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General Admission: \$5
Seniors: \$4
Children 12 and Under:
Free



National Bottle Museum®

Educating the public on the history of bottles and bottle-making



THE BOTTLE MUSE

Spring 2024

2024 SARATOGA ANTIQUE BOTTLE SHOW AND SALE

The 44th Saratoga Bottle Show is a wrap!

The annual major fundraiser for the National Bottle Museum was held on June 2, 2024, and it was another successful event. A huge thank you to our sponsors: Stewart's Shops, Curtis Lumber, and Adirondack Trust Bank. Thank you to the organizers, Roy Topka, Adam Stoddard, and Phil Bernnard. They start planning the event in the fall, attending to every detail, so the event runs smoothly. The rest of the Board of Trustees, Executive Director, and volunteers are always ready to support their efforts. This year set new records with attendance and tables. What fun watching new and old attendees interact and share their purchases. Thank you all for supporting us for another year!

On to the 45th Annual Saratoga Show on June 1, 2025!



FROM BOARD PRESIDENT, ELLIE DILLON



Just when I think our calendar at the museum is full, we add more!

Trustees have taken the museum “on the road” to historical societies, libraries and community events this spring. We have created new partnerships with the community.

These opportunities to reach out to the public encourage young and old to the hobby of bottle collecting and its role in history.

The JRM Artists’ Space on the second floor of the museum hosted 3 shows, 3 artists’ receptions and a collage workshop. There is something rewarding

watching the interaction between visitors and artists which these receptions create. There are new shows about every 6 weeks, year around. The Artists’ Space continues to inspire!

All this activity brings to me this: Please consider being a Trustee or a member of the museum. Becoming a Trustee would be a rewarding opportunity to contribute to the cultural and educational enrichment in the community and beyond. As a Trustee you would have the opportunity to shape the museum’s direction, support its mission and ensure its future. As a a member you would be contributing to its sustainability as well engaging in its history and art. Call the museum today!

Best Regards,
Ellie

BOTTLE SHOW RAFFLES



We held a number of raffles at the Saratoga Show this year. Our first raffle was our membership raffle. All current active members were entered in a drawing to win a Clarke & White Saratoga-type bottle, and we are excited to announce that the winner was Tom Paskewicz! Tom has been involved with the museum since the beginning, and is actually one of our life members! So thanks to Tom for all your support through the years, and congrats on your new bottle!

Another member won the drawing for our three Congressville bottles. Congrats to Vince (pictured to the left), who got to take his bottles home at the show!

Alyssa won the 50-50 raffle. We sold \$164 in tickets for the 50-50, which means she got to take home \$82, and the museum got \$82!

Congrats to all our winners, and thanks to everyone who bought a ticket and supported the museum!

RECENT DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM



The museum has been fortunate to receive a number of smaller bottle donations each month. We are steadily increasing our accessioned collections, with a number of beautiful new bottles joining the shelves.

This quarter, we also received a more unique donation, which greatly expanded our collection of art glass. This donation, from

the collection of Susan G. Keeler, consists of over 100 decorative glass hats. In a variety of colors, designs, and sizes, this collection makes a beautiful addition to the displays on our second floor, by the JRM Artists' Space.

DIGS AND STORIES FROM ROY TOPKA



So finally 2024 arrived. My plans to probe (on my New Years Eve lot where the pontils were dug) were stymied a little by a cold night

& somewhat frozen ground, but mostly because some poor soul was camping right where I wanted to probe. I returned the following week where another slightly later pontil hole was located. There I found a pontil puff among the broken bits.

Another half dozen pits which I had insulated over with leaves produced sparse bottles, but one dated to 1860's. I ended up mostly with hutches, and the weather was actually nice enough that the leaves weren't needed.

Finally, a long awaited construction project started. I kept worrying the ground would freeze over, but like last winter's digging it never happened. Pits were largely destroyed, either from when the area was

torn up years ago, or from the recent construction, leaving the bases covered over by the track hoes moving dirt around. From a total of seven privies found, only two touched pontil age, 3 went to 1880's, and two were turn pits at the base. Since so many of the pits were gone I only found a few pontil slicks, two 1860's Albany stoneware's, a pontiled blue "Parker" soda, & some hutches & beers.

Hope everyone has a great summer with great digging, take care & please consider joining the Bottle Museum



FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KAYLA WHITEHOUSE



Summer is always busier for us here at the museum, and this year is no exception! With the beautiful weather and schools getting out shortly, we expect to see a lot more people in the museum! We've also been working on more events, including some informational workshops, outreach opportunities, and we are working on lining up potential guest speakers for lectures this fall.

