

Drip Points



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION
VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3 SPRING 1992

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Drip Points is your NIA forum ... If you have items for publication send them to:

Drip Points
2513 Flintridge Pl.
Ft. Collins, CO 80521



Support your NIA show hosts by attending a regional or national show this year:

1992 NIA WESTERN REGIONAL - May 2-3, Enumclaw, Washington

1992 NIA NATIONAL - June 19-21, Orlando, Florida

1992 NIA CENTRAL REGIONAL - November 7-8, London, Ohio

91-12-22

FROM THE PRESIDENT

ONE OF THE MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECTS OF BEING YOUR PRESIDENT IS RECEIVING NUMEROUS LETTERS FROM INSULATOR COLLECTORS WITH COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, A FEW COMPLAINTS, STORIES AND VARIOUS REPORTS ALL RELATED TO OUR GREAT HOBBY. BESIDES ANSWERING EACH LETTER PERSONALLY, I CAN SOMETIMES SHARE WITH YOU IN 'DRIP POINTS' ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST. ONE THING FOR SURE IS THAT A FAIR NUMBER OF PRESENTLY NON-HOBBY PEOPLE ARE CURIOUS ABOUT INSULATORS AND HOW TO COLLECT THEM. IN MANY CASES THEY BECOME AWARE OF OUR HOBBY THROUGH NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY, ANTIQUE/BOTTLE/COLLECTABLE SHOWS, ETC. FOR INSTANCE, THE ATLANTIC NEWS TELEGRAPH (IOWA) NEWSPAPER FEATURED AN EXTENSIVE FRONT PAGE ARTICLE ON CECIL BOOS COLLECTION. THIS SORT OF COVERAGE OFTEN BRINGS NOT ONLY NEW INSULATORS INTO THE HOBBY BUT HOPEFULLY NEW COLLECTORS ALSO. ANOTHER COLLECTOR RECENTLY WROTE ME AND TOLD OF HOW HE HAS BEEN COLLECTING INSULATORS FOR ALMOST 20 YEARS AND JUST RECENTLY FOUND OUT THAT THERE WAS AN ACTUAL GROUP OF ORGANIZED INSULATOR COLLECTORS.

THE MONTH OF MARCH IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTH FOR THE NIA. YOUR **TIMELY** RENEWAL ALLOWS US TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING SHOW HOSTS ON BOTH THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS. PLEASE DON'T KEEP PUTTING THIS RENEWAL PROCESS OFF TO THE LAST MINUTE. DO IT SOON. YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE FOR THE NEXT NIA PRESIDENT AND THE EASTERN VICE-PRESIDENT POSITIONS CAN ONLY BE ENSURED BY PROMPT RENEWAL.

I HAVE NOTICED THAT THE RECENTLY DEVELOPED 'SPEC-TRUE' STANDARD COLOR REFERENCE DEVELOPED BY MARK LAUCKNER IS SLOWLY CATCHING ON. THIS COULD, IN TIME, BECOME AS STANDARD AND VALUABLE AS THE WOODWARD 'CD' SYSTEM. SEVERAL COLLECTORS AT LAST YEARS EASTERN REGIONAL WERE SEEN BY MYSELF TO BE USING THE DEVICE WITH RELATIVE EASE.

LOOKING BACK THROUGH MY 'DRIP POINT' FILES, I SEE THAT THIS IS THE TWENTY-FIRST SUBMISSION THAT I HAVE WRITTEN. BELIEVE ME, IT IS NOT EASY FINDING FRESH TOPICS TO COMMENT ON. IT WOULD BE A REAL BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR OUR READERS IF **YOU** WOULD WRITE A FEW LINES, TO DON REINKE WITH YOUR COMMENTS, CONCERNS AND IDEAS. THIS IS YOUR MAGAZINE, SO FEEL FREE TO USE IT.

MOST OF THE UPCOMING 1992 INSULATOR SHOWS HAVE OR ARE ABOUT TO BE ADVERTIZED. SINCE THE SHOWS ARE IN EVERY PART OF THE COUNTRY, THE NIA SURE HOPES THAT YOU WILL MAKE A REAL EFFORT IN ATTENDING WHERE YOU CAN.

BEST REGARDS



#2768

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 1992 NIA major show circuit starts May 2-3 with the Western Regional Show at the King County Fairgrounds, Enumclaw, Washington. Vi and Andy Brown, assisted by Jeanne and Joe Bridges, always do a great job with this show. Make your reservations early as this show is a sell-out every year and a great way to start the NIA show season.

Activity really heats up the following month with the 23rd National Insulator Association Show and Convention being held at the Orlando Airport Marriott Resort in Florida on June 19-21. Jacque and Len Linscott, assisted by Sis and Chuck Haymond, have been working on this show for two years and promise us a super National with everything under one roof at the fabulous convention center.

