree with that.

The first really good jar Dick ever bought was a pint Excelsior with an outstanding original condition lid and band. He found it right in his own backyard of Sussex County. He told me that Dick Roller came to his house 30 years ago (1980) and when he saw the Excelsior pint he was flabbergasted and immediately recognized it as something very special. What

amazed me was that Dick not only had that beautiful pint sitting out on his window sill, he had a fantastic Excelsior quart sitting there too in the same milk bottle shape as the pint and all original as well along with so many other great jars too numerous to mention here.

I sat there mesmerized as Dick pulled out box after box after box with nothing but the most outstanding jars imaginable and many I had never seen or touched before. What struck me



Rare colored Franklin jar along with rare Excelsior pt.

even more incredulous was the fact he told me that for every box he had pulled out of the barn (and there were at least 12) there were five he didn't bother to bring into the house. My mind went blank thinking how he had at least 60 boxes of nothing but fantastic jars that have sat in his barn and haven't seen the light of day for at least 30 years. Without a doubt, Dick is one



Another grouping of very nice jars.

Rare half quart Millville left, rare small mouth A. Stone center and rare mold preventer 1858 quart right.



of those under the radar collectors that hardly anyone even knows about and I am a very fortunate person that he allowed me access.

According to Dick, right at the very get-go he went to Bottle Shows all over the Northeast and that's how I actually met him. He has had a sales table at the North Jersey Antique Bottle Collectors Association Show in Oakland New Jersey since 1970 with the exception of probably four years. Dick told me in the early years, jars were plentiful at the shows and reasonably priced. Of course the rest of us know what has happened since those days but jars are still a hot commodity.

Dick says the most exciting time for him as well as his family was attending the 1976 National Show in St. Louis. He remembers how Alex Kerr and George McConnell were there and Dick claims Alex actually admitted George had the best jars (at that time) but then again, Alex was just getting into the hobby and Alex

made up for lost time in a big way. Dick claims Alex had all of his jars professionally packed and air shipped to the Show. He actually was right there and had the privilege of helping Alex unpack his jars and also setting up his display.

Besides the many great jars Dick has in his collection, he has also bought and sold many fantastic jars to other collectors over the years as well. Don Burkett came to his mind and he said, after reading Don's article and seeing how ugly the solid 1858 quart looked he knew he sold it to the right fellow. He also claims he mistakenly sold a Collins & Chapman Wheeling, W.V. to Jon Vander Schouw, oops!



Rare HM Harris Improved jar.

I'll never forget how back in 1985 Dick allowed me to come up to his area and look in one of his barns. He knew I collected Ball jars and he had been given hundreds of them. I spent the good portion of an entire day going through them and coming up empty. I asked at that time if he had any other jars I might be interested in and he told

Nicely colored unique Salt & Peppers.



me about his honey amber Christmas mason. So he goes away for a minute and comes out with what at the time was the most gorgeous jar I had ever laid my eyes on. He wanted \$500 for the jar and I about bust a gut. I wanted that jar so bad I could taste it but back then \$500 was like coming up with 15k now and for me I just couldn't do it, so sadly I had to walk away without the jar. In retrospect I should have sold everything else I owned and did whatever it took to get that jar. It ended up with David Byrd, and no one seems to know where it is now. :0(

Dick had a sad jar story about how he had a deep bluish jar in the basement that the oil man hit with the hose one day when filling the tank. Claims the bottom fell out of the jar. Moral of this story I suppose is don't leave good jars lying around.

Besides the myriads of fantastic fruit jars Dick has accumulated over the years he also collects other types of old glass. He and his wife collect Salt and Peppers and probably have one of the top collections in the country. His living room has a massive display cabinet chock full of them and he also has one side of his dining room wall with them too. And I



must say, the colors and different varieties were really eye catching and appealing to me. There is no way I could even come close to counting how many he had and I wondered how he knew himself but I tell you, he knows exactly what he has and where. He rattled off the ages of

some of them, places they were made and what glass houses and I could see he had an

intrinsic knowledge, understanding and passion that went well beyond the pale. Simply put, I was stunned by them all. Besides the wall shelves, salt & Peppers were everywhere, on tables and the like. I innocently asked him if he had "The" best collection and he told me straight out no. In fact he said he didn't want to have the best collection. I asked him in a quiz-zical way why? He said to my surprise "when you're on top the only way to look is down."



Incredible wall of Salt & Peppers.

Black glass plate from
Bridgeton, NJ circa 1881 – 1883.

Dick also likes black glass and had a spectacular Bridgeton, New Jersey 1881/1883 plate that I had never seen before. Dick feels a lot of people don't seem to appreciate black glass and that it goes unrecognized for its beauty and rarity.



I found it truly remarkable that this man hasn't added a single jar to his collection since 1980. What he showed me represented just unbelievable stuff that collectors across the country would love to get their hands on at almost any cost. What he amassed in a short 12 year period of time is truly remarkable but in retrospect he told me for the most part jars were much more readily available back in the early years and they cost a lot less money than they do today. Of course money then vs. now is a huge difference. Dick claims he stopped populating his own collection when the prices became in his opinion far too high sometime after 1980. Because of space limitations he never displayed his jars and instead focused on displaying the Salt & Peppers for his wife instead.