Of course, there's always so much going on that it can be hard to choose which events you want to attend. So if there is something that you really want to see here at the Bottle Museum, let us know! We would love to hear from you for suggestions for future events, lecture topics, or displays.

In the meantime, don't forget to check out our social media for any updates here at the museum, and we hope to see you here again soon!

FROM VOLUNTEER DIRECTOR OF THE JRM ARTISTS' SPACE, FRED NEUDOERFFER



As we continue celebrating our 15th year as a regional fine art gallery I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the artists and art patrons that have supported our efforts to share art with the community over these years. We have seen wonderful art and made many new friends along the way. Noticeably, over the last year especially, we have had many new artists, new to us, joining our growing list of regional artists that want to display their creations in our space. Some of the shows we produce repeat over the years with new

themes to keep the shows fresh and we also come up with new ideas for shows that attract new artists and push the window of creativity.

Our final show for the year will be our Summer Open Call show, which will run from July 13 thru September 14, 2024. Last year this show brought together 38 artists showing over 135 works of art. It was a beautiful show. I hope that we can duplicate that kind of response again this year.

Throughout this upcoming show we will invite artists to share their thoughts, processes and joy of creating art through artist talks every other Saturday afternoon during the run of this show. We did this last year and the artists and patrons that participated seemed to enjoy the experience greatly.

We hope that our growth will continue as we prepare for another fabulous year of sharing art and creativity with the Capital Region community.

A METZGER MYSTERY—SOME RESEARCH FROM ROY

While recently digging an 1840s-1850s privy pit in the city of Albany, NY, I came across a small mud filled bottle that at first blush I took for an ink or mucilage container of some sort. Upon examination later at home the bottle was simply embossed on the lower body. "F. H. METZGER", light blue-aqua, blowpipe pontil, measuring 1 7/8 " high and 1 15/16 across, with a neck bore of 1" and an inward rolled lip. The bottle appears well designed to dip a finger or applicator into to remove the contents.

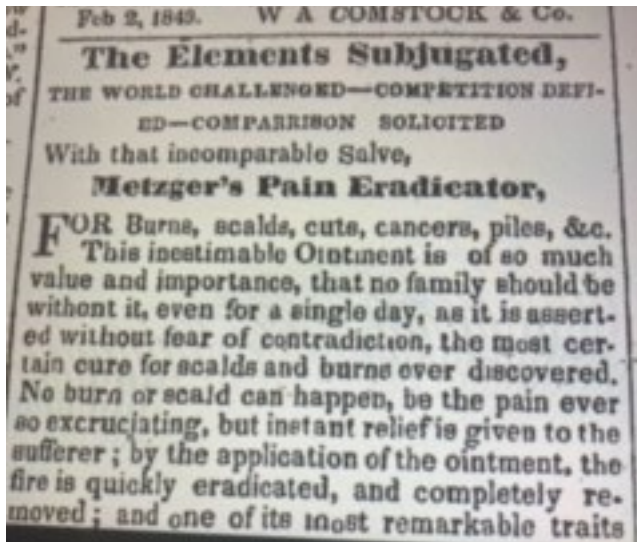
Not being at all familiar with this bottle, my first stop was an internet search. I was unsure how much is known about this bottle, and perhaps there is already a written history, but no matter, I decided to look into it anyways to satisfy my own curiosity. I quickly found a mention in the FOHBC May-June 2007 Regional News section from Minnesota's First Antique Bottle Club; speaking of a picture of an F.H. Metzger's Pain Eradicator Jar and a request for more information on the history of the company. The big question here being, was this identical to my example? Or a different bottle with Pain Eradicator embossing or a label?

I will note now that I will be working backwards somewhat on the timeline of this bottle. Information from the Official Gazette of the U.S. Patent office, Annual Report volume 34, 1886, shows that a William J. Metzger of Minneapolis, Minnesota, registered the label "F.H. Metzger's Pain Eradicator" on February 2, 1886. The Druggist Ready Reference, 1887, from Morrisson, Plummer & Co of Chicago, Illinois listed the Pain Eradicator at a retail price of 50 cents, a dozen at \$3.75. A pamphlet from the Metzger Medicine Co from the early-mid 1890s which was recently offered on eBay listed many of the preparations sold. His Pain Eradicator was "The Great German Healer." He had a pile ointment, Angle & Wormwood Oil



Liniment, Pink Eye and Distemper Cure, Veterinary Ointment, and Lighting Colic Cure. The pamphlet contained all the typical testimonials written to W.J. Metzger that you would expect to see of all the great things that happened after taking Metzger's preparations. A

A METZGER MYSTERY, CONTINUED



January 6th, 1893 issue of the Dakota Farmers Leader, a small paper from Canton, South Dakota had a provisions store offer Metzger's Pain Eradicator, Pile Ointment, and other medicines. I note that the 1887 Druggist Ready Reference only contained the Pain Eradicator, and it is possible the other preparations were not yet offered.

