



**GREATER CHICAGO  
INSULATOR CLUB  
NEWSLETTER**  
Rick Soller, Mailroom Clerk



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### **The Crown Point Swap Meet is On!**

By now, many of you will have received a postcard confirming that the January 30, 2021 swap meet in Crown Point, Indiana is a go! Already, the show hosted by **Tina and Arlen Rienstra** has sold 20 tables and promises to be an event for collectors to let off some steam since many other shows have been cancelled.

Despite the launch signal, caution will still be exercised at the show. There will be no self-service at lunch and eaters will be asked to do so at their sales table or spaced away from each other. In addition, the auction will be conducted using the procedures used at the Ottawa swap meet and the Mid-Ohio show where buyers will be offered chairs spaced 6 feet apart from where they can bid and lots will be assigned numbers so during inspection, buyers can easily identify which lots they want to bid on. Please plan on wearing a mask at the show.

Some of the usual helpers will not be available so if you are interested in volunteering, please let Arlen know ([ariens@att.net](mailto:ariens@att.net) or (219) 226-4975) or you can pitch in when the time comes. **Marge Frank** won't be able to make it to the show this year so Tina could use some help to serve food. If you are in town on Friday, set-up of the show will start around noon and any help is welcome.

Several people have indicated they are bringing insulators for the auction. **Rick Soller** just finished a three-week break between teaching and spent much of the time going through his stockpile to find gems for the auction. **Richard Case** has reported he will be bringing numerous lots to sell in the auction. **Mike McLaughlin** is sure to bring some interesting pieces.

### **Corrections**

In the last newsletter, the show listing for the Wheaton DuPage Collectors Expo indicated the show was April 20 and, in the text of the posting, the date was stated as April 4. Both are incorrect. The actual date of the show is April 10. I think one error occurred because I copied and pasted a past show listing and didn't correct the date. I think the other error occurred because I hit a "2" instead of a "1" when typing the date. As a result, I apologize for the confusion and accept my demotion to mailroom clerk as punishment.

### **Dues are Due**

Included with this issue is a membership renewal form. You can send your payment to Bob Stahr with this form or you can pay at the Crown Point, Indiana show. Membership forms will be available at the show.

I think the club does a great job supporting local shows and swap meets, awarding original art work at the National to the best display of power insulators, and keeping you informed and entertained with a club newsletter multiple times a year for the last 28 years.

## Thanks Mike McLaughlin!

By Rick Soller



In a previous newsletter, I reported finding an unusual porcelain nail knob insulator in an antique store along US 30 in northern Indiana. The insulator had “horns” and a 1910 patent date embossed on it. I thought it was a great deal at \$2. Mike McLaughlin later confessed that the booth where I found the insulator was his and he had more of them for sale if I was interested. I was and I arranged to buy more of them. Eventually I ended up with about 60 of them and paid a little more than \$200 for them, much more than Mike paid for them when he bought a collection with them in it. On a lark, I recently listed one on eBay and was shocked when the final price settled on \$83.66. I offered one to the second highest bidder at the generous price of \$50 and the offer was eagerly accepted. Elton Gish and another collector heard about the piece and I sold one each to them for the embarrassing price of \$40.

Oddly enough, I had one of these on my sales table at the Springfield Mid-Ohio show this November priced at \$15 and not a single person looked at it. If the remaining 56 of them sell as well as the ones I’ve sold so far, I anticipate making \$2240 in profit!

Thanks Mike!

## Are More Collectors Dying Off? By Rick Soller

During my winter break, I learned about a number of collectors who have died. On December 6, I learned that Canadian collector George Nowacki passed away the day before. The family found my name as the NIA historian and asked if I would compose an obituary for the insulator hobby. I’ve been working on an obituary with Barrett Nicpon to publish in the *All Insulators: Crown Jewels of the Wire* since then. George scoured the area around Thunder Bay and uncovered several rare insulators, including the previously unknown M-2101 transposition insulator made by Canadian Porcelain which were found buried deep in the midst of a swamp.

Shortly after this, I uncovered a letter from Harold Carlin who stated that he was 92 and not as active in collecting insulators so he was cancelling his subscription to the North Western Insulator Club (NWIC) newsletter that I wrote at the time. When I googled his name, I found his obituary and started talking to collectors that knew him to compose an obituary. I learned that the family contacted area collectors and **Riley Armstrong** ended up buying a large portion of the collection. I talked to collector **Mark Reutebach** and learned that Harold was lucky enough to have picked such beauties as the CD 125 in yellow olive green, the CD 1090 big spool, a purple CD 244 Pomona, and Cutters used on lines to fire outlook towers in the Black Hills.

