



The **BREWERIANA** **COLLECTOR**

A publication of the
National Association
Breweriana Advertising
"America's Oldest National Breweriana Journal"

Volume 135

Founded in January 1972

FALL 2006

***A Brewery Worker's
Story***

***Painted Bottle
Labels***

***Bay City's
Phoenix Brewery***

***Stroh Beverage
Company***

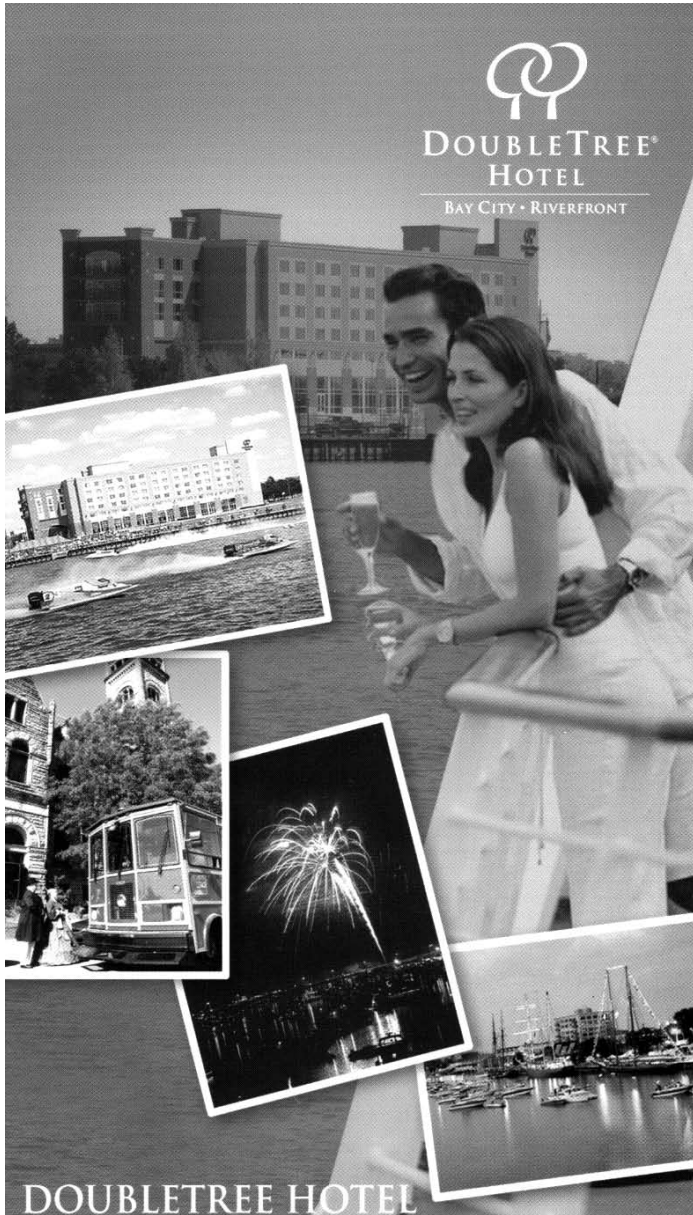


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2007 NABA Convention

Bay City, Michigan

July 31 - August 5, 2007



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The **BREWERIANA** **COLLECTOR**

FALL 2006

#135

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POSTMASTER:

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COVER:

A rare reverse-on-glass display, 6.5 in. x 12 in., circa 1930s, Phoenix Brewery, Bay City, Michigan. Photo by Bob Pawlak; courtesy Ricky Schmidt.

CONVENTION PHOTO CREDITS:

John Bain, Larry Moter, Lee Chichester

Herb and Helen Haydock Honored



NABA Pioneers Herb and Helen Haydock were honored by the Museum of Beer & Brewing with the prestigious Karl Strauss Award.

Karl Strauss, of course, is a brewing legend. He was former head brewer of Pabst, he became a brewpub entrepreneur with significant brewpubs in Southern California, and he acted as brewery consultant to microbreweries such as Oldenberg, where he met the Haydocks and became aware of the significance of the collector segment of the hobby as an important factor in historical preservation.

The Karl Strauss Award was presented to the Haydocks on August 20, 2006 at the Wisconsin Club in downtown Milwaukee. The Wisconsin Club was originally the mansion of Milwaukee Business Legend, Andrew Mitchell. Mitchell was an insurance/railroad magnate, and well-known financier of his day. His mansion was built in

the early 1870s. Andrew Mitchell was also grandfather to Milwaukee native, General "Billy" Mitchell, an outspoken advocate for the US Air Force, whose prophetic, but at the time (1920s), "heretical" theories rendered the battleship-based Navy obsolete during WWII. General "Billy" Mitchell suffered a "well-known court marshal" for his prophetic heresies.

Herb and Helen were awarded the 2nd Annual Karl Strauss Award for "their sense of duty and devotion to preservation of the beer and brewing culture" (paraphrased from the program). There was also a symbolic re-creation of the first (1972) NABA convention

trade floor, with a few tables of breweriana displayed by NABA members Bob Jaeger and the Gettlemen family, among others. Many NABA members were present. NABA President Moter presented a plaque (approved at the August 4, 2006 Board of Director's meeting) to Herb & Helen commemorating their award. He thanked the Museum of Beer & Brewing for honoring Herb and Helen. NABA Executive Secretary Emeritus Bob Jaeger was a featured speaker during the program. Bob also has been an active participant in making this Museum a reality.

The Museum of Beer & Brewing is an admirable project. Please review www.brewingmuseum.org for more information. This is a worthwhile endeavor for individual members to consider supporting!



Bob Jaeger, NABA Executive Secretary Emeritus (right) congratulates Herb Haydock upon receipt of the Karl Strauss Award.



President's Message

Hello to all. This is my first message to you as your new President. I want to thank the membership for this honor and pledge to you that I shall strive to continue the legacy of hard work and excellence established by my predecessors. I would like to have an "open door" to the membership. Please contact me about NABA business if you so desire – the best way is by email: accneca@aol.com.

How about Louisville? Louisville was a fine convention and would like to thank Roger Owen & Kent Speer for hosting. I would like to thank all who helped with the Louisville convention from Mary White & Helen Haydock at the registration desk, Beer Dave Gausepohl with the brewpub tour & brew master's dinner, Fred & Mary Clinton for the distillery tour, Dave Kapsos & the auction crew, and Frank & Vickie Zynda for the

Hospitality Room services. Unfortunately there is not enough space to credit all the folks who pitched in and helped with the numerous tasks to make a convention. The camaraderie is one of our great NABA traits where we all work for a common goal – a great convention. Speaking of camaraderie, Dan McShane and his team are planning a fantastic convention in Bay City, Michigan in 2007. Please mark your calendars now!

On a final note, it has been

a pleasure to serve on your Board over the years and serve with many fine folks who devote their time, effort, and energy to NABA. I would like to thank retiring Board members Reino Ojala and Bob Hajicek for their years of service.

I would especially like to thank George Baley (photo) for his four years of hard work and devotion as President & Editor. George approached his positions with energy and enthusiasm!

One item to correct, Beer Dave Gausepohl was inadvertently listed as a candidate for Board member due to a miscommunication. A mea culpa is extended to Dave for this miscommunication. NABA is always thankful for Beer Dave's devotion and hard work on a wide variety of items.

PS: Check out the new revamped NABA website: www.nababrew.com. Thanks are extended to Mike Walbert of South Bend, Indiana for undertaking the update.



From the Editor's Desk

We could not have enjoyed a more hospitable pair of hosts in Louisville. As many others have in this issue, I'd like to thank Kent Speer and Roger Owen for helping us feel so welcome. It was definitely a blast to meet so many beer lovers; to learn more about who in the hobby plays which roles; and to attach names to faces.

I especially enjoyed the RTR activities, although I still have quite a lot to learn about breweriana. Having some people help me out in this regard was also fun and helpful, and I particu-

larly want to thank the Clintons, Bob Post, Dan McShane, Dave Gausepohl, Ed Culbreth, and Larry Moter for helping me have a clue.

I also appreciate everyone's patience as I climb this learning curve in BC design and delivery.

We're on to thinking about the 2007 Convention in Bay City, MI, and hope to stoke the fires of interest with some articles about the local fare, leading up to next summer. I'll look forward again to seeing everyone there.



Kent Speer (L) and Roger Owen did a spectacular job with the 2006 NABA Convention in Louisville.



Chapter Doings

By Mary White

Our hats are off to the two people that were chairpersons of the NABA 2006 Convention in Louisville, KY. They are to be applauded for an excellent job, and a super convention: Kent Speer and Roger Owen. They've presented a challenge to the Dog-Gone-Good Chapter of Bay City, Michigan for their hosting 2007. I know they're busy getting ready for it.

The Dog-Gone-Good Chapter announced at their show this year that the 2007 Super Summer Swap Beer Show would be in conjunction with their hosting of the NABA National Convention, July 31 through August 5, 2007. That will be their big show for 2007.

The DGGC hosted their 2006



2006 Super Summer Swap Beer Show, Bay City, MI

Buy-Sell-Trade Auction on Saturday, Aug. 26, 2006 at Veteran's Memorial Park Pavilion on Bay City's west side. It was a festive occasion celebrating Michigan's legendary brewing history. It was a sale/swap meet for old "as in pre-Prohibition" beer/brewery advertising including bottles, cans, tap knobs, trays, cases, and signs. They also had current items such as mirrors, hunting-sports-racing-tin tackers and neons.



Above: Dan McShane, President of the DGGC, reads the winning ticket number of the grand prize winner.

Below: Becky McShane with children, Seth and Adam, show their support for the club and their heritage with the Kolb Brewery.

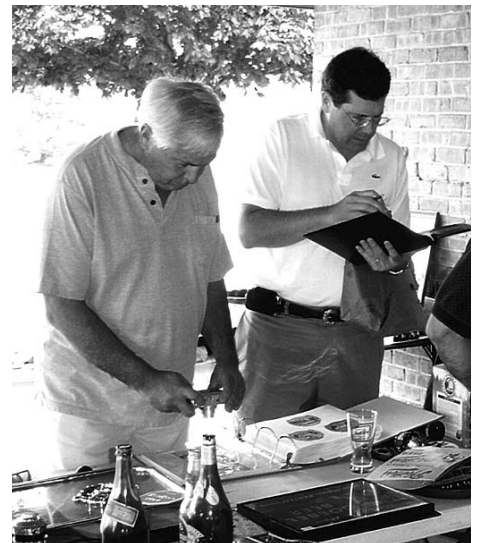


Robert Kolb & Freddy Youngs. Kolb was a beer distributor for 50 years. Youngs, who is 90 years old, worked for the original Kolb Brewery in Bay City.



Above: Dick Kolb donated his time grilling brats from Kramer's West. Kolb said, "We previously boiled the brats in beer."

Below: John Stroth III (right) attended also, and he was really into the hobby.



There were also more than a dozen raffle drawings, which were the winning ticket holders' item of choice off a full table of brewing/beer memorabilia.

The Chapter had advertised locally and even got a free spot on local radio. Some walk-ins were noted with some interesting things. Examples: a large HAMMS square that may have,

at one time, lighted up and rotated, but the wires were cut so you couldn't be sure; two just about mint ALL STAR cans by Manhattan; Frankenmuth doggies at \$30 and \$55.

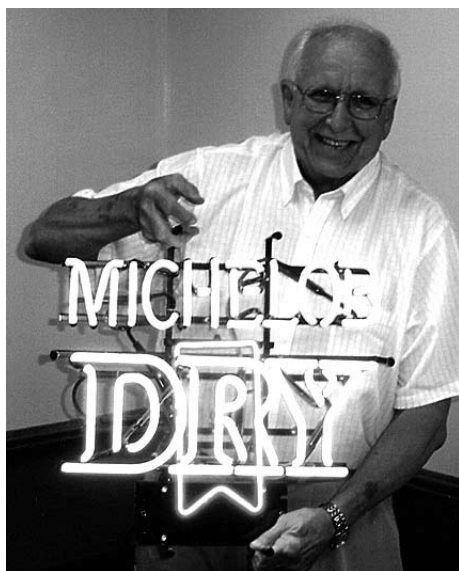
The regular trolley ride didn't materialize this year as Bay City did away with the vehicle. Several old timers from the glory days of Bay City brewing—one aged 90—also attended. There were lots of great war stories to hear. Unfortunately, Wilma Reynolds was a no-show—over the last few years, she had brought a lot of auction items to share. This year, she was moving and her boxes were all packed up.



Vickie Zynda (in front), Mary Clinton, and Barb Bauer (not pictured) whip up goodies in the kitchen.

In the kitchen, Barb Bauer, Mary Clinton, and Vickie Zynda were producing cakes and other goodies, while the brat cooks were Dick Kolb, Dave Alsgaard, and Mark Brooks. Sauerkraut is a favorite, and it was a great lunch at only \$3.00 a plate with free beer, donated by Michigan Brewery Company from Webberville, MI.

Nice items were taken by raffle winners, and the MICHELOB DRY neon, the grand prize, was won by Dick Milne.



