

## TARGET BALL COLLECTORS CATCH UP

### Collinsville FOHBC National Show is a great time to get together to talk (and talk, and talk, and ...)

*By Ralph Finch*

The Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors held its annual show in Collinsville, Illinois, Aug. 16-19, and a great time was had by all — especially target ball collectors.

The glass ball group was well represented by Mike Caraker of Missouri, Peter Frobouck of Pittsburgh, Tom Hicks of Georgia, Mike and (son) Sean O'Malley of Missouri, Dave Shadel of Nevada, Bob Strickhart of New Jersey, and yours truly.

"It was the first show of this kind that I have attended," wrote Frobouck in an E-mail.

"The show for me was fairly interesting," Frobouck continued, "even though I am not a bottle collector. Mike O'Malley did a fantastic job on the display (it had to cost him a few bucks), but with all the comments, I think that it gave new people a real feel about target ball collecting and it might bring new young people into it, and this is what all hobbies need."

I asked Peter about the challenge of his display of rare balls, which featured approximately \$75,000 worth of glass:

"I wasn't too concerned about the balls," Frobouck answered. "I had them well packed, but you never know."

"I am sure that Mike O will have much more to say about the show." And, indeed, he did:

"The target ball tablecloth was made by a local company that builds exhibits for trade shows. I walk in one day with a CD in my hand. I say, 'boys, can you take this CD full of target balls and make me a tablecloth?'"

"I am used to the question, 'what's a target ball.' I think this time it cost me. They said, 'No problem, we'll make you proud,' and they did."

"The three-panel display board was gathering dust in a storage room at work. I wanted to show the big name stars of the glass ball period, show some of the traps with colored balls and attempt to illustrate a brief timeline of the history of trapshooting."

"The slide show was put together with some of the balls in my collection, pictures I have scanned into my files, and music

from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony Ode to Joy.

"Dave, Peter, Sean. I cannot thank them enough. A trite statement I know. Sean is

the one that got us started in target ball collecting.

"What more do I need to say. I love this game. Peter Frobouck and Dave Shadel; we have been corresponding in person by phone and e-mail for the last few years. They are always ready to take time to help us in any way. Other than these two men, only you and England's John Hargreaves have a clue to how numerous and persistent my questions can be.

"I love this game!"



When you walked into the large display room at the Gateway Center, you were greeted by Mike's smiling face (above) and incredible exhibit of great target balls. (The continuous slide show was changing ball photos.) Right: More of Mike's display.

