

2008 Hall of Fame Inductees



Betty Zumwalt

Betty was elected to the Hall of Fame and was presented with a plaque and a book on her contributions to the bottle hobby at the York show in August, 2008.

Betty's introduction to old bottles began when she and husband Bill moved into a new subdivision in Santa Rosa, CA. While unloading their belongings into the new home a worker working on a new house next door

noticed their antiques. He told them to take a look in the creek behind their house as there was a big dump on the creek bank with lots of old stuff. They took a look and started finding old bottles. One bottle that took their interest was a broken pumpkinseed.

Determined to dig a whole pumpkinseed bottle, they moved lots of dump, finally unearthing a mint example. This was in 1963 and the begin-

ning of her collecting adventure.

The first book *Spirits Bottles of the Old West* was a success. It was one of the first books that combined glass works history as well as research on brands of whiskey and their agents. Unlike other books of this time, this was much more than just a listing of bottles.

While researching for the whiskey book they noticed that most, if not all, whiskey firms also advertised and sold medicinal bitters. Hence the next book, *Western Bitters*, the most complete work on the subject. In this book most of the bottles are pictured, the companies researched, and the bottles dated. The next book was *19th Century Medicine in Glass*, copyright 1971.

Betty was a member of the ABCA Club of Sacramento and also the Northwestern Bottle Collectors Association. In 1968 Betty, along with Bill and Richard (Dick) Hansen, laid out the first draft of bylaws for the forming of the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors. In 1978 she was the programs chairperson for the federation. Betty has also been President, Secretary, and Editor of the Northwest Bottle Collectors Association. She has been a speaker at various shows and historical societies and has displayed at many shows including St. Louis Expo in 1976.

After parting with Bill, Betty published *Ketchup-Pickles-Sauces 19th Food in Glass* a book that took many hours over several years to research. This book will surely be the bible for this field of antique bottles. Check out the food products in your own house, many have roots to the companies and bottles documented in Betty's book.

All in all Betty has contributed a vast resource of knowledge to the world of antique bottles, not only about the glass itself, but the companies and people behind them. For without the history, the glass itself is just another decorated item.



Thomas W. (Tom) Caniff

If knowledge is power, recent Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (FOHBC) Hall of Fame inductee Tom Caniff is arguably the current reigning daimio of the fruit and product jar field.

Starting in 1975 and for at least two decades from this point forward, he was deeply involved throughout the Midwest at the “grass roots” level by attending bottle shows and either setting up a sales table to support the sponsoring club’s event and/or organizing a display at these festivities for the knowledge benefit of all attendees.

At the local level, Tom Caniff served a term as the president of the

Jefferson County Antique Bottle Club of Steubenville, Ohio on at least two occasions. In addition, he was the co-editor of its newsletter - *Jefferson County Digger* - and either chaired or co-chaired that organization’s annual show and sale at least four times.

At a higher level of participation, he served a two year term as co-editor of the FOHBC’s newsletter (1978-1980), as the Northeast Region’s newsletter editor from 1981 to 1983, editor of the Federation’s annual newsletter contest in 1995 and as the vice president and then president of the nationwide Jelly Jammers club between 1990 and 1993.

It was during these formative

years that he developed a thrust for more details about fruit and product jars. In addition to helping others to populate the nascent fruit jar databases with facts, this need propelled him to begin his own process of researching and documenting information about glass firms throughout the Wheeling District. As a result, he became the recognized authority on the various Flaccus family companies and their food packing competitors along the Ohio River. In essence, he transcended the simple fruit jar perspective and elevated the world of packers’ containers and the firms that used them into prominence for the cadre that followed his work.

