



## GREATER CHICAGO INSULATOR CLUB NEWSLETTER

Rick Soller, Executive Interim Managing Editor

Volume 28, Number 3  
March 2020



---

### **New Embossing Reported**

On Sunday, March 8, 2020, I received a call and later some pictures documenting what seemed like a new embossing on a CD 102. Josh had purchased a local collection of bottles and happened to ask the seller if he also had insulators. He did and Josh bought them too.

Most of the insulators were common but one stood out as intriguing. The particular insulator had a Christian cross on the dome but no other embossing. The Christian cross consists of two crossed lines as opposed to a Maltese cross, a German iron cross, an ankh or other types of crosses. In the listings under "PATENT-OTHER," three embossing indexes ( [100], [110], and [120] ) list a Christian cross as part of the embossing but all of these also include patent dates. A careful examination by Josh and an inspection of the pictures by me found no other embossing. In addition, the insulator had a mold line over the dome (MLOD) and had typical features of a Brookfield insulator. Was this insulator made before the March 25, 1870 patent date was added to the mold? Maybe this insulator would be worth as much as \$100!

As I was writing this report, it finally dawned on me why the piece was not listed in the PATENT-OTHER section. (Do you know why?) The answer is that both of us were looking in the wrong place. We should have looked in the NO NAME section and when I looked there a day later, I found three variations in the listing.

### **Interesting Recent Finds**

Club members recently reported several interesting finds besides the one reported above. Both finds came from Wisconsin. One report came from Wyatt Johnson and the second came from Rick Soller.

Wyatt recently emailed that he bought a deceased lineman's collection who worked for Wisconsin Electric in Milwaukee. In the collection was a U-401 as well as two Locke catenary spools. To date, the U-401s all seemed to come out of the St. Louis, Missouri area but now there is one other place where they were apparently used. I'm looking forward to learning what else was in the collection.

The second report, from Rick Soller, was found in a Milwaukee-area antique store. While passing out postcards for the now cancelled Wheaton show, Rick found a U-243 with an incuse marking on the dome of MAR 23 Rec'd. This was an unreported Pittsburg High Voltage Insulator Company date code and is now listed on Elton Gish's web site of known date codes ([www.r-infinity.com](http://www.r-infinity.com)). Rick has collected porcelain for over 50 years and indicates that this is only the second unipart signal style he owns with a Pittsburg date code. Rick indicated he visited ten different antique stores over a 2-week period in April and only found the one good insulator.

### **Delayed Print Delivery**

If you have this newsletter sent to you via the USPS, you are getting it late because I did not want to leave the house to make photocopies and get exposed to the coronavirus.

## **Show Cancellations**

Bob Stahr and Rick Soller are sorry to announce that the April 4, 2020 Dupage Collectors Expo has been cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Wheaton, Illinois show is thought of as a national show for lightning rod collectors and a major show for insulator collectors.

The cancellation occurred in phases. First, there were the warnings about the illness in China. The illness eventually reached the U.S. and spread. As the illness spread, there were limitations placed on the size of gatherings that started at 250 people, then dropped to 50, then to 10, and eventually to the governor ordering people to stay at home.

Next year, dealer set-up for the show is scheduled for Friday, April 9, 2021 and the show is set for Saturday, April 10, 2021. This is a week later than usual in order to avoid holding the show on Easter weekend.

Show cancellations in the Midwest started with the March 9, 2020 announcement that the March 21 Platte City, Missouri show was no longer going to be held. Several shows cancelled soon after this: Wheaton's April 4 show, West Leechburg's (PA) April 4 show, Coon River's (MN) April 11 show, and the Mohican Country Insulator Show (OH) of July 23.

At this point, several shows are still on the books. These include the Columbia City show planned for May 1-2, the Tama, Iowa show scheduled for May 30, and the National show in Utah on the books for June 12-14, among others.

## **Harry Potter, the Insulator Collector**

By Rick Soller

As Harry Potter aged, and with his nemesis Voldemort long gone, his interest turned to items of triviality. His hope was to finally enjoy a life without the fear of "he who must not be named." In turning his mind toward the daily life of non-magical folk, he recalled how his Aunt had placed several colorful glass insulators in her kitchen window: Purple, green, aqua, clear, and amber. The thought made him smile and the memory made him an insulator collector.

Being a wizard was quite advantageous to someone who collects insulators. It could also be quite adventurous as hordes of glass knobs were coveted by some magical creatures, or since complex magical spells could be cast to recover the messages that passed through the silent sentinels of silicon. This essay, however, is merely about how a fabulous wizard like Harry used his magic to build a fantastic collection. These tales of adventure will have to be told another time.

