



Editor Note: With an abundance of reporting information and photographs this issue, we are placing the entire Regional Directors report on our website FOHBC.org. Please go to the homepage under Editors' Pick for "The Rest of the Story" as Paul Harvey used to say.

Northeast Region [Charlie Martin Jr., Director]

Before I begin my report on club activities for the Northeast Region, I encourage all readers of this report to reach out to me with suggestions and comments on how to improve my reporting. I want this column to be enjoyable to read as well as informative. With that said, you can write me at cemartinjr@comcast.net with your thoughts, comments, and recommendations. Thank you.

Aaaahhh! Fall in New England: bright sunny days filled with wonderful foliage that delights the eye and warms the spirit of the soul. Dry, crisp air with bright sunlight and clear deep blue skies followed by chilly nights...it does not get any better! What better conditions could there be to put on a bottle show? Correct, none! That is why there is so much activity from the bottle clubs in the NE Region between September and November. This past fall season, there were no less than ten bottle shows. By now, you may have read about several in the Northeast Region Report in the November-December issue of *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*. In this report, I hope to bring you up to date on the other shows held in late September that ran into late November.

Jim Hammell, Show Chairman, reports the Fall Antique Glass and Bottle Show at the historic Village of Batsto, in Burlington County, New Jersey, hosted by the Batsto Citizens Committee Inc (BCCI), was a wonderful success this past September 25, 2022. "The day started with a very light morning shower, but it quickly turned into a beautiful sunny day. There were eighty vendors, each with 2-3 tables, selling bottles, glassware and all types of antiques." This was a free public event and ran from 9 AM until 3:30 PM. There was a steady flow of shoppers throughout the entire day. Total attendance was approximately 2,000 to 3,000 individuals. "Very few people were seen leaving empty-handed." Their Spring Show is tentatively set for Sunday, May 21, 2023.

On October 1, 2022, the Richmond Antique Bottle Club (RABC) held its 50th Annual Antique Bottle and Collectibles Show and Sale in Chesterfield, Virginia. Show Chairman Tony Townsend noted that they sold seventy-nine tables to forty plus dealers. Thirty eager buyers paid \$10 for early admission, while one hundred fifty plus customers paid for general admission. Tony reports that dealers were quite active, and business was good for the whole day. The RABC awarded four \$25 gift certificates for purchasing a bottle from any of the dealers. Dealers and attendees hailed from a large geographical area. They came from Washington, D.C., South Carolina, Maryland, and West Virginia, to name a few states. It was noted that several high-priced items were sold and that dealer-to-dealer trading was also quite active. All in all, it was a great 50th Show hosted by the RABC.

On October 8, the Southern Connecticut Antique Bottle and Glass Collectors Association (SCABGCA) celebrated its 50th Annual Antique Bottle and Glass Show in Coventry, Connecticut. Congratulations to the SCABGCA on their 50th Show milestone. Show Chairman Bruce Mitchell provided the following report from the day's activities: "Despite early worries of a rainy outdoor show, we were rewarded with a dazzling autumn day of cool air and bright sun. The field quickly filled with thirty-four dealers from eight states (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont) offering beautiful bottles, glass, stoneware and sundry antiques. The show opened at 8 AM for early buyers and 9 AM for regular buyers. Both buyers and dealers exuded joy at the beautiful day and good buying and selling." Bruce goes on to say that the SCABGCA was founded in 1968 and is an affiliate member of the FOHBC. Some of the "seasoned dealers" that were set up at the show included: Tom (A spry gentleman at the age of 94) and Elaine Duff, Al Adams, Bill Beckett, Rick Ciralli, Eric Correa, Leo Goudreau, Norm Heckler, Matt King, Jim Segura, Jeff and Holly Noordsy, John Pastor, Ron Rainka and Chris Woods.