In 1991, Tom Caniff retired as the chief of the City of Steubenville’s Fire Department. Having more time, it was from this point forward that his involvement in recording the historical background of fruit, jelly and product jars began in earnest; one that has been nearly Herculean in scope and most noteworthy in significance. While having written and published several articles before this juncture, the breadth of his documentary and original work was yet to be realized. Since 1995, *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* has carried an average of six columns per year under Tom’s *The Label Space* byline. From March 1999 onward in the same magazine, Tom’s *Fruit Jar Rambles* column has appeared every month. On top of this already heavy workload, he authored the four-page *Fruit Jar News* every month from August 1998 until December 2007, averaged over two columns per year in the *Fruit Jar Annual* from 1996 through 2007 and has edited the yearly fall edition of the *Jelly Jammers Journal*, the quarterly publication of the national club - Jelly Jammers - since 1993.

One of the objectives of the FOHBC is sharing knowledge. Tom Caniff met this standard. In fact, over the past decade, he has far surpassed it in the total breadth of his work and involvement within the hobby. Right now, he is the only one in the fruit, jelly or product jar worlds doing this kind of prolonged work.



J. Carl Sturm

When asked whether or not he had the credentials for inclusion in the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors Hall of Fame, the unassuming J. Carl Sturm paused, thought, and succinctly responded "I don't know." A follow-up query of whether he'd like to be nominated for the honor resulted in another pause and then a response of "yes." These replies were from an extraordinary, yet down-to-earth man who was completing his 19th consecutive year as a member of the FOHBC

Board of Directors and his third term as President of the organization. For 45 years he had freely and generously given of himself for the betterment of the hobby and his fellow collectors on both a local and the national level. A sought-after expert in many areas of glass collecting, he's widely considered the "go-to guy" because if he doesn't have the answer, he knows where to find it, either in print or in the person of another long-time collector. Carl sees himself as a real "bottle guy" who just happened to find friendship and enjoyment through

his collecting and time spent with other collectors of antique glass.

There were a number of folks, however, who felt strongly that Carl is the epitome of why there is a Hall of Fame – to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the hobby at the national level. Of course he should be in the Hall of Fame!

So the

nominators went to work and, as they say, the rest is history.

Carl's early collections were of "medicines," but the vast number of them "would have driven us out of house and home." Carl narrowed his focus to medicines bottles that included the word "doctor," but there were still too many for a reasonable collection. When Carl came across Bill Agee's *Collecting the Cures*, he already had several hundred "medicine" or "doctor" bottles, but he found his new calling in "cures."

His first “cure” was a Clem’s Summer Cure for \$3 at a flea market in Maine. At that time “cures” were “easy to find at flea markets and garage sales” but the most memorable location was a table of bottles at the edge of a field – the farmer had plowed them up and put them on a table with a sign: “For Sale: Leave \$\$ for what you think the bottle is worth.”

In approximately 1969, Carl obtained what he considers to be his “best, early-on cure” – a Jos G. Michener & Co’s Occidental Diphtheria Cure (8½”, square, amber) for \$18 from Mahlon Thomas who had acquired a pair of them for the same price. These two examples of this bottle are still the only ones known to exist and at this time the location of the one that Mahlon kept is not known.

By the time Carl moved to Orlando in 1973 with his wife, Joy, and sons, David and Tim, his collection numbered approximately 150 “cures.” He soon met collector Bob Pyne (who had about the same number of “cures”) who sold Carl his collection and Carl’s collection grew to 250 unique “cures” overnight. Carl has done a little digging but never dug a “cure.” His current collection of 800 exceptional “cure” bottles is the result of purchases at innumerable bottle shows, offerings from friends he’s made in the hobby, countless flea markets and antique stores, and other collections he has purchased or been asked to sell. Just this year he acquired the rare Dr. Frank’s Turkey Febrifuge Cures Fever & Ague having been asked to sell the Larry Hicks collection of “cures.”

When Gene Bradberry became FOHBC President at the 1988 Exposition in Las Vegas, he needed help with the Federation newsletter and Carl became the Editor. The *Federation Glass Works* was at that time a half-sized pamphlet, but under Carl’s guidance became a full-sized booklet – more like a magazine. A number of years later *Bottles & Extras* was born when Carl played a role in the acquisition of Scott Grandstaff’s privately

published *Bottles and Extras* magazine – a gift to the Federation. Skipping a number of years into the future, *Bottles and Extras* became the premier antique glass magazine with Kathy Hopson-Sathe as Editor and during Carl’s third term as President, the magazine began to be produced bi-monthly rather than quarterly – a welcome change to those of us who crave news, history, information, and stories about antique glass.

