





Midwest Glass Chatter May 2009

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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

Meeting Minutes, May 3rd, 2009

The May club meeting was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Club President Dave Rittenhouse opened the meeting and welcomed 14 members and two guests—Jim Durr of Fortville, IN and Dwight Funk of Muncie, IN (both invited by Joe Coulson).

Dave mentioned that we will have advertising for our Last Summer July Show in the major bottle publications. He also said that he would be attending the big Mansfield, Ohio show.

Anne Szopa presented the Treasurer's report for April. Income included sales of 2 Robinson DVDs, and quite a few membership renewals. Expenses included postage for the July Show and postage and printing of the March newsletter.

Anne also shared a copy of a local magazine "Maximum Living" which had a full page ad for Minnetrista's "Can It!" exhibit. Joe Coulson mentioned that he had seen advertising for the exhibit on public television.

Dick Cole indicated that there are a few current editions of books that should be purchased for the club Lending Library. He also asked club members to consider bringing book donations to any future club meetings.

Dick also shared an article sent to him from Karen Vincent at Minnetrista. The article was titled "Post Office in a Jar" and shows a common blue Ball Perfect Mason of the time period. The beginning of the article says:

"On March 19, 1931 the Craig, Alaska Post Office burnt to the ground leaving it in ruins. As evidence of the fire a U.S. Postal Inspector scooped some of the remains and sent them in a jar with his report on the fire... or so it is rumored. Today, the Smithsonians National Postal Museum has in its collection a Post Office in a Jar." This jar is currently on display at the Smithsonian museum.

Dave reminded us that it had been exactly one year ago when Phil Robinson passed away. He recently visited with Meredith and told us that she is doing okay.

Norm Barnett brought a couple of different clippings from the Antique Weekly newspaper. This is a great resource for those in the Midwest. One article was about "Anna Pottery". The pottery pigs can be very valuable.

Upcoming meetings:

June 14—Minnetrista Cantina at 1:30pm. Show 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. Also, the Jelly Jammers meet at 10:00am if you would like to join them.

July 12—Summer Show and Sale Day! The location of the show is The Horizon Convention Center. Hours are 9:00am to 2:00pm.

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 amber jars or bottles for discussion.

Joe Coulson started out the Show and Tell by sharing an amber quart wax sealer with "MFJCo" embossed on the base. The jar was made by the Marion Fruit Jar Company and is very scarce in the amber color.



Joe also shared an amber half gallon "The Leader" (in two lines). This is one of Joe's most favorite series of jars to collect. The jars have wonderful glass character (seed bubbles and waviness). The jars were made in Yorktown, Indiana (also known as West Muncie) in the 1890s.

Dick Cole displayed a light amber pint special run jar commemorating Dick Bere (CEO of Kroger at the time).



Dick also brought an amber quart Cohansey prod-

uct jar; an amber beer bottle "The Minck Brewing Co. / Richmond Ind." (made in Albany); an amber jelly glass; an amber plain Ball product jar (made in Muncie in 1961 according to the codes on the base).



Dick shared a clear pint jar that was over 40 years old. It had peas in it around a tube. This was done on purpose to allow people to conceal their money in the jars!



Mike Mosier told us about the recent fire at the Saint-Gobain glass plant in Dunkirk, Indiana. About 450 tons of amber glass escaped from the furnace on the first floor and dropped into the basement! The tank was dedicated in 1999 and had sprung a hole. The facility ships approximately 1 million beer bottles a day for Anheuser Busch. The facility has another tank for making flint

glass, and it was not damaged in the fire.

Mike brought an amber quart Indiana milk bottle "Polk's Trademark Best".



Mike displayed an amber half gallon "The Leader" (two lines); an amber orange juice carafe "The California Glass Container Industry / 100 Years of Service / 1865-1975"; and an amber bottle commemorating "George Hendrickson / 50 years Kerr / bottle in the shape of an I.S. glass blowing machine).



Bill Wherrett told us that he recently bought a Globe jar at a good price and also a Ball jelly glass. Bill wondered if there was an easy way to clean pencil marks off of tin lids. Using something like Comet works, but it leaves marks because it contains abrasives.

