

Louisville, Kentucky
June 28-29, 2003

“WHAT A GREAT SHOW”

by Ralph Van Brocklin

If you like nice quality glass, stoneware and advertising, there is no finer venue for perusing and purchasing than the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors National Shows and EXPOs! The Louisville National Show, held June 28-29, 2003, at the Kentucky International Convention Center was a tribute to the tradition. 215 tables of wonderful items awaited our early buyers on Saturday afternoon and general admission buyers Sunday morning.

Two years in the planning, this show came together beautifully under the direction of co-hosts June and Wayne Lowry of Raymore, Missouri. They were looking pretty drained by the time that the show ended on Sunday afternoon, but the compliments they received throughout the show had to have provided them with the boost they needed to make that final push a show chair always seems to have to make. And, I have to admit, I heard nothing but kind remarks about the show and the efforts made by all involved.

This show was certainly a challenge for the Federation. With no active club remaining in the Louisville area, the Board assumed most of the responsibilities in planning and running the show. We were truly fortunate to have the help of a number of the prior members of the Louisville Club, particularly at the opening of the show. Stan Roessler, Paul Van Vactor, Tony Hayes, Sheldon Baugh, Peter Guetig, Conrad Selle and Mark Skaggs all attended preparatory meetings and/or helped get the show running on the morning of set-up. Junne Barnett, Kay Rittenhouse, Joan Goree, Brenda Baugh, Glennie Burkett and Sally Bernas all assisted at the front desk, one of the most essential functions in ensuring a smoothly functioning show. It is not possible to thank our volunteers sufficiently—they played a major part in the success of this show.



Banquet

The Federation banquet, held on Friday night, was a pleasant chance to visit with and honor those individuals who have contributed to the hobby — some primarily in the past year and some over many years. Following dinner, those assembled were treated to a captivating talk by Michael Veach, a Fellow with the Philson Historical Society in Louisville. Entitled “From Farmer Distiller to Bourbon Baron”, his presentation detailed the rise of, and the changes which occurred in, the bourbon industry in Kentucky over time. The effects of various legislation, including the Bottled In Bond Act were discussed, as was the changing process of distillation. I have to admit that when I am collecting my Western bourbons I still prefer to think it all came from an old time still, not some of the multi-story distillation towers he showed photographs of! The beauty of a simpler time and a simpler process rapidly gave way to a mechanized and very precise process — much like the beauty of the bottles that held the bourbon.

The awards ceremony is always a major aspect of the banquet. This year honors were provided in two author categories, for outstanding show posters and newsletters, as well as the Elmer Lester Award for Most Active Club and Honor Roll/Hall of Fame Honors.

The Federation was especially pleased to be able to award Jack Sullivan with the first place award in the Research Article category. Our readers will recall that he has been a consistent stoneware contributor in *Bottles and Extras* over the years and he was thanked for that effort in addition to the award for the article “Toledo and the Great Booze Run” (See article page 22.)

Howard Dean has also been an instrumental individual in the success of the Federation over the years. So, the opportunity to thank him, personally, while presenting his club with the Elmer

Lester Award was enjoyable! Perhaps the most industrious individual in the hobby this past year was presented with a new award, the President’s Award. Reggie Lynch received a heartfelt congratulatory applause from those gathered for his efforts in producing an online newsletter, work within the Raleigh Club and establishment of the Southeast Bottle Club. He was acknowledged for his tremendous effort in promoting the hobby in the South.

The two top categories of honor in the Federation are the Honor Roll and the Hall of Fame. This year saw three individuals inducted into the Honor Roll and two into the Hall of Fame. Receiving Honor Roll designation were Willy Van den Bossche, who was honored for exemplary effort in authoring “Antique Glass Bottles – Their History and Evolution 1500-1850” and Neal and Mary Jane Ferguson, avid promoters of the Federation and the hobby in the South. It was sad that Neal’s award was given posthumously, but he knew that it had been granted prior to passing away in May, 2003. He was a fine man and he will be greatly missed by all in the Southern Region.