The first of Carl’s terms as FOHBC President started with The 25th Anniversary National Bottle & Advertising Show & National Convention in Cherry Hill, NJ, in 1994. His leadership continued through national shows in Chicago, Nashville, and Jacksonville, and he became Past-President and Director At Large in 1998 at the first of two consecutive shows in Cincinnati, OH. His third term as FOHBC President began with the National Antique Bottle Show in Reno, NV, in 2006, and concluded at the highly successful and recent National Antique Bottle Exposition in York, PA, where he was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

In 1997 Carl was dubbed a “super-collector” on a national television program *Personal fx, The Collectibles Show* – and that is, indeed, a fitting term. Besides his “cures,” he has exceptional collections of flasks (primarily half-pint pictorial flasks), miniature jugs, utility jars, and black glass. He also has numerous books and collectibles from the Spanish-American War of 1898, 500 or more books and magazines on antique glass and bottle collecting (and he’s read them all), and, of course, hundreds of “go-withs” that are meaningful and attractive additions to his collections and his years invested in the hobby.

Approximately ten years ago Carl started collecting tobacco tags – small, tin tags that were affixed to plugs of tobacco that were for sale at the local mercantile or general store from 1870 to 1935. His collection now numbers 3000 tags along with tobacciana such as advertising, unopened tobacco packs, tin tobacco cans, and plug cutters.

And within the past two years, Carl has begun to collect German antique figural perfume bottles with crown stoppers from the period 1890 to 1920. Initially buying a collection for resale purposes, he grew attracted to the little treasures and he continues to buy for resale, for a friend/collector who doesn’t wish to bid on eBay, and for his own collection of exceptional and attractive pieces.

Because of his storied and lengthy involvement in the hobby of glass collecting and the Federation, J. Carl Sturm is a dear friend to many fellow collectors. Budding antique bottle collectors found him to be a teacher and a mentor – a fount of “bottle knowledge.” Fellow members of the Board of Directors found him to be a hard working and strong leader during both good and trying times. Other long-time collectors see him as a “master-collector” and an “all-around ambassador for our hobby.” Everyone knows him as a dedicated collector and a “Long Timer” (having been to every Expo and national show since the inaugural 1976 National Antique Bottle & Jar Exposition in St. Louis, MO) but realize that they benefit most because of his willingness to share his collections and his knowledge – through displays, seminars, personal consultations, and friendship.

One Hall of Fame nominator shared that “when he stops at your sales table with a big grin on his face you can be sure he has a new joke – always funny, sometimes a bit naughty, but that’s Carl.” He is the consummate joker, so whether you’re on guard or not, you’re likely to get your leg pulled by one of the best!

Congratulations, J. Carl Sturm, on your election to the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors Hall of Fame. It is our pleasure to see you included in such an elite group.

Bob & Shari Jochums

Joan T. Goree

Bill Baab

Norm & Junne Barnett

Dick Watson

Ed Herrold

John Wolf



Jim Hagenbuch

Bad things happen to good people. Or so it first appears. Sometimes, bad things turn out to be absolutely wonderful. Take Jim Hagenbuch of East Greenville, Pa., back in 1980 - a high school graduate, he's been working on the tire assembly line or in the warehouse at Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. for 14 years, has a wife and a nine-year-old child, and the plant up and closes!

"I had few options. Jobs were hard to get at that time, but I had about a year of unemployment and supplemental benefits to draw from before I had to make a final decision as to what I was going to do."

He wasn't without any other

skills. After all, he had been a cook in the Army in Korea, but ... making a living preparing powdered eggs and S.O.S. held little appeal. (He remembers that GIs liked his food, as it was better than what was offered in the nearby village, which was "a little kimchi, plenty of rice, usually with a little dog mixed in.")

