



**GREATER CHICAGO
INSULATOR CLUB
DIRECTORY**

Rick Soller, editor

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T he Button Room Report

Occasionally I set up at local flea markets or antique shows if the price isn't too high. I never expect to sell much but I usually have some luck in meeting people who don't know about the hobby and want to join plus people seem to show up with insulators to sell me. On Saturday, September 29, 2012, I was a dealer at just such a show.

The show was held four blocks from my house at a recently opened museum for button collectors. These are the kind of buttons found on articles of clothing. The museum was founded with money and buttons from the estate of a woman who collected buttons well into her 90s. As a fund raiser, the museum hosted an antique and flea market in their parking lot. Dealers could get a large space for just \$20 so it seemed like an attractive event to me.

I took five tables of goods plus the five tables to the show, arriving at 6 a.m., the start of dealer set-up. My wares included one table of good insulators, a table of cheap insulators, a table with meters, and two tables with items included in lots that I bought off of ebay in order to get the insulators in the lots.

At 8 a.m., members of the Button Room museum were allowed into the show and at 9 a.m., the general public was allowed to wander in. I didn't notice either threshold since very few people came to the show. The show was supposed to go until 5 p.m. (it was the show hosts first show so they didn't know any better) but at 3 p.m., the traffic was so low, I would get a person through my spot only once every 10 minutes so I started packing up and left by 3:45 p.m.

For the day, I sold \$41 worth of merchandise for an approximate profit of \$20 which covered the \$20 I spent on the space. Early in the show, the person running the show told me about a couple insulators that the now dead patron of the museum had. One was a nice CD 162 KCGW // 6 while the other two were damaged, common pieces. I told her what they were worth and she gave me a deal on all three with a price of \$15! At that price, I figured I made \$15 on the KCGW since it books for \$30-40. Another dealer sold me an ice green CD 1104.1 for \$1 that books for \$5-10 so I figured I was now up about \$20-25. I overpaid a woman for 2 damaged aqua insulators, a worn straight pin, and a sidepin but I figured the \$4 would bring some good karma and the pins might be worth \$2.50 so I wasn't out too much. Lastly, I got a small, brown, porcelain spool that swiveled on a bracket that screws into wood. One dollar was probably more than the piece was worth but I felt generous since the person went to the trouble to bring it over to my table.

I heard some interesting stories about insulators from people who stopped by. The woman who sold me the 2 insulators with pins was surprised that the pins screwed off. One woman said that her daughter had a tattoo on her back of two poles with crossarms. Between the poles were wires and a bird sitting on the wire. The symbolism of the tattoo was that she was a bird that was free to fly whenever she wanted. One person told me about the large collection her grandfather had upon his death. After excitedly inquiring about the collection, I learned that

various relatives each got part of it, the collection was originally in the Philadelphia area, and that the dispersal occurred over 15 years ago. Several people suggested different uses for the insulators, all of which I had heard of before: chess pieces, door stops, candle holders, flower pots, etc. I managed to give the only people who bought an insulator a membership application to the club and a sample newsletter. We'll see if they join. That would really make the 10 hours of sitting there worth it.

Next year, the museum is going to do it again. It will be on the fourth Saturday of September, just like this year, although the price will be higher (unless you commit now).

They were good hosts with a clean restroom available in the museum and food available for breakfast or lunch. They claimed to advertise for the show but I did not see it listed on Craigslist and don't subscribe to the local paper. I also haven't been to local antique stores or to other area flea markets to see if they had flyers there. I'll make those suggestions to the museum for next year. One of my students volunteers there so this should be easy.

So Long to Steve Blair, He'll be Missed

This year's 42nd Mid-Ohio show fell on November 2-4, 2012 and attendees enjoyed warm weather, good food, and lots of insulator activity. Unfortunately and unknowingly, it was Steve Blair's last show as well as he passed away on November 29 at the age of 68.



