



**GREATER CHICAGO  
INSULATOR CLUB  
NEWSLETTER**

Rick Soller, Cub Reporter

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**Rest in Peace Roy Parker**

The colorful life of club member Roy “Digger” Parker ended peacefully on July 14, 2019. Born on January 24, 1938, the 81-year-old had a long, interesting life.

He proudly served in the United States Air Force from 1955 to 1959. He was employed by the City of Geneseo for 18 years as the sexton/superintendent of the Oakwood North Cemeteries. Roy was a lifetime member of the Geneseo Moose Lodge, Iowa Gem and Mineral Society, Blackhawk Gem and Mineral Club, the Greater Chicago Insulator Club, and the Quad City Stamp Club. Besides collecting coins, stamps, and insulators, he collected fishing lures and enjoyed telling stories.

When I last visited him, he told me a story about a grave he dug and how a huge number of birds congregated around the grave after the burial. The next day, the birds were gone. He had never seen another incident like that in his 18 years working at Oakwood North Cemeteries. The story gave me the chills.

While visiting, we roamed the house looking at all his collections. Outside his home, people passing by could see signs of his interest in minerals. He had purchased several tons of minerals that were lined up in front of his house.

His collection of fishing lures was equally impressive. They were neatly organized in frames hanging on the wall and Roy had extensive knowledge about them.

Naturally I was most interested in his insulator collection which dominated the walls on his front porch as well as in nooks, crannies, and display cases around the house. The collection was eclectic, including commemoratives, porcelain spools, foreign porcelain, CD 102s, and fence knobs but consisted primarily of glass. Most came from frequent visits to auctions with some from club swap meets. One of my favorites in his collection was a CD 112 that had the embossing twisted. Roy gave me the piece, shown below, on my last visit.



Roy's porch was crisscrossed with shelves allowing his collection to be highlighted with natural light. In front of each insulator was a card with information on the embossing on the insulator. Several spots that once held insulators are empty since Roy frequently gave away an insulator or two to visitors.



It has been many years since Roy was a dues-paying member of the club. I never asked him why he drifted away from the club. I know he was still driving when I last saw him so that isn't the answer. In the melancholy mood I am in as I write this, I blame the passage of time and note one more GCIC friend I've lost. The list includes Betty Elmer, Lois Nelson (also of Geneseo), Claus Sutor, Jim Crandall, Fred Kirchner, Dan Ling, Judy Christensen, Marion Oschmann and a few others that passed from my memory over the past 27 years of the club's existence.



The flag is a fitting image to end my tribute to Roy. I think of him as the best of what America is.

## **First Mohican Country Insulator Swap**

By Rick Soller

Saturday, July 20, 2019 was the date of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mohican Country Insulator Swap Meet held on the lawn of the Perrysville, Ohio Church of God. GCIC members were well represented with Rick Soller, Russ Frank, Gene Hawkins, and Mike McLaughlin setting up at the show.

Show host Tom Nelson put a lot of effort into the swap meet to make everyone feel welcome and many of those in attendance chipped in to help out. Before the show, Rick Soller posted the event on Craigslist and offered to run an auction to help pay for swap meet expenses. Russ Frank recorded winning bids during the auction and Mike McLaughlin helped call out insulators in the auction plus hold them up for everyone to see. Dale Glendenning brought extra canopies to provide more protection from the hot sun. John Hovanek sent email reminders to Western Reserve Insulator Club (WRIC) members. Tom posted the event on Facebook.

Tom's excitement about hosting the swap meet has led him to already announce the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mohican Country Insulator Swap Meet. It will be Saturday, July 25, 2020 from 9 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Loudenville, Ohio Lions Club Hall, 643 Wooster Rd., Loudenville, Ohio. A \$5 donation is requested for tables. Dealer set-up is at 8:00 a.m., an auction is scheduled for 10:00 a.m., lunch at 11:30 a.m., an ugly insulator contest is planned at 1:00 p.m., and a raffle drawing for insulators at 2:00 p.m. All proceeds benefit Perrysville Church of God Assistance Fund. For information or to reserve a table, call Tom at (330) 231-9579.