How did you end up being a cook in the Army? Flunk out of truck-driving school? "I was drafted in the spring of 1964 and came out in 1966. After about the seventh week of basic training they posted a listing of everyone's name in the company and the job they were assigned to. Since almost the entire company were draftees we had no say in the matter. Me and

about 20 others were sent to cook school. Another equally large group were to be MPs. And, how did you know I flunked the truck driver's test?"

OK, so Jim is laid off from Firestone, and doesn't want to be a short-order cook. What's ahead? Fortunately, Jim had one other ... "skill" to fall back on: He had rocks in his head. Rocks and insects.

See, he had been a collector of rocks and little crawly things back in grade school, so the collecting bug — literally — had bitten him early.

"In my insect collecting days," explains Jim, who was born Dec. 5, 1942, "my mother would give me an empty glass jar with holes punched in the lid. Our backyard was full of flowers, and I would spend hours catching bees. One day, a different bee flew in; I tried hard to get him but he always flew away. I even hid in the flowers, hoping to catch him passing by, but never did. Years later, I found out it was a humming bird."

OK, so not the smartest collector on the block, but the die had been cast. (Actually, Jim has never gotten all the bugs out of his collecting, but we will get to that later.)

In Upper Perkiomen High School, he expanded his collecting education and turned to stamps.

When he wed Janice Krause, in June of 1970, he began collecting National Geographic magazines. And Jim claims it wasn't for the pictures of naked tribeswomen.

"After Janice and I got married, we moved into an apartment. In the attic was an old stack of National Geographics. I always liked the magazine, even subscribing to it for a couple of years. I thought it would be neat to see how many I could find. About the same time, my mother was getting rid of some of my grandparents' stuff; included were a few marbles," which also caught Jim's collecting attention.

"It was looking for more of these two things that led me to discover places like Shupps Grove, Perkiomenville and other early flea markets."

But, there he was in 1980, jobless and with plenty of time to read his

National Geographics. But when he tallied up his real job skills, he found that he had ...

"None, except those I was born with."

He toyed for a moment with the idea of being a professional chess player, but found that there was no money in that.

"It's not at all known in the bottle world, but I was a great chess player. When I was in high school, I joined the chess club in my senior year. I never lost a game. At the end of the year, all the club members played a round-robin series of games to see who the winner would be, and that was me. The winner would play the teacher. It was quite a challenge.

"The teacher, Mr. Prichert, and I played that game, with the entire club watching. At 16 years of age I was way too immature and intimidated by him. I lost. Several year later, when I played in Korea, older and more mature, had Mr. Prichert been there I would have crushed him. Interestingly, that game is the only game I think I ever lost, except to the computer, which I sometimes now play at the highest level on long flights."

But, let's get back to the 1970-80s.

Getting married and, in time, having daughter Jessica — and getting laid off — were momentous changes in Jim's life, but perhaps the key factor, the major influence — his "Rosebud," if you will — was way more subtle, yet seemed almost insignificant.

It was the marbles.

A handful of marbles led to more marbles and more experiences, and his life — and to one degree or another, the lives of thousands — would never be the same.

Let's continue to see where the marbles will roll ...

"At work," Jim says, "a fellow employee who attended a lot of local auctions would buy marbles for me. One day, I went to his home in Pottstown (Pa.) to look at a few he had found."

The guy collected local bottles, mostly from Pottstown, but he had a

Green Lane Brewery bottle, and this would form another milestone in Jim's life.

See, Green Lane is a small town about four miles from East Greenville. Both towns and six others form what is called the Upper Perkiomen Valley, and the Perkiomen Creek cuts right through the valley. (Now you know how his school got its name.) "I also have a good-size collection of local photographic postcards, and have one of the brewery," Jim says.

"I was fascinated by this bottle," he admits, thinking back, "and decided to collect them."

Soon, he was going to most of the local flea markets looking for bottles. "I ran across a bottle digger who also collected local bottles. I went to his home to see his collection of local bottles. He had about 10 different Green Lane Brewery bottles. By the time I was done collecting them, I had around 40 different ones, the largest group ever assembled. While at his home he showed me a copy of the Old Bottle Magazine. I subscribed to it the following day."