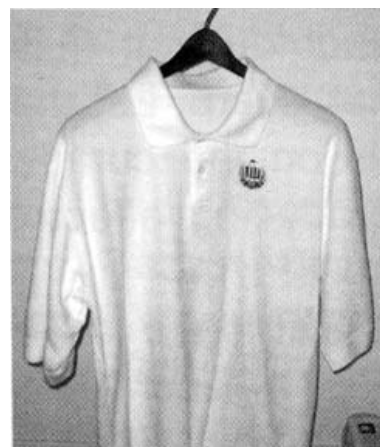
We thank Dave Van Hines Dan McShane, and Julie Munger for contributions to this article. Photos courtesy Dan McShane and "MyBayCity" website at <http://mybaycity.mmcctech.net/scripts/ArticleID=1253&NewspaperID=304>

We'll cover the NABA Convention's First-Timer's Breakfast in the next issue.

If you have a story and/or photos of your chapter's show or event, and wish to share with the rest of our NABA family, please send them to me. Thanks to those who do send items.

Do you want to affiliate an existing chapter or breweriana group with NABA? Please contact me or any NABA board member for membership information. Hope to see you at an upcoming show or the next NABA Convention in Bay City, MI, July 31 through August 5, 2007.

Happy Collecting!



Get Your NABA Shirt

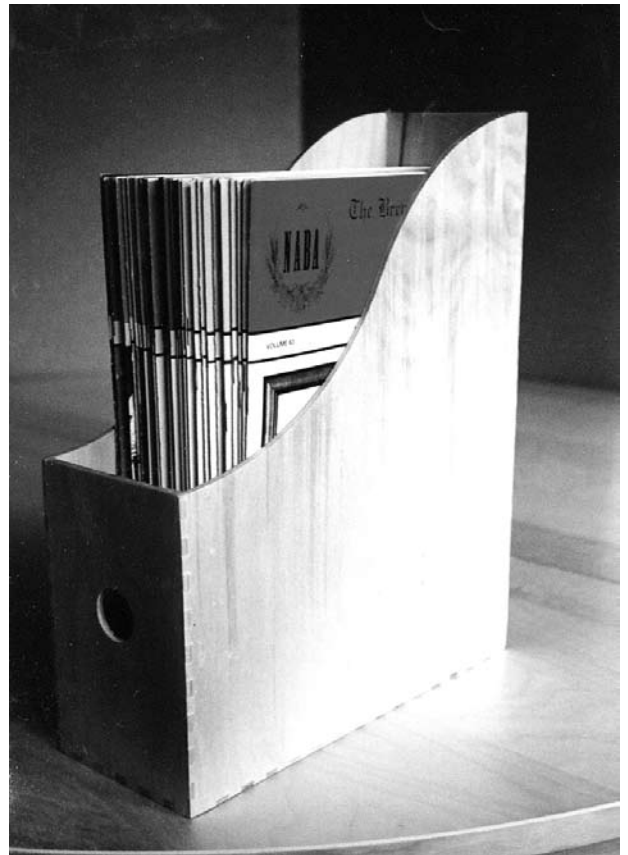
The new NABA shirts are in. If you ordered one, it should be in the mail to you any day. Orders are being taken now. These are high quality knitted shirts with the NABA logo embossed on the left side. You can get your shirt(s) now for only \$20 ppd. Send your check in now. Please be certain to state the size(s) and send your payment to:

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The Swedish home furnishing company IKEA sells what I consider the ideal magazine file. They are manufactured of thin, unfinished plywood with strong dovetailed corners, and are easy to coat with natural or paint finish. Because they're open at the top, flagged articles and photos of special interest are at your fingertips for future reference. 36 copies of our quarterly journal fit well into one file and they are very inexpensive. They can be found at www.IKEA-usa.com or 1-800-434-IKEA.

—Submitted by Reino O. Ojala



In the NABA Kitchen

2005-07 Board Members brew up a great recipe in the NABA Kitchen: Front row, l to r: Bob Post, George Baley, Jim Kaiser, Mary White. Back row, l to r: Reino Ojala, Gary Bauer, Kent Speer, Pat Stambaugh, John Ferguson, Larry Moter, Ed Culbreth. Far Right: John Stanley. Not pictured: Phil Pospychala; Fred Clinton; Bob Hajicek.





Let's Talk Breweriana

Beer Advertising with a Most Unusual Look

By Rich La Susa

Much of what I write is variations on a theme. Such is the case in this column.

In the last issue of *The Breweriana Collector* the theme was finding rare or unique breweriana in unusual places, such as scarce Chicago and Milwaukee brewery advertising in fast-food chain restaurants and the Burgie flying saucer and Griesedieck pieces in brewpubs.

We'll sing a bit of a different tune in this column. Instead talking about our sightings of interesting breweriana in unusual places we'll deal specifically with unusual breweriana.

One of the oddest-looking and most unusual pieces of breweriana I know was recently added to my collection. It is a chalk holder for hard-boiled eggs that was issued by the Canadian Ace Brewing Co. of Chicago during the late 1940s.

This piece was designed to sit on a tavern's bar or back bar. It could easily hold a dozen hard-boiled eggs, which were sold to sate the appetites of hungry patrons for five or 10 cents each.

The piece stands 10 inches high and is supported by three legs consisting of empty seven-ounce, green glass Canadian Ace beer bottles that have been affixed with thick glue. The label on the bottle has the familiar green and gold motif used for the brand in the 1940s. There is no mandatory on the labels. The bottle crowns are the usual white and red, with the Canadian Ace wings logo.

The bowl portion is six and one-half inches in diameter and eight inches deep. At least six one-inch simulated cracks run down from the rim.

The four lines of lettering on the face of the bowl are of typical Canadian Ace design.

An inch or so below the rim

on the face are the thickly embossed words *Canadian Ace* in large green letters. The line just below it says, "Brand Beer and Ale Made in USA" "Beer Ale" in smaller embossed red letters, while the other letters are debossed in white.

Near the bottom of the face of the bowl are two lines of quarter-inch letters that say, "Hard Boiled Eggs."

Between the lines of type at the top and bottom is the colorful decal image of a chick. Because this is one of the few Canadian Ace pieces for which I do not have documentation, I have no idea if the decal was original "equipment" or an added touch provided by an artful tavern owner.

A photo I took of a friend's Canadian Ace egg holder in the late 1980s does not show a decal. But there is discoloration on the face where one could have been.

My holder and my friend's are the only two I've ever seen. I had no idea any other brewery even issued one, until I

saw a holder (or jar, as it was described) used by the Gipps Brewing Corp. of Peoria, Illinois, in an eBay auction in August.

There were some noticeable differences in the Gipps piece, however. Instead of the brand name in chalk letters, Gipps is a red decal. And in the center of the face of the Gipps piece is a replica of a large glass beer mug, painted yellow and white to simulate beer and foam.

The Canadian Ace holder does not include this feature. Instead of a brand name molded into the chalk, as is the one on the Canadian Ace bowl, the Gipps has the words, "Hard Boiled Eggs" in green raised block lettering. It is decidedly more generic.

The holder appears to be in good condition, except for a partially missing Gipps decal and tatters in the foil labels on the glass-bottle legs. It sold for \$93—and I was the buyer!

I'll learn more about its condition when I receive it. But I know it's nowhere near the very good condition of its Canadian Ace cousin.

An interesting footnote: Gipps closed in 1954 and a short time later, its major brand was purchased by none other than the Canadian Ace Brewing Co., which brewed and marketed it in the Chicago area and central Illinois until about 1963.

Mine is filled with wooden eggs I purchased from a local hobby emporium. I have considered putting real eggs in the bowl for hungry guests.

I paid in excess of \$300 for it in an eBay auction. That can buy a lot of hard-boiled eggs, real or artificial. But it also bought a considerable amount of satisfaction.

Mini bottles case: I have a small wooden case in my col-



lection that advertises six beer brands. That in itself is not unusual, but there are elements that make so—including where I found it.

This unimposing wooden box is 6 inches wide by 4 and a half inches deep by 4 and a half inches high. It originally had a wooden lid that was nailed in place for secure packaging and shipping. The lid was not attached when I purchased it.

What makes the piece interesting and unusual is that it was used to hold a dozen mini

4.5 inch variety.

I have no conclusive proof about who manufactured or distributed the piece, but most likely it was a mini-bottle maker.

There is no clue on the box as to its origin. An educated guess would be the Bill's Specialty Co. of Milwaukee in 1950 or 1951. But it's just a conclusion based on what may pass as logical deduction.

Using the Ruppert bottles shown in Bob Kay's excellent, definitive, and indispensable reference book on mini-bottles as an example (*Miniature Beer Bottles & Go-Withs*, K & K Publishers, Batavia, IL, 1980), one may deduce that because the taller Ruppert bottles were made by Bill's during the early 1950s—and not by



beer bottles, most likely during the early 50s. It is devoid of fancy graphics. The black lettering on the front and back panels is simple and straight-forward:

One Case Twelve Bottles
Beer Miniatures Asst. (Assortment) Schlitz * Millers
* Budweiser * Ruppert's *
Blatz * Atlas.

Most of the text is repeated on each of the two side panels. And the spelling for Ruppert is really Ruppert's and for Miller it's Millers, as above.

When and where was this product sold? How much did it cost? Your guess is as good as mine, unless you have substantive information. I have no idea how many of these boxes were sold. I have never seen another like it or interviewed another breweriana or min-bottle collector who had seen one.

I have to assume there were two of each brand in the assortment. And because of the height of the box, I may also assume the bottles were the taller 4 or

the A. Muth & Son, Inc. of Buffalo, NY—the box can be attributed or connected in some way to Bill's.

Other bottles listed as being in the box also were manufactured and marketed by Bill's in 1950-51. I had once thought the box was from the late 1930s or early 1940s because it looked like a product from that era. But the evidence, albeit not entirely conclusive, does not support that belief.

I found the box in an antiques shop in 1998—in Fairbanks, Alaska! I paid \$14 for it, a small price for an interesting and unusual piece of breweriana about which we can talk. And wonder.

Branded ash tray: This item doesn't necessarily fall into the unusual breweriana category, but it would be *unusual* for me to ignore a request from my wife, Judy, to obtain information about an item that interested her. Well, I guess a non-breweriana-collecting wife who

is interested in a piece of breweriana is unusual.

Judy has been collecting Old West advertising pieces since we moved to Arizona two years ago and I've acquired some breweriana with a Western motif for her.

During a visit to one of our favorite malls, she came across a quantity of Western-looking items, including a Storz Beer china ash tray. It is five and one-quarter inches in diameter and features dark brown western cattle ranch brands on a cream/tan background. In the center, beneath the Storz brand, is the play-on-words slogan "Your Favorite Brand."

She expressed interest in purchasing it, but the \$95 price tag gave me some cause for concern. I explained to her that I was a Chicago breweriana specialist and had no knowledge of the "going" price for this Storz ash tray or its history and that \$95 seemed a bit high. She countered by saying that recently I hadn't hesitated to purchase ash trays that advertised beers marketed by breweries far from Chicago.

She had a point, but I further explained that most of these ash trays—Lucky Lager, Jax Falstaff and other non-Chicago breweries—were relatively attractive, a bit unusual and, the key word here for a peripheral collectible, *inexpensive*. My small collection of mostly 1950s milk glass, metal, and glazed ceramic ash trays didn't cost \$95.

(Like most sensible and prudent collectors, I have avoided bidding on any of the scores of what are purported to be vintage clear-glass ash trays, with painted or decal logos on the bottoms, that are being sold on Internet auction sites. Most are newly made fakes, with graphics that have been cleverly copied from beer trays or other flat breweriana. Avoid purchasing these phony ash trays—at any cost!)

My wife strongly suggested I get information about the Storz piece, because it really had captured her interest. I agreed and she postponed her purchase of

the one in the mall.

This is where respected Omaha and Nebraska breweriana experts, collectors and NABA members Mike Hearn and John Mlady came into play, although this saga took a few months to culminate.

I contacted Mike and he gave me the straight-shooting facts about this ash tray: "What he (the seller in the mall) has, is a piece of Wallace china," Mike said. "On eBay, it usually brings \$60 or more."

Mike explained that the ash tray "is one of the most common pieces with the Storz logo on it." He also said there is dinnerware with the Storz logo, including dinner, salad, and bread plates, coffee cups and saucers, salt and pepper shakers, and serving pieces.

"Those are tough to find," said Mike. "Wallace china is very collectible and the Storz logo makes it more so." Particularly so if you are a collector of Nebraska breweriana!

The Storz items are related to the Westward Ho line called Rodeo that was manufactured and marketed by the Wallace China Co. of Vernon (Los Angeles), CA. Wallace, which specialized in vitrified hotel china and plain and transfer printed dinnerware for institutional use, made a variety of dishware from 1931 to 1964.

Each piece is clearly marked on the back side with the words, "Wallace China Los Angeles, Calif." in small black letters. On some pieces, you'll find a symbol that includes a sunburst, Conestoga wagon, and the words: *Westward Ho*, and *Made in Calif. USA Wallace China*.

The Rodeo pattern was the brain-child of Till Goodan, according to the *"Collectors Encyclopedia of California Pottery"* (1992). Some pieces, the encyclopedia warns, are still being reproduced by a Texas company called True West. There is no evidence that the Storz piece was ever reproduced.

This china, even with the Storz logo, is popular among collectors of Wallace and Western-related items in general.

China and other items with beer names or western decorations are commonly called cross-collectibles. They have a broader appeal beyond just being pieces of beer advertising. But to see a fine piece of breweriana in the collection of someone who is not a breweriana enthusiast, and collects any beer-related item just because it has a Western motif or a hunting/fishing scene, can cause angst for breweriana collectors.

