

Contact Us

Phone: (518) 885-7589

Email: info@nationalbottlemuseum.org

Facebook and Instagram
[@NationalBottleMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/NationalBottleMuseum)

www.nationalbottlemuseum.org

Trustees and Directors

Executive Director: Chris Leonard

President: Ellie Dillon

Vice President: Phil Bernard

Secretary: Shirleyan Ebert

Treasurer: Eve Lansing

Trustee: Adam Stoddard

Trustee: Kayla Whitehouse

Trustees Molly Bingham

Volunteer Director of JRM Artists"
Space - Fred Neudoerffer

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

Winter 2025

Ralph Work Collection gets a new home

The National Bottle Museum houses the extensive Ralph Work Saratoga Type mineral bottle collection. For many years the bottles were displayed in the original cases from Ralph's home.



When it was time to update the display with modern back lit lighting to show the



beauty of the glass, the Saratoga Bottle Club stepped in!

We are grateful to Jeff Ullman, Jim Bender and the club for this very generous donation of skills, time and money. The cabinets are almost complete. The original cabinets can be seen throughout the museum to house other exhibits.

From the Desk of the Executive Director, Chris Leonard

Hi, I'm Chris Leonard, the New Executive Director of the National Bottle Museum. I started in October and want to thank Kayla Whitehouse for her excellent work during her tenure as director. The museum is on solid footing thanks to her work.



I come to the NBM with backgrounds in marketing, history and content creation. I serve as the city historian of Schenectady, NY and sit on the board of the Schenectady County Historical Society. I am an adjunct lecturer in the Archaeology Department at SUNY Schenectady and write for the Daily Gazette of Schenectady.

In my short time here, we've refurbished or replaced many of the standing exhibits and are working to make the museum more interactive and family friendly. We've added some 400 items to our permanent collection and are planning to add greater value to your membership in the museum. Look for big changes to come in soon, and don't forget that the Saratoga Bottle Show and Sale is on June 1st.

“I’ve lived here in Ballston Spa all my life and every time I drive by the museum I’ve wanted to stop... well here I am and can’t believe I waited so Long! “

Sarah from Ballston Spa, NY

WAMC came to the Museum on Valentines day to interview and visit the museum! stay tuned.

FROM BOARD PRESIDENT, ELLIE DILLON



The Museum closed its doors for the first two weeks of January. During that time our board and volunteers did a major rehaul and arranging of the museum exhibits. Old, dark cabinets were replaced with lighted open glass cases back lit so the beauty of the glass can be appreciated. Updated signage educates the visitors and new exhibits have given the museum a new face. It is the board and volunteers who deserve a grateful shoutout of thanks. Under the watchful eye of our Executive Director, Chris Leonard, they used their carpentry skills and creative juices to ready the museum to open its doors again to the public.

January kicks off our membership drive. Please consider renewing your membership on line or by mail.

We thank you in advance.

Ellie

STATE BOTTLE— Missouri

Cider companies in St. Louis, Missouri only existed for a short time during the 1870s. One such company was The Jos. Werner & Company located at 1324 - 27 South 7th Street. The site today is occupied by a Convention Center. Their amber ciders are rare but the National Bottle Museum’s bottle has one of only three olive green bottles known to be in existence, according to Verna Wagner. (collector)

The bottle is embossed with OHIO CIDER, Jos. Werner & Co St Louis, Mo.

It had to be strong and tough to contain a fermented beverage and survive the rigors of pre 20th century travel. In the early 1800’s bottles for beer, ale, porter and cider were usually from cheap black or green glass—called junk bottles. Today, we treasure their beautiful colors and hand crafted looks.



This February, the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association hosted its 11th annual Chocolate Fest in the Village of Ballston Spa. The National Bottle Museum opened its doors to chocolate and visitors. We welcomed over 300 visitors for the event. From comments overheard, the majority of visitors were first timers!