Younger readers should know that the Old Bottle Magazine — referred to by everyone back then as the "OBX," and printed in Bend, Ore. — was about the only game in town for the fledgling bottle hobby.

"After receiving my first issue, I became aware of bottle events in the magazine's show listings," and a few months later Jim and Janice attended their first bottle show at the convention center in Rehoboth Beach, Del., in 1971, and run by the DelMarVa Bottle Club.

By that time, "I was collecting other bottles, mostly bitters and medicines.

"At the DelMarVa show, I looked at a display of sarsaparilla bottle presented by Joe Wilson," and that formed part of another milestone. Years later — in the early 1980s, "I bought that collection," Jim adds.

After having his eyes opened and his horizons lifted at the Rehoboth Beach show, Jim "decided to seriously concentrate on pontiled sarsaparillas. After local sodas and local memora-

bilia, that was to become my second collection."

Being in an area rich in old bottles, he was soon knee-deep in them. "As a dealer, I always had a lot of bottles around. Some soaking in the sink, others sitting in whisky boxes, etc.

"When I sold my first collection in 1980, I probably had around 40 or so bottles in the collection. It wasn't large in size, but it was extensive in quality.

"Every Saturday, if I wasn't working, I'd be driving from one farm auction to another looking for old bottles. In those days, a number of them would turn up," and soon he began to deal in bottles and stoneware.

"I remember in 1972 paying \$135 for a green H.P. Herb at an auction 15 miles from home on a Saturday. On Sunday I went to the Pennsylvania Bottle Collectors show at the Guernsey Barn in Lancaster, and sold it to Barry Hogan for \$900! You could do that in those days," Jim says. And a habit was beginning to take form. (FYI: Today, that bottle would be worth around \$6,000.)

"I punched my last time card at Firestone, June 8, 1980."

Now, Jim is out of work, yet finding that old bottles are taking all his time ... and starting to pay the mounting bills.

Had he not been successful with bottles, what else was he considering as a backup?

"Nothing. I had always told Janice that I thought I could make a living out of buying and selling bottles. But, while at Firestone I never thought I would have to prove that."

So, he is out of a "real job," has a young child, and ... what did Janice think of having a husband who collects old bottles for a living?

"It is hard to imagine anyone being more supportive than Janice. She never complains, even when I spend tens of thousands of dollars on bottles. You must remember, Janice has never worked a day outside the house, with the exception of with me in the business, the entire time we've been married."

While Janice is a housewife and a

staff helper; she marginally collects several things: keys and kitchen memorabilia, “but nothing seriously.”

“When I was a general dealer, I handled a number of things: stoneware, advertising, and for a short period of time in the 1970s I was one of the biggest dealers in Etruscan majolica in the northeast. I still recognize the pieces, but have totally lost touch with the values.”

Tell me about the bottle show you put on. “It was held just outside of Philadelphia in King of Prussia, in 1998. I rented part of the convention center in the Valley Forge Sheridan. The location was great and the facility was first class. In order not to conflict with other shows I chose Labor Day weekend to hold it. This was a mistake, and I’m sure it held down the number of dealers we would have had. That said, I believe we had around 120 dealers attending.”

Will you ever sponsor another? “I really don’t know. I still get people who attended the first one asking for me to do another. But it requires a lot of time, something that is in critically short supply around here.

“Still, you never know.”

A highlight of Jim’s bottle career has been his attendance — and support — of all of the Federation’s big shows.

“I’ve been to every Expo since the first in St. Louis in 1976, and it’s really hard to say which I liked best. I threw a big party at Toledo in ’92, that was cool, but I guess Las Vegas in 1988 was my favorite.

“I put a lot of good material together before the show and ran a two-page ad in the magazine showing some of what I would be offering in Vegas. I think I had five or six tables. Besides myself and Janice, Frank and Judy Brockman helped out and I flew Will Fluman and his girlfriend Shelly in to also help. It was a mob scene! You took some pictures of it, and one was taken before anything was put out on the tables showing the buyers lined up at least two rows deep! We sold \$130,000 at that show, which probably still stands as a record for sales at a bottle show.”