Sue Wilson displayed an amber grapefruit soda bottle (base: Ball logo) (pyroglaze on front: Spike-it / Trademark / You'll Like it); and a 12 1/2" tall amber jar with a Mason screw cap and Owens-Illinois logo on base (used for chemicals?).



Sue also displayed an amber quart Wan-Eta Cocoa Boston; and a cardboard / paper / tin base container which was an early thermos.



Anne Szopa brought an amber product jar with 18 "scallops" around the body, and the lid said "Jelke's Good Luck Fresh Foods / This jar may be used for home canning / Use new rubber rings and mason jar covers."

Anne also displayed an amber quart P. Lorillard Co. (on base), with a lid which was

Show and Tell, cont'd

embossed "Geo. W. Helme Co. of New Jersey Patented July 12, 1872."



Anne also shared an amber quart product jar, which probably originally contained apple butter. The jar had an indented neck Lightning beaded neck seal and a milkglass lid—made by Hazel-Atlas.



Anne also displayed an amber quart Mason jar, with rounded heel, base with maker's mark of the Fairmount Glass Company of Indianapolis, Indiana.



Lou Ebert brought several items for discussion. The first was a red amber 28 oz. bottle, side embossed "Milks' Emulsion", base embossed with the Fairmount Glass Works mark.

Lou displayed a red amber quart blob top beer bottle, front embossed "C. Liebenguth Marion Ind. (within circle)", back embossed "This bottle not to be sold", and base embossed "S.B.&G. Co.". This bottle was made by the Streator Bottle & Glass Co., Streator, Illinois. The 1895 and 1897 Marion city directories show Chas. Liebenguth, agent Toledo Brewing and Malting Co.

Lou displayed an amber quart blob top beer bottle, side embossed "Ind. Br'g. Assn. Marion (in circle around an interpretation of the seal of the state of Indiana)", base embossed "M.B.&G. Co.". This bottle was made by the Massillon Bottle & Glass Co., Massillon, Ohio.

Lou displayed an amber 12 oz. blob top beer bottle, side embossed "Ind. Br'g. Ass'n Marion (in circle around an interpretation of the seal of the state of Indiana)". The buffalo is facing to the right, which is reverse of the buffalo on the seal on the previous quart bottle. Base embossed "R.G.&B. Co.". This bottle was made by the Rhodes Glass & Bottle Co., Massillon, Ohio.

Lou told us that the Indiana Brewing Association oper-

ated from 1897 to 1913.







Jean Harbron shared an amber quart jar "A.G. Smalley & Co. Boston, Mass. Patented April 7th 1896 & December 1st 1896" (all embossed on the base. The jar (RB #2645) also had a milk glass lid "A.G. Smalley & Co. / Boston & New York." According to research by Tom Caniff, the jar originally held Amber Brand Coffee from Howard W. Spurrin, Boston.



Jean also shared an amber quart "Atlas E-Z Seal" (RB

#114) (base: 29-K-342). This jar was made circa 1930s.



Norm Barnett brought an amber quart reproduction BBGMCo jar; an amber quart Trade Mark Lightning with heavy whittle; an amber pint and half gallon Globe; an amber quart "F.B.Co" (on base) wax sealer; and a light amber quart cork seal jar.

Dave Rittenhouse shared an amber quart "Ball 1880 1980" special run jar; a complete amber set (pint, quart, half gallon) of "The Leader"





LEGENDS OF THE JAR!

[Editor's Note: This article is a result of a day trip and personal visit by author and long time collector Bruce W. Schank with extremley long time collector Dick Watson]

In attempting to do this series of articles on long time prominent fruit jar collectors, Dick Watson's name came up. So I called him to see if he'd allow me a small amount of time to visit with him. I explained what I was trying to accomplish, and he of course



kindly agreed. I've seen Dick here and there at different shows before, but I really didn't know him personally nor can I say I knew anything about his collecting forte either. I must say I was a bit disappointed when Dick told me all of his best colored 1858 jars were down at Wheaton Village on display, but he assured me that he still had enough good jars to make my long trip more than worth my while.