UPCOMING EVENTS

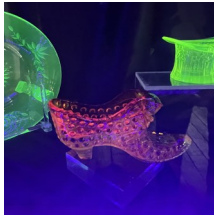
First Thursday of each month – Board Meeting at the museum. 6:30.

Feb, 18th – Tour for SUNY Archeology Class

March 5th– Presentation-Rotary Breakfast, 7am at Whitehouse Restaurant, Ballston Spa

TBD - Lecture at museum on bottle closures

June 1st– Saratoga Antique Bottle Show and Sale held at Saratoga County Fairgrounds



Visit our new Uranium Glass exhibit!



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



The JRM Artists' Space is a regional art gallery located on the second floor of the National Bottle

Museum. The "Artists Space" features changing exhibits of important artwork in diverse styles, ranging from post impressionism to folk art, once again representing the art, history, and technology inherent in all things created by hand.

This winter the Artists' Space displayed the Winter Invitational Art Show featuring 9 Artists selected by the Board of Trustees at the museum. The reception created an opportunity for both visitors and artists to share their love of art.



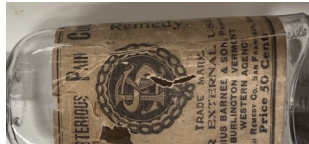
ON OUR DOORSTEP.....

Two noteworthy donations to the museum this quarter are a quack medicine and an Albany mineral water bottle.

The quack medicine bottle has a paper label touting it as a mysterious pain cure and a scotch remedy. This seems to be self explanatory..... However the blob top mineral water, embossed with Hennessy and Nolan, Albany NY has an embossed building with Empire State trade mark on backside. Can you identify the building?

Perhaps you can add to the information of these two finds.

Email us! info@nationalbottlemuseum.org



A Youthful Perspective.....

Sophie Kaspar, a junior at The Hotchkiss School, would like to study Art Conservation and Global Sustainability

On Thanksgiving Day 2022, while most people were carving turkey and passing around family traditions, my grandmother, Ellie Dillon, brought me to the National Bottle Museum. Instead of a crowded dining table, I found myself in a hushed room bathed in light, surrounded by hand-blown glass bottles that shimmered like tiny artifacts frozen in time.

Walking through the museum, I couldn't look away from the vibrant colors and delicate forms of the bottles. As an artist, I saw more than functional containers. These were masterpieces—crafted with precision, meant to endure, each one whispering stories of its time. The way light refracted through the glass, the imperfect curves, the fragile strength—it all felt like poetry. When you view objects as an artist, they demand more from you: they ask you to see beauty, purpose, and legacy all at once. I couldn't stop wondering: when did we stop valuing things like this? Glass bottles, so durable, reusable, and beautiful, have been part of human history for millennia. Yet somewhere in the mid-20th century, we exchanged them for plastic: light, cheap, disposable. Revolutionary, yes, but now we're drowning in its aftermath. How did we let go of something so timeless, so sustainable?

That Thanksgiving visit hasn't left me. Since then, I've been painting a still life inspired by the museum's collection, a way to immortalize those bottles and imagine a world where we cherish what we create. Each brushstroke feels like a quiet rebellion against the culture of disposability, an ode to a time when beauty and practicality coexisted. The deeper I dived into this project, the clearer it's become: plastic isn't just a material—it's a mindset. It's convenience at the expense of care, a trade-off my generation now wrestles with. Standing in that museum, I realized the solution isn't just about recycling or replacing plastic. It's about fundamentally rethinking how we create and consume. It's about choosing what lasts, valuing what we make, and intertwining beauty and sustainability once more.

That quiet dialogue—born in a room full of glowing bottles—hasn't stopped. I hope it never does. Maybe it's that whisper of insight that will guide us toward a future where our creations, like those glass bottles, stand as reflections of our best selves.



