



Letter to my Wheeling Friends

I'm always writing about digging privies and finding stuff (bottles) in Wheeling, Virginia, but only a few local people get mentioned. OK, just one, Thaddeus Podratsky, Thad, who gets to walk to most of our digs, LOL. I've never focused on a story on what I have found in Wheeling, which are the resident city dwellers who, for whatever reason, currently live along Wheeling's main roads and make positive contributions to local life.

OK, so Thad is a long-time resident of Main Street, whose home (which he since has sold) is a masterpiece of early Wheeling architecture, albeit in need of mucho dinero to bring it back to its "Golden Times." Thad has restored other homes along Main Street, and his master's skills are a local legend.

I believe the first time I met Thad was when he came to a dig site in Wheeling (when I was digging with people previous to Thad), and he offered to buy a yellowware chamber pot we had just dug. Twenty bucks, he offered, though it had a small chip, and he loved it. I think that was the first time that another digger came to a dig I've been on and bought something. Little did I know or understand then how much he was into chamber pots (see *Bottles and Extras*, May-June 2018, page 27).

Since we first met, Thad and I have become great friends, digging buddies, and he has been a mentor in many ways. One of the best things is that he knows almost all the locals and has family and many friends in town. Over time, this has led to many introductions and other in-road interactions with "downtowners." Yes, we dug all the privies we could with permission from the local friends and neighbors. But guess what? Getting to know many of these eccentric but always wonderful people has more than made up for the lack of bottles in most of the pits we have dug, LOL.

It is a great feeling to head downtown, but instead of probing or seeking permissions, you hang out with everyone and learn the local "goings on." Good to know that there is always a cold one over at Lisa and Johns, who are gracious Main Street stalwarts. Roger is always working on like 20 restorations (mainly historical in nature) within the town at any one time. Roger is so cool that he recently saw a likely privy spot, got permission from the owner, and let us know we were good to dig!

At the end of the day, you know that these friendships will grow and last as long as any glass we may dig. I'm just hoping to return the favor at some future time. I attempted to do this with Vera and Chuck (neighbors along the block), who are avid historians, working on many home restoration/reconstruction projects, and have plans to open a bookstore coffee shop along Main Street. They have provided us with many dig permissions and mentioned recently that they could envision a bottle showcase in their store. No problem, a box of early (1830-60's) bottles, tableware, and

shards of pottery were presented to them, with more to come! So thankful to have health and be able to get out to dig, meet folks, and enjoy life. I pray that others find their paths to joy (enjoyment), spread the good news, and maybe brighten up someone's day.

As I moved my home another 1.5 hours away from Wheeling to chase work, I want to thank all the wonderful Wheeling residents, local characters, and others I have yet to meet. Wheeling is resilient, diverse, and will pass through the current crises and economic downturn in good shape. There is always the next privy to dig, and hopefully, deeper friendships to make. Thanks to all you Wheelingites!

Jeff Mihalik, Poland, Ohio

FOHBC News—Magazine Merger

Ferdinand, thank you for your thoughtfulness and kindness in sending out the merger information (FOHBC newsletter blast). It is clear that both the FOHBC board, and John Pastor have worked tirelessly to make sure that our wonderful hobby is strengthened during this time of seemingly less interest in our hobby. Like you, the board and John, I believe this decision is monumental to ensuring the viability of, and instilling new life, into antique bottle collecting. I am a current member of both magazines (subscriber/member) and I look forward with eager anticipation to the investment all parties have made to health and well-being of our fabulous hobby! Kudos to all who have worked so diligently to ensure our survival. You will have my continued support as a new "subscribing member" to this rebirth of antique bottle collecting. Stay well and be safe. All the best,

Charlie Martin Jr., West Newbury, MA

FOHBC Virtual Museum News

Ferdinand, thanks for all the work that you do (along with that of a precious few others) to keep our hobby in good shape, not least of all in regard to the forthcoming combined magazine along with this wonderful virtual museum. I hope there will one day be a subsection within medicines for cures. A visit to John Wolf or Bob Jochums or even to me (my cure collection now exceeds 500) would allow your photographer to get a visual jumpstart on this substantial sliver of antique medical glass.