Of course I had no idea what to expect when I arrived at Dick's home. But the first thing I did notice when I pulled into the driveway and got out of my car was



large windows full of glass.
The way the sun was shining through tree branches, and with the reflective light, I could just make out what looked like hundreds of incredibly colored bottles.

My immediate reaction was to

rub my eyes and take a second gander just to make sure I wasn't imagining what I was actually seeing. "This couldn't possibly be real now, could it?", I was saying to myself. Of course, from that vantage point I had no idea what was in store for me when Dick finally opened his front door, and I entered that incredible home chock full of historical items. I've been to a lot of places in my life including major museums as well as the homes of many friends to see their collections, but this really took the cake.

I've heard the term "Awe struck" used before for certain things, including meeting



beautiful women, but never in my life did I ever think it would or could be used in this humble author's experience, especially in regards to glass. As I peered into the oversized foyer with the sun pouring through behind me, all I could see was glass cases on either side, full of an incredible array of bottles. As a lover of old glass and anything historical too, including fruit jars, I was literally stupefied talking to Dick as I entered the main body of his home.





Simply put, I was completely overwhelmed by the copius amount of eye candy, and it became apparrent to me almost immediately that this was no ordinary home, and Dick was no ordinary Collector whatsoever.

Dick was extremely warm and personal towards me as I queried him over and over concerning the cornucopia of stuff all around me. And being my main objective was fruit jars, I finally discovered a small treasure trove of early American jars right in front of me, including an amber oversized Cohansey.

Now let's start at the beginning. Dick was born in 1932 in Runnymeade, NJ, a working-man's class town. Dick's grandfather started an electrical

business in 1902 in which his father took over for a few years. Dick subsequently owned and operated the business for 30 years before turning it over to his sons upon retiring.

In 1958 Ball Corporation came out with a pamphlet celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Mason jar, and Dick came across that very pamphlet while at a little museum owned by the State of New Jersey in Batsto, NJ.

Batsto was an old iron and glass village at one time in the 19th and early 20th century. While visiting there Dick ventured into a small combination General

Store and Post Office where he came across the pamphlet on the second floor along with all sorts of historic jars and bottles on display. The Display was owned by a glass historian from South Jersey by the name of Eddie Pfeiffer, and the next thing Dick knew, he his wife were and hooked and off to the races looking for historic glass of all kinds.





Dick has one of the largest and most complete collections of patent models of fruit jars in the country. According to Dick, these models originally came from an

O. Rundel Gilbert of Garrison, NY. Rundel sold these models to Dick Harris of Northern New Jersey who in turn sold them to Al Vi-



gnon. Al then turned around and sold them to Dick. A very small portion of these patent models also came McCann Jerry from too. Just an amazing sight to behold seeing this fantastic and unique display collection of these truly one -of-a-kind models, and all in one place.

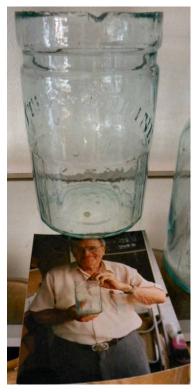




Dick also has an extensive collection of fruit preserve cans from the 1850's and 1860's. Again Dick probably has one of the best and most complete set of fruit preserve cans assembled anywhere in the country. Many of these cans came from the Norman Barnett collection.

It was just so incredibly overwhelming for this humble author to try and absorb the vast amount of fantastic early American glass and other historical items in every room, nook and cranny of Dick's home in the brief amount of time I was actually there. Dick has everything from tobacco cans, advertising, shear cutters, to whistles, decoys, needle work from the very early 1800's, stoneware crocks, bitters, Saratoga Spring water bottles, flasks, cures, food bottles, political hats, signs, slogans and torches, porcelain and tin plates from the very early 1800's, clocks, pictures, post cards, water bottles, demi-johns, moulds, old food cans and so much more it's just simply amazing.





Dick does have some very nice early American fruit jars on display. Some of which include Arthur's Patent, A. Stone, Potter & Bodine and Dalbey jars. I was amazed to see an Arthur's and A. Stone jar in half pint size. I didn't even know these jars existed in this smaller size.