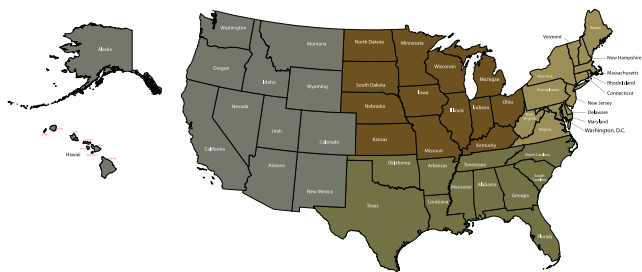
This long-running show is currently held at the site of the Coventry Glass Company, which operated from 1812 until circa 1850. The Coventry Glass Company produced a wide variety of blown and mold-blown bottles and flasks, mostly in greens and ambers. While the factory buildings no longer stand, the John Turner House, built by the first Manager of the Coventry Glass Factory, still stands.

Bruce noted that the Turner house and the surrounding glass factory are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and that the "site is the nation's only Glass Factory Historic Site. If you would like further information, go to the Museum of Connecticut Glass (MOCG) website at glassmuseum.org."

The day following the Coventry Show, October 9, the Yankee Bottle Club hosted its 53rd Annual Keene Bottle Show and Sale. Alan Rummill, Chairman of the show, said that this year the Keene Show would be set up differently than in previous years. The idea was to make more room for customers and dealers and to also create a less congested floor plan for all attendees. I attended the show and was amazed at how much more "airy" the floor area was compared to previous Keene Bottle Shows. "I believe the new design added to the excitement of the return to live in-person activities post-Covid 19," noted Alan. Columbus Day Weekend has been the club's date as far back as this collector can remember. The weather was exceptional...bright, sunny, and crisp as a freshly picked apple. Alan Rummill seemed quite pleased with the new arrangements when asked about them. I sense that going forward the Keene show will have this new look.

On October 22, the Forks of the Delaware Bottle Collectors Association held their 48th Annual Show and Sale in Macungie, Penn-

Continued on page 30...



FOHBC Regional Reports continued from page 9

sylvania. Chairman Bill Hegedus reports that there were approximately 40 early admissions and 200 general admission customers. Dealers reserved about 70 plus tables for the event. Paid refreshments were available at the show. Free parking was provided. The show display area was set up on two levels, and handicapped access to both floors was available. A great day was had by all.

The following day, on October 23, The Mid-Maine Antique Bottle Club (MMABC) held its 2nd Annual Show and Sale at the Topsham, Maine Fair Grounds. Paul McClure, Show Chairman, reports that there were 40+ dealers and 63 tables sold for the event. Just about all dealers from last year's show returned, and several additional dealers signed up for this year's show. The weather was almost balmy at 65 degrees with a light cloud overcast sky. The parking lot was filled all day. Activity seemed quite brisk. Several dealers I spoke with seemed very pleased with how sales were going. For some dealers, this was their first time in attendance. They enjoyed the venue for a number of reasons. They said that it was easy to locate, had lots of parking, good lighting, hot food available on the site, and it was close to other amenities. Two dealers took advantage of outdoor setups for the first time. Paul noted that this show continues to attract well-known and respected New England bottle dealers providing for "lots of camaraderie." Although attendance was down slightly from last year, it was still quite respectable, with 15 early shoppers and 120 paid admissions. "Raffle tickets were sold, many rare labeled Maine Bitters and advertising was on display (Courtesy of Sam Fuller) and was voted most educational. Another display was oddities from digging dumps. A table of free bottles was available for anyone to pick up, hopefully, to encourage new collectors. A table with handouts from the NBM, the FOHBC, the Poland Spring Museum, and others were available." Dan Lakatos, a bottle dealer/photographer from Elgin, South Carolina, provided the wonderful photos for the show. Dan is a longtime MMABC friend and dealer, returning each year to the show even after moving to South Carolina. What a great idea to have one of the dealers as the show photographer. Maybe other club show chairpersons can follow this lead for future bottle club shows!

