

“Preserving The History of Our Nation’s First Major Industry”



National Bottle Museum®

76 Milton Avenue, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Phone: 518-885 -7589

email: nbm@nycap.rr.com

THE BOTTLE MUSE

Winter 2018

Dear Museum Member,

At the Annual meeting on November 12, 2017 Roy Topka had the pleasure to award this years Volunteer of the year award to Meg



*Stevens. We jokingly called it the Volunteer of the **Years** award because there is no one who has devoted more time over the*



years creating a vision and working towards its completion than Meg. We recognize and appreciate Meg for her commitment to the museum.

We have a few goals for this year. The museum windows are getting a facelift with extra attention given to signage. The third floor is being looked at to house the Malcolm Jones Collection donated by Gerard Dauphinais. A long overdue rebuilding of the website is planned. Of course this all requires funding and your membership and donations are crucial to continue these plans for the museum. Except for the Director, Gary Moeller, all work is done by volunteers including the director of the Glassworks Studio, Heather Longacker and director of the JRM Memorial Artisits’ Space, Fred Neudoeffer who both donate countless hours. The time, commitment and enthusiasm of all the volunteers should be commended and I am proud to be associated with such a dedicated group!

So this year will be another busy one. If you have not renewed your membership I ask you to please consider doing so. Thank you for your continued support. You belong to a special, unique group of people!

*Ellie Dillon
Board President*

Board of Trustees

Ellie Dillon, President

Mark Juda

Meg Stevens, Treasurer and administrator

Patti Southworth

Stephanie DelSignore, Secretary

Roy Topka

Phil Bernnard

Museum Director: Gary Moeller

Volunteer Director of Glassworks Studio: Heather Longacker

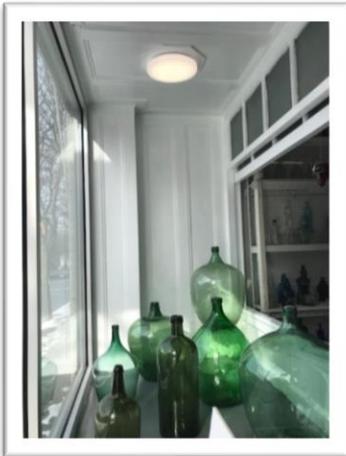
Volunteer Director of The Artists' Space: Fred Neudoerffer

The Annual Meeting was held on November 12, 2017. Stephanie Del Signore and Phil Bernnard were appointed to two year terms on the board. The Budget is in place and is attached at end of newsletter.

**If you would like to serve on the Board please contact the museum:
NBM@nycap.rr.com**

Improvements:

The windows have a new look! Electrical fixtures, paint and new exhibit have given the museum curbside appeal. More changes will include window lettering, new signage and outside painting. Fred Neudoerffer and Ken Hahn worked overtime to ready the windows for the January First Friday activities and Art Opening reception in the Artists' Space. The improvements give the museum a fresh contemporary look. Thank you Fred and Ken. Now Fred has his eyes on upgrading the lighting for the Artists' Space..... Stay tuned!



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As always it is the membership that supports the National Bottle Museum. Thank you. Membership renewals that have come in this quarter:

Benefactors

Johnnie Fletcher

John Pastor

Jeffrey & Aimee Ullman

Darlene Furda

Bob & Diane Puckhaber

Stewart Wagner

Supporters

Rick and Kathy Mattrazzo

Terry McMurray

Miles Cornthwaite

G. Benjamin Bouck

Jon Sterngass

John Rudzinski, Jr.

Rick Hasenauer

Friends

Ellie Dillon

Robert St. Andrews

Fran Martone

Phil Bernard

John F. Tague III

Meg Stevens

Ed Kaminsky

Robert Latham

Richard Vitkay

Kenneth Previtali

David P. Wright

The membership renewal form is attached at end of newsletter. Again, thank for your membership.

THE 2018 SARATOGA BOTTLE SHOW WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY, JUNE 3RD AT THE SARATOGA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS IN BALLSTON SPA, NEW YORK. INFORMATION AND TABLE APPLICATIONS WILL BE MAILED OUT AFTER THE NEW YEAR. IF YOU ARE A NEW VENDOR YOU MAY EMAIL ROY TOPKA AT RMT556@YAHOO.COM OR PHIL BERNNARD AT EXPLOMAR@HOTMAIL.COM

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Museum Director's Report:



The museum continues to be a destination for tourists. This quarter guests visited from 16 states plus Canada and Spain. January, usually a cold slow month saw 61 visitors from four states and 2 Canadian Provinces.

