

FOHBC NEWS



Dr. Cecil Richard Munsey JR. Obituary



Born May 21, 1935

Died November 17, 2019

Cecil Munsey Jr was born on May 21, 1935 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. His family moved to San Diego, California in 1950. He met and married Dolores Jean Murray in 1956. He attended Helix High School. He earned a bachelor's degree and a teaching credential from San Diego State University. He went on to earn a master's degree and a PHD in human behavior.

Dr. Munsey was a husband, father, and educator, a historian, an author, and above it all an avid collector.

He is survived by his only son, Cecil Richard Munsey III of Oceanside, California.

Cecil Munsey will be remembered for his love for his family, his dynamic wit and his authorship of all things historical and collectible.

Cecil Munsey

Cecil Munsey was kin to magazine publisher

Mike Bryant, editor of the San Diego Bottle Club "Bottleneck" newsletter, in his "Spotlight on Cecil Munsey," noted that "many people do not know that Cecil's great uncle Frank Munsey was a powerful and influential publishing tycoon.

"He built a newspaper and magazine empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His Argosy and Munsey's Magazines were very popular and he owned newspapers in New York, Washington, D.C., Boston and Baltimore."

Munsey founded the magazine bearing his name in 1889, aiming to publish "a magazine of the people and for the people with pictures and art and good cheer and human interest throughout,"

according to Wikipedia. Soon after its inception, the magazine was selling 40,000 magazines a week. By 1895, the magazine had a circulation of 500,000 a month.

But circulation began to fall in 1906 and by the 1920s was down to 60,000. It was merged with Argosy in 1929.

Meanwhile, its founder had died in 1925 with an estimated worth of \$17 million. But Cecil did not benefit since his great uncle left the bulk of his fortune to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Bill Baab

Missing Bottles

Hi Martin,

Recently I sold two Harrison's Columbian Inks as a pair on Ebay; It was Ebay item number: 133283618155 and it was a 4 ½" master Harrison's and a smaller cylindrical Harrison's – Both with labels and both cobalt blue. They were sold quickly for a buy it now price of \$1000 and shipped off to a buyer in Newnan, Georgia. The larger, masters ink has a small chip on the edge of the lip and both came from the Charles and Jane Aprill collection that sold at through Hecklers Auctions.

With nearly every transaction I make on Ebay I always enter the tracking number. Well not this day – This day I forgot my reading glasses and was unable to enter the number into my smart phone. So instead I marked shipped and thought I would enter it when I got home.

After running a couple other errands and heading home I could not locate the receipt; It must have fallen out of my pocket or I accidentally through it away. Well you guessed it – About three weeks went by and the Buyer from Newnan, Georgia contacted me and said "Hey, I see you didn't enter that tracking number – Do you happen to know what it is? I still haven't gotten my bottles"

Lessons to be learned – If there is no proof of delivery via tracking numbers a buyer has up to 180 days via Ebay policy to demand a refund. Ebay will always side with a buyer if you cannot provide proof of delivery. As my mother used to say "Always keep your receipt". Find a small drawer or a locked box and just throw them in there as a habit.

Next a bible scripture sprung to mind – I cant remember the verse number but I clearly remember what Jesus said, "Why do ye store up treasure on earth where thieves break through and steal and rust destroy."

Perhaps this was God's way of telling me stop dealing with this incorrupt and imperfect world and instead take on the easy, stress free yoke of Jesus.

I've been collecting bottles since I was a boy – I'm now 53 years old and have been witness to so many underhanded shenanigans that I've decided to let go. I'm liquidating my entire collection of bottles, antiques and collectibles. Next I'm going to delete my Ebay and PayPal accounts. I'm tired of dealing not only with crap like this but all the other stuff that creates unneeded stress.

God Bless, Ted Kinney

Response: Sorry to hear that. If you paid with credit card at the post office, sometimes they can look up your transactions? Just a thought. Hope the bottles shows up.