This year's show was dedicated "to Dr. Curtis Morse, a longtime friend to many of us, a great bottle collector and an MMABC member who's generously given his knowledge to many people throughout his decades of collecting."

There were three November shows this past year. The first was in Elton, Maryland, on November 6, sponsored by the Tri-State Bottle Collectors and Diggers Club, where they held the club's 49th annual event. Dave Brown, Show Chair, reported that 75 sales tables displayed a wide variety of bottles and glass. One deal-

er was selling off "a long-time collection of local bottles, many uncommon offerings." He went on to say that dealers expressed they were having a great show. There was lots of buying and selling. Dealers that set up came from Finksburg to Baltimore to East Greenville, Maryland.

The following week, on November 13, the Pittsburgh Antique Bottle Club (PABC) staged its 52nd Annual Show and Sale in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Show Chairman Bob DeCroo told us that 60 dealers took over 101 tables. Early admission was a huge success, with 38 buyers paying a premium of \$25 to shop before general admission at 9 AM. Bob noted that the general admission was greater than expected, with over 300+ paid admissions. Dealers love the new venue with its wonderful space and great lighting. Dealer-to-dealer buying and selling and dealer-to-buyer business was active all day long. This is the second year at the new location, and by all measures it is a wonderful facility for the club's annual bottle show. The PABC hosts dealers and club members the evening before the show for a free meal, hospitality and camaraderie.

Since the third November show is on November 27, I will report on that show in our next edition of Northeast Region activities. The New Jersey Antique Bottle and Collectors Association will have hosted its 52nd Annual Antique Bottle and Collectors Show in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey.

Lastly, Roy Topka from the National Bottle Museum sent me an update on the activity at the museum. Roy writes that the museum is planning "an article with photos to send into the magazine outlining the work done to bring the Glass Factory exhibit to life as well as some new history." An Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust grant provided the money for the "Glass Factory Mountain: Making Bottles and Making History Exhibit." It is now installed at the Museum in Ballston Spa, New York. As of November 7, "a few tweaks to the exhibit are being undertaken; it will be a popular attraction to those familiar with Saratoga-type bottles, more so to individuals unaware of the history of the Mt. Pleasant Glass Works. Engaging the public about the history of bottles and the glassblowing industry is important to all trustees and volunteers at the museum. We encourage you to join the museum and help us continue our mission. Volunteers at the museum are also needed, as well as trustees, to serve on the board. Trustees can attend meetings via Zoom." Finally, Roy notes that the dealer contracts for the 43rd Annual Saratoga Bottle Show, June 4, 2023, will go out in the mail in January.

Midwest Region [Henry Hecker, Director]

I am continuing to make contacts with more clubs in the region. In this report, I will summarize some of the trends and challenges facing the bottle-collecting field in the coming months. I have not been able to visit club shows, and I continue to recuperate from back surgery, but I have gathered some highlights in the region.

I am hearing several common themes, further confirming my experience with several volunteer organizations. While the hobby is strong in its core of legacy collectors, the contingent continues to skew older, and club memberships have flatlined or declined. Both in club membership and show attendance, the demographic is predominantly 45 years old and up. Club meeting attendance is on the

wane, and recruiting new members, especially those under 30, is difficult. Finally, some clubs find it difficult to get members to volunteer for officer roles. Clubs are trying various means to reverse these trends with varying degrees of success, but none have found a silver bullet. I will share some of the ideas that are being tried.

Mike Brodzik reported a successful Metropolitan Detroit Club Show held in Royal Oak, Michigan, on November 12. There were 39 tables, and 123 counted at the gate, with nine paying early admission. The turnout and sales were strong despite a lot of road work around the venue. Mike is both Club President and Show Chairman.

