This year the Rochester Bottle Club celebrates its 50th year. Burton Spiller, a founding member, passed away this spring on March 13, 2019. Dr. Spiller started his hobby of bottle collecting in 1958 at the East Bloomfield Antique Show. Accompanying friends, he felt obligated to buy ‘something’. So Dr. Spiller bought a little bottle. Off to the library to research his purchase he discovered his bottle had some value. Thus the path that Dr. Spiller was to take had been cast! One of his favorite finds was a $1.00 bottle bought in a garage sale which sold in 2000 for $3200.00. Dr. Spiller’s passion for the bottle collecting hobby motivated him to leave a generous annuity to The National Bottle Museum. We at the Museum are very grateful to Dr. Spiller for his vision. His generosity has allowed the National Bottle Museum to continue to thrive.
Things that Sometimes Happen at the Museum

Long-standing museum policy prohibits appraisals, but I am always willing to give an opinion as to whether a bottle would be of interest to a collector. That brings to mind a couple stories, one of which didn’t involve me at all.

Some years ago, when the previous Director, Jan Rutland, was living, (Jan passed away suddenly in 2010) NBM was open 7 days a week from June 1 through the end of September. Generally, Jan worked Saturday and I worked Sunday. We were usually both here on Tuesday.

One Tuesday morning, Jan said to me “Let me tell you what happened Saturday.” A man came in to the museum and asked her if she could tell him anything about a bottle he had found. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out cobalt blue skull bottle. Jan told me she said “First thing I want to tell you is you want to be more careful with that.” She gave him some information, including some prices from price guides, and when he left the bottle was wrapped in tissue paper and bubble wrap.

One day some years later, I was at NBM alone and a man came in asking the same question, can I tell him anything about the bottle he brought in, which was a black-glass mallet. I took him to the collection wall and pointed to one that was nearly identical. I gave him some general information about it, including its possible age and he asked “Can I sell it?” I said of course, but suggested he contact the bottle auctioneers.

Some months later, on another day I was alone at NBM, the phone rings. On the phone is one of the bottle auctioneers, who for this piece shall remain nameless. He asks for me BY NAME. I said “Speaking,” and he then thanked me for referring the “man with the black glass mallet” to him. I told him that I hadn’t referred the gentleman to him, I gave him contact info for all the bottle auctioneers, and apparently the gentleman picked him, to which he responded, “Well, I wanted to thank you anyway.” I’m assuming it commanded a pretty good price.

“I driven by here so many times and never took the time to visit. It really is so interesting. I’m going to be back and bring my husband”
— Kara, Clifton Park NY
NEW DIRECTIONS AND WE ALL ARE EXCITED!

Due to rising maintenance costs, utilities and insurance to both the National Bottle Museum and the Glassworks Studio, it is no longer feasible to effectively maintain both buildings that house the Museum and Glassworks Studio. The Glassworks Studio building has been sold to ensure the National Bottle Museum will be financially secure. The Glassworks Studio will remain in place under new building ownership while the Museum, secure in its future, can continue its mission of preserving the history of bottles and bottle making. The National Bottle Museum and Glassworks Studio will continue partnering on projects and maintain a close working relationship.

The Annual Saratoga Bottle Show provides activities to encourage young bottle enthusiasts! Happy with their grab bag bottle, these children’s faces say it all!

Someone is always on hand to assist the young bottle enthusiast gain information. A big thank you to all volunteers who made the 2019 Saratoga Bottle Show a success!

Please renew your membership for 2019 if you haven’t done so. Form is at end of newsletter and your support is needed and appreciated. Thank you.

DID YOU KNOW

The National Bottle Museum had 178 visitors this month from 17 different states and France.? For a five dollar donation you can adopt an orphan bottle!

Another successful Saratoga Bottle Show is in the books.

See you June 7, 2020!

Contact the National Bottle Museum:
Tel. (518)-885– 7589
Email: nbm@nycap.rr.com
Annual Saratoga Bottle Show - First Sunday in June

The Saratoga Bottle Show put another annual show to rest. The fairgrounds continues to be a great venue to house this annual event. Sales, exhibitors and customers were up from previous years. Thank you Roy Topka and Phil Bernnard for putting on another successful year! Contact Roy for info: rmt556@yahoo

The Jan Rutland Memorial Artists’ Space at the NBM

Director Fred Neudoerffer : fred@neustudios.com

A Successful Art exhibit coincided with the Saratoga Bottle Show last June. The Artists’ Space continues to hang exhibits year round. Visit the second floor to enjoy an art show amid the uranium glass and Saratoga type bottles! Contact Fred for further information.

Roy Topka and Phil Bernnard
Trouble is a brewing!!!
New exhibit at the museum: Fire Grenades loaned by Charles Betts

For the past 6 years The National Bottle Museum has partnered with the Saratoga County Summer Youth Employment Program making the museum home for Saratoga County summer youth interns. This summer is no exception. With three interns busy at work in the museum. Meg Stevens, Museum Trustee, and initiator of the program at the museum, has successfully mentored many teens over these years, teaching them life skills and providing valuable work experience. Thank you, Meg.

