



**GREATER CHICAGO
INSULATOR CLUB
NEWSLETTER**

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Ottawa, Illinois GCIC Swap Meet

Don't forget the upcoming GCIC swap meet at the home of Tom and Mary Nugent. The swap meet is less than one week later than it has been in the past so please show up on Saturday, September 14 rather than September 7. There will an auction at the show with several hundred insulators already expected.

Nisswa, Minnesota Swap Meet Report

The North Western Insulator Club (NWIC) held a swap meet on Saturday, August 24, 2019 and several GCIC club members made it to the event: Rick Soller, Dave French, and Riley Armstrong. The lack of other club members provided multiple benefits for those who did make it.

First, there were a lot of different insulators on tables. The proximity of Nisswa to Canada provided an opportunity for one or two collectors from north of the border to travel south with a load of CD 143s, crude CD 145 B's, CD 101 Brookfields, and Canadian porcelain. Even dealers from Minnesota had Canadian insulators since many traveled across the border to the north to pillage our colder cousin. I haven't seen Dave at a show for a while so even the crown jewels he was offering were new pieces to me and I ended up getting an unembossed Zicme CD 106 from him in a grayish purple color. Even though Riley gets to some of the GCIC events, he had a lot of new stock to offer including numerous strings of carnival suspensions.

Second, collectors at the show had not seen the insulators on our sales table before so sales were excellent for club members. I took a table's worth of insulators to the show and sold all but about 12 insulators there. I brought about 250 other insulators but sold those in the club auction. Dave French went home with about 4 insulators from his card-table-filled offerings.

Third, there were lots of opportunities to meet new friends or renew friendships. I had not seen Karen and Colin Yennie for a while. I hope they can make it to the Wheaton show since they had a lot of sales stock. Gary & Marita Senum were there with some nice glass. I don't know if I've ever had a chance to talk to Rick Augustyn but the small crowd gave me a chance. Dave Dahle brought a meter testing kit that was very interesting. Wayne Duzinski had a three-cell battery rest in green that he brought to the swap meet to show. I forgot he collected these. I met Norm and Sandy Flagstad for the first time. Norm collected years ago but when he found out about the show, he dug his insulators out and brought three tables of insulators to the show.

A small auction was held for the benefit of the club. Only 32 lots were offered from 9 different dealers with total sales equally \$213. Several lots involved donations, so the club brought in \$70 for its treasury. A few notable sales occurred. Two chunks of glass (white milk, and blackglass amber) from the Hemingray dump sold for \$27. A CD 286 flat top Locke went for \$26. Two CD 252s in nice shape earned a top bid of \$9. A three-pin metal bracket sold for \$7. Some unusual pieces were offered in the auction. A meter-related device was offered and sold for \$3. A Randy Wesner melted Hemingray-40 private production insulator saw a winning

bid of \$1. Two boxes with lots of wires inside that were used in a phone application sold for \$15 each. A nice amount of reading material exchanged hands in the auction. 24 issues of the Crown Jewels sold for \$1. Four older price guides sold for the same price as did two other lots of miscellaneous insulator books.

A delicious lunch was offered. Hot dogs, hamburgers were served from the grill. Chips, vegetables, drinks, and much more were offered. No one left hungry.

After lunch, I decided to make an offer on the three tables of insulators brought by the Flagstads. They had indicated that they brought their entire collection to sell and I had sold almost everything I brought so I had money and space. Both of us left happy with me picking up a load of new insulators to look through, add to my collection, and sell the rest, and they going home with a wad of cash.

I was especially happy with the motel I reserved the night before. It was less than 2 miles from the swap meet, had a comfortable bed, a clean shower, and a quiet environment. The price was about \$80 which was much less than other motels I found on travel sites (\$200+) and much closer (30 miles closer). If you decide to attend a future swap meet in Nisswa, I recommend the Magnuson Hotel Nisswa at 24186 North Smiley Road, Nisswa, MN 56468.

Bottom line: Not only should you get to a show but occasionally, get to a show far away!

A Trip to Wisconsin By Rick Soller

On Facebook, Rachel Simons posted on the Insulator Collector's page pictures of her father's insulator collection. Her father passed away 16 years ago and she now wanted to know if she should keep them together or sell them individually. The Facebook community had a lot of opinions.

The pictures showed crossarms mounted on the wall of a barn with insulators attached across the arms. A few specific pieces could be identified but much of it looked like common glass or porcelain, so an in-person inspection was needed to gauge what was actually there. I was one of the posters regarding what she should do.

Some people suggested she sell the pieces individually to maximize the amount of money, some suggested auctioning the collection at the Springfield, Ohio show or the Ottawa, IL show, and some suggested selling the collection to a dealer. Most agreed that she should not let someone cherry pick the collection. A couple offered to help with the collection. I was one of those.