I look forward to hearing more about all the FOHBC developments in the last official edition of *Bottles and Extras*. Warm regards,

Bruce Shephard, Tampa, Florida

[FOHBC] Thanks for the nice note Bruce. Michael Seeliger is moving Cures up in the schedule. Michael and Mike and Kathy Craig with their Warners is planned. The Agee books have been scanned and are two of the first books in our Research Library



coming very soon. If it is OK, I'll work with you, John and Bob to develop a want list of 75-120 Cures or so to start, excluding Warners. Could you get me an excel spreadsheet in the next three months or so? The goal would be to have one of our three imagers visit each collection after we develop a game plan. We can get 35 or so rotational shots a day. They key is, we do not want duplicates. We can also add to the collection.

Ferdinand Meyer V (Houston, Texas)

Happenings

[In response to the following posted recently on FOHBC.org]

March 1995 – Bottles and Extras

The contributions to the bottle collecting hobby by Scott Grandstaff and Kitty Roach commenced in 1988 when the magazine *Bottles & Extras* took form on the kitchen table of their home in Happy Camp, California. With the help and support of FOHBC Hall of Famer Dr. Cecil Munsey, of Poway, California, they published their first edition in 1989. In 1995, when the publication had grown too big for both of them, they decided to turn over the magazine and subscribers list to the FOHBC at no charge. *Bottles & Extras* became the Federation's most tangible asset. The first issue was March 1995, Volume 6, No. 3.

Hi Ferdinand, I was never concerned with the *Bottles and Extras* name. I started a place where more ordinary collectors could feel welcome and even cherished. This is what was important to me. This is why it was a success. Bottle collecting had become a blatant snob-a-torium then. New collectors and collectors with lesser means were being ignored or made to feel outright unwelcome. When any hobby does this, and I have known a few, they snob themselves out of existence. Conventions are moved to places nobody could afford, complete with big charges to buyers and little-to-no charges to sellers who are "on the list." The average collector couldn't or certainly wouldn't go. There were few collectors who cared about nothing but the biggest money this or that and always bickering over some real or imagined advantage they can take. Inkwells are gone. Infant feeders ditto. I know you aren't like this. I have seen your heart and I know it's big. Please fight to get more average people involved, if you can. This is the only chance of bottle collecting surviving in the long run. Yours, Scott

Scott Grandstaff, Happy Camp, California

Revolutionary War Cannon Ball

I found this ball when digging a garden in the far Northwest corner of my property. It was buried about 10" down, weighs a little under 2 lbs., and is a little under 2 1/2" in diameter. I live outside of Philadelphia in the Whitmarsh area. After the battle of Germantown, the British forces would come out of Germantown to engage the Continental Forces which were encamped in the surrounding hills. I



live between these two locations. Hence this was the area of skirmishing. I was in a Revolutionary War reenactment group during the Bicentennial years and another group we worked with (the 4th Continental Artillery Unit) verified its authenticity. I have seen similar balls at various historical museums.

David C. Hess, Flourtown, Pennsylvania

President's Message

To: John O'Neill, President FOHBC, 22 November 2021,

Hello John: I hope this note finds you well. There is great interest, on my part, concerning your observations and comments in the most recent President's Message dealing with the perception that the FOHBC is an elitist organization.

This is a topic I have discussed with federation officers and collectors for many years with very much the same outcome year to year. In my opinion, this is more an issue of optics than actual actions. I agree with the fact that FOHBC members are hard working and dedicated but most collectors don't see this because they do not belong to the Federation or attend Federation shows. It would be great to have national shows in conjunction with a larger local show such as Baltimore or similar. The cost for set up and visiting would need to be similar.