Charles Betts, a member of the National Bottle Museum loaned the museum part of his extensive fire grenade collection. In researching this phenomena he discovered the first patent known was given in 1863 to Alanson Crane of Fortress Monroe, Virginia. Hundreds of patents were given between 1870-1885, Harden Hand Fire Extinguisher of Chicago and S,F, Hayward of New York City being the largest. Over time the decorative grenade gave way to a more utilitarian clear round globe filled with carbon tetra chloride which being heavier than air suffocated the flame. Earlier grenades were filled with salt water, bicarbonate of soda or muriate of ammonia.

Charles Betts’ collection will be at the museum till after Fire Prevention Week in the Fall.

Did You Know?

Saratoga Bottle Show

For the second year in a row, Volunteer Director of the Glassworks Studio at the NBM, Heather Longacker has received a grant from The Saratoga County Council for the Arts. Heather received a check for $2,626.00.

The grant will be used to educate and teach multi generational students in flameworking.

Contact the National Bottle Museum:
Tel. (518)-885–7589
Email: nbm@nycap.rr.com
A Plethora of Privies leads to Ponderously Poor Pickings

Greetings all. Yes, I know the title is an alliteration but it kinda rhymes. It rhymes true to the kind of digging I have been having. The digging season started out at the end of March with three privies dug one after the other. The third pit had a few whole pontils. (last dig story Spring Newsletter).

My recent M.O.is I dig what is available to me, somewhat foregoing looking for just pontil age houses. I never go out expecting to find bottles and over the years you learn not to hype yourself up, but you always think if you dig enough holes at least one, based on the law of averages, will contain a bunch of keepers. Written herein is a privy reality.

The week after the hole ending the last story, I dug another early 1860's lot dug, two 4' wood liners, one 1860's the other 1880's... no bottles. Next I searched out a house c.1870, 5' wood liner, disturbed a number of years ago when a water pipe was installed for an outdoor spigot. Driving around Cohoes I got permission for two lots, both had a lot of old fill in the back, but located three more than likely privies, plus two trash pits. On one lot the privy went 7' but never aged past about 1885-1890 and contained only a few slicks. The 2nd lot had an 1880-1890 6 footer absolutely devoid of glass. The 2nd pit on the lot was an 8 footer and showed the lot was older than I thought going back to early 1870's and actually had an old use layer at the base. But it was all busted ceramics, bricks, with a few slicks mixed in. A few pipe bowls were taken home.

The trash pits contained the total of one Albany hutch. Moving back to Albany I secured permission to dig three adjoining lots, two of the houses went back to at least early 1860's and the 3rd was standing by 1876. A total of 5 privies were dug. A loaded 1890's hole had all common stuff, over a dozen each of Dr Kennedy's and Hoods Sarsaparilla taken home, most to be donated. The only keeper was a scarce Albany Cook & Meutch beer. One 7' woody went pontilled but with only 1 whole pontil puff and a hing mold Hazards liquid bluing. The other 3 pits, early 1870's to 1890's holes had a few Albany druggists bottles and Hutch's.

Finally, several more lots to investigate produced little, and I mean a little. An 1890's pit had an old throw, a perfect I.Seymour slip glaze jar, not a rare piece of stoneware but just nice to dig whole, An 1870's pit had a nice yellow utility. Both pits were under 4' deep so it made for some easy digging. The next pit was ugly, going about 8', a typical slimy, wet, clay filled hole with it's floor dropped into the muck to make it more difficult. It went probably pre-1850, but was bottle poor. Glass was only a pontil Dr. Porters but there was a nice N. Mullany stoneware bottle, a fairly rare Albany piece. So that's how it goes, 14 holes in seven weeks, very little to show for it. You don't have to ask if I would do it again, you know I would!!
**Supporters of the National Bottle Museum Dec.-July 2019**

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Without your continued support, the National Bottle Museum would not be able to preserve bottles of historical significance or their history. For this we sincerely thank you.
Support your museums.

12 month membership

Name________________________________________________________

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Membership special: $45.00 includes both museums.

Checks payable and mail to

Brookside Museum 6 Charlton Street, Ballston Spa, NY 1202

Please support the two museums of Ballston Spa, NY, The Saratoga County Historical Society at Brookside and The National Bottle Museum. Support our community. Thank you.
NATIONAL BOTTLE MUSEUM®
76 Milton Ave.
Ballston Spa, N.Y. 12020
(518) 885-7589
www.nationalbottlemuseum.org

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP in the National Bottle Museum is open to one and all in the following categories:
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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 memberships include: The Museum Association of New York, The Southern Adirondack, Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association, and the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.

Members receive our newsletter containing information on the museum and upcoming shows. 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: ( ) __________________

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