Our Hall of Fame inductees for 2003 were Norman and Junne Barnett. Honored for their many years of effort in holding shows, promoting the hobby and promoting the Federation, they enter the select group of those at the top of our hobby with the congratulations of all present at the banquet!

A complete list of award winners follows:

- Authors – Original True Stories
 1st Place: Johnnie Fletcher, “I Have Just One More Question”
 2nd Place: Ralph Bowman, “An Early, Early Dig”
 3rd Place: Bob Harms, “Ramblings”

Authors – Research Article

1st Place: Jack Sullivan , “Toledo and The Great Booze Run.”

2nd Place: Ann Sekerak, “Whimsies.”

3rd Place: Howard Dean, “First Bottled Beer In America.”

HM: Mark Zipp, “Salt-Glazed Stoneware of the Eastern United States.”

Show Posters

1st Place: Jersey Shore Bottle Club.

2nd Place: Southeast Bottle Club.

3rd Place: Finger Lakes Antique Bottle Club.

Newsletters

1st Place: *The Whittlemark*, Los Angeles Historical Bottle Club; David & Esther Hinson, Editors.

2nd Place: *Oklahoma Territory News*, Oklahoma Territory Bottle & Relic Club; Johnnie Fletcher, Editor.

3rd Place: *Southeast Bottle Club Newsletter*, Southeast Bottle Club, Reggie Lynch, Editor.

HM: *Ohio Swirl*, Ohio Bottle Club, Terry Grove, Editor.

Elmer Lester Award: Mohawk Valley Antique Bottle Club.

The President’s Award: Reggie Lynch, “For Outstanding Contribution To The Bottle Collecting Community”

FOHBC Honor Roll:

Willy Van den Bossche.

Neal Ferguson

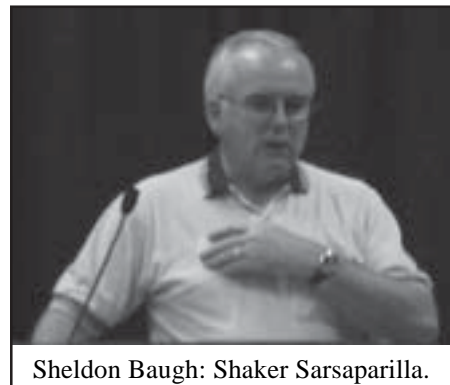
Mary Jane Ferguson

FOHBC Hall of Fame:

Norman and Junne Barnett

Seminars

The Federation Shows are unique in providing attendees seminars about collecting specialties and services available to the hobby. This year three seminars were given on Saturday morning. I’d love to report to you directly regarding them, but a mad scramble to re-set tables in the sales hall in their appropriate



Sheldon Baugh: Shaker Sarsaparilla.

arrangement and then to assemble my display on western glass and pottery precluded my attendance. I understand from attendees that they were excellent!



Wayne Lowry: The Jar Doctor



Donald Yates: Ginger Beers

Early Admission

119 buyers purchased early admission for the opportunity to purchase items as they were coming out of our dealers boxes. Some real treats awaited, with a couple of light colored barrels being offered by Mary Ballentine and at least one nice green Drakes hitting the tables. Rod Walck reported in BAM that he had added “an incredibly rare GI-76 Rough and Ready” historical flask which he had sought for years! Cures, early meds, handled



whiskeys, colored beers and medicines, pontiled and Hutchinson sodas.... Great advertising pieces and ephemera.... shot glasses..... superb stoneware— it was all there!!! I had the opportunity to purchase a beautiful Bigbee Bros., Lynchburg, Virginia, multi-colored applied label backbar bottle from Kentucky dealer Mike Brown, and from

Delores and Jim Brawley, a choice self-framed lithograph on tin for Old Forrester, titled “O’ Lordy De Boss”. A collection of 15 Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory mini jugs and an Oklahoma Territory shot glass made the drive home with me, as well.