As far as the collectors go, those who collect local or regional are rarely on the same page as those who collect on a national basis. I have collected on a local and national basis for over 50 years and see both sides of the hobby. When I attend shows, this is observed by those who seem to congregate and discuss like interests. Collecting is like life in that regard; it is highly unlikely that a bitters collector will have much in common with a collector of ACL soda bottles and herein lies the perception. In which category do you place those who manage FOHBC?

Bottles and Extras is much-appreciated and has done a lot to address different topics, but the distribution is limited. Also, the FOHBC Facebook page has never been a focal point for most collectors. The distribution of *Bottles and Extras* pales in comparison to the more than 40,000 combined members of dedicated Facebook groups such as: Antique Bottle Collectors, Antique and Vintage Bottle Collectors, California Antique Bottles, Hardcore Bottle Collectors, etc. I know this has been a topic of discussion by the Board and will be even more important in the future.

Hopefully, as time goes on, the Federation can find a way to reach more collectors so this perception will no longer exist. Regards,

David Tingen, Raleigh, North Carolina

Correction: Dan Lakatos provided the images for *The Maine Event* article in the January issue of AB&GC.



More on that Spooky old mansion

Hi there, Jack Klotz here in Missouri. I was thrilled more than usual to see my stories in the latest magazine issue and got a real kick out of the skull embellishment. You guys always knock it out of the park but this was a grand slam in my opinion! I am emailing with a request, if I may, to obtain a half-dozen extra copies of not only the Jan–Feb 2022 issue but also of the July–Aug issue, as I have a story in that one as well. I would greatly appreciate it as I have found myself offering more copies than I imagined to family and friends. Thanks again and hope you all are having a good holiday season. Hope to see you all in Reno!

Jack Klotz, Louisiana, Missouri

Post-Sale Press Release—American Bottle Auctions (Part 1, Mel Hammer, Dec. 10-19)

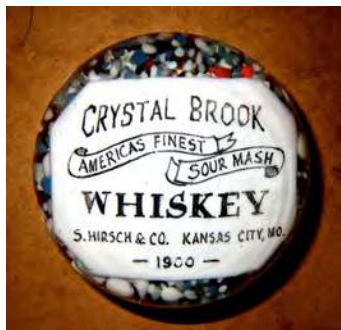
Dear Editor or Journalist—Attached is a press release with accompanying images for the online sale of Part 1 of the Mel Hammer bottle collection, held Dec. 10-19 by American Bottle Auctions, based in Sacramento, Calif. (see FOHBC News online for link). The 137 bottles included many of Mr. Hammer's favorites, to include schnapps and gin bottles, bitters bottles, and inkwells. The top lot of the auction was a Dr. Renz's Herb Bitters bottle (San Francisco, circa 1868-1881), 9 1/2 inches tall, with a uniquely styled applied tapered top (pictured). It sold for \$24,150; a new record for that bottle. Online bidding was driven through the American Bottle Auctions website. 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, Atlanta, Georgia



Largest all-glass American “whiskey” paperweight

Here is what I believe is the largest all-glass American “whiskey” paperweight. It is dated 1900 and is from Simon Hirsch & Company of Kansas City, Missouri. The object is four inches at its base, two and one-half inches high, and weighs 2.8 pounds. It bears a pontil scar of three quarter inches. No idea of the maker.



PS: I would like to give my collection of whiskey paperweights to the FOHBC upon my demise but am aware the Fed has no

“real” museum or other place to put them. Am not sure they show well in the “round” format.

Jack Sullivan, Alexandria, Virginia

Bottles and Extras Nov–Dec 2021 issue correction

Dear editor, your magazine is exceptional and I very much enjoy reading every issue. In addition to being a passionate collector of American antique bottles, I also collect comic books from the 1950s-1970s. I'm fortunate enough to have picked up a copy of *Amazing Fantasy #15*, the first appearance of Spider-Man, around 1979, paying \$33 for it in good condition (rated a 3.0 by the CGC).

