

National Bottle Auction, Louisville, Kentucky Saturday, June 28, 2003

by John Pastor, FOHBC 1st Vice President

Saturday evening, following an afternoon of camaraderie and flurry of activity in the sales and display area, a warm and receptive crowd of more than two hundred collectors turned out to participate in and enjoy the Federation of Historical Bottle Collector's live public auction which included a fine assortment of bottles and stoneware.

Everyone seems to love a live sale and this one was no exception! The venue for the sale was the ballroom at the host hotel, the Hyatt Regency in downtown Louisville, Kentucky. A total of 95 quality lots of bottles and stoneware (78 catalogued and 17 uncatalogued), awaited collectors from New York to Kansas to California.

The auction featured a nice assortment of items in most categories and most price ranges providing items of interest and affordability for both younger or beginning collectors as well as those more advanced or "well heeled" collectors.

This is the third year that we have coordinated the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors' National Auction and based on the encouragement that we have received, the results of the sale, as well as the feedback, it was a most successful event. The monies remaining after covering the expenses associated with the auction and payments to the consignors are utilized in their entirety to assist the Federation in funding these National Shows as well as programs which help promote the study, education, preservation and collecting of antique bottles and related artifacts.

In addition to the consignors, I would like to personally thank a number of individuals, - those who volunteered (or were drafted) to help with the many details leading up to and surrounding the Saturday evening event. Liz Maxbauer was invaluable for her tireless efforts assisting in many aspects of the operation and her infectious smile I'm sure contributed to the overall brightness in the ballroom. Jodi Hall (Gurnee, IL) assisted with the registration of bidders and cashing out (an important and sometimes very stressful job!), for the many happy buyers that were able to purchase new items to add to their

collections. Dann Louis and Jack Hewitt (Portage, MI & Atlanta, GA), familiar faces to many, helped to keep the auction flowing by working as quasi "runway models" dashing back and forth in front of the crowd with the individual items held high so people could get one last glance at them as they were being sold. Ralph VanBrocklin and Sheldon Baugh (current and most recent FOHBC Presidents) happily assisted with various duties recording hammer prices and assisting with the checkout process.

A number of catalogs were ordered in advance and mailed to collectors across the country and the auction enjoyed strong support from many of these absentee bidders. Norm Heckler Jr. graciously accepted the job of executing the absentee bids. And finally, we extend a very special thank-you to Norman C. Heckler Sr. for his willingness to step up to the podium and call the bids in his usual charming and witty way. It certainly helps to provide for a fun and lively evening. I know that Norman enjoys this aspect of the business, but his willingness to serve in this most valuable capacity is certainly appreciated. I value the friendship and appreciate the support of

Norman and his son who have both so graciously supported my endeavors as well as the Federation throughout the years. They are both great supporters of this wonderful hobby.

The 95 lots items sold in this auction resulted in total proceeds grossing in excess of \$30,000.00! Prices ranged from \$50.00 to \$2,750.00 with a very respectable average lot price of approximately \$318.00.

Some of the highlights included a "C.A.P. Mason - Alpine / Hair Balm - Providence, R.I." in a very beautiful yellow-olive with citron tone and with full labels which crossed the auction

block at \$2,750; a most unusual stenciled mini-jug with a bust of Abe Lincoln from Elizabethtown, KY, that brought \$350; a light golden amber "Brown's Celebrated Indian Herb Bitters" sold for a very respectable price of \$1,000.

Other interesting items included a large amber druggist, 10 1/4", embossed "Morley Bros Druggist (Mortar & Pestle) Austin, Texas" which went to a very tenacious bidder at \$500; a pontiled "Forest Lawn" Whiskey bottle, bulbous form that also sold at \$500, and a very pretty "Dr. J. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters" in yellow-olive that commanded a strong price of \$475.

Another item of interest was a honey amber "Wormser Bros / San Francisco" barrel whiskey bitters that, despite several of these coming on the market recently, reached a respectable high bid of \$2,000!

As a group, the items consigned stood out for their overall attractiveness and fine condition. We were very pleased with the consignments that we received and have already begun accepting items for consignment for next year's much anticipated event, the 2004 EXPO Show, Sale and Auction to be held in Memphis, Tennessee, August 13-15, 2004.

If you missed this year's auction and are interested in having a full-color catalog for your library or for a handy reference, the Federation still has a few catalogs remaining. They may be purchased for a token donation of \$7.00 postage-paid (\$5.00 + \$2.00 S&H), by sending a check or money order made payable to "FOHBC" to John Pastor, 7288 Thorncrest Dr. SE, Ada, MI 49301. A post-auction price list is included.

Please give John Pastor a call if you would like to discuss consigning an item or group of items or would like more information concerning next year's EXPO Auction, scheduled for Saturday evening, August 14, 2004.

We are already hard at work coordinating this special event and would look forward to hearing from you. [John's contact information is as follows:

Phone: (616) .285-7604;
E-mail: jpastor2000@msn.com.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Memphis, at EXPO 2004!