So there is a lot of competition out there from people who do not specialize in breweriana but include such items in their collections because of specific



themes. In fact, I've been told that some of these collectors can be a bit fanatical, even aggressive, in their collecting. Hard to believe!

I'm beginning to understand what humorist Dave Barry meant when he said, "There is a fine line between hobby and mental illness."

A few months after passing on the purchase of the Storz ash tray in the mall, I was able to acquire one in mint condition—and for far less than \$95—at a show in Colorado from John Mlady, for which my wife—and I—are grateful.

Now I hope Judy isn't so hooked on Western-motif Wallace china that she wants to collect a lot of it. I don't have sufficient room for my growing ash tray collection.

What *isn't* unusual about this story is that I was able to ask for information about the

ash tray from respected breweriana collectors, and to purchase it from one of them. It would have been easy to buy the one in the mall or to bid for it on eBay. But I had the added satisfaction of finding the piece at a breweriana show and getting a fair deal from a collector whom I respect.

A personal note: Occasionally writers for this fine magazine, including myself, have had difficulty getting information about items from NABA members to whom we write or call. Sometimes we don't even get the courtesy of a reply!

As writers and historians, we have an obligation to provide the most up-to-date, detailed and accurate information to our members. We often contact experts and specialists to get the best information available.

Credit will be given when credit is due to those who assist us, including providing direct quotes or attributions. You get the glory and we get the information for our readers. Although you are under no obligation to assist us, your cooperation is most appreciated—by the writers and the readers.

Digging deeper into a subject—a specific brewery or piece of breweriana—to provide as much detail as possible from the perspective of the expert or specialist is what makes our writing more creditable and *The Breweriana Collector* an exceptional magazine.

We respect the privacy of our members and will honor requests to remain anonymous. But we also hope we can count on your cooperation. Your expertise is valuable and essential to us.

The rest of the story: The Burgie flying saucer sign I wrote about in my Summer, 2006, column was manufactured by the Paul Stanley Co. of San Francisco. And the display does indeed stand 60 inches tall. I found this information in my cluttered reporter's notebook—after I had sent my column to the editor for publication.

Painted Label Beer Bottles

Near Beers & Beer Company Sodas

Prohibition challenged the survival of many breweries. With the advent of national Prohibition, brewers had to develop new products, new markets, and new business plans to survive. Among the multitude of products – ranging from “Pabstette process cheese” to “Coors ceramics” – three manufactured items predominated as brewers tried to outlast Prohibition, and alas in 1929, the Depression. These three products were “near beers” (also known as “cereal grain beverages”) sodas, and ice.

A random examination of Dale Van Wieren’s *American Breweries II* (Don Bull, Manfred Fredrick, and Bob Gottschalk all must be credited for Volume I) illustrates numerous corporate name changes reflecting the shifts in business strategies and products. For example, Cleveland’s “Standard Brewing Company” became “The Standard Food Products Company,” and Dallas’s “Dallas Brewery Inc.” became the “North Houston Street Grain Juice Company,” manufacturers of “Graino” (per a recent bottle opener added to the writer’s collection). Many of

By Larry Moter

the corporate entities operated by former brewers during prohibition did not register these new corporations with the ATF Department of the federal government because there was not a legal requirement for brewers to report this information.

Near Beers

The first picture here of a painted label bottle is a tough 12 oz. steinie bottle from the Oertel Brewing Company of Louisville, KY (this corporate incarnation is listed in *American Breweries II* as being in operation from 1936-1967). The label states “non taxable as fermented liquor” which implies it was produced in the IRTF era.

The second photo is also a Louisville, KY bottle. It is a 12 oz. returnable “cereal beverage” from the Falls City Brewery Co. (1933-1978), again marked “non taxable as fermented liquor.”

To this writer’s knowledge, besides the modern Anheuser-Busch “O’Doul’s” salt and pepper shakers, there are not any other reported painted label beer company near beers or cereal grain beverages. In all probab-

ity, discoveries are waiting to be found or reported.

For some reason, Louisville, KY seems to be the geographic location for painted label near beers. Was it because of a marketing plan first pictured by one company and then matched by a competitor? Or was it perhaps a marketing plan to sell in the numerous dry counties of eastern Kentucky and the South? Who really knows? Maybe one of our enterprising Kentucky collectors will turn up a Fehr’s painted label near beer.

Soda Bottles

Now we move to Beer Company painted label soda bottles. Paul Burden’s book *The Guide to U.S. Painted Label Beer Bottles*, lists the following beer company painted label soda bottles:

- **Eastside Cherry Keeno**
Los Angeles Brewing Co.
San Bernardino, CA,
Eastside Beverages
- **Flecks**
Ernst Fleckenstein
Brewing* Co.
- **Fauerbach**
Fauerbach Brewing Co.,
Madison, WI

* Prohibition corporate incarnation was Ernst Fleckenstein Beverage Co.



Three are pictured (lower right, previous pg.) – Eastside Cherry Keeno, a Fauerbach, and Flecks. The Fauerbach and Flecks are known to come in different sized bottles.

In addition to those, there are some soda bottles that are not listed in Burden's book. They are (pictured rt. & below):

Jung Beverages (Wm. G. Jung Brewing Co. 1935-1958, Random Lake, WI) did business as Jung Beverage Co. 1920-1933 – notice the hop leaf on the front.

Gold Star Beverages (Blatz Brewing Co.) notice the brewer's star on the neck label and Blatz triangle (like flat top cans) on the main label.

Gerst from Nashville's Gerst bottling works (comes in 2 sizes at least). Gerst is not in *American Breweries II* from 1915 – 1935. Was this their Prohibition corporate entity?

Grace Brothers – a famous California brewing name – NABA Breweriana gypsy Charles Vick obtained this at a Watsonville show.



Jung



Blatz



Gerst



Grace



Hoffman

Hoffman Beverages of Newark New Jersey (1934-46, sold plant to Pabst, operated 1946-1985).

Drewry's ginger ale (USA, not Canada) "ALKA Pep" – on the back it states "The Drewry's Dry Ginger Ale Company, Detroit" – any relation to the Associated Brewing Company? – note two Drewry's Canadian cousins are contained in the photo too.

National Bottling Co., Saginaw, MI – the script on the bottle for the word National is the same as on the well-known tray from the National Brewing Co.,

Saginaw, MI. Was this a Prohibition venture by the brewery?

An interesting sidebar is painted label soda bottles packaged in bottles that commonly were used for beer/ale only. The first two of four are pictured (please see pg. 19): Wildwood, FL, (Rip's Brewing Co.); one from Blue Seal Bottling Works of New Orleans, LA (Stein'O); and a "Strike" from the A.A. Beverage Co., Endicott, NY.

Was this packaging choice for styling purposes so people thought they were drinking an

Painted Labels Cont. pg. 19

Left to right: Drewry's Alka Pep F&B; Drewry's Canadian Cousin F&B; National Bottling F&B





Labelology

Tracking Label Size

By Bob Kay

Collectors have a habit of wanting to know as much as possible about their collectables. For labels a key piece of information is the brewery of origin. Usually, but not always, the producing brewery is listed on the label. When the brewery isn't shown, or is bogus, the labelologist next looks for a U-type permit number which identifies the brewery. In the absence of a U permit, label size is often a good clue. Here are some examples for identifying breweries through the size and shape of the labels.

The Johnny Bull Ale label only says Brewed and Bottled for Michigan's Albion Beverage Co. However, the oval label has a unique die cut neck label and the Prima Company in Chicago is the only US brewery known to use this shape. Thus, by matching the label size and shape we found the producing Brewery!

Manhattan Brewing Company in Chicago (next pg., top) had several bottling lines and one of their signature label shapes was their **tall 12 ounce**, measuring about 3.2 x 3.9 inches. Several distributors or bogus brewery names can be traced to Manhattan by matching this label size.

Mound City Brewing Co. of New Athens, IL (next pg., far right column) also had a **tall 12 ounce** bottle set-up and competed with Manhattan for private label business. Fortunately, the label dimensions were different, so if you watch the sizes you shouldn't get mixed up. Mound City's tall 12 oz'ers are smaller, measuring 3.0 x 3.5 inches.

Note the Cream Top labels (next pg, bottom). If you have several labels from this brewery you may notice something doesn't look right. The bigger one says Brewed and Bottled by Ann Arbor



Left: Brewed by Prima Co., Chicago, IL.
Right: Brewed & Bottled for Albion Beverage Co.
Albion, Battle Creek & Jackson, Michigan

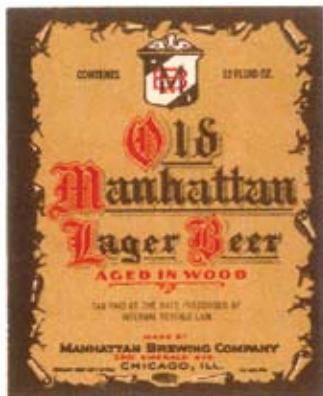
Prima Co., circa 1933-38, ran three 12 ounce bottling lines, each set up for a different size and shape label. At right, Column I: (1) a rectangle 3.3 x 4.5 inch, (2) an oval sometimes with a unique die cut neck, and (3) a unique shield-shaped die cut body label. Many private brand labels from the mid-west can be matched to these Prima Co. bottling lines. Note these examples (Column II) from Val Baggot, a Distributor in Wisconsin Dells, WI. He used all three shapes. By the way, Val Baggot's Stand Rock makes a great tee shirt—my son, Forrest has one.



Column I Brewed by
Prima Co. Chicago, IL



Column II Brewed & Bottled
for Val Baggot
Wisconsin Dells, WI

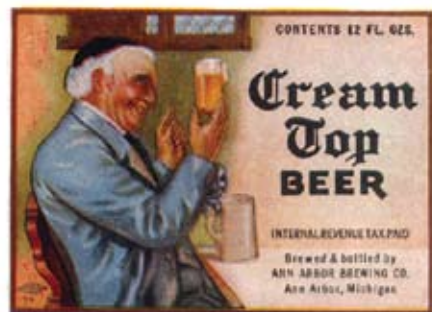


These tall (3.9 x 3.2 inch) labels came from Manhattan Brewing Co.



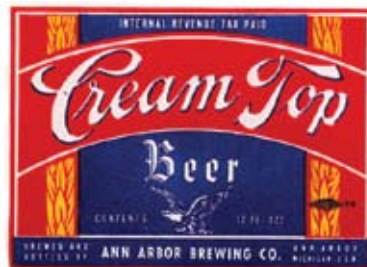
Brewing Co., however, it doesn't match their other labels. Instead, it's bigger—like labels from Chicago's Manhattan Brewery family. Manhattan took over Prima around 1936-37 so it's safe to assign this rectangular size to Prima Co. or the Manhattan family. Given Manhattan's proclivity for bending the rules, it's a good bet the large sized labels were actually brewed in Chicago. In any event, a relationship is apparent between these breweries. Cream Top labels using the same design can also be found listing both Whitewater Brewing Co., of Whitewater, WI, and Manhattan, so it's quite obvious Manhattan's fingerprints are on the bigger Ann Arbor labels. The two smaller Cream Tops match

These tall (3.5 x 3 inch) labels came from Mound City Brewing Co.



the common 12 oz. size, 3.5 x 2.6 inches, used by the Ann Arbor Brewery. Of course, the Ale label shown had to be trimmed to fit Ann Arbor's bottling line!

Paying attention to label dimensions is a big help in confirming the real brewery.



Large sizes (above) brewed at Manhattan Brewing Co. Small sizes (left) brewed at Ann Arbor.

Bay City's Phoenix Brewery

By Bob Pawlak

Phoe-nix (fee-niks). A mythical bird of great beauty fabled to live 500 to 600 years in the Arabian wilderness, burned itself on a funeral pyre, only to rise alive from the ashes to live through another cycle of years: often an emblem of immortality or of reborn idealism or hope.

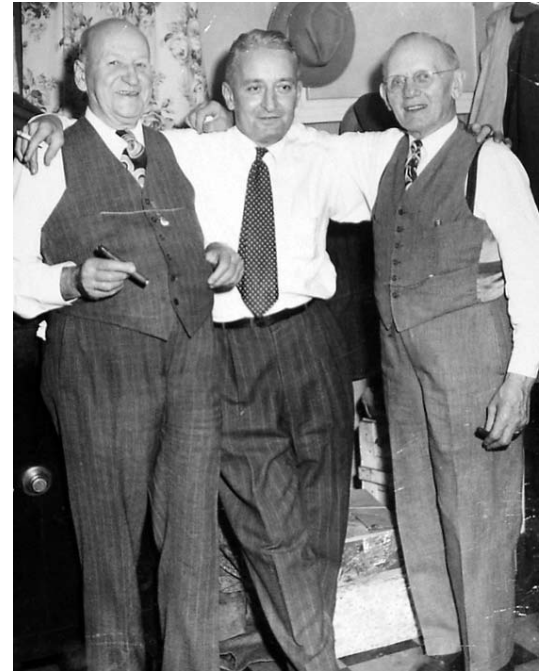
The Phoenix Brewery of Bay City, Michigan did just that—rising from a destructive fire in 1896 and emerging as a brand new brewery in 1898 with added capacity. The former West Bay City Brewing Company adopted a name change and featured the mythic bird, rising from a flame, as its new logo.