Martin D Van Zant

Don Patrick Mullally Passes

Don Patrick Mullally, 91, a co-founder with Byron Martin of the Los Angeles Historical Bottle Club in 1967, passed away January 5, according to FOHBC and club member Darlene "Dar" Furda. Martin is still living.

Dear Editor or Journalist

Attached is a press release with accompanying images for Part 1 of the Ken Fee collection of mostly Western bitters bottles, held online November 29 by American Bottle Auctions, based in Sacramento, Calif. The undisputed star lot of the sale was a 150-year-old Cassin's Grape Brandy Bitters bottle (circa 1867-1868), bluish teal in color and so rare many in the field doubted its very existence -- that is, until it sold for \$155,000 (including buyer's premium). Other rare antique bottles also performed well in the auction. Part 2 will go online Feb. 14 and end on Feb. 23.

If you need additional information about this auction, you may call Jeff Wichmann at 800-806-7722; or, you can email him at info@americanbottle.com.

Thanks, and best regards,

Ken Hall

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCEEDINGLY RARE CASSIN'S GRAPE BRANDY BITTERS BOTTLE, BLUISH-TEAL, SOARS TO \$155,000 IN PART 1 OF THE KEN FEE COLLECTION, HELD NOVEMBER 29



Cassin's Grape Brandy Bitters: This 150-year-old blue Cassin's Grape Brandy Bitters bottle so rare that for years many doubted its very existence, circa 1867-1868, bluish teal in color, sold for a staggering \$155,000.

The bottle was sold in an online auction held by American Bottle Auctions, based in Sacramento. It had an estimate of \$75,000-\$100,000, but the final price blew past that. Part 2 is Feb. 14-23.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – A 150-year-old blue Cassin's Grape Brandy Bitters bottle so rare that for years many doubted its very existence has sold for a staggering \$155,000 at the Part 1 sale of the Ken Fee collection of mostly Western bitters bottles, held November 29th by American Bottle Auctions (www.americanbottle.com). Part 2 will go online February 14th and end February 23rd.

The Cassin's Grape Brandy Bitters was the undisputed headliner in American Bottle Auctions' Auction #67, Part 1, an online-only affair with phone and absentee bids also accepted. Part 2 will be the same. What made the Cassin's so desirable to bidders was its bluish-teal color, which many bottle collectors, even seasoned pros, had never seen and were skeptical one even existed.

"No one had seen Ken Fee's collection of over 300 bottles in four decades," said Jeff Wichmann of American Bottle Auctions. "It only came to light following his death in November of 2018. I've been working with the family ever since." Many of the bottles are outstanding examples that brought a few hundred to many thousands of dollars. Part 2 contains many desirable rarities, too.

The Cassin's Bitters is arguably one of the greatest Western bitters blown. Made in San Francisco in 1867 and 1868, its shape was meant to resemble a cello. The first variant of the bottle had thin corners and because of the fragility of the bottle only a few mint examples remain intact today. The second variant eliminated the fragile lines of the bottle and some still survive today, although there are still believed to be only a half-dozen or so in undamaged condition.

This example, though, was a marvel, regardless of age or history, and the only example known in this unique blue color. In addition, the bottle was in mint condition with no discernable flaws, a rarity for any bottle this old but especially important for the only blue Cassin's known to date. It was expected to do well, with an estimate of \$75,000-\$100,000, but the final price blew past that.

Following are additional highlights from the Part 1 auction. All prices quoted include a 10 percent buyer's premium.

A Dr. Boerhaave's Stomach Bitters bottle with an applied tapered top, circa 1868-1869, finished at \$28,000. This San Francisco made bitters, with the distinctive windows on the reverse, had its own special identity. This one was a beautiful light to medium green, as these bottles came in a multitude of colors. Graded a high 9 out of 10, the bottle also boasted good whittle and bubbles.

A Henley's OK Bitters bottle with applied band, made circa 1869-1871, graded 9.5 out of 10 for condition, climbed to \$21,000. The size of the lettering on the bottle was quite unusual, although it fit very well. The curved "R" was the most pronounced of any Mr. Wichmann has ever seen. He added, "With the overall whittle and blue aqua, it will make for quite a bottle on one's shelf."