I arranged to see the collection on Labor Day. I thought it would be fun to go with someone else so I called Randy Wesner since I could stop at his house on the way. I estimated Rachel's house was about 90 minutes from Randy's house. Randy didn't answer the phone when I called so I left a message. When I didn't hear back, I decided to call retired collector Russ Frank who I was able to get hold of and who agreed to go.

Monday around 9:30 a.m. we met up at Russ' house and proceeded to head due North. We got off track a bit but still managed to get to the area by 11:30 a.m. which was plenty of time to get some lunch at a nearby Subway. I had a BMT on wheat bread (I'm sure you all wanted to know that).

At exactly noon we pulled into the driveway of Rachel's farm and parked right in front of the barn with the insulators. A knock on the nearby farmhouse led to our introduction and our first glimpses of the collection. We learned that the farm had been in the family for four generations and that Rachel's father collected a lot of different things. The farmhouse was rented

out to someone who was going to move soon, and Rachel did not want to leave the collection in the barn without someone being around to keep an eye on it, so she felt it was time to do something with it.

The biggest challenge in appraising the collection was that it was up in the rafters. The only ladder handy was too long so it was awkward climbing it but was used anyway to get at a few of the pieces that might be worth something. Where the ladder couldn't be used, Rachel's husband used a bucket on the front of a tractor to raise Rachel up to the crossarm with the insulator of interest.

Several of the pieces were promising but turned out to be somewhat disappointing. A beautiful Brooke's Blue CD 120 embossed PAT APP FOR with a letter on the back was one of the first pieces we looked at. Valued at \$150-175 for a very near mint piece, the one in the barn had a big crack so I valued it at 20% of that price (\$30 for those who don't like to do the math). Another interesting piece was a CD 133.4 [020] in a dark blue aqua/teal aqua color with lots of seed bubbles. The embossing was: (front crown) PATENT / DEC.19.1871 (rear crown) 3. There was extra glass on the bottom but a large chip there. The book price for one of these in very mint condition without the bubbles is \$40-50 but with the bubbles, I was thinking it would sell for over \$100. With the chip, maybe back to the price without bubbles. Pictures of the piece are shown below. There was only one of these in the collection, so it wasn't clear if they were used in the area.



There were some interesting pieces in the collection. The first piece that had my heart racing was **A YELLOW PORCELAIN MICKEY MOUSE!!!** I spotted it on the top crossarm and immediately asked if Rachel's husband could hand it down. Pictures are on the next page.



The piece had a lot of dirt on it but would clean up nicely. I should have taken pictures of the sides of the ear and the bottom because that would provide additional evidence of what this was, but the “HEMINGRAY” and “No. 60” embossing on the skirt should be a big clue. The side picture would have shown several small holes in the ear. (Do you know what this is now?). The bottom has a cork in it. (What about now?) The piece was very light because it was made from a mold made from a glass CD 257. Once the mold was made, slip was poured into it, allowed to harden some, had excess slip poured out, and the piece was glazed and fired. It is a salt shaker. Rachel indicated that she had the mate to this at home. At the time I was thinking how a brown porcelain Mickey sells for a couple hundred, a blue one for a couple thousand, a white one for more than that, and this would be more than that (\$5,000?!). Once I figured out it was part of a salt and pepper set, I still thought it was desirable but more in the \$30-40 range.

Besides an extra long ladder, a front loader was used to get Rachel up high enough to grab some of the insulators of interest. The ladder made accessing the insulators awkward since it was too long. It had to be climbed at a 45-degree angle as a result. Luckily there were not a lot of insulators that we needed to see up close. Most were common.



Another interesting piece was a wall tube that I clearly saw in the pictures posted on Facebook although I wasn't quite sure if it was a wall tube, some kind of lightning arrestor, or some other oddity. Rachel indicated that her father had chiseled this out of a building at a dam. I've never seen a wall tube like this before, either in person or in a catalog. It was about four feet long. Ridges on the side would give cement a place to grip. If you are looking at the picture in color, you'll see a blue cast to the glaze around the rings but that is due to the type of light used to shine on the tube. The glaze was dark brown. Below is a picture. Also in the picture you can see typical insulators in the collection: Brown porcelain pintypes, brown porcelain spools, and aqua glass.



After an hour, we had finished looking through everything. I gave Rachel an estimate of what I thought the collection was worth and we headed back to Illinois. Rachel asked what she owed me but I enjoyed just looking so indicated that was enough.

Upcoming Shows

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.

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 or (614) 301-5125 or LOIS BLAIR (740) 852-3148. Additional info at: 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 (630) 793-5345 and RICK SOLLER: com574@clcillinois.edu (847) 782-8602.

Loudenville, Ohio

Saturday, July 25, 2020

2nd Mohican Country Insulator Swap Meet.



To the left is an interesting pole tag found on a pole at Randy Wesner's home. His garage was built with old utility poles and, if I remember correctly, a couple of them have the tags.

I have little understanding of what the code means other than it provides a unique number to identify this pole.

