

Down Memory Lane A Look Back at the 1976 Expo in St. Louis

By Junne Barnett

During the 2011 Summer Jar Gathering at Muncie, Indiana, some of the guys asked me a question. I guess it was because I was the oldest “long timer” there – that was my husband Norman’s name for us. It was a question that I knew some of the answers to, but I have had to do some research for more answers.

The question was “Can you remember the jar collectors that were at the first Federation Expo? The event was held in St. Louis on August 14 – 15, 1976.

Some of you remember that Hal and Vern Wagner of St. Louis were the chairpersons of that show, and Norm and I traveled to St. Louis several weekends prior to the show to help make the arrangements. It was the first big show of the Federation, and there were lots of ideas that were considered and passed on.

At that time, Roy Brown of the Midwest Antique Fruit Jar & Bottle Club was the president of the Federation of Historical Bottle Clubs (name later changed to Collectors). That weekend was also Roy’s birthday, and as a surprise he was presented with a “Baked Aflaska” – a cake with a flask on top of the icing! Roy was a well-known collector of flasks as well as being a fruit jar collector.

Of course, I remembered collectors Alex Kerr, George McConnell, Don Burkett, the Dudleys, Vanderlaans and others from our MAFJBC. I knew that I had given Joe Coulson a program book from that 1976 show, so I contacted Joe, and he mailed me the book. As I read through it I was amazed at how many names I recalled, several of whom are still members of our club, some who are not collecting any longer, and some who are not with us anymore. I’ve counted 43 members’ names and whether they had a display, were dealers, or had advertising in the show program.

Alex Kerr had commissioned four large display cabinets to be constructed for the fruit jar collectors to use for their displays. These had sliding glass doors which locked. I don’t remember the details, but Alex left the display cases with Hal Wagner to disassemble and take to his home. I do remember that Hal kept one case and Norman got the other three. They held Norman’s collection from 1976 until 2010 when his health caused him to give up his collection, and now the cases belong to another jar collector, Joe Coulson.

If my memory is correct, the boxes of display and sales jars which



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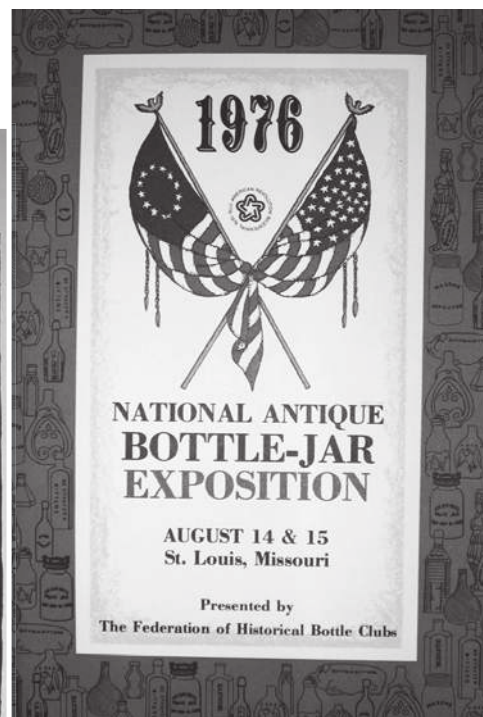
Also available are copies of the famous Hall Blue Book and Ball Freezer Book; Bill Brantley's "A Collector's Guide to Ball Jars;" and Don Ensor's art print "The Good Things."

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...the fruit jar's first name.

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1976 Ball Corporation Advertisement