On another note, The National Bottle Museum has gone on the road! Clifton Park /Halfmoon Library's "Friday Morning Free For All" extended an invitation to bring the museum to them. After a well-received lecture followed by questions and answers, I set up an exhibit at the library to be on display for the month. The Christian Women's Club of Saratoga also invited the museum and the traveling box of artifacts to a talk given at the Longfellow's Restaurant. The travel show also visited the Ballston Spa Lions.



On the flip side, the museum hosted the Malta Rotary and The Saratoga Bottle Club at the museum. We welcome road trips and visits from clubs and interested groups.

The Jan Rutland Memorial Artists' Space:

Volunteer Director: Fred Neudoerffer

Currently exhibiting in The JRM Artists' Space are three student artists from Galway High School. The exhibit will run through February 17th. You may contact Fred at fred@neustudios.com for information or on facebook at Jan Rutland Memorial Artists' Space.

The JRM Artists' Space
@ The National Bottle Museum
Presents
**ADULTS
IN
TRAINING**
On Display
January 14th - February 17th

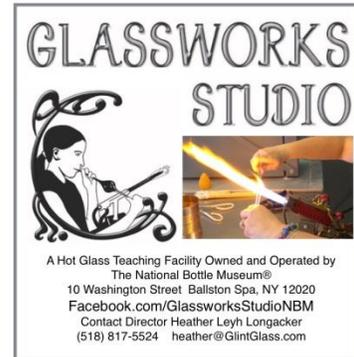
Artists' Opening Reception January 14th 2-4pm
National Bottle Museum
76 Milton Ave
Ballston Spa NY 518-885-7589

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Glassworks Studio:

Volunteer Director: Heather Longacker

Glassworks Studio hosts ongoing classes for teens and adults in hot glass and art forms of all kinds. Special events and demonstrations are regularly held on the First Friday evening of each month. You may contact Heather at heather@glintglass.com for information or on Facebook: glassworks studio at the National Bottle Museum



Digs and and Stories: from the desk of board member Roy Topka:

Be A Boy Scout



When you dig privies, some pits you will remember because they were so good, some because they were so big & empty, and some you cannot forget because of the misery inflicted upon you. One such misery inflicting hole was dug at a construction site in Albany on a cold Sunday morning in January several years go. The story actually starts weeks before, when the excavation crew took over the site. A line of basement holes were being dug, and I asked for permission to check the site after they were done working and if I could pick any bottles they dug up. "Yea, we don't mind if you look when we are done, But I save all the bottles I get my hands on" replied the crew foreman." UHHH - OK, I can live with that." Visiting the site several times when they were working, they found some common bottles and I was able to dig one late 1870's pit for a few McGovern blobs and some Hutch's. The weather had been unusually warm but was now turning colder. I had been unable to visit the site for a week and was on my way into work on a Saturday to work a double into Sunday morning. Knowing I would be *too* tired to do any serious digging in the morning I did not take my truck (full of digging equipment), but I still threw my probe & a shovel into my wife's car so I could stop and poke around, having been under the belief that no new area was going to be excavated. WRONG!! When I drove down the street I could see that over the previous days a large area was taken down a good six feet, and they were digging deeper. DARN. What did I miss? How many bottles destroyed? These are the questions that go thru any diggers head, but don't cry over spilled milk, get it that hole and see what's going on! Into the pit I went. It was all typical Albany clay, wet and sloppy despite the freezing weather. You learn that excavated holes will continue to stay frost free longer than the normal surface, makes sense because they are still releasing heat. Everything in the hole was wet and mucky and oh, I have my work uniform and shoes on. I always leave a change of clothes and have boots in my truck. I spotted wood, mucky ash, and pieces of brick and needed no probe to know it was a privy, and it was filled with water. This was the bottom 3' of a 3' x 6' x 9' deep woodliner, divided in the middle by another wood wall. As is fairly normal in these wet holes, the wood was as solid as the day it was laid in. Divided holes can be funny. Sometimes both sides share equal amounts of trash. Others, one side contains most of the trash. Still others were used at totally different periods of time. I need to know how deep the remainder of the pit is so I probe gently into the muck. There is maybe a foot of watery ash than a plug of clay. I nudge the probe and then "tink", a quick feel of void space, than another tink. I know what