Dick was very good friends with George McConnell. He related to me how George was over at his house one day and spied a Crowleytown in a size he didn't have, and asked Dick if he would sell it to him. Dick went to his glass cabinet, took out the jar and gave it to George. Dick then told him it was a gift. George was thrilled to say the least, and it's moments such as those that make collecting what it's all about, the people.

Dick told me another very interesting story concerning some really good jars and bottles he acquired for the collection some twenty-five years ago. Once a month Dick and his wife used to set up at a flea market in Rancocas, NJ. There he met some doctors and lawyers' wives who had time on their hands, and so became involved in antiques, and all of them liked both Dick and

Elma a lot. A few of them had shops in Mt. Holly, and one of the ladies was approached by a woman who said she had many fruit jars and bottles she was looking to sell. Well, since she didn't know much about fruit jars she told her to get in contact with Dick.

The woman lived about ten miles away from Dick, so he went there as soon as possible to look over the items. When he got there he saw that she had many boxes of jars that she wanted to get rid of due to lack of space. As Dick looked through the boxes he found a green H&S quart, a full set of Haller's with stopples

and other assorted early glass fruit jars with stopples too. It turned out her husband was a Philadelphia fireman and there was a fire in a building there. According to Dick, during the Civil War the Government used to commandeer many buildings and use them as make shift hospitals. Well, this was one such building.





So, after the fire was put out, the husband was up in the attic to vent the roof and saw all kinds of glass everywhere. He wanted to take a closer look at it but couldn't at that time. Then he heard the fire Marshal talk-

ing about the building having to be taken down due to structural damage. The building was right at the edge of the street, and most of the bricks had been cooked by the intensity of the fire, so it was very dangerous. Well, he went back that night and cleaned all of the glass out of there.

According to Dick, everything was super clean. If a jar was supposed to have a closure then the jar had the correct one, and all of them were perfect. There were also olive oil and some pickle bottles too in the mix. Dick said there was just a bunch of nice jars including three pint Haller jars with stopples that were all whittled. So the woman told him she had someone else already look at them, and she wanted to take bids. Dick told her he just didn't want to get into a back and forth deal and asked her to get the other party's highest bid that they would pay for the lot and after that call him. Then he would give her his highest bid,

but he didn't want to know what the other bid was at all.

So she called Dick back, and he went over again to give everything another look over. At that point Dick told her



he'd give her \$1,500 for the whole works. Well, the woman stuttered and said "you would, \$1,500, you, you got them." She was so excited she could not contain herself.

Dick happens to be one of those very fortunate and blessed collectors who just happened to be alive at the right time and also live in the right place. But it was also his insatiable passion for history and historic Americana that drove him on. You wouldn't know though by talking or looking at him that he has probably the most complete and diverse collection of truly historic Americana in the entire country. Dick is just a simple warm hearted down to earth person who loves to share his collection, life



experiences and wonderful stories with whomever would give him the time.

Dick claims what really helped spur him on was the fact that his wife was also into collecting many historical items too, and she didn't mind him spending money. Dick's thinking is very simple; once he's bought something and paid for it, he doesn't worry about what it's worth. Considering Dick claims he isn't just a jar collector, I'd say he has some pretty fantastic stuff.





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

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.FRUITJAR.ORG



Many product jars from earlier years could be re-used as home canning jars. This was a very economical way to distribute product and appeal to the thriftiness of customers.

Announcements

- We ran out of room in this issue to share photos of our club's experience at Minnetrista's opening
 night party for the "Can It!" exhibit. Look for those photos plus additional coverage of the exhibit in
 the June issue of the Glass Chatter.
- Mason Bright's wife Nancy passed away Tuesday June 2, 2009 of complications from a stroke. Our sympathy goes to Mason and family. You may reach Mason at: 734-241-0113.
- Full details on Minnetrista's "Can It!" Exhibit can be found here: http://www.minnetrista.net/Visit/Calendar/Exhibitions/CanIt.html
- The inventory of the Lending Library is viewable on the club's website. Get in touch with Dick Cole (contact details on first page) if you would like to borrow an item. Dick is also seeking book donations from our club members. Please consider donating your old bottle and glass books.
- Did you enjoy Bruce Schank's report on his trip to visit Dick Watson and his wonderful collection of early glass and Americana?! 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!

