

# Rain Didn't Dampen Spirits of Athens Show Attendees

By Sam Evans



Rick Shepherd, of Watkinsville, Ga., shows off a nice selection of sodas and seltzers. (Photos courtesy of Jeff Weinberg)

**A**THENS, Ga. – It takes more than rain to keep collectors of antique bottles from attending a show, especially since it was the first ever held in a city better known as home of the Georgia Bulldogs.

By the time the inaugural Athens Antique Bottle, Pottery and Collectibles Show and Sale had gotten under way at 8:30 a.m., last March 3, the rain had ceased. A couple of dozen dealers were having their offerings checked out by more than 100 collectors in Trumps Banquet Hall on South Milledge Avenue.

There were serious longtime collectors such as Athens resident Jeff Weinberg trading and collecting straight-sided script Coca-Colas, while others looked for early bottles and pottery, Civil War collectibles, folk art and Georgiana.



Folk artist Jim Corder, of Elberton, Ga., offered a selection of awesome bird houses.



Glenn Cook, of Crawford, Ga., was able to acquire many painted label bottles for his collection, by trading some Carolina bottles he had brought to the show.

Other notable collectors in attendance included Bill Wrenn, John Wood, Steve Johnson, Rick Sheffield, Andy Tull, Richard Gianferrara and Brent Jones were buying, selling and trading sodas. Also coming to the show were notable collectors like Calvin Ferguson, of Thomson, Ga., and others from nearby Washington and Augusta.

It was a real pleasure for me to visit not only with collectors I knew, but also with folks who are new to the hobby of collecting bottles and/or pottery.

The show helped me to finally meet folks like Archie Huffstetler from North Carolina. I'd only spoken to him on the phone prior to the show. He was looking for the elusive Athens 3-Centa bottle. I was able to add 15 new bottles to my collection. I collect Athens sodas of all types, as well as all of the Coca-Cola hobbleskirt bottles from Georgia towns that had them. Currently, I have over 150 Athens soda bottles and more than 400 different Georgia hobbleskirt Coke bottles, including all the variations and colors

The show wrapped up Saturday afternoon with clear skies and smiling collectors on their way back home to add their new finds to their collections. It was a lot of fun and I hope you'll join us next year for the second annual show.

(Sam Evans can be reached at [www.DixieSoda.com](http://www.DixieSoda.com))



**Sandy Gray, of Marietta, Ga., completes a sale during the inaugural Athens, Ga., show.**



**Veteran collector Bill Wrenn, who is known for his mini jug collection, included a show case of them in this display. He lives in Watkinsville, Ga.**