When you were a general dealer, what was the oddest thing you ever bought or sold? “Probably a couple of English black-glass shaft and globes that I bought on one of my earlier trips to England. They dated to around 1650.”

No, not the OLDest, the ODDest: “Oh! That’s a piece of signed 1890s stoneware at a Garth’s auction in Ohio, probably about 1980; it was on the front cover of the catalog. It’s a stoneware harvest jug, probably an Ohio piece, with a handle that has a lizard eating a frog; the pour spout has a conch shell, on one side is a man drinking out of a jug, on the other there’s an American eagle with ‘Ne Plus Ultra’ in a banner, and a snake or two around the shoulders; this is all raised on the jug. I still have it.”

And I replied: “You have one of those too?”

Since it is clear you weren’t the spelling bee champ back at Lower Pokemon High, what made you think about publishing a bottle magazine?

“That’s Upper Perkiomen,” Jim corrects me. Whatever.

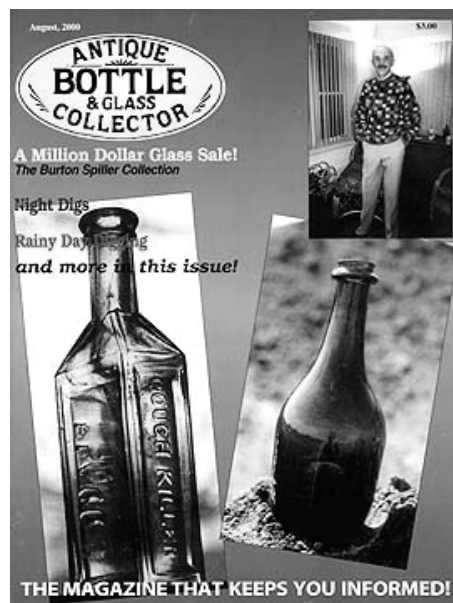
“After Firestone closed in 1980, I became a full-time dealer, but I wanted to do more for the hobby,” Jim continues. “In the summer of 1983 I started thinking about starting a magazine. At that time, both Old Bottle Magazine and Antique Bottle World were struggling to survive. I had heard that Old Bottle Magazine was for sale, but at a price I wasn’t prepared to pay. As a full-time dealer, four to five times a year I was mailing out my for sale lists to around 600 customers. I figured, if I could get a good percentage of them to subscribe to a new magazine it would be a great start.

“In the fall of 1983, I bought my first computer. It was an early model Apple with the keyboard, hard drive and monitor all in one unit. By today’s standard it was a dinosaur. Since it had no flash memory, you had to load the programs in every day from what was the original floppy disks, that you could bend in half.

“The first magazine issue was in May of 1984.

“Since I had no staff or colum-

nists, a lot of the stuff in the first few issues was done by me. After the word got around that I was working on a new magazine, I received a call from Tom Caniff of Ohio, telling me that if I was looking for a fruit jar columnist Vivian Kath was available. For a number of years, Vivian did a column for a magazine out of Texas that had



folded. I contacted her and she agreed to be my fruit jar columnist.

“Vivian passed away in 1999, and Tom Caniff has been my fruit jar columnist ever since.

“Less than a year into publishing I received a call from Dr. Richard Cannon in Texas, asking if he could submit from time to time a column on medicine bottles. And so the Medicine Chest column was born. Dr. Cannon is retired now, but still produces a column every month. We have about 50 of them available to the public on our website,” Jim adds.

“Within a year, I received calls from people wanting to do articles or become a columnist. Several still do things for me from time to time.”

How many subscribers did you have with the first issue of AB&GC, and what is the circulation now? “Probably no more than around four or five hundred. Today we have 2,800.”

Aside from his many museum-quality collections, Hagenbuch is perhaps best known for being the No. 1 auction house for antique glass and

related items.

Jim estimates that he has held "89 auctions, if you include the seven I did for the Federation. I have no idea how many items we've sold, but it's a lot, I think we had at least three auctions that had over 1,000 lots in them."