For Russ Frank and I, the trip to the show started on the Wednesday morning before the show. It was then that we left to visit collectors from Indiana and Ohio, plus pillage as many antique stores as possible.

Our first stop was a stop in Michigan City to have lunch with Robert Winkler and buy some insulators he wanted to sell. We would have driven to the restaurant in my truck, but it was stuffed with boxes for the show, so we ended up taking Robert's car which allowed him to give us a tour of the back roads of northern Indiana. After a filling lunch accented with delightful conversation, we had to get going if we wanted to see a couple more collectors that day.

Stop number two was not far away. New collector and club member Ephraim also lives in Michigan City and I had some multipart porcelain I was willing to give him. We got to his house, but no one was home. Luckily there was much to see of Ephraim's collection outside, so we enjoyed taking a few pictures and admiring the creative method of display of insulators along a fence. Ephraim's mother showed up a few minutes after we were there, and we had a brief talk but were quickly on our way since our next stop was in Ohio.

We had a little extra time, so we took some back roads and did some antiques. Not much was found but we did run across a booth with dozens of irradiated insulators. What a shame!

I had called Ken and Delia Blake ahead of time to visit them at their rural home in the evening. Ken is a former lineman for a power company and has a small but nice collection. Delia also collects a few insulators, primarily porcelain, which is what I find more interesting. She also collects pie birds and had a display case filled with a variety of them and I was able to learn quite a bit about them as a result. Ken originally thought he could make it to the Perrysville swap meet but was unable after all so I ended up buying three crates of insulators he was going to take to the show. Among the crates were several CD 302s (Muncie Type and Ohio embossings) that were used in the area. I also picked up a U-3950 "tick" that Delia had been using as a flower pot.

When we left, I called a relative of mine who lived nearby, and my uncle joined us at a nice restaurant in town. We had a nice dinner and then put a few miles on the truck before staying at a hotel in Findlay, Ohio.

Day 2 (Thursday). I wanted to visit a family friend in Zanesville, Ohio so we were on the road for a couple hours and had lunch before we got there. After a nice visit, it was back to insulators. We scoured the local antique stores and paid a visit to Don Scott in Duncan Falls. Don lives “one street over” from where my grandparents lived when they were alive. One street is about a mile in the countryside where his home is. Don is a former telephone lineman and has an impressive collection of phones and insulators. The insulators were mostly found in the area, so it was a real learning experience to hear where pieces were used.

After Don’s house, we headed for Columbus and had a great meal at Schmidt’s Sausage House in the historic German Village area. I enjoyed my Bahama Mama and sauerkraut but we both agreed we should have ordered the buffet to get a wider variety of sausages and side dishes.

Day 3 (Friday). We got a call from a collector I was trying to reach and arranged to visit Friday morning. This guy was a hoot! He gave both Russ and I a couple puzzles, for example. One involved trying to get a dowel out of a beer bottle that had a bolt, lock washer, and nut attached to it keeping the dowel from being directly pulled out. Instead, you had to swirl the dowel around to get the nut to unscrew. As a bachelor, his collection was all over the house. He was kind enough to part with a Kuhlman fuse cutout that I did not have in my collection. There were a few other odd pieces he had, one that I was not sure if it was an insulator. In a large barn, he had a bicycle he invented in which you had to turn the handlebars to the right to go left. It was impossible to ride ☹️ and I tried hard. Inside the barn were other projects such as a bike with roller skate front wheels, various vehicles, and several other machines.

We made it to Scott Sweetland’s house in Upper Arlington in time for lunch at a Mexican restaurant. We also got to inspect his collection and helped him add a nice CD 127.4 to it. On the other hand, we left with a box of insulators from Scott’s sales stock.

Our next stop was Wilma Wilson’s house in nearby Columbus. I had talked to her a couple weeks earlier to encourage her to attend the swap meet but she eventually learned she would not be able to make it but asked if we could take up some junky porcelain insulators and put them in the auction. The insulators, including several suspensions, had been stored on a rotting pallet in her back yard. Loading them in the 90-degree heat was the real challenge.