An exceptional Wonser's USA Indian Root Bitters bottle in

a bright aqua color, probably blown between 1871 and 1873, changed hands for \$25,300. "Only a dozen or so aqua examples are known, so they don't come up often, and this one was in mint condition," Mr. Wichmann said. "When it comes to strike, color, condition and rarity, it's hard to top this iconic bottle."

An N. B. Jacobs Rosenbaum Bitters bottle – an early San Francisco bitters blown circa 1864-1868 – finished at \$904. "It would have fetched far more, had it not been for a 3/4 inch hairline crack in the side panel," Mr. Wichmann observed. The old amber bottle, variant 2, was the smaller size, with the Rosenbaum name embossed on it. It had an unusual top, as these bottles usually had a tapered top with a ring type collar. This example had no taper and, in fact, no ring.

A Lacour's Bitters Sarsaparilla bottle, a beautiful green with some nice overall crudity, topped out at \$14,690. "Louis Lacour and his fascination with the lighthouse is evident in this early San Francisco bitters bottle in mint condition," Mr. Wichmann said, adding, "Lacours have become highly sought after in recent years. Prices have escalated in proportion to desirability."

A Henley's Wild Grape Root IXL Bitters bottle, an early colored example circa 1868-1893, went for \$3,842. "Henley and his partners had great success selling the oddly named IXL bitters product in quart bottles," Mr. Wichmann said. "That's a long time, but many of those were later variants. Most were aqua but this one was an unusual green with crudity, and in mint condition."

A Catawba Wine Bitters bottle with an embossed cluster of grapes, in pristine condition with a super drippy top, found a new owner for \$7,150. It is known that Catawba grapes were grown in Ohio and it is thought these bottles were made for an Ohio concern. Some have the graphite pontil, including this one. Collectors love the distinctive embossing and colors they are found in.

American Bottle Auctions is always accepting quality consignments for future sales. To consign a single bottle or an entire collection, you may call them toll-free, at 1-800-806-7722; or, you can e-mail them at info@americanbottle.com. To learn more about American Bottle Auctions and the Part 2 auction of the Ken Fee collection (February 14th-23rd), visit www.americanbottle.com

For more images and information go to: American Bottle Auctions website

Contact: Jeff Wichmann - (800) 806-7722
info@americanbottle.com

National Bottle Show Memory

I wanted to share my favorite picture I took at the recent 2019 Augusta National Bottle Convention. Every time I look at it, it makes me smile and reminds me of the good time I had at the show.

Mike Bryant



New Book, The Field Guide to American Trash

My name is Bram Hepburn, I've been a bottle digger for 40 years, and a diver for the past 10 as well.

I've written a book titled "A Field Guide to American Trash", which is a comprehensive guide to finding dumps, digging privies, and locating underwater trash sites dating back to the Civil War.

I've worked on this thing for years, a labor of love! Below is a link to my website, which has information on how to purchase it on Amazon or Ebay.

<https://thedowneastdigger.com/business/>

If you'd be willing to pass it along to anyone who might enjoy it, I'd be greatly appreciative!

Thank you, Bram Hepburn - Eliot, Maine

Bottle attributed to Lockport Glassworks in Lockport, N.Y.

Hello!

I recently purchased what I was told is a bourbon flask, possibly from the late 1800's. I was wondering if you knew anything about the bottle. I am enclosing a picture of the bottle. Any information you can provide would be greatly appreciated!

Thank you, Zak Zumkeller

Response: Congratulations on your find!

It is quite a good flask. The flask is attributed to Lockport Glassworks in Lockport, N.Y. and dates between 1860-1880. The flask reference guide (Antique Bottles and Flasks and Their Ancestry by Helen McKearin) charts the flask as a GXIII-28. While the flask is not considered "rare," it is desirable amongst collectors and often sells in the \$300-400 range.