The room of requirement. As even mud-bloods know, the size of a person's collection expands to the amount of space available. Realizing this from the start, Harry the collector created his own room of requirement, much like the same room at Hogwarts. The task did require some investigation of the spell used to create the Hogwarts room, but once the intertwining webs of magic were followed, Harry was able to make his own. It was a room of infinite shelving for his soon-to-be personal museum.

The oculus reparo spell. In their first meeting, Hermione Granger repaired Harry's glasses with the oculus reparo spell. Although the spell was specific to glasses, the spell was easy to adjust to repair any glass. While hunting for insulators in antique stores, Harry often found a piece that interested him but there would be a chip, ding, ping, or crack that would have caused annoyance whenever he looked at it. With a wave of his wand, however, and the stern command, "Vitrum Reparo!" the glass would be returned to mint condition.

Time turning device. Soon after Harry began his pursuit of insulators, he found a postcard in an antique shop announcing an insulator show in the heart of muggle society – Springfield,

Ohio. Walking into the show hall that first time in early November was almost overwhelming. Soon he was meeting other collectors who would become life-long friends: Bob Stahr, Rick Soller, Dave Shaw, Dave French, John Hovanek, Dale Glendenning, Dwayne Anthony, Bill Rohde, Tom & Linda Katonak, Ron Yuhas, Ken Willick, Elton Gish, Bob & Caroline Berry, Darryl Wagner, and many more. Luckily, Harry had borrowed the time turning device housed at Hogwarts so he could enjoy the show experience over and over (as long as he didn't run into himself). Thus, he was able to talk to several collectors at the same time. The device became especially useful when he heard Jim Colburn, noted lightning rod insulator collector, talking about an especially rare LRI he scooped up at the beginning of the show. A little prodding of Jim for information on when and where the prize was found plus a couple turns of the time turning device and Harry was the one bragging about the treasure. Unfortunately, Harry was definitely NOT ALLOWED to borrow the device from Hogwarts again due to an unfortunate incident in the parking lot.

Felix felicitis potion. Better known as "Lucky Potion" or "Liquid Luck," Harry occasionally brewed up a batch of the potion before attending a show and took a swig as the doors opened. It never failed that he was able to easily find his table and quickly set-up. Then the really good luck would start to happen. Sometimes it would be that a walk-in with a rare insulator would go right to his table and Harry would make a deal for a piece he needed for his collection. Sometimes it would involve finding a piece on another dealer's table that was a bargain. Sometimes Harry wasn't even aware of his good luck such as the time when he bent down to get a box under his sales table and a talkative collector missed Harry and latched onto the dealer at the next table.

The stupify spell. Harry swears he has never used the stupefy spell on a muggle at a show. The Ministry of Magic seriously questioned him on this subject once when they received a report that some of the collectors at a show seemed to be seriously impaired. Harry was cleared, however, after close observation of those suspected of being charmed were found to still be that way long after the spell would have worn off.

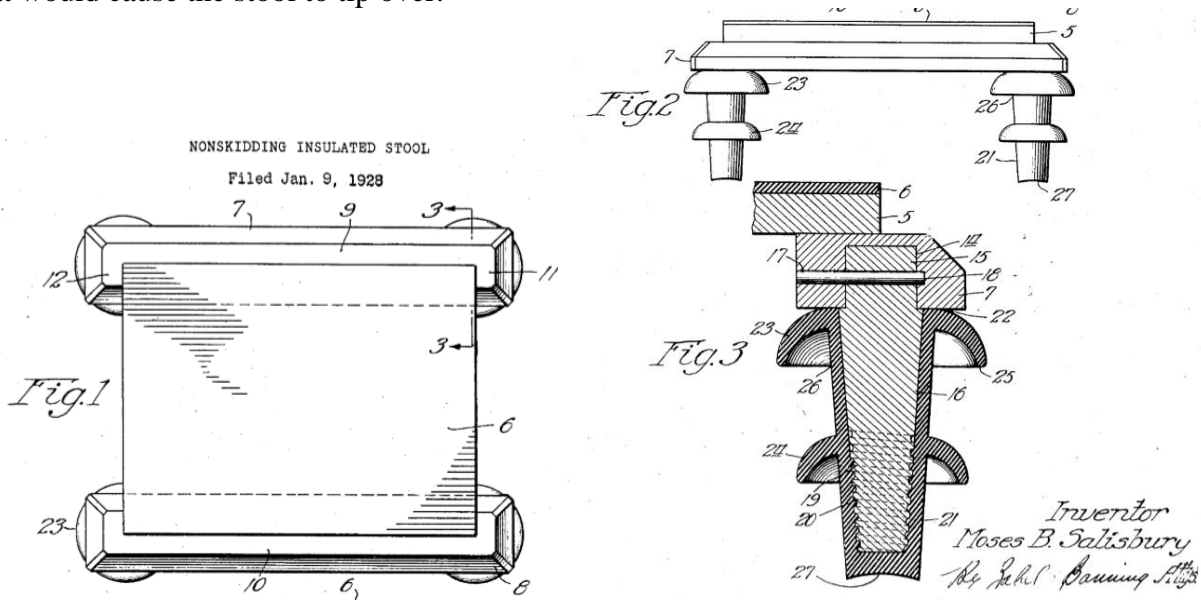
Gillyweed. Who do you think discovered the cache of threadless insulators in Mobile Bay in Alabama? If you Google "Mobile Bay threadless insulator" you can find reports of the find but none of the reports list the name of the finder. After eating some gillyweed, Harry grew gills that enable that hunt. Fearing someone might have learned he was a wizard; however, he used an amnesia charm to hide his secret on those who learned it.

