

The Fredricksburg Brewery



Story & Photographs by Dave Scafani

Among many western collectors, there is a popular familiarity with the beautiful whittled and colorful bottles of the Fredricksburg Brewery. They can be found in green, red, clear, yellow and red-amber, as well as other unusual and unique shades of amber.

As if that is not enough, add the temptations of nicely illustrated labels and gorgeous advertising pieces - and there is no questioning of enthusiasm.

The Company Behind the Bottles

It all began in 1856, when Gotfred Krahenberg opened the Fredricksburg Brewery in San Jose, California, for the production of steam beer.

The San Jose Brewery supplied beer as far away as southern California and Washington. The demand for their lager and porter became so great that the brewery could not handle the volume.

The San Francisco Bottling Works was purchased from Arnold and Rudolph Postel during 1888, to help supplement their output. The Company flourished.

In its prime, Fredricksburg was one of the largest and finest brewing companies on the Pacific Coast. Hogsheads containing 63 gallons of beer, which provided enough beer for 27 cases of 23-ounce bottles (fifths), were often delivered to bottlers, where the beer was put into the bottles for distribution by August Lang, San Francisco; C. Schmeer, Sacramento; L. Cerf Ventura; C. E. Roos, Seattle; San Jose Bottling and Oakland Bottling.

Photos:

Top: Where the beer was made - The San Jose Brewery, circa. 1875.

Middle: C. E. Roos Act, Seattle, Wash., 1895-1905, and paper-labeled Fredricksburg Premium Lager Beer bottles.

Bottom: Labeled in blue, white and gold, these bottles were sealed with ceramic stoppers.

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