

FOHBC

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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So after my last President's message, I had a number of phone calls asking me if I was OK. I am fine, I would reply, I just needed a medically necessary operation that rewires the electrical activity in my heart. So I had the procedure on May 19, 2021 and thankfully it was a successful outcome. I am fully recovered and have been digging more bottles in the last sixty days than in the last two years, so that my friends, is a really positive outcome.

I reflect back on the changes that our hobby has gone through over my lifetime and they are really astounding, some for the better and some for the worse, but the hobby remains constant and strong. I recall some of the first bottle shows I attended in the early 1970's, the one at the AAHMES Temple in Oakland put on by the Golden Gate Bottle Collectors Association. That was a tremendous show with all sorts of displays related to local digging in the San Francisco Redevelopment Area. I remember the Torpedo Soda Display put on by Judi Miyasaki, and the great display by Dave & Lori Hartley of digging in Yerba Buena Cove of all the bottles and relics they had recovered from the excavations during construction of various projects in Downtown San Francisco. The Peninsula bottle show put on another spectacular show that was held at the San Mateo Fairgrounds, and had a great crew of regular diggers bringing a constant supply of new glass to the market. Fred and Bev Rosenquist, Randy Haumann and his father Martin, Al & Marjorie Roe, Marv & Charlene Twissleman, Jeff Rosenquist, Steve Osnick, Jess Jones, to name just a few.

The Peninsula Bottles Collectors Club and many of these early collectors and diggers are no longer with us, but they had a passion for old glass, and they helped us younger diggers learn some of the basics, along with where to go to find old bottles. They lit the fuse that sparked a life time of passion and friendship with other collectors across the country. (Good time to stop and remind our readers that Michael Seeliger is collecting photos of our early shows and beginnings of our hobby, so if you have something to contribute please contact Michael who is a board member). We need to do the same to the next generation. The displays in my opinion were some of the best things we could see at the show and they were plentiful. They brought to life the local history, the history of glassmaking and the love of digging

to many who saw them. At the time people would tell me, "Oh most of that town has been dug out." I can tell you I still hear that today, and I completely disagree. If you have the passion to do the research and are physically able to expound a fair amount of energy, there are plenty of opportunities to collect and dig old bottles.

Now I am not saying it is easy as it was years ago, because it certainly is not. Back in the 1970s security and liability concerns were non-existent. We could easily approach contractors or security guards and ask for permission to recover these relics before the tractors smashed them. When the permission could not or would not be granted, we did the next best thing – we followed the dump trucks to the land fill areas where they would deposit their loads and dig the piles which many times were full of bottles and relics. The contractors had a job to do and bottles were not something they were going to stop the project in order to recover.

Today, sadly the fences are higher, and the electronic surveillance systems make the sites highly secure, so permission needs to be secured. When you are lucky enough to obtain permission, treat any site with respect and please, please, please make sure you backfill all your holes and share your finds with the permission grantor as a thank you. A successful relationship can be developed over time and like any good relationship it's a give and take situation. Also, we need to not only encourage, but to show and teach a new generation of bottle collectors how and where to find historical bottles.

The summer is a great time to get outdoors, especially with the subsidence of Covid-19 and start exploring your local neighborhoods for good collecting opportunities. I think the shows will start up in the fall without any resurgence of the virus and hopefully give us the opportunity to reconnect. I know collectors get a little testy when shows like the National or Baltimore are cancelled, but please remember we all share in that disappointment and there are usually very good reasons behind these decisions, be that financial or public health. Instead of criticizing the volunteers trying to put on these events, offer a kind word and volunteer to help out with alternative events, as this is a relatively small group of dedicated people that put a lot of hard work into attempting to make these events a reality. They have a maze of not only logistics to get the shows off the ground, but compliance with public health guidelines from the owners of the grounds on which these venues are held. There will come a time when we get back to normal and I hope all those complainers will stop verbalizing and start volunteering to do what they can to assist the officers and show chairman. I know how excited I am for our next National Show in Reno next year. I hope to see all of you there.