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that was, the sound of two sides of a bottle bustin' out. Rats. Well, at least there's glass. Might as well dig here. Scooping out the ash, each time I lift half falls back down with a splash saturating my pants. Out of the muck ceramics start showing up and two aqua Hoxie Albany bottles with the "H" on the shoulder come out. Good, the stuff is at least early to mid 1860's. Ahead of me is a mixture of ash and clay and water. Normally I would dig a well hole in the muck, use my small pail to transfer the water into my 5 gallon buckets to be dumped a safe distance away. BUT... no truck, no buckets, no pail. I go to the edge of the site and find an old gallon kids beach pail, which I will use to throw water. I dig my well 16 -18 inches and start bailing water, knowing water from the other side and ground water will be filling back in. I'm starting to make a little progress when the brittle plastic bucket breaks. Ok. The only thing to do is dig the slop the best way possible and go for as long as I can. There is a kind of technique to this. I ended up with a deep pool of cream colored water after half an hour or so of shoveling mucky clay. Digging pieces of ceramics I'm fairly sure I'm over the use layer. My clothes are pretty saturated and



freezing up. I need to re-warm as my fingers are numb. Up to the car, throw the emergency blanket over the seat, start er' up and thaw out. On the way back I bring some rags to wrap bottles in in case I find anything good. On the top of the privy it is slick on all sides. I dig a standing area outside the wooden wall and slope it away from the pit so I can maintain traction while scooping downward. This is where things really get messy. I have to work fast and hard as I will get wet and freeze again. Using my shovel as a rake I go from one side to the other to loosen up whatever might be down there. A corked pontil puff floats up to the surface. And then I feel glass in the area where I think I probed through a bottle. Several scoops later I'm looking at all the pieces of what was a beautiful, whittled, early 1860's smooth base demijohn in pink amethyst. Yea, there is always a danger when you probe. Moving as quick as I safely could, there was soon a good size pile of ceramics on the side and some bottles in my rags; 5 plain pontil meds, a green Kinsella Albany beer, and some pontiled Winslow's and Davis Vegetable painkiller bottles. My fingers are numb again but I do not want to stop. All of a sudden the board in the side of the privy my foot is against gives way and my right leg slides into the water up to my thigh. This was not good. Gotta hurry up. Shifting to another side of the pit I go full steam through the mucky water, recovering a few plain pontils, a Dillon stoneware, and a green Hoxie's Premium Beer. I felt I was done on this side of the pit. There was no way I was going to dig the other side. I hoped no one would be working Monday. I was dangerously numb, at least I could leave the hole (ever try to fill in a hole full of water?) and it didn't matter as it would be excavated out. I made it back to my car, ripped off my shoes and turned on the heat. I was too numb to drive and, honestly, scared I had gone too far this time. Defrosting was painful but I was ok. When I got home all my uniform clothes went in the garbage, and I snuck up the back stairs to my room. No way I wanted my wife to see any of this!

Epilogue: the next morning I went back. The crew was there, and they were going to be digging. I showed them the remaining side of the pit, they were amazed, and had no idea the ash they were digging through a few days ago was a privy even though I had explained what to look for. The next morning I got to the site before the crew. They had taken the other side out and spread it around. I noted a freshly broken green Hoxie beer and pulled out of a dirt clump a whole pontil Mexican Mustang Liniment. I have to end this by saying anytime you think you may be digging be prepared!! If I had my truck & equipment I could have done both sides of the hole. Be a Boy Scout!

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NATIONAL BOTTLE MUSEUM®

76 Milton Ave.
Ballston Spa, N.Y. 12020
(518) 885-7589
www.nationalbottlemuseum.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP in the National Bottle Museum is open to one and all in the following categories:

\$20.00 up to \$49.00 ---FRIENDS

\$50.00 up to \$149.00 --SUPPORTERS

\$150.00 and up-----BENEFACTORS

\$500.00 and up-----CORPORATE DONORS

The NATIONAL BOTTLE MUSEUM is a non-profit (501 C-3) educational institution chartered by the Board of Regents of the New York State Department of Education. The museum is not subsidized, but raises all of its own funds and is governed by an elected volunteer Board of Trustees, operating under universally accepted museum policies. Museum is a member of the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association, and the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.

Members receive an annual newsletter containing information on the history of antique bottle manufacturing, identification, and collecting. Each spring, the Museum sponsors a Bottle Show & Sale known as "The Saratoga Show" which attracts enthusiasts from coast to coast in the United States and several provinces of Canada.

PLEASE PRINT NAME & FULL MAILING ADDRESS

Please make checks payable to National Bottle Museum & mail to:

Membership Chairman
National Bottle Museum
76 Milton Ave.
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Name: _____ Phone : () _____

Street or P.O. Box: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ New: _____ Renewal: _____ Gift: _____ Date: _____

Bottle Club (if any): _____ Email Address _____