Cloak of invisibility. Harry didn't want his first visit to the Mid-Ohio show to end so he brought his cloak of invisibility with him during the trip. As the doors closed on the show, Harry donned his cloak and roamed the rows to closely inspect all the wares on dealer tables. A guard was also locked in the hall and caught glimpses of tablecloths being pulled back, insulators hovering in air, or sounds of a chair moving but never suspected someone was there. The beer the "guard" was drinking was blamed for the aberrations.

Conclusion. The world of Harry Potter the insulator collector involves much more than can be printed here. There is the nightmare involving Dementors, how his magic broom was used to clear areas around pole stubs, mishaps with a finding spell (can koozies are also called insulators), getting tricked by a love spell coated on an insulator, and the creation of box that new collectors look into and find out what kind of insulators they will collect. Hopefully these stories can be told some day. Harry is a good friend of mine so has allowed me to tell some of them.

## Moses B. Salisbury

On November 5, 1929, Moses B. Salisbury was issued letters patent 1,734,597 for a nonskidding insulated stool. The legs of the stool consisted of a black rubber insulator with a bevel on the bottom of the insulator to create a suctioning effect with the floor, so the stool does not slip. The insulator also has “umbrellas” to provide dry spots in case the stool has water dripping off it. There is a rubber mat on top of the stool to provide additional insulation. A bevel on the side of the stool keeps someone from standing too close to the edge of the stool in a way that would cause the stool to tip over.



Salisbury patented several other inventions designed to provide greater safety to linemen. A company was created around these products with his family name on the company. Eventually the company was purchased by Honeywell but the Salisbury name is still used on electrical safety equipment.

I own one of these insulated stools. It is exactly as the patent drawing depicts. The insulators have the Salisbury name on them. I haven't seen one of the insulators nor a stool for sale in over 20 years, however.

<p><b>MOSES B. SALISBURY</b>          Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.  <b>CHICAGO, Dec. 31</b>—Moses B. Salisbury, retired president of a rubber products company, died in the Mercyville Sanatorium yesterday. He was 71 years old. Mr. Salisbury was chairman of the board of W. H. Salisbury &amp; Co., a rubber manufacturing firm. He was also an inventor of electrical devices. A son, William H., and a sister, Mrs. Urlaville Decker, survive.</p>	<p>The New York Times of January 1, 1951 reported his death in a terse obituary on page 17 as shown to the left.</p> <p>The Mercyville Sanatorium was in Aurora, Illinois and run by nuns. It was the first privately run psychiatric institution in the state.</p> <p>The W.H. Salisbury company traces its roots to an 1855 rubber making company. In 1880, the W.H. Salisbury Company was incorporated from these early beginnings. In 1922, the company began making a full line of safety gear for the utility industry.</p>
--	---

### **McAbee v. IRS (1945)**

An interesting question for those who collect Hemingray insulators is how much did Owens-Illinois pay to buy the company. On about April 25, 1933 Owens-Illinois finalized the deal. It wasn't until November 28, 1945 that details of the transaction could be found in the court case of Philip W. McAbee, Petitioner, et al., v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue. The court case dealt with the tax treatment of money and stocks received by stockholders. In considering the case, some interesting details about the business were disclosed.

For 80 years, the Hemingray Company stayed in family hands. However, in April 1933, the company was in serious financial difficulty. According to the decision in the case, Hemingray "lacked working capital and owed approximately \$250,000" (p. 1133) because of shrinking demand for insulators. Executives of the company were looking for a way to merge with a larger and stronger company so they might "retire from its operation without embarrassment or apology."