Tell me about the first Glass Works auction, and why you were crazy enough to attempt it: "You can blame it on David Arman (then of Woodstock, Conn.). In 1985, he sold a collection of early American glass using an absentee auction method.

"At that time, I was doing around 25-26 shows a year and was looking for another outlet for selling. In those days, Skinner's (in Bolton, Mass.) was the only auction house that sold bottles on a regular basis. Garth's would on occasion get a collection of Mid-

1986, I have changed the system very little."

How many lots were in that first auction? "154."

How many lots in your largest auction? "There were 1,304 lots in Auction 53," says Jim. "That was on June 21, 1999."

What was the most expensive item in the first sale? "Lot 99," answers Jim, "a 'G.D. Goggleshall New York Soda Water' bottle; it brought \$2,900, and the auction had no buyer's premium."

The most expensive thing you have ever auctioned? "Lot 24, in the Bob Mebane auction. It brought \$52,000 plus 10 percent."

And while Jim has found business success, it hasn't gone to his head: He still lives in the family home that was built in 1905 by his grandfather's father-in-law.

OK, Jim, some of your glass interests are very serious, but some are for fun, like the infamous Bug Bottle Shootout.

"The two Bug Bottle Shootouts held in Las Vegas, in 1985 and '86, were really different. I came up with the idea after a conversation with Lou Pellegrini the year before. I was getting many of mine from Mike Hoffman and from other northeast bottle diggers. Most of Lou's came from the digs in old Sacramento and San Francisco. He claimed they dug more of them in California than back east. I had a pretty good collection and so did he, but we'd never seen each other's. Mike Dolcini also had a grouping, so the three of us sat down and had a shootout to see who had the best.

"Mike Hoffman and Frank Brockman were judges. The whole thing was based on a point system, with each bottle judged for rarity, color and condition. I beat Lou the first year by only two or three points. Before the second shootout, Lou secretly bought Rick Pisano's collection. I added a few, but Lou still won the second shootout. We never held a third. Lou still has all of his and I have all of mine.

"Just before we started the second

shootout — both were held outdoors, off the side of the convention center — a big guy yells, 'Hold up there.' He was wearing a type of pull-over sky mask hiding most of his face. He sat down and competed in the shootout. He didn't have much and left, still with mask on, somewhat annoyed, claiming the judges cheated him. I had no idea who it was until 10 minutes later, when Rudy Kuhn walked up without the mask. Lou had loaned him a few of his lesser bottles so he could play. I'm surprised security didn't arrest him when he came across the parking lot with the mask on."

I don't want to bug you, but ... what do these bug bottles look like? "They are cylindrical in form and resemble a miniature artillery shell. They can range in height from around 4 inches to about 6 inches. Most are embossed on the shoulder, but some are embossed in vertical wording on the side. They contained a type of poison powder that after taking out the cork you shook onto the area where you saw the bugs."

How many bottle shows a year do you attend: "Only about a dozen, but at my peak as a bottle dealer I was doing 30 shows a year."

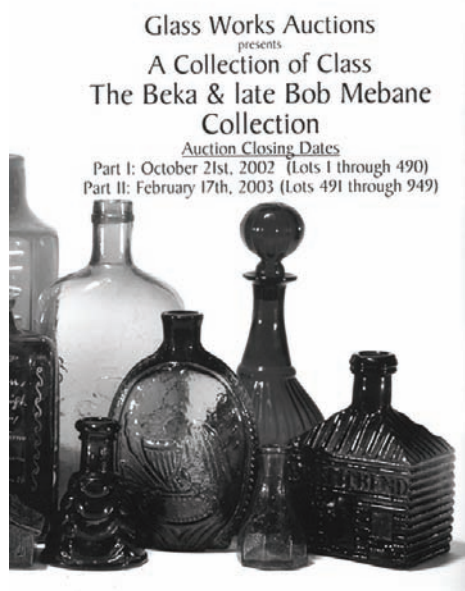
In what bottle categories do you feel you have reasonable knowledge: "Whiskies, Saratogas, Midwesterns, pattern molds, black glass, poisons, medicines, bitters, shaving mugs, fruit jars, target balls, colognes, pot lids, pottery pigs — just about every category of bottles, since I have handled so much of it over the years."

