



Recently Ralph Van Brocklin asked me if I would be interested in writing some articles on collecting bottles in Arizona. I was honored with this opportunity to enlighten those of you from the more prosperous bottle collecting states as to how alive and well the hobby is in the Grand Canyon State.

With the many-penned articles from diggers and collectors from the Northeast, California, Great Lake region and even the South, showcasing wonderful new finds, it is easy to overlook our section of the country. And the lack of such articles from our area makes it is easy to believe that the only bottles of interest in our state are those presently holding our beer on those scorching summer afternoons.

It is true that we are one of those underprivileged western states, which have no bitters, no pontiled bottles, no colored medicines, one blob-top soda, and only a handful of patent medicines and whiskeys.

It is also true that to dig in this state you have to have the patience of a tortoise and the digging skills of an armored clawed armadillo. So with so little going for us, by normal standards, why write about the hobby in cactus country.

To put it simply, because out here the Hutchinson is king, we like our pharmacy bottles clear and if you have an Arizona whiskey in your collection you are at the top of the game. Heck, I have a complete collection of every blob-top soda from my state. Can you New York people say that?

Actually, the reason for writing these articles is to explain that in the absence of the so-called higher-end categories, collectors from states such as Arizona, New Mexico, etc. have placed a high desirability on local bottles and the histories of the businesses that utilized them.

Unlike the eastern states, Arizona's history in embossed glass doesn't begin until 1880 when Arizona was a territory (statehood was established in 1912). With this all said, I hope you will enjoy this tangent from the normal and find the information to follow interesting.

Since the timing for this first article just happened to fall immediately after our annual show, I felt it would be appropriate to inform you on how things went.

As with many activities these days, the effects of the poor economy and other issues were felt by our show this year. Undaunted by these problems, the Phoenix Antiques, Bottles & Collectibles Club put on a wonderful show, and many great items were to be found.

Dealers from all over the Southwest, Texas and even Iowa were present and I saw many familiar faces amongst the buyers.

Items for sale included bottles from throughout the west, territorial bottles, a great assortment of milk bottles, courtesy of Ivan Dankenbring, railroad items, Dr. Pepper bottles, ACL sodas, tokens, insulators, advertising signs, stoneware and Fred Harvey collectibles.

The highlight for this year's show was the display of Arizona Hutchinson sodas. For the very first time every known Arizona Hutch bottle was presented including unique and extremely rare examples from, Clifton, Flagstaff, Yuma, Safford and Globe.

Color variations of the amber Union B&B Hutch and Union Soda



Works blob-top from Tombstone were also represented. In all, 42 bottles were displayed by 5 top collectors (Brian Grapentine, Bud Bassett, Rick Hopwood, John Hargis and Mike Miller).

Estimated value of these bottles would be in the area of \$25,000. Rick Hopwood and Ed Sipos also displayed their Hutchinson soda cases.

Sam Michael presented an additional display of Bisbee, Arizona items, which included mining items, calendar plates, souvenir china, advertising and items from the Copper Queen Mercantile.

The show will be held on October 10th & 11th at the Rendezvous Center in the city.



Show display of Arizona Hutchinsons