DIGS AND STORIES FROM ROY TOPKA'S SHOVEL

A prerequisite to being a bottle digger is the enjoyment of not knowing. You have to understand it is a blessing. If you knew what lay under foot you might never dig. So it was the last quarter of 2024 I lined up a series of digs, plus spur of the moment spots, ending up digging 15 privies before January 1st. You never know how a dig will end up, but experience gives you a rough idea. Out of several c 1865 - 1875 pits the best find was only one aqua Hennessy & Nolan 1876 Ginger ale. The next 4 pits, one after the other, all had one thing in common: all were converted into flushers, meaning modern plumbing was installed. These privies. All located near to or attached to the backs of their respective houses, served until a proper indoor toilet was installed. One of the pits wasn't filled in until the 1920's. It's not unusual to find a converted pit. Digging four in a row is. All of these pits did not have a good feel to them, but you dig them anyway, as you just don't know what could be in there. More pits were dug with the best stuff being a Warner's and some local gravitating stopper bottles. The last holes of the year, just before Christmas, went pontiled but void of bottles. One interesting pontil was found, embossed simply "H. W & Co / N.Y." This is for Heath Wynkoop & Company, listed in business from 1855 - 1862, as Perfumers.* So that was it for the year. Probing has already begun for 2025.



* information courtesy of the Federation of Historic Bottle Collectors Virtual

Museum website

Once again the National Bottle Museum participated in Chocolate Fest, an annual event sponsored by the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association, in Ballston Spa, NY. Estimated crowd of almost 400 visitors had the opportunity to free admission, and chocolate. "I always wanted to visit" to "I Never knew this existed" was overheard all evening. Many didn't realize that the JRM Artists' Space, a premier regional gallery is located on the second floor of the museum. The museum also hosted a table for the Ballston Spa Committee on the Arts. A successful event for all!



NEW EXHIBIT!

When we closed in early January to refurbish the museum, we created several new exhibits. Here is one of them!

SPOUTING SPRINGS

Just South of Saratoga Springs multiple mineral water wells were drilled that produced large fountains of water. The area became known as "The Geysers". Underground carbonic acid gas is what powered the geysers. By 1900 widespread extraction of the gas itself led to a depletion of some springs. In 1909 New York State took over control of many of the wells in order to protect the resource. These bottles and images represent activity from 1870 to present. Many of the earlier bottles displayed were made in the Congressville Glass Works a short distance away.



National Bottle Museum

76 Milton Ave
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

518-885-7589

info@nationalbottle.museum.org

www.nationalbottlemuseum.org

It's that time of
year...
Don't forget to
renew your
membership.

The museum
appreciates your
support!

Memberships, Donations, and Grants

GRANTS AND ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Village of Ballston Spa Town of Milton
Charitable Donation—Nancy Voehringer

MEMBERSHIPS

BENEFACTORS

Jim Bender
Robert & Diane Puckhaber
Somers Antique Bottle Club

Jeffrey Ullman
Stewart Wagner
Capital Region Antique Bottle Club

SUPPORTERS

Janice Badkin
Sander Bonvell
Deborah Cangi
Ralph & Janet Finch
David Foley
Richard Hasenauer
Jim Healy
Vance Heroth
Sherry Hoffman
Angela Iacolucci
George & Sara Kolesar

Liz Kormos
David Krzemien
Kevin Kuhne
Robert Latham
Fran Martone
Jack and Jan McEneny
Terry McMurray
David Mytych
Mike Polak
Judy Prevratil
Robert Rasera

John & Sue Rudzinski
John Shaver
Laura Silver-Kuhne
David Smith
Meg Stevens
Adam Stoddard
Ron Tetrault
Roy Topka
David P. Wright
Mark Yates
Stephen Youker

FRIENDS

John Ackner
Phil Bernnard
Molly Bingham
Thomas Blaber
Elizabeth Brennan
Linda Brown
Judith Bunzey
Amber Chaves
William Clarke
Mark Desiderio
Gerald Dexter
Ellie Dillon
Kevin Dillon
James Finnance
Victoria Garlandia