Collectors were presented with the rare opportunity to purchase from two dealers breaking up large collections at this show. Sara Devi of Florida offered a large collection of poisons, including a KC-1 one-gallon, a Thompson’s amber coffin with contents, a small size skull and three sizes of submarines. At shows conclusion, she indicated that she was “pleased with the outcome and had a great time!” And, no doubt also did the poison collectors who made it to her table! When I walked by a ways into the show Jim Mitchell looked pretty pleased, as well, as he was wrapping up the balance of her poisons. Now, how great is a show when you can totally sell out???



Dan Levitz of Angola, Indiana, proved to be a show chairs dream when he called advising that he intended to sell his 30 year collection of bitters. He then added further fuel to the collector’s scramble by advertising on EBay that he was going to make the collection available at Louisville. I was a short time into the show before I got over to his table and folks were piled around — some in front, some in back and if they could have done it I’d say some would have been ON TOP of the table! I saw a lot of bottles change hands, a Schroeder’s ladies leg variant leaving in mine. Dan still has some fine examples left — interested readers can reach him at: stoneyridge1@msn.com.

One of the collectors leaving with a number of Dan's bitters was Mike Newman, of Augusta, Georgia. "I had a great time at the show, especially visiting with long-time friends in the hobby. I sold reasonably well both days but had not purchased a single bottle at the time dealers began to pack on Sunday afternoon. Of course, I could not stand to go home with a wad of cash and no new additions. So, I purchased about a dozen bitters from a long-time collector at the last minute. Included were several nice barrels, a cobalt Solomon's, many Drakes and an Indian Queen." A colored soda collector, primarily, he indicated that he just could not pass up the opportunity to buy some nice figural and colored bitters at a great price!



As one walked around the show, it was hard not to be impressed with the offerings. Others also found additions to their collections among all the great glass and stoneware:

- David Beadle provided collectors with a beautiful display of scroll flasks and then proceeded to add to that grouping. "I had a great show in Louisville — sold a lot and added three very important scrolls to my collection. There were not many walk-in customers, but the dealings between dealers was excellent! And, Louisville is a great place—would love to return some day!"



- Also adding a scroll flask were Pennsylvania's Ed and Kathy Gray. "We had a great time at the National Show at Louisville. We were thrilled to get a deep teal quart scroll flask for our collection. Sales were great — it was well worth the 8-hour drive. Can't wait until Memphis!"
- One of the collectors who usually chases the historical flasks hard is Frank Ritz of

Healdsburg, California. He didn't report any additions to his shelves in that area, but indicated "I thought that there was a very nice array of bottles for sale at this show and I did pick up a couple of handled whiskies for my collection. Great displays and it is always fun to visit with old friends and make new ones." (You are welcome for the RB Cutter, Frank!)

- Tony Hayes, our digger who put up the fantastic outhouse display and who has a killer collection of Louisville items, "added a nice pre-Prohibition labeled Louisville whiskey and a colored Schanzbacher Louisville mineral water in a pale, odd apple green", bringing him up to 21 colored Louisville sodas.



- For Curt and Ellen Faulkenberry, of St. Louis, Missouri, the addition that whet their whistle was "a very rare Western Spice Mills, St. Louis, peppersauce in a nice lime green."

- Bob Barbour of Kansas was so happy with Louisville that "I have already signed up for the Memphis EXPO." He further says, "I picked up three poisons. It is very difficult for me to add poisons to my collection. So, when I can add one to my collection, it is a great show. To add three—fantastic!"

- For Brad and Brian Shultis, this was the first Federation show ever attended. Brian indicates "It was top notch all of the way.... Great collectors, great bottles, great dealers and friends.... What else could one ask for in a show? We were very impressed, to say the least, and will be attending future Federation shows. I purchased two great Drakes (a lemon



yellow 5-log and a very odd cream colored 6-log) for my collection and Brad added an amethyst vertical Greeleys and a 4-cities Casper whiskey to his collection. So, it was definitely worth the trip!"