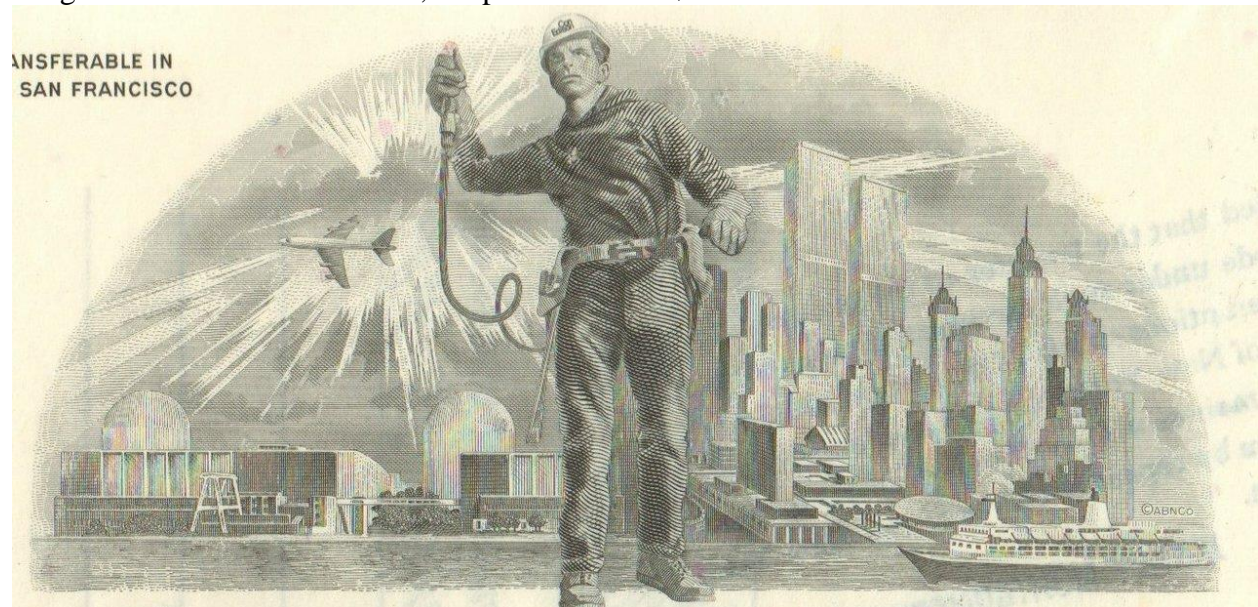
## Are More Collectors Dying Off? (continued from previous page)

Another old letter popped up during my cleaning. This one happened to be from Roger Huff, Sr. in Waterville, ME. We corresponded last in April of 2016 when he was selling me some insulators. I again googled his name to see if there was an obituary for him printed somewhere and found one. I haven't verified if the obituary I found is for the same person so I am holding off on reaching any conclusions or writing an obituary but it does make me realize how people can come into your life, leave an impression, and then you disappear. I wish I was better able to keep track of all the collector friends I've known over the years.

## Collecting Stock Certificates

A little-known go-with is stock certificates of companies that made insulators, supplied insulators or used insulators. These don't take up much space, can enhance a display of insulators, and have a beauty of their own. Finding them, however, is a challenge and prices vary from less than \$20 to thousands of dollars.

There are a few factors that affect price. Naturally supply is one consideration. Large companies issued more certificates than smaller ones. Insulator companies would fall into the category of a small company with few certificates issued. The age of the certificate and the subject matter are important factors. A more subtle consideration involves the artwork on the certificate. Some certificates have no image on them and are valued at the low end. Common vignettes on a certificate include an eagle, a woman holding a torch, Greek gods, images of the founder of the company, or buildings and would be at the next level of price. Top prices are for unique images. For example, in the image below from a Consolidated Edison of New York certificate, the image of a lineman is likely to appeal to insulator collectors, although, since this image is from a 1970 certificate, the price is low at \$14.95 and for sale at oldstocks.com.



There are a few places on the internet that sell or auction stock certificates. Searching them may turn up something. Booneshares.com holds periodic auctions of mostly foreign certificates. Holabird Western Americana Collections, LLC (FHWAC.com) sells mostly mining certificates but other certificates are sold in the auction as well as bottles and a few insulators. Scripophily.com has a large selection of certificates and the name of the website is the term for people who collect stock certificates. Many other sites can be found by using Google.

Shown below are some certificates I have in my collection.

This certificate for Verrerie Ouvriere was purchased for 50 Euros (\$60) in a Boonshares.com auction. This is a French company that made insulators.



This 1930 Ohio Brass doesn't have much art work so the \$30 price seemed reasonable.



I recently acquired this certificate but had to buy 29 others to get it. Once I sell the others, I'm hoping my net price will be zero. The average price of the 30 was about \$40.



## Upcoming Shows

### **Saturday, January 30, 2021 Crown Point, Indiana**

The 13th annual "Beat the Winter Blahs" insulator swap meet is once again planned for the last Saturday of January which this year falls on January 30. This is the 4th year at this location, bigger and better than ever: Lake County Fair, 889 S. Court St., Crown Point, IN. (SE entrance). The meeting is in the 4H Building, which is spacious, well lighted and warm. Tables supplied at \$20 each, additional \$10 each. Lunch provided. Bring insulators or related collectibles to show and tell, sell or trade. All are welcome to experience Hoosier hospitality, plenty of space, GCIC auction, business meeting and a great new larger location. Doors open 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Hosted by Arlen and Tina Rienstra and the Greater Chicago Insulator Club. Located easily from I80/94 and I65. RSVP [ariens@att.net](mailto:ariens@att.net) or (219) 226-4975

### **Saturday, April 10, 2021 Wheaton, Illinois**

The DuPage Collectors Expo will be held Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at the DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, Illinois. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Items for sale & trade include insulators, lightning rod items & weathervanes, telephone & telegraph items, bottles, jars, etc. For information, contact Bob Stahr at [bob@hemingray.com](mailto:bob@hemingray.com) (630) 793-5345 or Rick Soller at [com574@clcollinois.edu](mailto:com574@clcollinois.edu) (847) 782-8602.

## 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, 360 S. Kenilworth Ave., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. **NEW! Pay by PayPal Friends and Family to [Bob@Hemingray.com](mailto:Bob@Hemingray.com) and save a postage stamp!**

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
- Free sales table at swap meets
- 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.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to receive the newsletter via email \_\_\_\_\_ or in printed form sent in the mail \_\_\_\_\_?

Interests/wants/specialties: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Mail to Bob Stahr, 360 S. Kenilworth Ave., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137) OR  
**PayPal to [Bob@Hemingray.com](mailto:Bob@Hemingray.com)**