With this background, I was very interested to see your report in the November–December 2021 issue of *Bottles and Extras*; *Lost & Found* section, page 63, on the sale of a CGC 9.6 copy of *Amazing Fantasy #15*. I noticed a few errors in this report that I'd like to point out to my fellow readers: This record-setting price for any comic book ever sold (at least in a public auction) was for an *Amazing Fantasy #15* in a CGC graded 9.6 condition (not 9.4 as your report stated—though your picture of the book does show it as a 9.6). Your report refers to the book as both “*Amazing Fantasy No. 15*” and “*Spider-Man No. 1*.” It is the former. Your report states it sold for \$241,000. In fact, this CGC 9.6 (highest known grade for this book) sold for \$3.6 million at the Heritage Comics & Comic Art Signature Auction on September 9, 2021.

Additional information: “This sale topped the previous world record set by Superman. The Man of Steel's first appearance in Action Comics #1 CGC 8.5 sold for \$3.25 million in April 2021 in a private sale brokered by ComicConnect.” More details can be found here: <https://www.previewsworld.com/Article/254580-Amazing-Fantasy-15-CGC-96-Sells-for-36-Million-at-Heritage-Sets-World-Record>. Thank you!

John Savastio, Latham, New York

1853 Auntie Annette Nerve and Blood Tonic Jasper Texas

I was referred to you by Mr. Dennis Fox. Any help you can provide would be greatly appreciated. I've run across a bottle in Zavala, Texas. The bottle came from grandma's house after she died... probably been outside as it's dirty—but amazing if the date is real. It has a cork stopper that's disintegrating and holding liquid so no cracks. Embossed on front; “1853 Auntie Annette Nerve and Blood Tonic Jasper Texas.” I've talked to the Harper Historical Assoc., area museums and collectors, and spent many hours online with no luck.

Cindy Pruitt Smith, Lufkin, Texas

FOHBC News online

Remember to go to FOHBC.org for the latest antique bottle and glass news.



Northeast Region [Fred DeCarlo, Director]

The northeast is buzzing with activity from shows to meetings and so on. Unfortunately, a few events were canceled due to some Covid restrictions, but most have been able to go on. Life has been getting pretty busy with a lot of work shifts that I have had to pick up at work due to so many people out. This additional commitment has led me only to attend one show in the last month, but it was a fun time. I managed to get out to the Little Rhody Show in Taunton, Massachusetts. Attendance was a little low due to rough weather and Covid being so abundant, but it was a great show with many great bottles and people. I drove from central New York and drove through over 180 miles of freezing rain, which caused me to get there a little late. Chairman Bill Rose submitted an excellent write-up with pictures that you can find on our website, "Editor's Picks."

There is a bunch of antique bottle shows coming up also such as on March 27 in Cicero, New York, the Empire State Bottle Collectors Association show, April 3, Baltimore, Maryland, the Baltimore Antique Bottle Club Show & Sale, April 24, Rochester, New York, GVBCA's Rochester Bottle and Antiques Sale. If you are in the northeast and have news you would like to report; please reach out to me. I'd love to hear from bottle collectors and to share your information.

Midwest Region [Steve Lang, Director]

Well, 2022 is off to a great start! January 15 was the Midwest Fruit Jar & Bottle Club's 50th annual show held in Muncie, Indiana. What a great way to start the year. As always, great fruit jars and other glass were available. From what I was told, the room hopping that occurred a couple of days before was as exciting as the show itself. Thanks to show chairman Dave Rittenhouse, club president Jerry Dixon, wife Colleen, and the other club members for putting on a great show. Larry Munson, acting as a fruit jar liaison, introduced me to several dealers-collectors, including Tom Sproat and Bill Burgess, during the show. The Jelly Jammers Club also met in conjunction with the room hopping and jar show on Friday the 14th with some great show-and-tell items, and I, for one, learned something new about jelly jars.