From Wilma’s house, we headed north toward Mansfield, Ohio, near where the show would be held. Once we checked into our motel, we headed to Tom Nelson’s house and took him and his wife to dinner. Early the next morning, we were at the swap meet location before anyone else and got our canopy set up. Soon there were several canopies set up as Dale Glendenning, Gene Hawkins, Mike McLaughlin, Dave & Josephine Ramp, and Andy Wadysz showed up along with a few other people. The canopies really helped with another day of blazing heat.

A short auction was held around 10 a.m. Everything sold with a few surprising bargains and a few pieces that sold for a surprising high price. A lack of space in this newsletter will keep me from listing everything. About \$200 worth of insulators were sold so ten percent of that was turned over to the show host to pay for expenses.

I was happy with both sales and purchases. I sold a French CD 695 “bustle” to Josephine Ramp near the end of the swap meet. Earlier in the day, I bought a VNM CD 317 “candlestick” from Gene Hawkins at a price below book value. I was a little worried that I ripped Gene off with my offer, but when I got home, I found the receipt for what he paid, and it seems we both made out like a bandit.

Tom has already scheduled a date for the swap meet to be held next year.

## Upcoming Shows

### **Nisswa, Minnesota**

**Saturday, August 24, 2019**

Join the fun with the North Western Insulator Club Summer Swap Meet in Minnesota lake country. The Yennies' will host at their home at Nisswa Minnesota for a day of insulators, go-withs, food and friends. We will spread out in the yard and, if necessary, the garage. There will be plenty of canopies available in case of rain. Set up starts at 9:00 AM and goes until 3:30 PM. Bring your tables and a chair. Colin will be grilling brats, burgers, and hot dogs for lunch, please bring a dish to pass. Bring items to donate for the club-sponsored auction and plan to bid often-there are always unexpected treasures to be had! For questions or more info, contact Colin Yennie at (507) 289-1095 (land line) or (507) 271-3457 (call or text). Or email

[cryennie@hotmail.com](mailto:cryennie@hotmail.com)

### **Ottawa, Illinois**

**Saturday, September 14, 2019**

The Greater Chicago Insulator Club's annual fall swap meet will return for the second time to the home of Tom and Mary Nugent although one week later than in previous years. Their home located at 1999 N. Columbus St., Ottawa, IL 61350. Bring a table if you can. Free lunch. Club auction with Rick Soller taking bids. For more information or to RSVP, contact Tom at (815) 434-5157 or [tnugent@ivnet.com](mailto:tnugent@ivnet.com).

Although the address is listed as 1999 Columbus Street, attendees need to turn on Alexis Street to get to this address. You cannot see the house from Columbus Street and you have to travel to the end of Alexis Street to get to the address of the swap meet. Coming from I-80, Alexis Street is one mile south on Columbus Street/U.S. 30 and is the first right turn after Reynolds Manor Dr. You will be going west when you make the turn. Tom will have signs up to make it easier to find his domicile.

### **Springfield, Ohio**

**Friday – Sunday, November 1-3, 2019**

The 49th Mid-Ohio Insulator Show will be held November 1-3 at the Clark County Fairgrounds, 4401 South Charleston Pike, Springfield, Ohio. Exit 59 off I-70. Show hours are Friday 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM, Saturday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Sunday from 9:00 AM to closing. Info: CURT BOSTER email: [cboster530@att.net](mailto:cboster530@att.net) or (614) 301-5125 or LOIS BLAIR (740) 852-3148. Additional info at: [www.insulators.info/shows/springfield/](http://www.insulators.info/shows/springfield/)

### **Wheaton, Illinois**

**Saturday, April 4, 2020**

The Dupage Collectors Expo will be held Saturday, April 4th, at the Dupage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, Illinois, Hours are 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Items for sale & trade include: Insulators, Lightning Rod items & Weathervanes, Telephone & Telegraph items, Bottles, Jars, etc. Info: BOB STAHR: [bob@hemingray.com](mailto:bob@hemingray.com) (630) 793-5345 and RICK SOLLER: [com574@clcillinois.edu](mailto:com574@clcillinois.edu) (847) 782-8602.

### **Loudenville, Ohio**

**Saturday, July 25, 2020**

2<sup>nd</sup> Mohican Country Insulator Swap Meet.