Steve hosted the show for over 40 years, recently turning over the duties of running the show to others. Nevertheless, he was a fixture at this year's show. He could be found talking to people all over the show, making announcements, and still performing some show host duties such as presenting display awards at the banquet. In fact, the picture to the left was taken at this year's show.

Steve's devotion to the hobby began early in the hobby as witnessed by his low NIA number of 247 (Lois, his wife, is NIA #248). He hosted many NIA Regional shows as well as an NIA National show. His contribution to the hobby was recognized in 2003 when he and Lois received the highest honor of the National Insulator Association, the NIA Lifetime Membership award. Glenn and Sandra Drummond received the same award that year, partly for their involvement in running the Mid-Ohio show.

Steve was known for his good nature. He liked to forward jokes via email and his emails always ended with "Laughter makes you younger." If you were lucky, you might be given one of his humorous business cards describing a variety of interesting skills that he had beyond sheep shearing. He enjoyed after-show activities and the camaraderie it created during the show such as the Viking helmets and Baaing that marked many shows.

Steve promoted the hobby in a number of ways. Several years ago, he had a commemorative made for the show that became a popular collectable. Displayers were given a special version of the commemorative. Before the show, Lois and Steve opened their home to fellow collectors who enjoyed the friendship and the opportunity to see their collection. Steve also had a large pile of insulators outside his house that collectors were free to dig through. Many new collectors probably added quite a few pieces to their collection this way.

I would have to say that I did not know Steve very well but you can see from all I knew about him that he was well known in the hobby and had a positive influence on people far and wide.

Classified Advertisements

WANTED: Marked COOK insulators including pin-types, multiparts, suspensions, johnny balls, spools, etc. Let me know what you have. Top dollar paid. Dan Ling, Ambered257@hughes.net.

FOR SALE: The latest insulator price guide, \$45 postpaid. Sealed in plastic, mint condition. Send check, money order or use PayPal to Rick Soller, 4086 Blackstone Ave., Gurnee, IL 60031 or Com574@clcollinois.edu

Upcoming Shows

January 19, 2013 (Saturday)

14th Annual Winterfest

Strongsville, Ohio

Western Reserve Insulator Club's 14th Annual Winterfest / Swap Meet & Club Meeting at the Spyglass Hill Recreation Center, 13201 Compass Point Drive, Strongsville, OH 44136. Dealer Setup: 9:00am; Show Hours: 10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. Club Meeting and Lunch: 12-1:30 p.m. There are no admission or table charges, but space is limited, so please contact us ahead of time if you plan to set up! Info/RSVP to JOHN HOVANEK (440) 237-2242, E-mail: wric@clubs.insulators.info

January 26, 2013 (The last Saturday of January)

GCIC "Beat the Winter Blahs" Swap Meet

Crown Point, Indiana

Put this one on your calendar because I'm sure you'll want to do something insulator related then. Held at the home of Arlen & Tina Rienstra, 6527 W. 93rd Avenue, Crown Point, Indiana 46307. When the date of the swap meet is closer, you can call to let them know you are coming (219-365-7913) or you can email them at ariens@att.net. An auction is planned at the swap meet with over a thousand insulators for sale. Sellers pay 10% of the sale price to the club which goes to help pay for the food at swap meets and other club activities. Each year the auction seems to be bigger and better with more insulators, more dealers bringing insulators, and more fun. Bring a table if you are planning to set up or a couple tables will be available. There will be plenty of room outside in the freezing cold but there should be room for everyone in the "heated" garage.