The Milwaukee Antique Bottle and Advertising Club is already gearing up for their February 2023 show. Sid Hatch is similarly playing both roles as president and show chairman. At our October meeting, elections were held and the same members were elected to their same offices they have held for the last decade, and in most cases unopposed for the voting. Let's hear it for stability at least! The club tries to have a presenter about every three meetings to keep them interesting, has a show and tell each meeting, and holds a summer picnic. This year we had two descendants of Fred Miller, one of the beer barons of Milwaukee, hold court at the picnic telling us some of the inside stories of this prominent family over the years.

The Antique Bottle Club of Northern Illinois held its show at the DuPage County Fairgrounds on November 20. John Puzzo, show chairman, reports that the club had 26 tables. The show is held at the same time as a popular advertising collecting show on the grounds. So, despite the relatively small number of bottle tables, attendance was robust at around 1,000, and sales were extremely strong,

The North Star Historical Bottle Club of Minnesota seems to be bucking the aging trend somewhat. Steve Ketcham reports that their president/show chairman and newsletter editor are both under thirty years of age. (Oh, to be young again!) They have been having "Best Dug" contests to spice up their meetings. They recently hosted a national expert on Coca-Cola to present on that great topic.

Finally, the Ohio Bottle Club is holding alternatively in-person meetings and Zoom meetings to encourage attendance. Ohio is a big state! They have several categories to make the meetings fun, including "best dug and best-acquired bottles" and best dug and best-acquired anything." Those categories about cover it!

Southern Region [Jake Smith, Director]

The southern region has had many shows in October and November. I attended the 9th Annual Alabama Antique Bottle Collectors Show & Sell (Fayette, Alabama) and they sold out of their 50 tables. Traffic was good, with sales of all kinds occurring. Show chair Jeff Pendley is already working on next year. I have seen some photographs from the Tennessee Bottle Collectors Nashville Area Antique Bottle & Advertising Show in Lebanon, Tennessee. Based on the pictures, it looked like a very big show, and from what I understand, many rare and tough bottles and jugs found new homes. I received a telephone call regarding the Atlanta area's

51st Annual Southeastern Antique Bottle and Pottery Show. Apparently, it was a good show, with lots of friendly folks and bottles. They had dealers from at least three states bringing a mix of items. From what I hear, the Houston Bottle, Advertising & Collectibles Show had its 53rd show, and folks had a great time. The Blacksburg Antiques and Bottle Show in Blacksburg, South Carolina, is a sold-out show, and I expect more information will come since it is a December show. There were many more antique bottle and glass shows in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Mississippi, but I didn't get any information from them. I hope they were good shows and that folks who attend shows please let me know how they were. With a new year coming in, we have many shows coming up all over the region. I hope to hear from y'all.

Western Region [Eric McGuire, Director]

I want to first thank the 49'er Historical Bottle Club for hosting its show and sale on November 12 and 13 in Auburn, California. It was a huge success in bringing together so many collectors in the West and beyond. I hadn't witnessed such a crowd at a local show since pre-Covid days.

It is good to see that local historical organizations are accepting and retaining bottles as legitimate artifacts. From my particular "home base" both the Sonoma County and Marin County historical groups are embracing this material fabric of the past. I recall, some fifty years ago, spending many hours at the California Historical Society in San Francisco, going through its card files and searching for anything related to bottles. The library staff barely tolerated my whimsical approach to discovering any information

possibly buried in its records. It is true that the traditional "keepers of history" seldom have extensive knowledge on the subject. Now they are beginning to reach out to eager collectors who are giving them a hand. Some ideological differences may exist as many historical organizations are academic and collectors are essentially materialistic. It's great to witness this cooperation and I am hoping it will continue. Many historical organizations are in survival mode and they recognize the eager fan base that collectors have to offer.



Collecting local bottles is one of the most popular specializations among collectors, and this offers a sort of mutual symbiosis for both groups. I envision the biggest problem is a shortage of valuable artifact storage space for many historical organizations.