Phillip McAbee was the president of the company and negotiated a deal that valued the company at a value of at least \$833,734 assuming an O-I stock price of \$42. The actual deal involved each shareholder of Hemingray stock getting four shares of Owens-Illinois stock for every one share of Hemingray stock they owned. Shareholders owned 2500 shares of Hemingray stock so received 10,000 O-I shares. In addition, Owens-Illinois included 7,827 additional shares plus \$85,000 in cash as part of the deal. This money and the shares would be used to pay off the debt the company owed (13,127 shares + cash), pay a broker's commission (2,200 shares), and compensate McAbee and the secretary-treasurer of the company, Williard P. Zimmerman for their efforts. On April 19, 1933, O-I stock was valued at \$47.5625/share; at \$48.75 on April 25, 1933; and @ \$56.875 on June 3, 1933. Using this last price, 17,827 shares = \$1,013,910.62.

### **Upcoming Shows**

#### **Wheaton, Illinois**

**Saturday, April 4, 2020**

Cancelled. Will next year on April 10, 2021

#### **West Leechburg, Pennsylvania**

**Saturday, April 4, 2020**

Cancelled

#### **Coon River, MN**

**Saturday, April 11, 2020**

Cancelled.

#### **Columbia City, Indiana**

**Friday & Saturday, May 1-2, 2020**

Free Admission, free appraisals, and free air too! at the annual Columbia City, Indiana Insulator, Fruit Jar, Bottle & Collectibles show to be held at the Whitley County 4H Center, 581 Squawbuck Road, Columbia City, IN on May 1-2. Plenty of parking. Friday dealer setup Noon to 3 PM, Public 3 - 5:00 PM, Pizza 5:00 PM, BRING SOMETHING FOR THE SHOW & TELL at 5:30 PM, Saturday Dealer setup 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM, Public 8:00 AM until the last dealer leaves. First dealer table \$28, 2/\$48, 3/\$60, 4/\$75, 5/\$80, 6/\$85. For info on discounts on local hotels email Gene Hawkins at: [gene.hawkins@mchsi.com](mailto:gene.hawkins@mchsi.com) or call (574) 377-0171.

**Tama, Iowa****Saturday, May 30, 2020**

The 23rd Annual Hawkeye State Insulator Swap Meet will be held on Saturday, May 30th at the Tama Civic Center from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Tama Civic Center is located at 305 Siegel Street in beautiful downtown Tama, Iowa. Those dealers planning on setting up can do so starting at 7 a.m. There will be no cost to those who plan on attending and there will be a lunch provided around noon. This annual event is well attended by collectors from the Hawkeye state as well as our friends from neighboring states. The relaxed atmosphere is enjoyed by all. There will also be an auction scheduled with part of the proceeds going to support this show. Donations towards this event are welcome. We are again looking forward to hosting you and provide some Hawkeye hospitality here in the Midwest. For any additional information and table reservation, please contact DAVE SHAW at (641) 484-5463 or e-mail at [dashaw@mchsi.com](mailto:dashaw@mchsi.com). Please note the show is scheduled a week earlier than usually as a courtesy to those attending the national.

**Berkley, Michigan****Saturday, June 6, 2020**

The 3rd annual swap meet is on again but with a new location and the same day as the St. John Woods neighborhood garage sale. A 1 hour drive north of the Ohio border on I-75. Set up is free, please bring your own tables. Some food will be provided, not necessary but if you like, bring a dish to pass. Show location: 3518 Cumberland Road, Berkley MI, 48072, show time 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact information: Curtis Erickson (248) 515-4612 or [crerickson1@gmail.com](mailto:crerickson1@gmail.com)

**Logan, Utah****Friday to Sunday, June 12-14, 2020**

The National Insulator Association's 51st Annual Show and Convention will be held at the Cache County Fairgrounds in Logan, Utah. The fairgrounds is located at 450 South 500 West, Logan, UT 84321. There will be plenty of dealer space and exhibit space plus a multitude of things to do in the area. Show Hosts are: DON & JEANNE BRIEL, (435) 753-5786, [Don.Briel@comcast.net](mailto:Don.Briel@comcast.net) and ARNOLD & LINDA SMITH, (801) 829-3383, [smithlrh@hotmail.com](mailto:smithlrh@hotmail.com). [www.nia.org/shows/2020\\_national](http://www.nia.org/shows/2020_national)

**Tecumseh, Michigan****Saturday, June 27, 2020**

The first ever official All Insulators - Crown Jewels of the Wire Insulator Show! Held in Tecumseh, MI at the AJ Smith Recreation Center, 810 N. Evans St., Tecumseh, MI 49286. Only 45 minutes from the Michigan/Ohio border and 1-1/2 hours from the Michigan/ Indiana border. The show welcomes all types of insulators and closely related go-withs. Eight foot tables are available for \$30 each. Electricity available in a limited basis for an additional \$10. Dealer setup will be at 9 a.m. Dealer information is available at: <https://allinsulators.com/hobby/show/dealer/>

**Loudenville, Ohio (2<sup>nd</sup> Mohican Country Insulator Swap Meet)****Saturday, July 25, 2020**

Cancelled.