What is unclear is the relationship between F.H. Metzger and W.J. Metzger. Whether they were father-son or some other relation is unknown to me, and further research is needed. Also unknown to me is how long the company stayed in business.

On the other end we know that F. H. Metzger was selling his Pain Eradicator as early as October 7, 1848, as evidenced by ads in The Otsego Democrat, a newspaper published in Cooperstown, NY from 1847-1855. The ads continue until at least the middle of 1849 without variation. While the ad makes all the usual cure-everything claims, the ad states that numerous people have been cured in the cities of New York, Albany, and their vicinity. But more interesting, the ad states the proprietor's store and depot is at No. 54 Beaver Street,

Albany. For reference, the location would have been not too far below today's MVP Arena at 51 South Pearl Street.

So, can this little bottle lay claim to Albany for its origins and as its home in its early years? Right now, I would be a little reluctant to state positively that the F. H. Metzger bottle is an Albany bottle without further proof that Metzger was in Albany, or that the store and depot were not just an outlet for Metzger or someone with rights to sell the preparation; and they lived elsewhere. The last paragraph in the ad is "Jetur Gardiner, General Agent. Sold by P. E. Johnson, Cooperstown; - and also by all of Dr. Perkins' agents" (there is a Dr. Perkins Syrup Albany NY bottle). There is a large hole in the history (at least to me) of F. H. Metzger from the 1850s going into the 1880s when it is apparently in the hands of W. J. Metzger in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Just to state what may or may not be obvious, the chances of the Pain Eradicator originating from around the Minneapolis area are slight, as in the late 1840s much of that area was still being settled.

If anyone can fill in this rather large hole with information or anything applying to Metzger being in Albany is known, please send it to the National Bottle Museum or myself.

—Roy

UPCOMING EVENTS

We have a lot of events coming up in the next few months here at the museum, and we hope that you will be able to join us!

Some of our volunteers and trustees will be doing outreach events. Last year we held a couple of BYOB (Bring Your OLD Bottle) events at the Real McCoy Brewery in Ballston Spa, and they were very successful, so we will be at the brewery again on June 29 as a pop-up identification event.

We will have a table at the Saratoga County Fair to discuss how to tell the age of a bottle,

and an outreach table at the Troy Farmers' Market on Saturday, July 27.

We also have a number of workshops that will be held at the museum in coordination with local businesses. Check our social media for more information!

Also, this summer there will be a number of Artists' Talks in the JRM Artists' Space during the Summer 2024 Open Call Show. Email Fred at fred@neustudios.com to get on the mailing list for the gallery and learn more!

STATE BOTTLE—MAINE



Collectors in the state of Maine chose a well-known figural bottle made to sell the spring water from their famous Poland Spring.

There were several glass houses which produced the Poland Spring Water Bottle. A glass factory near Hartford, CT may have made the earliest ones. The Salem (NJ) Glass Works was a major long-time producer of the Moses

bottles, and after 1906, the Cunningham and Company factory in Pittsburg made facsimile or reproduction ones.

The bottle features the figure of the bearded man seated on a rock. The company official said the inspiration definitely came from Exodus 17:6 and Numbers 20:11—"Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." ... "And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he

smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and the beasts also."

All the different styles in different years were produced by Poland Spring for specific reasons. An original Moses bottle means any Moses bottle made before the Automatic Bottling Machine, in line on back base identifying H. Ricker & Son, Proprietors, embossed Poland Water on front "legs," and Poland Mineral Water Spring seal on back shoulders. Since 1906, facsimile bottles, some 40 different variants, have been produced, in various sizes and colors, and for liquor, mostly gin, but some whiskey, too. In the 1970s, a screw top emerald green fifth was still being used. Even Czechoslovakian glass houses made some copies, mostly of poor quality and in odd bright colors that make it fairly easy to differentiate from the real Moses bottle.

Altogether, the Maine bottle is well identified with a famous mineral spring in Poland, Maine, it was widely distributed and is well known, and to cap it all, it is a beautiful bottle, and full of character. It most certainly added to the success of the Poland Spring.



National Bottle Museum

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(as of 6/2024)

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