And your collections? "I have a general collection of about 350 pieces: bitters, flasks, black glass, whiskies, colored pontiled medicines, inks, Midwestern pattern-molded glass, mineral waters and a few others. And, 52 pottery pigs.

"Also, some other stoneware and advertising, just to fill up space."

You have had a pretty close-up view of the hobby for almost 40 years; what do you see for the next 40?

"The hobby has survived and flourished greatly in the past 40 years. We have seen the advent of numerous clubs, publications, shows and spe-



western pattern molded glass but sold little in the way of other bottles. Other auction houses, like Pennypacker's in Reading, Pa. would on occasion sell some.

"Arman's auction did very well, and I thought, here's a guy who just sold a collection of something he knew little about," Hagenbuch continues. "I can do this!

"My first auction was January of 1986. I used Arman's system but changed some things, mostly regarding the callbacks. To this day, with the exception of adding e-mail and on-line bidding, which didn't exist in



cialty auctions, and all have increased the awareness of bottle collecting.

"Years ago, most auction houses wouldn't take bottles; they considered them too cheap, or, in many cases, they knew nothing about them. That has changed; today, you can look through the pages of any of the numerous trade papers for the antique and collectibles community and see many auction company advertisements showing bottles and flasks in the ad. This helps to create an even greater awareness of the hobby.

"Often times, I'm asked if the values of bottles will

"I have heard it said many times in the past, 'always buy the best you can. It's better to have a \$1,000 bottle as opposed to having 10 \$100 bottles.' This will probably remain true in the next 40 years, but only if we have enough new collectors entering the hobby to offset those who are, for whatever reason, leaving it."

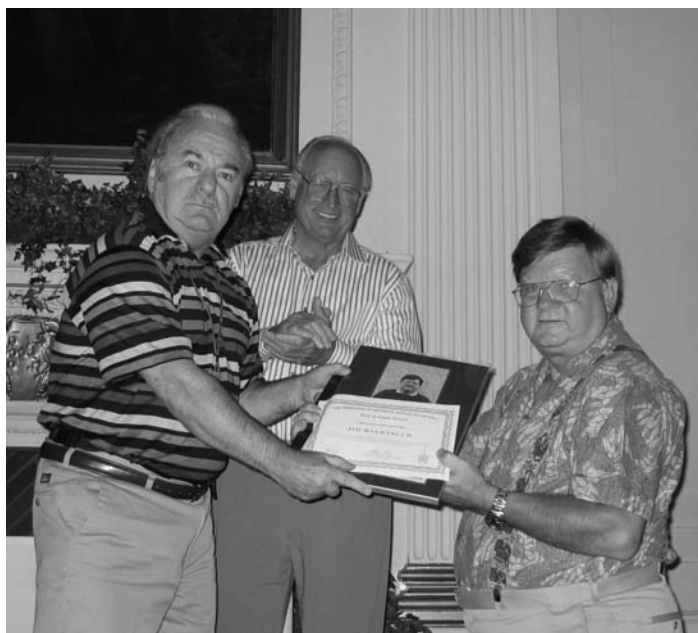
Ralph Finch

34007 Hillside Ct

Farmington Hills, MI 48335

(248) 476-4893

RFinch@twmi.rr.com



continue to climb. I usually answer this by saying that, like most all other areas of antiques and collectibles collecting, you will see highs and lows. This depends on how many collectors have X amount of dollars to spend on their interests on a particular day. During the '90s, when the high tech sector of the NASDAQ was rocking and rolling, a lot of money was made; some of it by hobbyists who invested it in their collections. In that decade, most bottles moved up in value, some categories considerably. But that rise is over. Today, many bottles that sold at a high price in the '90s sell for considerably less today. Usually these are bottles in the middle and lower price range, but occasionally even in the higher values.