The Brewery was established in 1865 when John Rosa cleared a site on the banks of the Saginaw River, facing Arbor Street, in what was then West Bay City. The original name is unrecorded, but in 1868 it was known as the West Bay City Brewing Company, with John Rosa and Andrew Fink listed as partners. Initial annual production is listed as 5,000 barrels per year. Mr. John Kohler and Jacob Knobloch were later listed as partners in the brewery. Prior to the 1896 fire, there were a number of ownership changes.

Upon rebuilding, the new facility's capacity was increased to 20,000 barrels per year. Frank Mohr was listed as president, Julius Kaiser, vice-president, and Louis Hine secretary-treasurer and general manager. Under their leadership, Phoenix was "known far and wide as makers of the famous HIGH GRADE, the brand that is always the same."

Bay City, at that time, had two other breweries—the Kolb

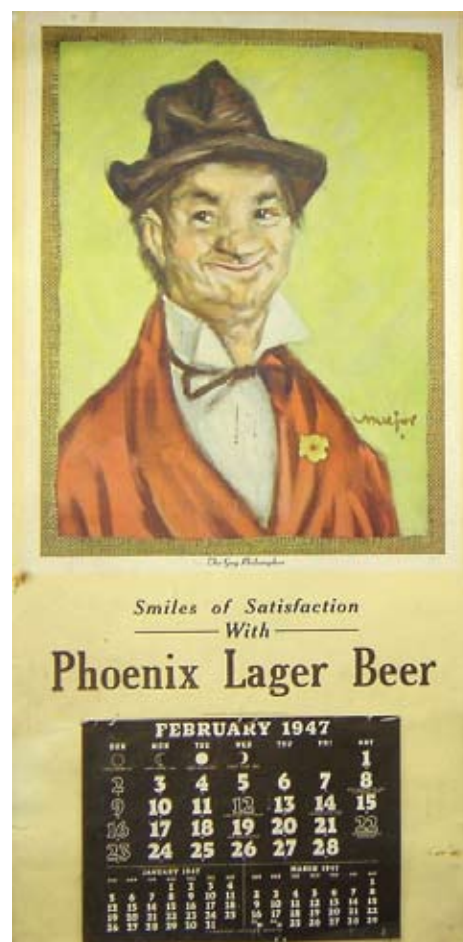
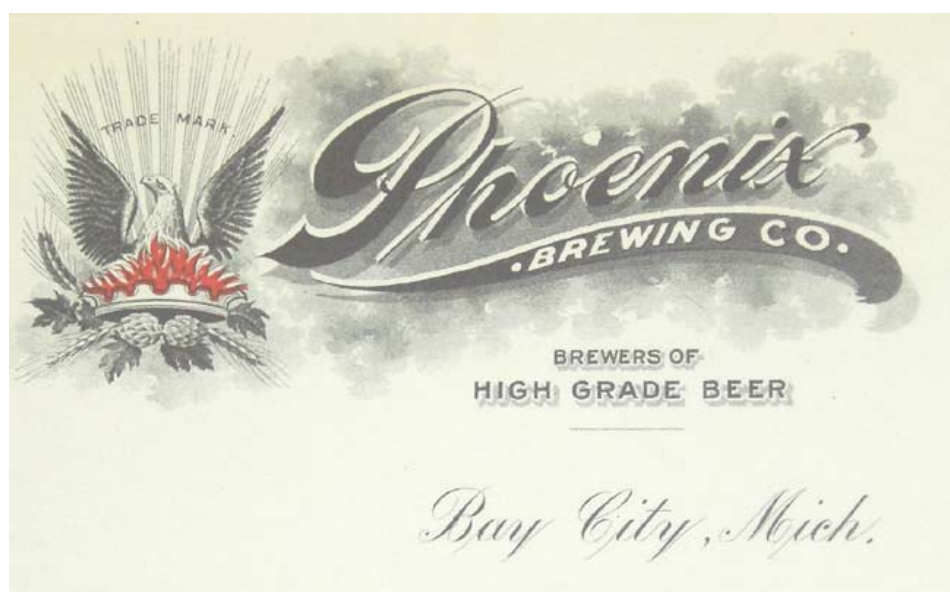
Top l & r: Hans Behrens, Phoenix owner & Master Brewer; and with local dignitaries; Phoenix workers, 07/15; Victory! Phoenix Brewery baseball team: note horse-drawn car as their "Victory Wagon."



Brewing Co. and the Bay City Brewing Co., with which the Phoenix Brewery was in direct competition. Phoenix was distinguished from the others through its amber-colored bottles and a picture of a large eagle on the front label. The eagle became synonymous with Phoenix and at least two chalkware versions of the rising eagle are extremely rare and much sought after among Phoenix breweriana collectors and statue collectors alike.

Like other breweries at the time, the Phoenix suffered with the onset of Prohibition and the partnership of Mohr/Kaiser/Hine was dissolved in 1917. The brewery had to shift focus to viable alternatives to stay afloat, and turned to producing and selling malt extract. The malt extract was sold around the country as well as to the local population for the production of 'home brew,' which was allowed under Prohibition. Malt extract was sold in five-gallon cans, under the name H.H. Behren's Malt Extract Co., until 1933, when Prohibition ended.

Hans Behrens was the brew master for the Phoenix Brewery from 1910 until 1918, succeeding the late Julius Kaiser. Mr. Behrens left Bay City and worked for the Home Brewing Company and the Woolner

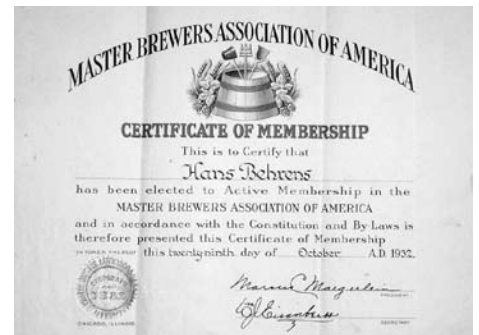
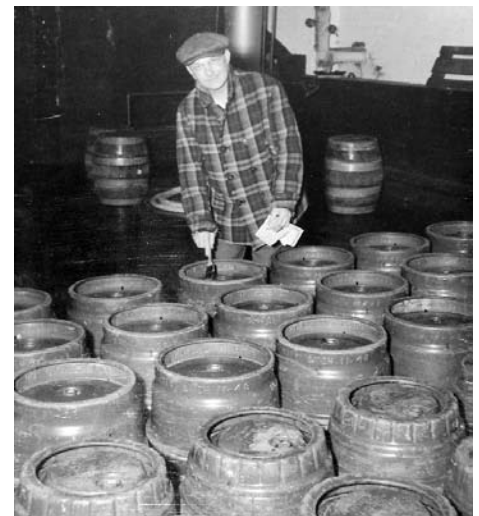


Rare Phoenix bottle labels; cone-top can in excellent condition; two versions of hard-to-find "Rising Phoenix" chalkware statues; Pre-Prohibition letterhead; "The Gay Philosopher" spokes-personality, 1947.

Brewing Company in Toledo, Ohio until 1921. Upon his return to Bay City, Mr. Behrens was employed by the Kolb Brewing Co., supervising the production of 'near beer.' In 1925, he purchased the Phoenix Brewery and continued to sell malt extract until the end of Prohibition. When Prohibition ended, Behrens re-formed the Phoenix Brewing Company with Mr. Fred Vollbrecht. When that partnership dissolved, he formed a partnership with his sons, Erwin and Jack, and son-in-law Emmons Riegel.

In 1943, the storage capacity of the Phoenix plant was increased to 40,000, with annual production of 30,000 barrels produced under the PHOENIX BEER trade name. The rise of the nationally-advertised competitors spelled the demise of the Phoenix, unable to keep up. Both of the other two other Bay City breweries had already closed their doors (Kolb in 1939 and Bay City Brewery in 1943). The Phoenix was able to keep its doors open until 1952.

The buildings that were used to pump out thousands of gallons of beer remained and had a variety of occupants until the early sixties when a cleaning supply business purchased the property. The huge brewery vats are still used for the production of cleaning detergents by the current owners. A 24-foot smokestack from the brewery was deemed a safety hazard and was toppled and removed in 1999. Scavengers are reported to have discovered the fragments of hundreds of broken Phoenix beer bottles among the debris. Just prior to Christmas, 2004, a wrecking ball sent red



Top L: Phoenix during Prohibition (note name change); Top R: Inspecting stainless barrels; Middle L: Early workers; Middle R: Brewers Certificate, Hans Behrens; "We Won It" victory car w/case of beer on top. (All photos from the collection of Rick Schmidt).

brick and wood fragments flying as the south end of the plant was crushed. This section had been condemned by city officials.

All that remains of the Phoenix Brewery today is the section that was once the bottling house of the plant. The age of the building and its proximity to the Saginaw River make the site desirable for potential development and its demise is

just a matter of time, according to its current owner. There are still a small handful of Bay City residents that are former employees of the Phoenix, but their recollections and stories are slowly going the way of the brewery itself, crumbling and fading away.

alcoholic beverage? Are there others of these types waiting to be reported?

In conclusion, I would speculate there are many painted label beer company sodas remaining to be reported. The Holy Grail to find would be a "Bevo Fox"!



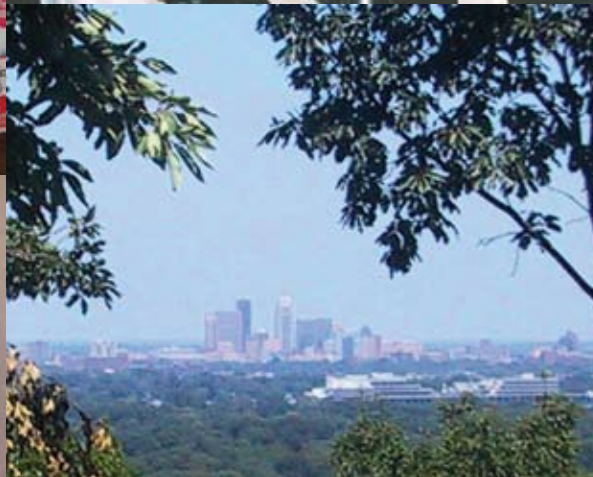
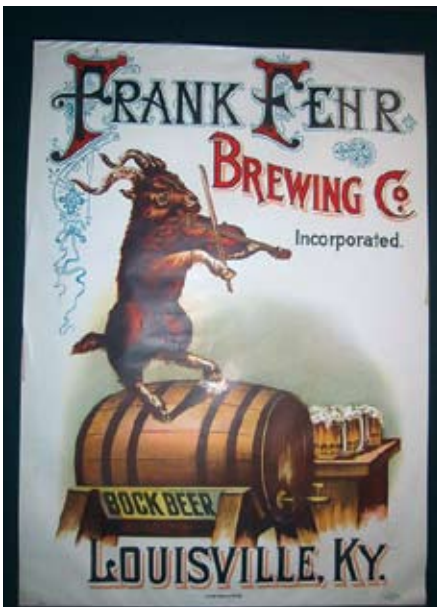
**Rip's Beverage Co.,
Wildwood, FL, Sport soda
and Vino Punch.**



**Miscellaneous
selection of
painted beer
bottles from
the author's
collection.
Above left:
Bald Eagle
Beer F&B;
Southern and
Stein Gold.
At left: two
types of Lang's
Beer bottles,
fronts first,
backs second.**



Painted beer bottles from author's collection. At left: Old Topper ale & lager; Above, left to right: Phoenix Beer (2); Stein's (2); Binzel.



NABA

2006



Louisville Kentucky August 1-6



The Stroh Beverage Company

By Joe Olsen



10-13-17

Everyone and anyone who has met Joe Olsen is well aware that he is a Stroh breweriana collector—extraordinary. Well enough about me.

I have in my collection two items that I have had for some time. These items have really aroused my curiosity, so I am going to describe them in the hopes of acquiring some information about them.

These items are from a printing company's art department—probably the Calvert Litho Company out of Detroit. They have done most, if not all, of the early printing for the Stroh Brewery Company.

These items are dated 10-13-17 and 12-12-17. What really makes them unique is the fact that they both read STROH BEVERAGE COMPANY.

Let me digress for a moment to give you a brief history of Prohibition in Michigan. In 1916 the powers that ruled in the state capitol at Lansing approved "The State Prohibition Referendum." This stated that on the first of May, 1918, Michigan would enter into Prohibition and become a dry state. Sure enough it came to pass, Detroit being the first major city to try

the noble experiment as it was called. Rather than close during Prohibition, as many Michigan breweries did, Stroh decided to survive by offering a number of products to the public.

So the name was changed from The Stroh Brewery Co. (1902-1920) to The Stroh Products Co. (1920-1933). These are the dates listed

everywhere that the history of Stroh's is written.

Now stay with me on this. The two items from my collection, as seen here with this article, are listed as "The Stroh Beverage Company." My thinking—and this is open to debate—is that Stroh planned to produce typical soft drinks and Temperance Beer; a non-intoxicating cereal beverage also listed as a soft drink. Hence the name, The Stroh Beverage Company.

Now the wiser heads at Stroh (probably including the main man, Julius Stroh, who was the force behind Stroh's survival throughout Prohibition) decided they were going to produce: soda pop, Alaska Brand ice cream, malt syrup, malt extract, Mattay Cola Syrup, distilled water ice, carbonated water, ginger ale, birch beer, Stroh's Temperance Beer, and Stroh's Bohemian Lager.

Wow. What an impressive list of products. Hey, let's call the company The Stroh Products Co.,

since we are offering much more than just beverages.

