

The Maine Event!

Mid-Maine bottle club hatches a winning show

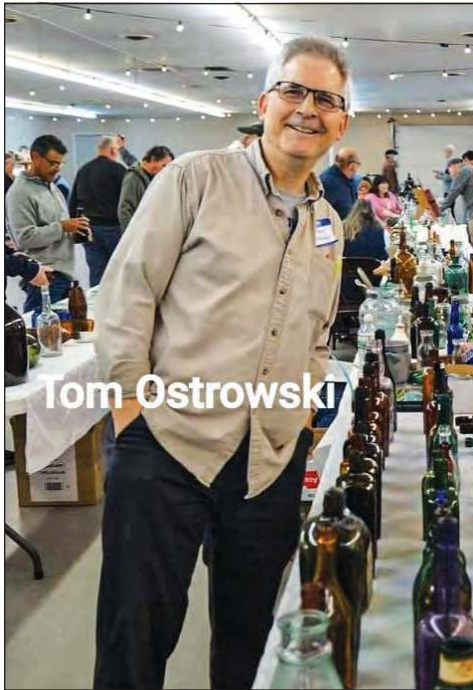
By Paul McClure

The Mid-Maine Antique Bottle Club (MMABC) held its first annual show and sale Nov. 7, and by all accounts it was a great inaugural show for the club, said the dealers and many browsers and buyers who attended.

The MMABC, which had casually formed in 2014, has achieved its original two goals: to build a new energetic Maine-based bottle club holding regular meetings and creating a Maine bottle show.

The club was hatched when Paul McClure, a longtime bottle collector and digger from Maine, was selling bottles at local flea markets and noticed a lot of interest in old bottles from folks attending those events. Missing the camaraderie of his earlier club days with the New England Antique Bottle Club in the 1980s, where he served as newsletter editor and secretary, he introduced the idea of forming the club to Sam Fuller, another longtime Maine bottle collector. Sam was receptive to the idea and was eager to get started.

Within the first two years the small meetings of five or six people turned into meetings averaging from ten to fifteen people. A meeting hall was needed and eventually one was located and rented. Now at each monthly meeting there are several educational presentations, show and tells, current events, and the buying and selling of members' bottles. A Facebook page serves as a club newsletter and chat page and a website (midmaine-antiquebottleclub.com) is available for non-members to peruse the club's news and events.



Tom Ostrowski



Bobby Hilton



Dan Lakatos



Dr. Curt Morse



Jack Pelletier



Andy Clark



Andrea Robertson

Donna McClure



Eric Halyard

Justin Petelle



Paul McClure

Guy Kelley



Mike George

Rick Ciralli



In 2019 the MMABC started in earnest to prepare for what they hoped would be their inaugural 2020 show. Unfortunately, that show had to be cancelled due to COVID. In 2021 there were no social restrictions in place and the first show was able to proceed — and what a show it was! Over thirty early buyers practically stormed in, starting at 8 a.m. By the time general admission began at 9 a.m. the hall was humming with enthusiastic conversation and laughter. During the entire show the noise level never died down and the winning raffle ticket numbers announced over the loudspeakers were nearly drowned out! The excitement of being at a new show was palpable.



The hall was packed with over 63 tables occupied by dealers from New York, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, as well as a healthy number of local Maine dealers. What made this first show such a success could be that word of the show had been around the New England show circuit for more than a year. With other antique and bottle shows in the region recently canceling it became a great draw for many New England dealers and bottle collectors alike.

There were several unique displays for people to enjoy. One was a fantastic display of the iconic Poland Spring Water Moses bottles as well as other bottles and stoneware used through the years by that famous bottling operation. Another display showed the history of the Ingalls Brothers bottling operation from Portland, Maine, from the 1860s through the 1930s and the various bottles used by that outfit.

There was also a large display case which held a beautiful selection of pontiled and smooth-based pickle jars, pepper-sauce bottles and also several colorful early demijohns. Rick Carney's highly original bottle glass artwork was both colorful and enticing for his customers. There was a table with free literature from the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors,





Sam Fuller



the National Bottle Museum and also the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* magazine. There was even a table with free bottles for young collectors.

Some of the most respected dealers in the hobby set up their tables with the finest early-American bottles and historical flasks that any discerning collector could wish for. Sales were very good for some and great for others.

Many of the dealers and the customers thought that the show venue was perfect. It was held at the Topsham Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall in Topsham, Maine. Offering easy access from the highway, lots of convenient lodging, easy parking and unloading, great lighting, and hot food on site made both the dealers and buyers happy. The most important thing for our club is that we were thrilled that there was finally a bottle show in Maine again after none being offered in nearly twenty years!

As we said our goodbyes to our friends after the show we were so thankful for everyone who contributed to make our first show such a roaring success. Our club and its volunteers deserve a huge thank you along with Cindy from the Topsham Fairground and, of course, everyone who attended. So many dealers are eager to come back next year that I expect 2022 to be another great year for our club and another great show for our hobby!



Poland Spring Water Display



Ingall's Brothers Display



PeachridgeGlass.com