Auction

At the conclusion of the Saturday Early Buyer period, it was off to the Hyatt Regency for a reception that included finger food and a cash bar, followed by a preview of the items being offered at the Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors Auction. Following the Denver EXPO, the Federation began to handle the auctions itself, with John Pastor procuring,



cataloguing and photographing the items. The catalogues have been absolutely beautiful, in full color and with items crisply presented, giving the consignors the benefit of a great presentation to absentee bidders, as well as the large national audience present at the show. We appreciate the attendance and bidding by other auctioneers of fine glass, but particularly we appreciate... the fine job Norman Heckler has done on behalf of the Federation in calling the auctions the past three years!

With his usual blend of apt description of the items being offered and his "coaxing" of the reluctant bidder, Norm sent 78 catalogued items and 17 uncatalogued items to happy new owners. A beautiful yellow with olive overtones Robacks Bitters brought \$2750.00 as one of the uncatalogued lots and the consignor, Billy Parker of Tennessee had this to say "My first experience at a bottle auction was a good one. I was very pleased with the outcome! I want to thank John Pastor for his help and honesty in preparing me for it. I look forward to the show in Memphis in 2004." Jim Mitchell landed a nice Tucker Whiskey "Suspects His Master" multi-colored enamel back bar at \$600.00, which he would have had a little less money in but for a Tennessee bidder (who might that be, I wonder?!)

Bill Wrenn was the happy purchaser of lots #58 (two-gallon Hesdoffer's Saloon

Canton, Miss. jug), #64 (JJ Morrison Lynchburg VA strap-sided flask) and #68 a choice miniature advertising jug picturing Abe Lincoln. "I was glad to see the quality of items listed in the National auction and to be fortunate enough to be the high bidder on these three lots. Norm and his helper, Jack Hewitt, made the auction a fun and entertaining event for the large crowd on Saturday night."

John Pastor had this to say about the auction: "We were very, very pleased with the results of the auction, evidenced by the standing room only crowd and the many pleasant comments we received about the quality of the items offered and the prices realized on them."

In all, the auction resulted in approximately \$31,000 in sales and a lot of happy folks added pieces to their collections. I can hardly wait to see what is offered at the EXPO in Memphis!

Displays

One of the highlights at any National Show is the fine array of high-quality displays that are assembled. The Louisville show provided collectors with a nice cross-section of the hobby, with 16 displays covering items as diverse as stoneware to bitters, western glass to Celery Cola. Two club displays, one by the Findlay Antique Bottle Club and a joint display by the First Chicago Bottle Club and ABC of Northern Illinois, were especially appealing. But, the show-stopper was the Louisville display of Tony Hayes that featured a pile of superb shards taken from Louisville privies. The thought of some of those bottles and pottery items being intact was enough to make the viewer drool almost as much as they were salivating over the fantastic intact items housed in the outhouse display Tony constructed behind it.

Steve Ketcham lauded the show and the displays, voicing "Louisville was great! We were very fortunate to have a nice show in a fun town, and the dealers who set up truly brought good quality. The

displays were especially well done and the display of 1850's shards from the hole just a block from the convention center was both dramatic and interesting!" Reggie Lynch furthered that opinion, stating "What a great opportunity to meet old friends, make new ones, and do a two day bottle show with a great auction in between! But the most impressive thing to me were the great displays. The Louisville dig display was awesome!"

In regards to the displays, Rick Baldwin, Show Display Chairperson adds:

The solicitation and inclusion of Federation affiliated "club displays" at this year's show was envisioned to provide club exposure and "PR" to the attendees. A display by the First Chicago Bottle Club and the Antique Bottle Club of Northern Illinois highlighted the variety of bottle types that their members collect and that can be found in their geographical area. The Findlay (Ohio) Antique Bottle Club display focused on providing an overview of the range of their club's activities and membership benefits. Following the national show, the Findlay club's website was inundated with almost ten times their usual number of hits.

