

# The History of Bottle Collecting

*Picture this: A new wing in the virtual museum*

By Michael Seeliger

Our hobby has come a long way since the 1960s. Before that, there were great pioneers with the insight to collect bottles and bottle information long before it became popular. The Clevenger Brothers recognized that with the bottles they reproduced from some of the iconic molds they acquired. This is a great part of our hobby.

A few months ago, I started talking to fellow collectors about some of the collections I have photographed. We talked about how these collections were awe-inspiring to say the least, and they motivated us to continue in the hobby. Some of these collections now are only mere memories.

We also discussed the old bottle shows of the '60s and '70s. There were memorable events, displays, and camaraderie, to say the least. Often a club photographer took pictures and captured the history of these shows. How wonderful it would be to see these old photographs again.

When I saw the letter from our FOHBC president, John O'Neill, in *Bottles and Extras* soliciting ideas on how to move our hobby forward, I recalled my previous discussions and shared those ideas with John. Be careful what you wish for.

Suddenly I found myself gladly agreeing to serve on the board as Second Vice President focusing on some of my ideas.

Currently I am working on several topics. First, I volunteered my 1974 book, *H.H. Warner — His Company and His Bottles*, and the follow-up eBook version, to be available to our members in the reference section of the Virtual Museum. I also worked on the additional transfer of early books on bottles into digital format for the museum's reference library. My first endeavor was to get Rev. Agee's two cure books added to the reference library. I am proud to announce that *Collecting the Cures* and *Collecting All Cures* will soon join my books in our reference library.

Which books shall I work on next? What are the books that helped our hobby along and gave us valuable reference material? Contact me with your ideas, or permission to transfer or include books or information you have written.

Secondly, I am gathering photos of collections, past and present, to put into our historical "collections photo" library. They don't have to be fantastic, just collections that you have pictures of from the past and present. Remember to obtain permission from the owners of past

collections, as well as present collections to be entered into our gallery. Digital format would be preferred but I can scan photos if that is what you have. I'll return photos. Please include as much information about the photos as you can on the photos you submit.

Thirdly, I am gathering photos of bottle club shows, displays, auctions, etc. Again, digital format is suggested but I can scan photos and return them to you. Also provide information as to the date and location of the show.

I have included a few photos to get us started. Your contributions will make this a valuable resource for current and future bottle collectors. Also, remember monetary contributions are needed to maintain the Virtual Museum. If you have not visited the museum lately, now is a great time to do so and see the vast number of additions that have been made recently. It is turning out to be a fantastic project.

I can be contacted with photos and other ideas at [MWSeeliger@gmail.com](mailto:MWSeeliger@gmail.com) or Michael Seeliger, N8211 Smith Rd., Brooklyn, Wisc. 53521, or by phone at (608) 575-2922.