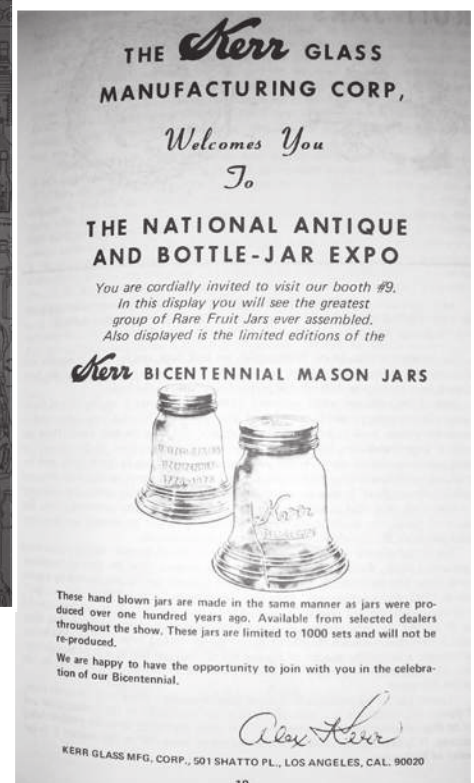
1976

NATIONAL ANTIQUE BOTTLE-JAR EXPOSITION

AUGUST 14 & 15
St. Louis, Missouri

Presented by
The Federation of Historical Bottle Clubs

1976 Expo Cover



THE **Kerr** GLASS MANUFACTURING CORP.,
Welcomes You
To
THE NATIONAL ANTIQUE AND BOTTLE-JAR EXPO

You are cordially invited to visit our booth #9. In this display you will see the greatest group of Rare Fruit Jars ever assembled. Also displayed is the limited editions of the

Kerr BICENTENNIAL MASON JARS

These hand blown jars are made in the same manner as jars were produced over one hundred years ago. Available from selected dealers throughout the show. These jars are limited to 1000 sets and will not be re-produced.

We are happy to have the opportunity to join with you in the celebration of our Bicentennial.

Alex Kerr

KERR GLASS MFG. CORP., 501 SHATTO PL., LOS ANGELES, CAL. 90020

1976 Expo Kerr Co. Advertisement

Alex sent back to his home in California were misplaced for a while, but later recovered. Can you imagine a collection like his being lost?

The cover of the program book was designed by Gary Demaree, another member of MAFJBC.

The first national Fruit Jar get-together was held on Monday right after the Federation Expo closed on Sunday. The get-together was held at another hotel, because there was another convention signed up at the hotel where the Expo occurred for the week after the bottle show. It so happened that it was the National Implement Dealers convention, and people were beginning to arrive on Sunday evening. This made it a little difficult for us as Norman was an Oliver dealer, and he wanted to go to the jar meeting, and we didn't want to be seen by the other people. So we more or less "sneaked" out of the hotel and moved to the one in the suburbs where the jar meeting was scheduled for Monday. I don't recall how many attended that meeting, but I do know it was considered a success, because for the next several Federation meetings there was time allotted for jar people to get together.

I've made this list, and I checked it many times. I hope it is correct, and all I can think to say is, if there is something not right don't tell me, tell the guys who wanted this done.

I am happy the guys asked me about this, because it has brought back many happy memories of people, places and things. Yes, there are many great memories that Norman and I have had by being in the hobby where we collected fruit jars, but that did not limit us to jar friends, because we have many who collect bottles, fire grenades and anything in the hobby. I used to say that Norman collected jars, and I collected friends; however, I think he collected both.

Time marches on and some of these friends are no longer with us, but the memories linger on.



Jar Nuts at the 1976 Expo

Name	State	Dealer	Display	Advertiser
Phil Alvarez	NJ	X		
Paul & Mary Ballentine	OH	X	X	
Norman & Junne Barnett	IN	X	X	X
Leigh & Mary Beardsley	NY	X		X
Art & Earl Beedham	NY	X		
Dan Bell	MI		X	
Lynn & Joyce Blake	NY	X		
Roy & Barbara Brown	IL	X	X	X
Don Burkett	MI	X		
Bob Christ	OH	X		
Gary Demaree	IN	X		X
Bill & Wanda Dudley	OH	X		X
Roger & Joan Emery	IN			X
Jim & Sharon Fiene	MO	X	X	X
Ralph Finch	MI	X		X
Joe & Nell Ford	TN	X		
Randy & Jan Haviland	MO	X	X	
Richard Harris	NJ	X		X
Doug Hawkins	AL		X	
Larry Henschen	OH	X		
Dean Hoffman	IA	X		
Don Kimery	MO		X	X
George Judy	MI	X		
Don Kay	IN	X		
Alex Kerr	CA	X	X	X
Jerry McCann	IL	X		
George McConnell	NJ		X	X
Jerry Mueller	MO	X		X
Jim Milam	IA	X	X	
Doug & Cathy Moore	IN	X		X
Tom & Alice Moulton	NY	X	X	X
Louie Pelligrini	CA	X	X	X
Rick & Becky Norton	IN	X		X
Leonard Pavay	IN	X		
Frank Peters	CA			X
George & Nancy Reilly	IN	X		
Bob Rhineberger	IL	X		X
Ed & Margaret Shaw	IN	X		X
Joe & Alyce Smith	KS	X	X	X
Richard & Phyllis Vanderlaan	NY	X	X	X
Jon Vander Schouw	FL	X	X	X
Eleanor Trout	MI			X
Betty & Ernest Zumwalt	CA	X		X