Hopefully, more clubs will use the national show venue in the future for "advertising" and promoting their unique activities and attracting new members!

Other displays focused on the unique and diverse interests of the participating exhibitors, and offered an educational experience to all. David Beadle (Ripon, Wisconsin) exhibited an awesome collection of colored scroll flasks. John

Hinkel's (Pacific, Missouri) exhibit consisted of two primary categories of ink collectibles - "dry inks" and "dispensing inks". Adam Koch's (Akron, Ohio) stoneware exhibit focused on early decorated wax sealers. Howard Dean (Westerville, New York) shared with attendees a collection of scarce Saratoga mineral waters from the upstate New York area, and Bob Watson (Cattaraugus, New York) exhibited a fine collection of rare and colorful bitters bottles. Ralph Van Brocklin (Johnson City, Tennessee) shared his passion for western whiskey flasks and related memorabilia with an awesome display of rare items from his collection. Keith Leeders' (Elmwood Park, Illinois) exhibit of cone inks reflected a spectrum of beautiful colors, and Norman Barnett (Flat Rock, Indiana) shared an assortment of scarce fruit jars. Don and Betsy Yates (Homerville, Ohio) supplemented their educational seminar at the show with a gorgeous display of early decorated stoneware root beer mugs and dispensers. Carl Sturm (Longwood, Florida) and John Wolf (Dayton, Ohio) combined forces to exhibit a beautiful collection of seldom seen embossed cures. If you enjoy seeing some nice jugs, then Orville Seals' (North Jackson, Ohio) display was one not to miss! Orville had over one hundred different "Louisville" miniature jugs in his display case.

The exhibition area was rounded out with two large multi-table displays of very unique twentieth-century era collectibles. Gene Joo (Burlington, North Carolina) enlightened new and old collectors alike with a display of prohibition era liquor



Keith Leeders, Elmwood Park, Illinois: Inks.



John Hinkel, Pacific, Missouri: Dry Inks and Dispensing Inks.



Norman Barnett, Flat Rock Indiana: Jar Closures.

bottles. Dennis Smith (Buffalo, New York) exhibit of “celery cola” bottles and collectibles enlightened us that there was a lot of competition with Coca-Cola and Pepsi in the earlier years!

On behalf of the Federation and the public in attendance at the 2003 Louisville FOHBC National Show, the Show Display Chairperson, Rick Baldwin, sincerely thanks all of the exhibitors for the time, expense and commitment to share their knowledge and valued collection with others in order to help educate and stimulate the growth of the bottle collecting hobby!

Conclusion

When you have a comfortable, well-lighted facility full of beautiful glass and are surrounded by the best group of folks in the collecting world, it’s got to be a great show! Hope to see all of you at our next great show — the 2004 EXPO in Memphis!



Howard Dean, Westernville, New York:
Saratoga Mineral Water Bottles.



Findlay (Ohio) ABC: Findlay Antique Bottle Club.



Bob Watson, Cattaraugus, New York: ABC's of Bitters.



Gene Joo, Burlington, North Carolina: Prohibition Era Liquor Bottles.



Adam Koch, Akron, Ohio: Stoneware Wax Sealers.



Don Yates, Homerville, Ohio: Early Root Beer.



Ralph Van Brocklin, Johnson City, Tenn.: Best of The West.



Carl Sturm/John Wolf, Florida/Ohio: Embossed Cures.



David Beadle, Ripon, Wisconsin: Scroll Flasks.



Dennis Smith, Buffalo, New York: Celery Cola.



Tony Hayes, Shepherdsville, Kentucky: Outhouse Souvenirs



First Chicago BC: Chicago Area Bottles.



Orville Seals, North Jackson, Ohio: Louisville Miniature Jugs.