In my infinite wisdom, I was thinking the company may have been known as The Stroh Beverage Co. from 1918 to 1920. This would be from Michigan entering in Prohibition in 1918. Then, when the whole of the United States went dry officially in 1920, the name was changed to The Stroh Products Co. This is pure speculation on my part.

At first I had thought these two pieces in my collection most likely had been rejected by the brewery. This is what I had believed all along.

Yeah, right. Up until a bombshell was dropped in my lap.

It came in the form of a labeled bottle that I recently added to my Stroh's collection. (See accompanying photos). These are both Stroh's Temperance Beer bottles. But if you look closely at the bottom of the labels, one reads, *The Stroh Products Co.* and the other one reads, *The Stroh Beverage Co.*

Wow. This means they *did* operate under the Stroh Beverage Co. name. The proof is in the label.

The neck bands also relate to the name changes: one being S.P.Co.; and the other being S.B.Co. The Beverage Co. label also has the 1906 pre-Prohibition statement, "Pure and with-





out drugs or poison." It appears to match the two bottles in the reverse art work, but minus the 1906 statement. The reason for the art work being in reverse is because this is the way it would be transferred to a stone printing block. And when printed, it would show as it should.

The acquisition of the bottle was quite a coup for me as it represents a rare, unknown Stroh label. So now I am more confused than ever.

These are my thoughts on the subject. I would love to hear yours.

Peter Blum, where are you now that I need you? I would love to pick your informative brain on this over a few beers.

Hey, thanks for your time and your attention. This is done to share information. After all, isn't that what our hobby is all about?

ADDENDUM

I add this note after speaking with John W. Stroh III, who is quite knowledgeable in the history of his family brewing years, having been a part of them. John came up with this scenario, using Bob Kay's expert knowledge of labels.

Between 1908 and 1916 there were 25 states that had already entered into Prohibition. With this information, John's thoughts are that this label could have been put out for sale in one or more of any of these 25 states.

It makes sense to me—this would explain the 1906 "pure foods" statement. However, neither John W. Stroh III nor Bob Kay have ever heard of the Stroh Beverage Co. and neither had ever seen a label from this com-

pany. I asked the person from whom I had gotten the bottle where it was found. I was told: in an old house in northern Michigan. Was it brought back from one of those 25 states or was it sold in Michigan? The mystery deepens. So again, I ask if you can add anything to the mystery? I would love to hear from you.

Joe Olsen
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Finally, I sent this article to Bob Kay before publication for him to add his thoughts and his views on this subject. His response is included, and the information he added is worth sharing. I thank you Bob:

Joe: Prohibition was such a hard pill to swallow, many large breweries struggled with if—or how—to continue. The company name was just one of the many things that had to be considered. Many breweries changed from Brewing Co. to Beverage Co. or Products Co. or just plain Co., while some elected to stay with their pre-Pro names. Many of the bigger breweries tried two or three different naming schemes.

For example, while the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Co. became the

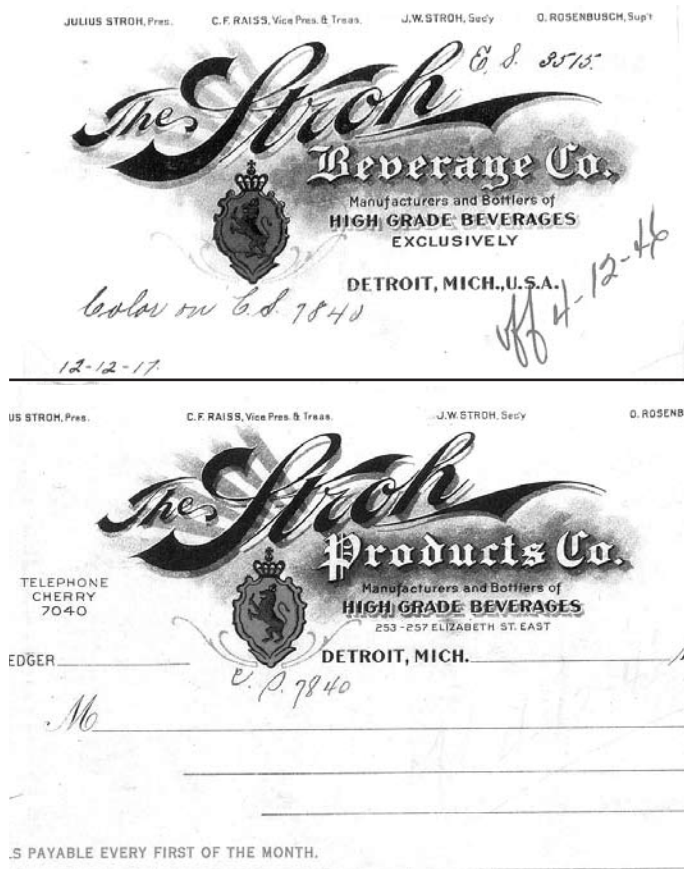
pany.

I asked the person from whom I had gotten the bottle where it was found. I was told: in an old house in northern Michigan. Was it brought back from one of those 25 states or was it sold in

Joseph Schlitz Beverage Co., some correspondence said simply Schlitz-Milwaukee, or Schlitz Brewery. Miller became the Miller Products Co. from approximately 1920-27 and the Miller High Life Co. from approximately 1927-33. There are numerous more examples of indecision on naming.

Now you have discovered an otherwise unknown example from your brewery of interest—Stroh's. I checked again and don't have anything that says Stroh's Beverage Co. in my holdings.

Since the temperance label uses that four-letter word (BEER) that was eventually banned, I would place it in the early part of the 1916-1920 period. That seems to fit with the 1917 dates on your Stroh's Beverage Co. pieces. I tend to agree with John W. Stroh III's feeling, that the Stroh's Beverage Co. name was likely used in the 1916-20 era and in this wild and wooly period that's close enough. Cheers....Bob Kay



Beer Advertising on Minneapolis Streetcars in the 1940s-1950s

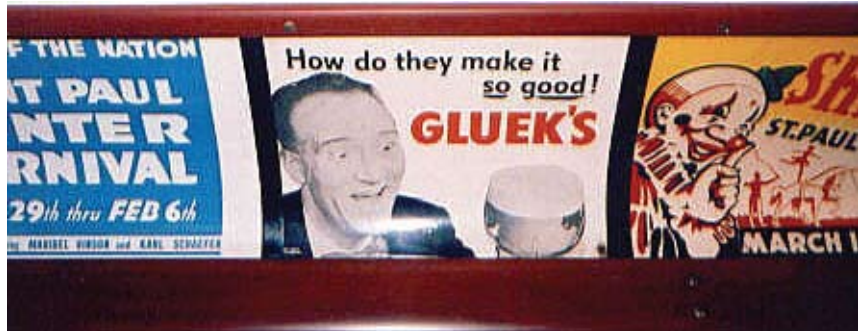
By Roger Krafve

The streetcar was really the only way to get around in Minneapolis back at the turn of the century. By the 1940s, however, they were starting to become a thing of the past, and were completely gone by 1955.

The Minneapolis Transportation Museum started restoring a few surviving streetcars in the early 1980s. Today they have five totally restored cars that operate on a small strip of the original track in Minneapolis & Excelsior, MN. Another three cars are being restored at the time of this writing.

My father is a volunteer driver for the Museum. Here he is with my daughter, his granddaughter.

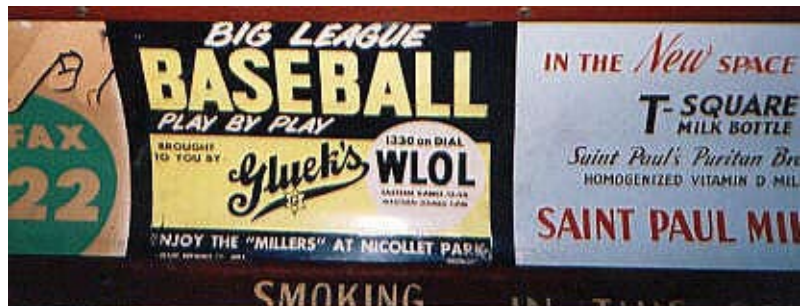
He drives the restored cars along the remaining one mile of track near a city lake. My family loves taking the short ride.



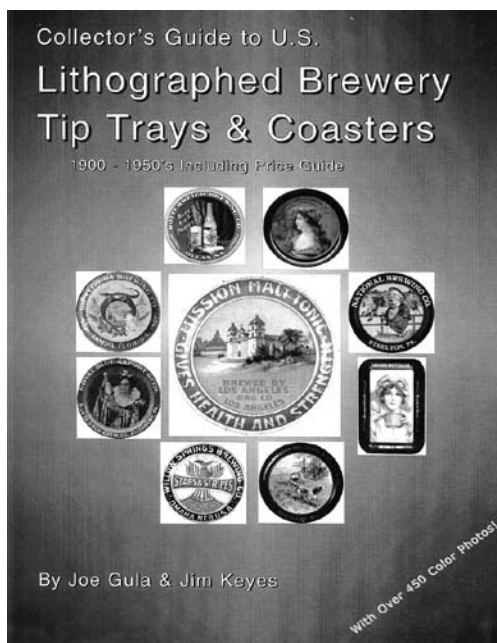
My first time inside the cars, I noticed all the vintage advertising placed up near the curve of the roof/ceiling. Most were originals, discovered in the old "car barns."

Here are a few pictures of some of the styles of beer advertising that were used. You'll notice Gluek's sponsored the old Minneapolis Millers baseball games.

I thought everyone would enjoy these pictures, and I'll continue to search out



more, if any surface. For now, however, these are all that remain from a grand time, long forgotten, but recently resurrected.



NABA members Joe Gula & Jim Keyes have been hard at work compiling the definitive guide to US tip trays. One of the great pleasures of involvement in our hobby is to see passionate members undertake a labor of love about their main collectible, and produce a book.

The book is well organized with an "Overview," and an answer to the question, "What is a Tip-Tray?" Included are manufacturers of tip trays, rounding up all the usual suspects (Shonk, Coshocton, etcetera), plus a few unheralded ones, like Pittsburgh, PA manufacturer, Ivan B. Nordheim.

An important compilation of "stock trays" versus "original artwork" is also included.

The book is arranged in an "alpha by state" sorting, making finding things easy. The photos of the individual trays can only be characterized as exceptional.

The authors have also identified "UFOs"—tip trays known to exist but for which they were unable to find photos. These are tip trays that had been traded/sold over time by knowledgeable collectors, so we know they are out there, but the authors weren't able to find their current locations.

These tip trays are listed in the page mockup at the right.

A challenge is hereby issued to the membership to see if anyone has these tip trays or others not listed in the book. If any member has any tip tray not listed in this book, please email Joe Gula at: joeffd@indy.rr.com. Joe can give you order information so you can purchase this reference guide.

Joe Gula and Jim Keyes deserve a "Tip of the Hat" for writing this important historical/reference book.

The Breweriana Collector

Book Review

The Collector's Guide to US Lithographed Brewery Tip Trays & Coasters

By Joe Gula & Jim Keyes

Reviewed by Larry Moter

UFOs (taken from Pg. 5 of the book, original photos in color)

In compiling the information contained in this book, we learned of other tip trays of which photos were not available. There were some that people had owned or seen, but no longer had the tip tray or a photo. Others were tip trays that they had heard of, but hadn't actually seen the actual tip tray. Below is a listing of the various tip trays that may exist that we were unable to find photographs to include in this edition. If you have any other brewery tip trays that are not included, please send a photo to: joeffd@indy.rr.com

	Brewery Name	Description	City	Shape	Size
NY	Buffalo Brewing Co.	Bellweiser tip	Buffalo	Rd	??
VA	Southern Breweries	Derby King	Norfolk	Rd	??
PA	National Brewing Co.	Stock-Caricature			
		Yachting #24	Steelton	Rd	4"
AL	Mobile Brewery	Stock-Girl # ?	Mobile	Rd	4"
IL	Schoenhofen Co.	Edelweiss Beer			
		(coaster) Chicago		Rd	3.5"
WI	Mueller Bros Brewing Co.	Stock-Girl			
		w/horse #8	Two Rivers	Rd	4"

Trays not included in this guide: This book is meant to cover the US brewery lithographed trays from 1900 – 1905s, below is a compilation of photos showing examples of trays that were specifically excluded from this edition. There are four major categories of trays that were excluded: non-lithographed tip trays, foreign brewery tip trays, ashtrays, and post 1950s tip trays



An example of an early brass tip tray from Foss-Schneider of Cincinnati, O



An early porcelain tip tray from Blatz's of Milwaukee.



An example of an early tip tray from Canada.



Another brass tip tray - this one from Aberdeen Brewing Co. in Aberdeen, WA.

Non-lithographed/foreign tip trays – this group includes brass, chrome, aluminum, composite, glass, porcelain, and foreign tip trays.



A sharp ashtray featuring "Old Faithful" from Gallatin Brewing Co. of Bozeman MT.



A nice lithographed ashtray from the Phoenix Brewery in Buffalo, NY.



A rare ashtray from the Interboro Brewing Co. of New York City.



A colorful ashtray from Claussen Brewing Assoc. of Seattle, WA.