Anna Goldberg
Jennifer Greenwood
Art Gueguen
Ed Holmes
Vince Holmes
Fran Hughes
Ed Kaminsky
Chris Leonard
Lorraine McConnelee
Gary Moore
Rebekah Mortiz
David Mosher
Jim Nolan
Carmel Patrick
Matthew Paul

Roger J. Peets
Carl Puckhaber
Leigh Rathner
Nancy Repp
Cindy Rosenberg
Richard Rosenen
Sarah Schiavi
Anna Scott
Rich Strunk
Audrie Sturman
Cynthia Anne Tiogar
Barbara Trypaluk
Karin Welsh
Joel Willems
Randy Woodbeck

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of Sonny and Joan Tyler



National Bottle Museum

76 Milton Ave
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

518-885-7589

info@nationalbottle.museum.org

www.nationalbottlemuseum.org

Memberships, Donations, and Grants

(as of 6/2024)

MEMBERSHIPS

LIFE MEMBERS

Michael & Rise Anderson
James G. Becker
Michele Braidwood
Jimmy Breen
Joan C. Cabaniss
Ruth C. Cantu
Quincy & Phyllis Chamberlin
Robert & Phyllis Christ
Eric Corria
Edward K. Crowley
Earl D. Dalh
Gerard Dauphinais
Joseph De Lengyel
John DeGraft
Charlotte Dell
Art Dell, Jr.
Ralph Finch
Ralph Fletcher
Samuel Fuss
Charles & Mary Garner
Deborah S. Glasgow
Leo G. Goudreau, Jr.
Gary & Joanne Gugino
James & Janice Hagenbush
Randy & Jan Haviland
Norman C. Heckler
Richard C. Hillenbrand
Robert Houseman
James & Helen Jacobs
Ann S. Jacobs
Steve Ketcham
Gottlieb & Gloria Kim
James Kurtz
Victor & Betty Landis
Larry & Dee Lawrence
William Lecki
George G. McConnell

Joseph & Mary Miller
George & Gwen Mills
Charles G. Moore
Linda & Daniel J. Murphy
George & Dorothy Oglesby
John & Claudia Panek
Thomas M. Paskiewicz
Louis Pellegrine
Frank & Fran Peters
Rosemary Poskus
Lisa M. Puckhaber
Carl & Katherine Puckhaber
Ron Rainka
Jack & Margo Richards
Carol Richardson
Robert & Marie Saxe
Tim Schuck
Stanley & Isabel Sherwood
Kenneth & Donna Sosnowski
Jacob Starman
Gary T. and Marilyn Stephenson
Dick Stockton
Margie Stockton
Barbara Stofer
Sharon Strach
JoAnn Todd
Philip Toussaint
James Wagner
Rayburn & Ether Weimer
Frances Whetzel
Dorothy K. White
Donald C. & Betty M. Whiteman
William & Loretta Zimmerman
Larry E. Zirbes



NATIONAL EST. 1978
BOTTLE MUSEUM

76 Milton Avenue, Ballston Spa, NY 12020
518.885.7589 www.nationalbottlemuseum.org

Membership Renewal Form:

Annual Membership in the National Bottle Museum is open to one and all in the following categories:

- \$20 to \$49 – **Friends**
- \$50 to \$149 – **Supporters**
- \$150 to \$499 – **Benefactors**
- \$500 and up – **Patrons**

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. The Museum is a member of the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association, the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, and the Museum Association of New York.

Members receive a quarterly newsletter containing information on the museum, and the history of glass bottle manufacturing, identification, and collecting. Each June, 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 AND FULL MAILING ADDRESS

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

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

Name:		Phone:	
Address:			
City:		State:	Zip:
Email Address:			
Amount Enclosed: \$	Circle One: New / Renewal	Gift:	Date:
Bottle Club (if any):			