At their November meeting, the Kalamazoo Antique Bottle Club had an interesting show-and-tell on the Uncle Jo Bottling Company. The Iowa Antique Bottle Club announced their 52nd annual Show and Sale scheduled for June 25, 2022, in Johnston, Iowa. The 1st Chicago Bottle Club's November meeting featured a presentation on medicine bottles from the Chicago suburbs and nominations for 2022 officers. The Flint Bottles and Collectibles Club held their November meeting with lots of interesting show-and-tell items and the announcement of their 52nd annual show to be held March 19, 2022, in Flint, Michigan. Christmas dinner occurred on December 9 at the Bavarian Inn located in Frankenmuth, where 24 people gathered for the feast. The Circle City Bottle Club in Indianapolis held its annual Christmas party on December 15 at The Coachman in Plainfield, Indiana. The 12 members and spouses had a great time with fellowship and food. I spent a great couple of hours with a 50-year bottle collector in early January. The people and places he remembered and shared with me, along with his collection of great bottles and go-withs, were amazing. Happy Collecting!

Southern Region [Jake Smith, Director]

I'm sorry to write that the southern region doesn't have much of an update of recent bottle shows. I will say that the southern region has some newly announced shows and is rumored to have even more in the works. The Pee Dee Antique Bottle Club has set a show date for November 5. I have also been working closely with Jason Herron on his new Chattanooga Antique Bottle & Advertising Show that occurs in Dalton, Georgia, on March 19. On March 5, there is a Deep South Artifact Show in Bainbridge, Georgia. It is billed as the "largest artifact

show in the Deep South with amazing fossils, antique bottles, and the finest arrowheads ever found." On March 26, there is the 49th Mobile Antique Bottle Show in Daphne, Alabama. Also, on the 26th is the Deland Antique Bottle Show in Reddick, Florida, then on April 9, there is the 3rd Annual North Texas Bottle Show in Willis Point, Texas. Then there is the 49th Columbia South Carolina Antique Bottle Show on April 23. On April 30, the River City Toy Fest is in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Email me if anyone wants contacts for any of these shows, a copy of my show list, or knows of a show I need to add to my list. Of course, all antique bottle and glass shows are listed on the FOHBC.org Show Calendar. There are also display ads for many of these upcoming shows in this issue of the magazine. I hope all these events turn out great and hope to see y'all soon.

Western Region [Eric McGuire, Director]

As I write this (January 2022), Covid has again raised its ugly head, which has directed us to an uncertain future with regard to what may be termed a "normal" life, including our free association with friends and family. I hope this will not impact our currently scheduled bottle shows on January 22 in Anderson, California; February 18 in Aurora, Oregon; and January 18 & 19 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Also, February 25, in Phoenix, Arizona, and April 22, in Antioch, California. It is no secret that this is one of the busiest times for shows in the Western Region. We keep our fingers crossed.



It is important to note that we have lost two of our dear members of this region's pioneer collectors. On December 12, 2021, we lost Betty Sue Zumwalt in Keizer, Oregon (near Salem). She co-authored three bottle-related books with her first husband, Bill Wilson—"Spirits Bottles of the Old West," "Western Bitters," and "19th Century Medicine in Glass." In 1980 Betty published her final book, "Ketchup—Pickles—Sauces, 19th Century Food in Glass." She was a

long-time member of the Northwestern Bottle Collectors Assoc. headquartered in Santa Rosa, Sonoma County. Several years after marrying Ernie Zumwalt in 1971, the couple moved to Sand Point, Idaho, and after his death, Betty moved to Oregon. Along with being instrumental in the formation of the FOHBC, she was the last keynote speaker at the FOHBC 2016 Expo banquet in Sacramento. Always gracious, she will be sorely missed by many. Betty was 89.



Theodore "Ted" Siri was another early member of the Northwestern Bottle Collectors Association and brother of Richard Siri, former president and current board member of the FOHBC. Raised in Santa Rosa, California, he was closely allied with the construction trade for many years but finally gave way to his love of antiques. Ted moved to Watkins Glen, New York, and became a successful antiques dealer. Ted assembled what is considered the finest collection of early western beer bottles—a feat that will likely never be duplicated. He passed away on December 18, 2021, at age 78, while visiting his son in Utah.