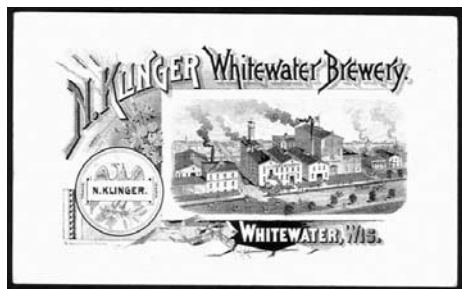
Lithographed Ashtrays – this group includes some very nice early lithographed ashtrays, which were very close companions of the pre-Prohibition lithographed tip trays. Most were manufactured by the same companies that produced the early tip trays, and some even used the same stock images on both tip trays and ashtrays.



Auction Hysteria

By Robert Hajicek

N. Klinger
Trade Card
3-5/8" x 6"
N. Klinger
Whitewater
Brewery,
Whitewater,
WI \$306.



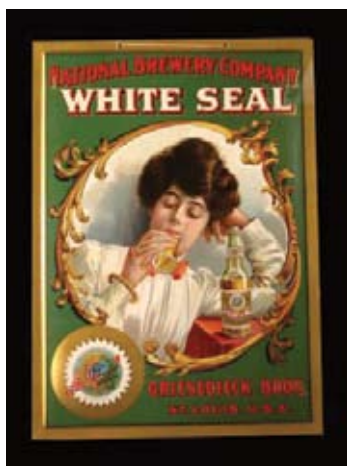
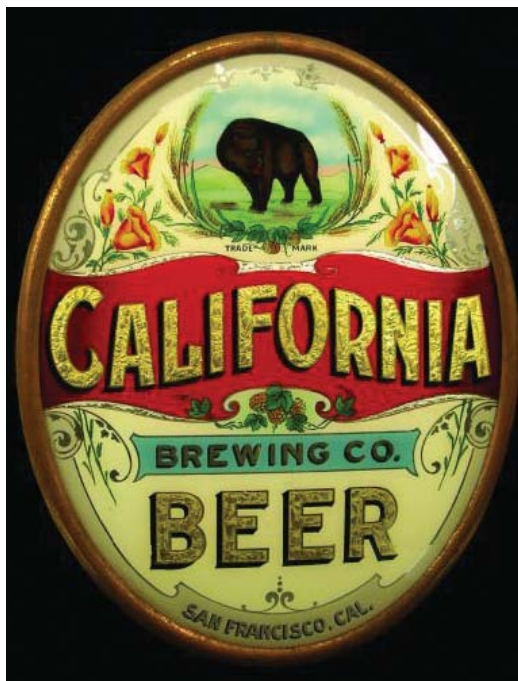
Worthburger Coaster, 4" diam-
eter Texas Brewing Co., Fort
Worth, TX \$621.

Maier
Reverse-
On-Glass,
19" dia.,
Maier Brew-
ing Co., Los
Angeles,
CA \$4,750.
(eBay Live)



Above: Schell's Lighted Sign,
28" x 6-1/2", Aug. Schell Brew-
ing Co., New Ulm, MN \$610.

Right: Budweiser Girl
Self-framed Tin, 26" x 18",
Anheuser-Busch, Inc., St.
Louis, MO \$4,250. (eBay Live)



Top, Lft: California Reverse-On-Glass,
16" x 20" California Brewing Co., San
Francisco, CA \$22,500. (eBay Live)

Top, Rt: Valley Forge Special Tin Flange
Sign, 18" x 14" Adam Scheidt Brewing
Co., Norristown, PA \$866.

Bottom, Rt: Hamm's Beer Tin Sign,
23" x 18" Theo. Hamm Brewing Co.,
St. Paul, MN \$1,025.

Left: White Seal Celluloid Sign,
14" x 10" National Brewing Co.,
Griesedieck Bros., St. Louis, MO
\$1,900. (eBay Live)

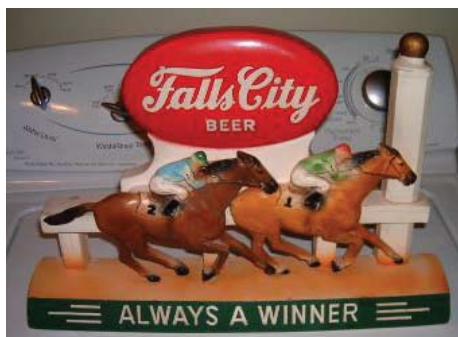
Below: Moehn Metal Wall Hanging Sign
Moehn Brewing Co. Burlington, IA \$1,710



(eBay Live) at the
end of a price in-
dicates the item
was sold during
a live auction in
which floor bid-
ders compete with
phone and inter-
net bidders. The
eBay Live sale
prices listed here
have NOT been
adjusted to in-
clude the buyers
premium.



Chris. Schmidt Etched Glass
Christian Schmidt,
Belle Plaine, MN \$1,025.
(note the spelling of Schmidt is
different than listed in
American Breweries II)
Red Top Flat Top
Red Top Brewing Co.,
Cincinnati, OH \$3,550.



Falls City Backbar Chalk,
11" x 17" Falls City Brewing
Co., Louisville, KY \$2,027.



Hudepohl Backbar Chalk
Hudepohl Brewing Co.,
Cincinnati, OH \$495.



Frank Fehr Paper
Lithograph, 24" x 34"
Frank Fehr Brewing Co.,
Louisville, KY \$1,525.



C. A. Lammers Tray, 12" dia.
C. A. Lammers Bottling Co.,
Denver, CO
Ph. Zang Brewing Co.,
Denver, CO \$1,500. (eBay Live)



Moehn Porcelain
Enamel Sign,
17-1/2" dia. Moehn
Brewing Co.,
Burlington, IA \$2,500.



Iroquois Clock
International Breweries, Inc.
Findlay, OH,
Buffalo, NY \$575.



Stegmaier
Porcelain
Sign,
26" x
14-1/2"
Stegmaier
Brewing
Co.,
Wilkes-
Barre, PA
\$3,250.
(eBay Live)

Left, Top: Bohemian Tin
Charger, 24" dia.
Buffalo Brewing Co.,
Sacramento, CA \$6,000.

Left, Bottom: Beck's Tin
Charger, 17-1/2" dia,
Shonk Mfg.
Magnus Beck Brewing Co.,
Buffalo, NY \$7,000.
(both: eBay Live)

A Brewery Worker's Story

Buffalo, New York

By John P. Eiss

Buffalo, New York, located at the terminus of the Erie Canal, has a storied history with the brewing and malting industries.¹ Joseph Webb, from the Village of Black Rock (now part of Buffalo), first brewed beer commercially in 1811. Brewing continued until the William Simon Brewery closed its doors on Buffalo's East Side in 1972.²

In the mid-1800s, several factors combined to secure Buffalo's position as a large brewing and malting center: a growing population of German, Prussian, and Alsatian immigrants; plentiful amounts of natural ice; and later, electricity for ice making and refrigeration from Niagara Falls. Also important was Buffalo's role as the major shipping connection between the Great Lakes and the Erie Canal: it became the country's largest grain storage and shipping center, moving 25 million bushels in 1850 alone. Buffalo also had the world's first automated grain elevator.³



Advertising Litho, East Buffalo Brewing Co.

In 1872 there were over 33 breweries and 22 maltsters listed in the 1873 city directory. The breweries produced 176,299 barrels of beer and ale that year.

Much of this article is based on several discussions with Joseph Cafferty between Christmas Eve, 1999, and May, 2001, when Joe was 86. Joe began his 38-year career in the malting and brewing industries when he found work in the Phoenix Brewing Corporation in 1934. This was a year after Prohibition ended, when the East Buffalo Brewing Company (298 Emslie Street) reopened as the Phoenix.

In 1935, Joe moved to the Fleischmann Malting Company, near Niagara and Ontario Streets, on Buffalo's West Side. At Fleischmann's, the grain was stored in large room-sized bins filled from large chutes. These chutes would sometimes clog with barley husks and had to be manually cleaned and reopened. This process was tedious and could be dangerous.

Being one of the younger employees and new on the job, Joe volunteered to do the work

in exchange for the foreman's promise of a half-day off with pay. Joe was lowered into the bin on a wooden seat attached to a rope, and he started unclogging the grain chute with a wooden shovel. While shoveling the husks out of the way, the barley suddenly let loose and began pouring into the bin at full force. Joe almost drowned in a sea of grain.

Because grain was moved throughout the plant on conveyors, any loose husks would fall to the plant floor. Joe and the other workers would shovel the husks so they could be sold as feed for cattle. They used wooden shovels for this job, as the plant was always full of grain dust—a very explosive material. A spark from a metal shovel could set off an explosion and fire.

Workers would collect as much of this grain dust as possible, and, using metal baskets, they'd carry it to be dumped into the Erie Barge Canal. On one occasion, Joe was dumping a basket of grain dust, lost his grip, and dropped the basket into the canal. He knew the boss would not be happy when told of

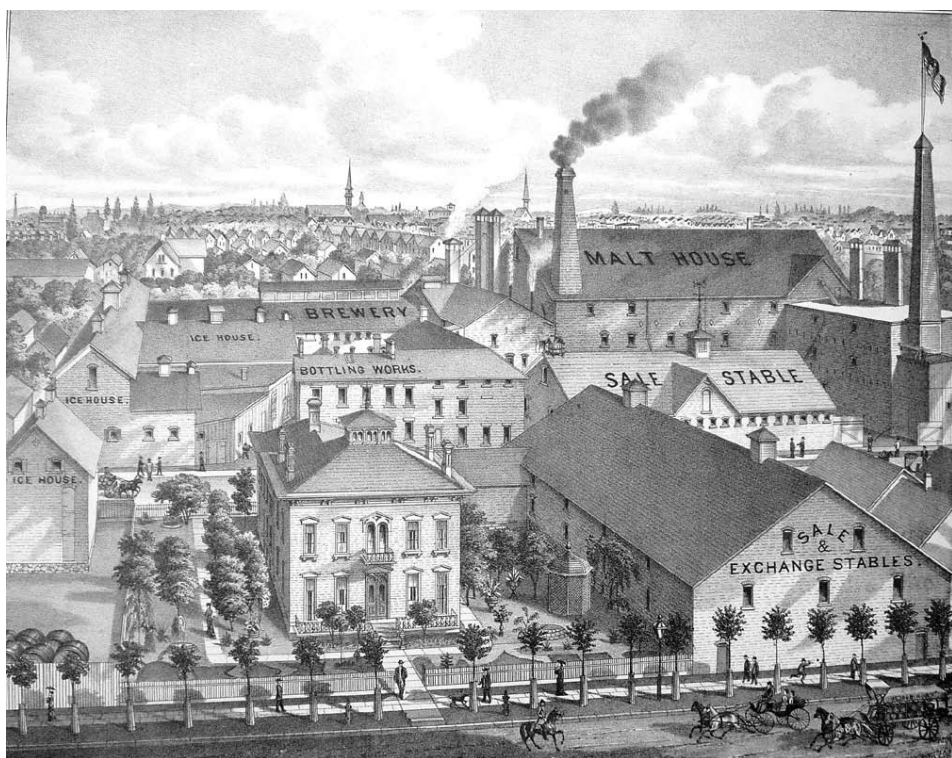
the lost basket, so he chased as it moved with the current. His efforts were in vain, however, as he almost fell in, but was never able to retrieve it.

The areas along the Erie Canal and Niagara Street, near Fleischmann Malting, were populated with saloons. Most served fish fries on Friday nights. Joe and his fellow workers would go there for supper and a few beers after work. Some bars would provide free fish if you bought a beer. This may be part of the reason why the "Friday night fish fry" remains so popular in the Buffalo area to this day.

delivered his beer to customers in half-kegs carried on a wheelbarrow.

In 1840 Roos moved his brewery to Pratt Street on Buffalo's East Side and operated it until his death in 1867. George Roos continued the brewery operation until 1893 when Leonard Burgwerger purchased it. He built a new brewery on the site and called it the Iroquois Brewing Co. The brewery continued in operation until Prohibition in 1920. It reopened at the end of Prohibition.

Joe began his employment in the keg department and as



Roos Brewery ca. 1880, predecessor of the Iroquois Brewery, Buffalo, NY

In 1936 Joe again changed jobs and went to work for the Iroquois Beverage Corporation, one of Buffalo's oldest and largest breweries. The Iroquois Brewery began as the Jacob Roos Brewery in 1830. The original brewery was located in an area of downtown Buffalo, near the waterfront, called "Sandy Town." Jacob Roos reportedly

it turned out, he was the only Irishman on an all-German crew. When the United States entered World War II Joe took a leave from Iroquois to join the US Army, and participated in the Normandy invasion.

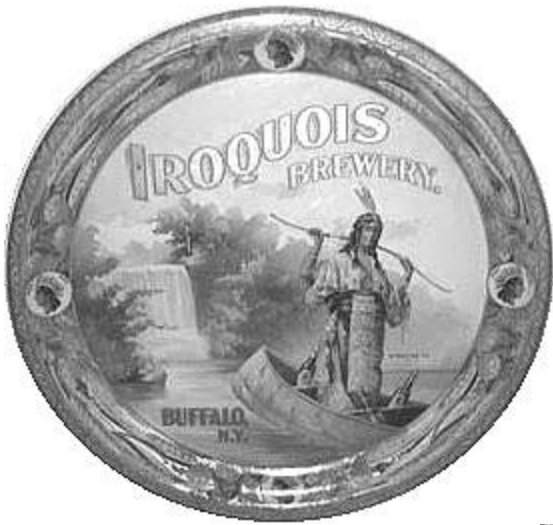
After the war he returned to Iroquois and worked there until 1971 when, as part of the International Breweries Corporation,

and after several changes in ownership, the plant closed its doors forever. During his many years with Iroquois, Joe was a keg washer and filler, and also worked in the filtration and carbonation department. He ended his career as the cellar boss in the keg department.