March 9, 2013

11th Annual Northwest Missouri Insulator/Bottle Show & Sale

St. Joseph, MO

The 11th Annual Northwest Missouri Insulator/Bottle Show & Sale will be held at the American Legion Pony Express Post #359, 4826 Frederick Ave. Show hours: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Free Admission. Sponsored by the Missouri Valley Insulator Club. Insulators, bottles, lightning rod balls & arrows, telephones and advertising. We will have 70 Tables available for 2013. For information and/or a show packet contact: DARRYL WAGNER, 14615 NW Skyview Ave., Smithville, MO 64089, 816-719-0801. Email: kcinsulators@kcba.co

April 5-6, 2013 (Friday & Saturday)
Antique Insulator, Lightning Rod, and Bottle Show
Yorkville, Illinois

Located at the Kendall County Fairgrounds, 10826 Illinois 71, Yorkville, IL (Route 71 & East High Point Road). Hours on Friday are 5 p.m. – 9 p.m. Saturday hours are 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Free admission, free table for displays, \$30 for sales tables. 110 tables available. For more information, contact show host Jason Townsend at 630-667-3357 or email him at jtins76@gmail.com

May 17 – 18, 2013 (Friday & Saturday)
Insulator, Bottle, & Antique Show
Columbia City, Indiana

The 2013 Columbia City, Indiana Insulator, Bottle & Antique Show will be held May 17 & 18 at the Whitley County 4H Fairgrounds, 581 W. Squawbuck Rd, just off US Why 30 and one mile South on Lincoln Way. Friday hours: Dealer set up from Noon to 3:00 p.m.; show from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., Seminar from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday: Dealer set up from 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. and show from 9:00 to 3:00 p.m. First 8 foot table is \$28; additional at \$20 each. CHUCK DITTMAR 5209 Forest Grove Dr, Fort Wayne, In 46835. Phone: 260-485-7669. Or, GENE HAWKINS: gene.hawkins@mchsi.com

July 19-21, 2013
44th National Insulator Association Convention, Show & Sale
Franklin, Tennessee

The 44th National Insulator Association Convention, Show & Sale, sponsored by the Dixie Jewels Insulator Club, will be held July 19-21 at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs, 700 Cool Springs Blvd, Franklin, TN 37076, located just 10 miles south of Nashville. 130 dealer tables and at least 25 display tables are available. For info contact the show hosts: BILL HALEY 423-326-9248 or email: wgh@tnaqua.org ; STEVE ROBERTS 615-419-7905 or Steve_Roberts@comcast.net ; KEN ROBERTS 256-656-1636 or kroberts@apprser.com

July 26-27, 2013 (Friday & Saturday)
19th Annual Hog Roast
Arcanum, Ohio

The 19th Annual Hog Roast hosted by Alan and Joan Stastny will be held on Friday, July 26, 2013 with an insulator swap meet on the following day (Saturday, July 27). Come hungry but you won't leave that way. For more information, contact Alan at 8784 Grubbs Rex Rd., Arcanum, OH 45304 or by phone at (937) 884-7379 or (937) 546-4745 (cell) or you can email Alan at FuzzyFace42@aol.com.

D ues are Due

If you need to renew your membership, the next page contains the form to renew your membership. You can renew for multiple years if you like.

Join the Greater Chicago Insulator Club!

You are invited to join the Greater Chicago Insulator Club (GCIC). Membership runs from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 and costs \$10. If you are 16 or younger, dues are \$5. Checks should be made out to the Greater Chicago Insulator Club and sent to Bob Stahr, 515 Main St., Unit 403, West Chicago, IL 60185

Your dues entitle you to a variety of benefits:

- Newsletter 6-8 times a year
- Free food at swap meets
- Club directory of members and their specialty
- Club hunts
- A network of club members looking for insulators to sell or trade to you
- Free ads in the newsletter
- Notification of insulators free for the taking
- Access to an extensive club library
- Discounts on the prestigious club patch
- Collectible membership card
- Input into the hobby
- Opportunities to serve in positions of leadership
- Promotion of the hobby so you can share your collection with others
- A chance to practice your public speaking skills

Join or renew today by completing the following form. Check the box before any line if you **don't** want that information printed in the club directory.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ E-mail: _____

I want to receive the newsletter via email _____ or in printed form sent in the mail _____ .

Interests/wants/specialties: _____

(Mail to Bob Stahr, 515 Main St., Unit 403, West Chicago, IL 60185)