Dick mentioned that he never really went after colors when it came to fruit jars yet he does have a few beautifully colored examples. In a weird sort of way I felt a bit melancholy that he

had such incredible jars and most with fantastic original closures yet he really has no place to display them and has never displayed them. A visit by a few collectors the week before I showed up along with my visit gave him at least a nice period of time to temporarily display many of his

wonderful jars once again. One jar in particular caught my eye but alas it had a "not for sale" sign on it. I could see how he looked at and talked about his jars that he was extremely attached to them but I knew he would probably sell them sooner rather than later.



Super grouping of Crowley town 1858's all with original caps.

Scarce Mason's Shield Union jar.



Rare OVCo Jar 1881



Very Rare West Virginia jar.



Rare Mason's Shield unlined cap.



Rare set of Arthur's Patent jars.



Rare half pint Millville Improved.



Rare color 58 (only) midget



Beautifully colored Keystone pints.

2011 SUMMER FRUIT JAR ROUND-UP

There are only 2 events each year devoted just to FRUIT JARS: January's Get-Together put on by the MAFJBC, and the SUMMER FRUIT JAR ROUND-UP, put on by the fruit jar collectors themselves, coordinated by Jerry McCann and Marianne Dow. Last summer we had a super turn out, and a lot of fun!

Save The Date

Better make your room reservations now. The hotel is blocking off rooms for us at a special discount rate, for this JULY 6-10, 2011 EVENT.

Fruit jar nuts will start arriving in Muncie on Wednesday the 6th, and the room-hop-shopping scene is happening on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the 7,8,9th. Sunday the 10th will be the farewell breakfast for those die-hards who stay over Saturday night.

Enjoy complimentary hotel-breakfasts every morning, as well as sandwiches, snacks, and cold drinks in the Hospitality Room upstairs Thursday and Friday afternoons, and into the night.

Greg Spurgeon will have his famous "Bargain Cave'o'Jar Deals" in the Hospitality Room, too. Anyone who wants to bring jars to sell without getting a hotel room may also set up upstairs, no charge.

In addition to the excitement of the room-hop-shopping, which is what these Muncie fruit jar events are famous for, and the good visiting with friends (which would be enough, wouldn't it?!), there are also some scheduled talks and moderated group discussions.

Jerry McCann will give another of his fun educational talks, illustrated with rare jars that make his audiences "ooh" and "ahh".

This summer we are adding some themed Show'n'Tell discussions, where those interested bring in items that illustrate the theme. Or come and participate in the discussion, and see what the others bring. Or just lurk and learn, that's okay too.

Suggested themes are "Swirls", "Non-Ball Indiana Jars", "Unusual Go Withs". Please email with your theme suggestions. We will need someone to volunteer to moderate each group too, just to keep it on track, but it'll be very casual.

Anyone wanting to give a more formal talk, long or short, is welcome.

On Saturday we will have the Jelly Jammers meeting (10am), and the MAFJBClub's meeting (1:30pm). The meetings are open to everyone.

Afterwards will be the fun fee-free auction. There are always some rarities, and some bargains there. And there's nothing like the excitement and entertainment of an auction. You never know who will be dukin' it out for that must-have treasure.

Don't miss this fun 4-day collectors event with room-hop-shopping and activities at the Signature Inn, 3400 N Chadam Ln Muncie IN 47304-5272 (phone for room reservations: 765-284-4200).

For more info, contact Marianne Dow at finbotclub@gmail.com or 419-455-1112.

Aside from hotel room costs, events at the hotel are free and open to all fruit jar enthusiasts.

Read about last summer's Fruit Jar Round Up here ~ with pix and videos.

<http://finbotclub.blogspot.com/2010/07/summer-muncie-was-jar-tastic.html>



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A jarrific place to share and learn

Send articles and info here:

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.FRUITJAR.ORG



Top photo: real-photo postcard from 1911 of the F.C. Ball home.
Bottom photo: the tall front pillars are all that remain of the home today.

Announcements

- The Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (the National bottle club) has a beautifully re-designed and informative website. They also have a new Facebook page. Check them out:
<http://www.fohbc.org/>
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Federation-of-Historical-Bottle-Collectors-FOHBC/199965823373381?sk=wall>
- **07 – 09 July 2011 (Thursday – Saturday) Muncie, Indiana, Fruit Jar Round Up**, Signature Inn, 3400 N. Chadham Lane, Muncie, Indiana. 3+ Jam Packed Days of Fruit Jar Fun! Contact Marianne Dow 419.455.1112 finbotclub@gmail.com or Jerry McCann 773.777.0443 fjar@aol.com
- **23 July 2011 (Saturday) Altoona, Iowa, The Iowa Antique Bottleers 42nd Annual Antique Bottle & Collectibles Show and Sale** (9:00 am – 2:00 pm) at the Meadows Events Center, Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino (I-80 Exit 142) Altoona, Iowa, Tom Southard, 2815 Druid Hill Drive, Des Moines, Iowa 50315, Tele: 515.490.9590
- The Minnetrista Collections Department is excited to announce that a selection of object and archival records are now available online. Currently, there are approximately 4,400 collection records accessible that include postcards, photographs, objects, and over 2,300 book catalog records. Topics include but are not limited to Muncie Pottery, Ball Corporation, Ball family, businesses, clubs and organizations, gardening, collectibles, artwork, museum profession-related topics, etc.
<http://www.minnetrista.net/heritage-collection/>