Competition among Buffalo breweries was fierce during the forties and fifties. Most beer deliveries were made to tavern or saloon basements. Joe said beer delivery drivers were not above popping the caps on some of their competitor's bottles during deliveries to spoil the contents, along with the competitor's reputation.

Another incident Joe recalled was when a new owner of Iroquois arrived at the Buffalo Airport. All the brewery's beer trucks and employees were sent to the Buffalo airport to welcome the new owner in style. When the owner introduced himself, he asked all the Iroquois employees to loudly order Iroquois beer whenever they ate at a restaurant or bar, and to complain if Iroquois beer was not available.

Joe and his fellow workers belonged to Buffalo Brewery Workers Local #4. As part of the



union contract there were daily beer breaks at 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:00 noon, and 2:30 PM. This accounts for the beer taps strategically placed throughout the brewery. Iroquois also had a large rathskeller and Indian Head saloon on site for visiting tours and worker get-togethers.

My uncle, Frank Bodekor, also worked many years for Iroquois Brewing Corporation until it closed. He was a mechanic in the brewery's boiler room. In the late 1940s and early '50s my father, who worked for the Buffalo Fire Department, would sometimes take me along when he visited Joe or Frank at the brewery. During these visits, there always seemed to be Buffalo Police cars parked on Pratt Street at the brewery employ-

ee entrance, with policemen in the lobby. Of note: there was a beer tap conveniently located in the lobby. Joe and Frank both said that in later years, the taps were locked and keys were only issued to workers.

While the Iroquois shut down in 1971, brewing continued in the city through 1972, until Buffalo's last remaining brewery, the William Simon Brewery on Buffalo's East Side, closed its doors. With the closure of these last two breweries,

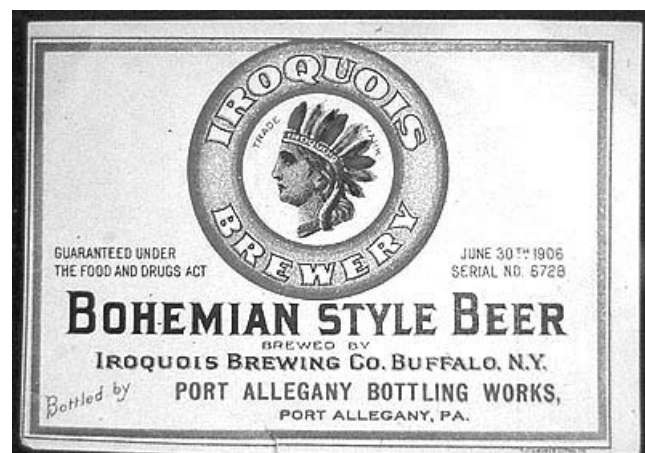
the occupation, "brewery worker" also ended in Buffalo.

After a fourteen-year hiatus, beer was again commercially brewed, starting in 1986, at the Buffalo Brewpub. The brewing tradition is kept alive in Buffalo at several local brewpubs and the "Flying Bison" microbrewery, opened in 2000.

¹ Malting is a process whereby grain is made usable for the brewing of beer.

² It can be debated as to whether the commercial brewing of beer in Buffalo actually stopped during Prohibition (1920 - 1933).

³ Joseph Dart built the first steam operated Grain Elevator on Buffalo's waterfront in 1842.





The Back Bar

By John Bain

“Houston, we have a problem.”

Because of this column and my involvement in *The Back Bar* display, I receive numerous requests from NABA members to authenticate, grade and appraise early lighted breweriana. I respond to all requests, but if I'm away at a show, I may not be able to respond in a timely manner. If your request is in connection with a pending deal or an auction deadline and you can't wait for me to respond, you can now turn here. In this article, I will explain how you can grade and appraise early lighted breweriana, and I will illustrate when and why it is important to do this.

As for authenticating an item, being able to tell if it is original or counterfeit, I covered that topic in *The Breweriana Collector*, spring 2006, volume #133, page 9, “Caveat Emptor I”. (For a future volume, I am preparing a sequel, “Caveat Emptor II” which will cover the subject of neon.)

With “Caveat Emptor I” and what you're about to read, you will have the means to get most of the answers you need when timing is critical. If you want a second opinion or you have other questions about early lighted breweriana, you're still welcome to e-mail me at the-back-bar@earthlink.net. Just remember that this e-mail address has a challenge-response feature that blocks all spam: the first time you e-mail me, you will receive a message prompting you to follow an instruction that will add you to my address book; if you don't follow the instruction, I won't know that you're trying to reach me.

There are several situations in which it would be helpful to accurately grade and price an item, or tell if someone else's grade and price are correct and reasonable. For example, how

often have you heard the term “mint” used in the description of an item? Could you tell if the term was misused? When a buyer tells you that your item is worth about half of the price you're asking, or a seller tells you that his item is in “great condition” for its age, can you tell if their claims are based on several previous examples or sales; a reasonable accepted standard; a whim; or how much they've had to drink in the past hour?

When you want to sell, but you're not sure how much to ask for your item; or you want to buy, but you're not sure if the price is in line with condition; what are your options? Where can you turn for help?

For any of the above situations, you could shop around and compare prices and condition; buy a book on collectibles with a reliable price guide (if there are any); ask a friend or fellow collector for advice; do some research on the internet; or just charge forward armed with your experience as your guide. But what if you don't have the time, resources or experience to exercise any of these options? Imagine that you're shopping a show and you're holding an item in your hands while trying to decide if you should buy, but there is another buyer hovering like a buzzard right behind you, ready to swoop in and pounce on the item the moment you let go.

Do you:

- a. buy on impulse, and hope you don't overpay;
- b. pass, and risk missing a good deal;
- c. shoot the buzzard?

Or what if you're the seller and you're offered far lower than your asking price?

Do you:

- a. accept, and give away a

- treasure unwittingly;
- b. reject, and tote the item to more shows;
- c. shoot the buyer? (After all, it has been said that you can get more with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone.)

Since I wasn't very handy with a gun when I entered this hobby, I needed a quick grading method suitable for complex lighted breweriana like signs, clocks, and mechanized items. I also needed a way to price these items; one that was flexible and adaptable to a rapidly changing market. I did not want a price guide like those found in books on collectibles. Those guides are not useful for long because the quoted prices often become obsolete faster than you can find and pay for the items in the book. (Publishers love price guides because they help sell books, which generates revenue that can be used to publish more books with obsolete price guides.)

While searching for a suitable grading method, I found a common scale that many collectors use today. It goes like this: “mint, excellent, very good, good, ...” and so on, all the way down to what I call “landfill.”

But when is an item “good” instead of good for parts? Depending on which side of the trade table you're standing, one person's “excellent” can be the other person's “project.” Okay, let's compromise and say, “This would make an ‘excellent project’.”

Here is another common scale; it sounds like a NASA shuttle launch: “10, 9, 8, 7, 6, ...” etcetera. But, again, what criteria defines the grades on this scale? “Um... Houston, we have a problem.”

Reasonable collectors will agree that “10” and “mint” have no meaning other than “new” or “new-old-stock,” with no significant manufacturing flaws or defects. Anything in lesser condition cannot be “10” or “mint.” So what about the rest of the scale, where everything else falls into a loosely-defined universe; where ignorance, absurdity, intoxication, and, on occasion, insanity might be factored into the grade? Without established guidelines or criteria, everything below mint might as well be summed up in just one grade: “opinion.”

Beer can collectors are smart; not because they collect beer cans, but because they grade their cans according to an established scale that is correlated to accepted criteria. Will the method for grading cans work for lighted breweriana? (Will Budweiser ever taste like beer?)

that works consistently well across a wide variety of lighted items and non-lighted items, regardless of their age, condition, style, or complexity. In addition, the method that I developed lets the user set the item’s starting price, and adjust it according to the grade by using a very simple formula—one that you will find easy to use, if you took differential calculus in high school.

Now, before you drop this magazine and run screaming for the nearest open bar, be aware that the formula is designed to aid you when you are buying or selling items for or from your collection: it is not designed for commercial dealing for profit. A dealer’s “buy” price will be substantially lower (and their “sell” price may be substantially higher) than a collector’s, simply because dealers have to realize a profit in order to cover their operating expenses and stay in business. A collector does not

use the item slightly higher since there will be less repair work for you to do. But the item’s grade won’t necessarily go up as a result.

When an item is displayed, the back and bottom are usually hidden from view, so some collectors ignore the back and bottom when grading. I don’t. After all, if you have two of the same item, and the only difference between them is that one has a damaged or rusty back and the other has an undamaged, clean back, which one would you desire more to have in your collection?

To grade an item, start by assuming that it is in “new-old-stock” condition (without the manufacturer’s shipping carton) and give it grade “10.”

Deduct 1/4 point for each minor part that has been compromised significantly (i.e. missing, damaged, repaired, touched up, repainted, modified, reproduced, incorrect, etc.) or shows wear, age, deterioration, or corrosion. Minor parts include visible fasteners and hardware, ordinary chains, switches, and internal parts except motors and movements.

Deduct 1/2 point for each secondary part that has been compromised significantly or shows wear, age, deterioration, or corrosion. Secondary parts include decorative parts, supports (except ordinary chains), clock hands, feet, and secondary graphic components.

Deduct 1 point for each major part that has been compromised significantly or shows wear, age, deterioration or corrosion. Major parts include the base, frame or cabinet, neon tubes, bubble tubes, motor, mechanism, and moving parts. If bubblers, clocks, or mechanized items are not working, but the defective component can be repaired or replaced with the correct type, style, and speed, then do not deduct.

Major parts also include the primary graphic component (e.g., the ad glass) which counts for 1 point. However, if the primary graphic component

Will the method for grading cans work for lighted breweriana?

No, because the beer can scale works in reverse to the other two scales: the grade numbers are inverse to the condition (i.e., the worse the condition of the can, the higher the grade number). In addition, the construction of a can is much simpler than, say, a lighted bubbler, or a neon spinner clock. So the method for grading beer cans works only for beer cans—and solving basic math problems (e.g. $1 - 1 + 5 =$ something dented and rusty you find after a day of digging in a dump).

For lack of a meaningful or suitable method for grading and pricing lighted breweriana, I decided to develop a method that would include practical criteria for grading and a simple formula for pricing. After some experimentation, adjustment, and, of course, a few inspirational beers, I developed a method

have to do this. In addition, dealers’ prices are market-driven; collectors’ prices are driven by personal motives. At least they should be.

Now, here’s how the method works. When grading early lighted breweriana, things that can be ignored most times are:

1. wiring, transformers, ordinary internal bulbs
2. motor (as long as it can be *easily* replaced with one of the same type and speed)
3. very minor manufacturing flaws
4. surface marks or dirt that can be removed without harming or changing the item’s finish

Numbers 1 and 2 are expendable components because they are expected to wear out or become unsafe over time. If they are intact and safe, you can val-

is missing, severely cracked or broken, a reproduction, a fantasy creation, incorrect, has been modified or touched up substantially, or has deteriorated to a state in which the item does not display well and has you wondering why anyone would even give the time of day for it, then the item is “off grade,” no matter how good the rest of the item may be for parts.

When grading an item, you can consider the manufacturer’s shipping carton when it is present and in good condition—but only if you are certain that it is original to the item that you are grading. For example, a plain, brown, corrugated, cardboard carton does not, on its own, confirm that it is original to the sign—although some folks would like you to believe otherwise. The carton should bear

ping carton can reveal two things about the item being graded: first, it helps authenticate the item; second, its presence means that the item was likely never put in service, or the owner cared enough to keep the carton, and, therefore, may have treated the item carefully during its time in service. Whatever the case may be, I add 1/2 point for the original manufacturer’s shipping carton in good condition.

When you finish grading an item, you’re ready to price it. Start with one-hundred percent of what the item would be worth at grade “10” to *you*: not the price one like it sold on the internet recently; nor what it is worth to another collector; nor how much cash you have in your pocket that day; nor how much your booth or table fee is; nor

what the seller is asking or what the buyer is offering.

Next, multiply *your* value by ten percent of the grade. For example: if an item at grade 10 is worth \$500 to you, but the actual grade is 8, then—here comes the formula— $\$500 \times .8 = \400). Done!

When

you’re shopping and you find an item that interests you, ignore the item price if it’s marked. If the price isn’t marked, don’t ask the seller so it won’t influence your evaluation. Sometimes the price can scare you away prematurely. If you take the time to grade the item carefully before learning the price, you may discover that the item has more value than you first thought.

After you calculate *your* grade-based price, ask the seller *his or her* price. If that price

is lower or matches yours, of course you buy—and don’t be crass by trying to talk the seller into giving the item away. If the seller’s price is higher than yours, explain briefly how you arrived at your price; then try to negotiate based on condition. If the seller’s price is a lot higher, you may still have one option left—but that depends on how well you can hold on to the item while trying to outrun the seller.

To a casual collector, this method of grading and pricing may seem like lighting a cigarette with a flamethrower. To a serious collector, who sometimes taps his home’s equity for a few choice pieces, in a market where the price of early lighted breweriana keeps climbing, this method will quickly put some perspective on condition and value. It may become the standard for grading and pricing, or it may not. In either case, it’s your money and your collection, so you decide what this method is worth to you. Go get one or two items from your collection now and take a moment to try it. If you think you overpaid or underpaid, you’re about to find out.

Here are some closing thoughts on why it is wise to take the time to grade an item accurately before you buy. If you don’t grade, you run the risk of overpaying or buying junk, and you’ll own that junk until the day you throw it out or give it away. When you take the time to grade, you know exactly what you are buying. The higher the grade, the better the condition, the higher price. Down the road, an item in better condition will be easier to sell or trade than one in worse condition, and for an item in better condition you will often get more than you paid.

Cheers!



Fig. 1. Original manufacturer’s carton and contents; manufacturer’s decal on sign cabinet (inset photo).

the manufacturer’s logo and/or name; address; or a brief description of the contents, product, or brand inside. The more information on the carton, the better. In addition, the information should appear machine-printed, stamped, or labeled on the carton (see fig. 1). Hand-written information does not qualify and is a clue that the carton may not be original to the item, or worse, that part of the item (e.g. the ad glass) may not be original.

A confirmed original ship-



Executive Secretary's Report

By John Stanley

NABA ♦ PO Box 64 ♦ Chapel Hill, NC 27514 naba@mindspring.com

Congratulations to Roger Owen and Kent Speer and their supporting cast for a very successful NABA Convention in Louisville. My apologies to everyone who received the Summer issue with a 2nd Dues Renewal Notice and thought they needed to renew. When using bulk mail we must put the same insert in every issue and cannot just send it to people who need to renew. Our membership stands at 898 but 114 need to renew to stay active. If you know any people who are undecided about renewing, please encourage them to do it now. Please note that you can pay your dues through PayPal and

the NABA Account to pay to: naba@mindspring.com.

Start planning your membership Directory Ads for the 2007 NABA Membership Directory. The 2007 Directory is being sent out with the next issue (Winter) of the *Breweriana Collector*. Rates are: inside front cover, \$125; inside back cover, \$125; outside back cover, \$300 (4 color separation must be supplied); full page \$80; half page \$50; quarter page \$25; and business card size for \$15. Deadline is December 15th. Please email Lee Chichester (falconer@swva.net) or me if you have any questions.

If address information has

changed, please mail or email any corrections to the address below. I would like to welcome the new members listed at the right. Special thanks to John Bain (2), George Baley (1), Gary Bauer (1), Larry Moter (1), NABA Convention (1), eBay Auction (1), and the NABA Web Site (3) for recruiting these new members (3 of which were Rejoins). To win a free year's membership you need to recruit five (5) new members for the year (the year starts and ends with the Convention). Congratulations to George Baley (6) and Mary White (5) for winning free one-year membership extensions for the year just ended.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

FILL OUT, DETACH OR PHOTOCOPY, AND MAIL TO: NABA, PO Box 64, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-0064

I wish to join NABA and payment is enclosed. Annual Membership dues are: US \$25, 5 years for \$100; Canada \$30 (US); and overseas \$40 (US). Dues expire May 31; dues paid after Jan. 1 are valid until May 31 of the following year. Please make your check or money order payable to NABA (please type or print legibly!).

Name _____ Spouse _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip plus 4 _____

Phone (incl. area code) _____ Amt. Enclosed \$ _____

email address _____ Sponsor _____

Upon receipt of Application, we will send the current Membership Directory, a Membership Certificate, and two recent issues of *The Breweriana Collector*.

Please check the areas of breweriana that you collect. You may select a MAXIMUM of six different listings, including specific brands or cities, for inclusion in the Membership Directory.

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All Breweriana | <input type="checkbox"/> Clocks | <input type="checkbox"/> Lamps | <input type="checkbox"/> Neon Signs | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt Shakers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ash Trays | <input type="checkbox"/> Coasters | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaded Windows | <input type="checkbox"/> Openers | <input type="checkbox"/> Show Promoter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barrels | <input type="checkbox"/> Corkscrews | <input type="checkbox"/> Lithographs | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Items | <input type="checkbox"/> Signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books & Magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Crowns | <input type="checkbox"/> Matches | <input type="checkbox"/> Patches | <input type="checkbox"/> Statues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bottles | <input type="checkbox"/> Dealer | <input type="checkbox"/> Match Safes | <input type="checkbox"/> Photos | <input type="checkbox"/> Tap Knobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brewery Equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Foam Scrapers | <input type="checkbox"/> Medals | <input type="checkbox"/> Pinbacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calendars | <input type="checkbox"/> Glasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Menus/menusheets | <input type="checkbox"/> Pitchers | <input type="checkbox"/> Tip Trays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cans | <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Beers | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Tokens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cases | <input type="checkbox"/> Knives | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirrors | <input type="checkbox"/> Postcards | <input type="checkbox"/> Trays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Labels | <input type="checkbox"/> Mugs & Steins | <input type="checkbox"/> Reverse On Glass | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch Fobs |

Specific breweries, brands cities _____

*Be sure to fill out ALL the requested information. This is used for the Membership Directory.
If you skip an item, you've limited the usefulness of your listing.*

New Members

Blumhagen, Bruce

506 Hunter Ln
Garfield MN 56332-8413
320-834-2743
moss84sucks@yahoo.com

Burkhardt, Jim (Beverly)

6626 E Palm Ln
Scottsdale AZ 85257-2514
480-946-6067 F480-946-8778
burkhardttrans@att.net

All Breweriana;

Burkhardt of Akron OH

Carrano, Marty

PO Box 237
Port Jefferson NY 11777-0237
516-991-1083

Chatfield, M W

2130 Elstun Rd
Cincinnati OH 45230-1014
513-231-8868

Maguire, Tom (Meg)

13 Confederate Ln
Pawleys Island SC 29585-7492
508-237-4936
tmaggy77@hotmail.com

Mugs & Steins; Boston

Otte, Larry

12133 Pelota St
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Travels with Brewster

Hello again from Brewster, Mary and Fred, this time from merry old England where we were this past June. This was a top-notch trip with excellent beers and weather to match. The main purpose of the trip was to actually go to Mary's goddaughter's first communion. However, it seemed a pity to spend the airfare and not explore a little. As a consequence, we headed to Yorkshire (James Herriot country for those of you who are familiar with him and his books) to explore the Moors as well as the Hills and Dales.

When we travel in the UK we use two publications to guide us: one is the *Good Beer Guide* which identifies, as you might surmise, where the good beer is. In particular it tells us which pubs have "real ale," which is cask conditioned and hand pumped. CO2 is not used to serve real ale and it is less carbonated than we are used to here in the States.

The other publication is the *AA Guide* and no, it does not list the places where we can attend meetings, rather it is the Automobile Association Guide. It does, however, list pubs that have lodging. So you can see where this is going. If a pub is listed in both books, it is then a pub where we can spend the night. There are at least two reasons for this: first, we really like cask conditioned beer; and second, Fred really doesn't want to drive on the left after more than one beer: too easy to forget which side of the road you should be on.

So, combining the two books, at the end of the day we can have dinner, drink at least one pint of each of the available cask conditioned beers (they are generally low in alcohol) and still crawl up the stairs to bed. That is the original pub crawl.

Now, about the beer: this is, after all, why you have tuned in to this space.

Because the weather was so nice and the car rental agency

By Fred & Mary Clinton

assured us it would stay that way, we did a first for us and hired a cabriolet or convertible. And (unbelievable as it may seem) we were able to go topless every day!

After landing at Gatwick Airport near London we headed north to the Blue Cow in South Witham, Leistershire County. This brewery had rooms, but all were booked that night. Prior research had revealed that only about five miles away was another brewery adjacent to a pub that served their beers and had rooms. (More about that later.) We were golden.

The beers at the Blue Cow were the Witham Wobbler so named because it was 4.8% alcohol; and Thirwell's Best Bitter. A couple of side notes about British beer are in order here. As noted earlier the beers are generally low in alcohol, the majority I would guess being less than 4.0% alcohol. This is much lower than beers in this country where many craft beers are in the 5.0% to 7.0% range or higher. So in the UK a beer of 4.8% strength would be considered a "strong ale" and have a name such as "Wobbler" or "Tippie" or "Skull Crusher" to indicate that it is strong and you should go easy on the consumption.

The second note is the use of the word "bitter." A bitter is a generic class of beers that usually aren't—bitter that is. Bitter is a style not a flavor. In the States we consider an IPA to be bitter. In the UK I have never tasted a beer that is as bitter as a typical Stateside IPA. So when you hear the name "bitter" for a British beer, don't think it will be really bitter. But I digress.

The Witham Wobbler was a nicely balanced beer, malty but had a hoppy finish and left a wonderful lace on the glass. The

Best Bitter, while thinner, was also tasty and well balanced. The WW was our Four Paw Pick at this stop.

Next was the Willoughby Arms in Little Bytham. This pub was about 25 feet from the Newby Wyke Brewery. The pub had a beautiful garden in which to enjoy possibly the best beers of the trip. We say "possibly" because you have to factor in ambience and the situation—like first day of the trip, etc. The only bummer here was the kitchen was closed that evening due to staffing problems and the menu looked good.

So we had to go two miles down the road to the Six Bells for dinner and were entertained by one of the "landed gentry" who, while smoking like a chimney, informed us that the second hand smoke issue was just that, so much smoke. Back at the Willoughby Arms, driving done for the day, beer drinking got underway in earnest.

Out to the garden we repaired with the first of the Newby Wyke beers. The brewery is named after the owner's grandfather's fishing trawler, and many of the beers have nautical names. We sampled the Summer Session which was a mild beer and at 3.8%, one that could be consumed in session fashion. Although mild, it was full of flavor. As a homebrewer, Fred especially appreciated the



Everyone's welcome at the typical neighborhood British Pub.

challenge in making a beer like this which was light in color but full of body and flavor.

We had the Chesapeake which was much drier than the Summer Session and had excellent hop and malt balance. It weighed in at 5.5% and was our Four Paw Pick **** of the group. The Chesapeake is made with eight varieties of hops, an unusually large number, and all are American hops.

The Grantham Gold (4.2%) was an English IPA, not to be confused with its considerably more robust and hoppier American cousin. It was very dry and crisp and also a very well balanced beer.

Newby Wyke is a man-and-wife operation that looks like it will have much (deserved) success. The beers being made here are pushing the envelope on some of the more traditional British beers and are being well

received. They were certainly appreciated by these two beer geeks!

Our third brewery stop was the Barrowden Brewing Company in Barrowden, a small village near Rutland Water. This is an area that is nearly commuting distance to London and is also a vacation area with parkland and trails. There on the very pretty village green is the pub and brewery.

This pub had been a brewery for a while, but the current publican/brewer/owner had been on the job for just a very short time. He was an interesting fellow who, in prior careers, had been a jockey and a lorry (truck) driver. It appeared he had found his true calling here, though, as the beers being made were quite tasty.

The day we popped in, there were three beers on draft: Beach Boys at 3.8%, Bevin Boys at 4.5%, and Hop Gear at 4.4%. The Beach Boys was the typical English Bitter, although slightly hoppier than many in the style. It was an easy-drinking dry beer that was very pleasing. The Bevin Boys was a maltier version of the first beer but was also nice and dry and well balanced. The Hop Gear was even fuller in body than the Bevin

Boys in spite of the fact that it had slightly less alcohol.

All the beers we had at Barrowden were clean and crisp and highly recommended. The pub itself was also a very clean and traditional one. We had actually tried to book a room there, but they were full (all three rooms) and we had to go elsewhere. It was quite a disappointment as this was the epitome of what we consider the ideal spot: a small, quiet village; a clean and traditional pub; a friendly publican; and tasty beer and food. It made Fred wonder if the owner needed an assistant brewer. . .

We visited three other breweries, staying at one of them, but space dictates that we will perhaps tell you about them another time.

I think it would not give a complete view of our trip if we didn't mention a couple of our other pub stops, although they were not breweries. There was The Falcon, a pub high in the Yorkshire Hills where the publican had exactly one beer to offer—gravity-fed from the keg into a pitcher. After years of practice, he had the amazing ability to draw off the exact amount you had ordered, whether it be a pint or pint-and-a-half or more. Then, the Foresters Arms in Carlton was cozied into one of the narrow river dale villages, where the lady publican easily swept us into conversation and made us feel as welcome as her most earnest regular. She loaded us up with wonderful beer souvenirs knowing full well that these Yanks would not be back soon to buy more pints. And there was the wonderful ancient pub in the sleepy countryside of Surrey, not an hour and half from London, where the benches and steps were curved from years and years of thirsty visitors trodding in and settling down to a pint of ale, and where even today, the visitor can sit outside under a canopy of hop vines.

We have said it before and we will say it again: the traditional English pub is one of the



Top: Newby Wyke Brewery in Little Bytham.

Bottom: Authors having a gravity-drawn brew at The Falcon, the pub they visited in the Dales.

Travels With Brewster Cont. on next pg.



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Travels With Brewster Cont. from previous pg.

greatest inventions of the civilized world. It is certainly not simply because it is a place to drink—it is far more than that. With its lack of TV, games, and other noisy distractions, it is at once a place to escape the world, and at the same time have the chance to pass the time in conversation with friends or even to find a new one in a perfect stranger. In one quiet spot we spent an hour chatting politics, news, and sports with a 19-year-old, an experience I cannot imagine having had in a bar at home.

We have learned much, felt most welcome and had the opportunity to discover so much about the English, and in a sense ourselves, in these places. We hope they will long survive.

Until next time, Cheers!

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