There is even going to be a special luau at Sea World on Thursday evening for show participants and guests. With Disney World just a few minutes away, Cypress Gardens less than thirty minutes and so many other world class attractions nearby, take a couple extra days off, bring the family and make this a real holiday vacation. Write the Linscotts for a show packet and get those reservations in early as this promises to be a real blockbuster of a show and convention.

Last, but certainly not least, Steve and Lois Blair will host the Central Regional Show at the Madison County Fairgrounds, London, Ohio on November 7-8. This will be the 22nd consecutive, annual insulator show hosted by the Blairs, a record for our hobby. If you've never had the pleasure of attending one of their shows, complete with a Saturday night banquet at the Red Brick Tavern, get your reservations in very early as this show will definitely be a sell-out.

The above three shows are this year's major NIA sanctioned and sponsored shows but there are a lot of other fine insulator shows being held around the country. Check the Crown Jewels' Coming Events' section every month and attend all the local shows you can. Your support and participation at these shows is the life blood of our hobby.

Looking ahead to 1993, I'm pleased to report that, once again, some very solid bids were received from the Western Region prior to the January 1 deadline, assuring the NIA of a National Show and Convention in the Western Region for 1993. Additional bids from the Western Region for the 1993 National Show and Convention will be accepted until the April 1 deadline.

Bids are now actively being solicited for the 1993 Central Regional and Eastern Regional Shows. Please call me at (907) 562-4537 or write for a regional bid packet. Due to the early dates of this year's Western Regional Show and the June 19-21 National Show, I would like to request that all regional bids be submitted to me by April 25, 1992.

Please call me if I can be of any assistance.



Bernard L. Warren, NIA #1828

FROM THE CENTRAL REGION VP

With most of the cold winter weather behind us, we are all looking forward to Spring with its full calendar of good shows. I am one insulator collector who has been pacing for weeks and I bet I have a lot of company out there, too. So check out this fine show schedule and let's resolve to attend at least one of them. It will get our blood running again. Winter blahs, be gone! The insulator "junkies are coming out of hibernation!

March 7 - Metroplex Insulator Show, Fort Worth, TX

March 21-22 - Antique Collectibles Show & Sale, Port Arthur, TX

April 4 - Insulator & Antique Collectibles Show, Houston, TX

April 3-4 - Jubilee Insulator/Collectibles Show, Carol Stream, IL

April 3-4 - Antique Telephone Collectors Show, Abilene, KS

April 25 - 3rd Annual K.C. Insulator Show, Kansas City, MO

Of course, the 1992 National in Orlando is the big one to look forward to. Have you reserved your table yet? You don't want to be left out, so don't put it off any longer. Incidentally, Laura Monckton (Sydney, Australia) sent me a photo of the 18" block she embroidered, which will be incorporated into the king size quilt to be raffled at the National. Honestly, when I looked at it, I had to sit down. It is just so beautiful! This quilt is really going to be outstanding, and as you know, it will represent all of the NIA's family clubs, including "The Australian Insulator Collectors". Wait until you see it. I guarantee you'll be standing in line to buy raffle tickets!

I want to remind all of you in the Central Region that you not only have the right, but you have the opportunity to express any ideas or concerns you may have about the NIA - do you have a gripe? Do you have suggestions for improvement? Better still, if you would like to offer your services to the hobby, that would be most welcome. Just let me hear from you. I represent you and will be happy to pass on to the Board of Directors anything you have to say, negative or positive.

Good Collecting!

Marilyn Albers

Marilyn Albers NIA #541
Central Region Vice President

FROM THE EASTERN REGION

For those of you reading these regional reports, you should realize that there is currently a 2 1/2 month or better lag between the actual writing of one of the columns and when you receive it. For this reason, when discussing shows, I will try to focus in on a realistic time frame for the readers. Frankly, there were not many shows in the eastern region to focus on over the fall and early winter months. The Capital District Club had a couple of gatherings at Bob Berry's and the Barnes home in Elmira and Ken Willick was good enough to sponsor a backyard show. I regretted not being able to attend any of them, but even though only one of them was well attended, the word was that the absentees were the losers. The backyard get togethers are a pretty good way to bridge the gap between shows and in some cases, to beat the high cost of show halls. Claude Wambold will be hosting his annual swap meet at his home in Perkiomenville, PA on May 23. This always a real happening with plenty of dealers, attendees and glass and porcelain surprises showing up. Watch for the Rochester Bottle show on April 5 and of course, the NIA national show in Orlando on June 18-21. Not to belabor a point, but I will, ALL the shows need your support. Without you folks there, particularly at the larger shows where the hosts have a lot invested, the shows won't happen and we'll all lose.

Who says there isn't any good stuff out there. How about a NM THREADLESS E.R.W., a big Tillotson hat with a Dey St. address, a Tillotson hat 16 B-Way, eggs, baby E.R.W.s, and recently a 736. 1 hat. Not all of these were whole, but some of them weren't bad and they were all dug over the past few months on a short stretch of line. Lots of work, but I've seen some pretty happy faces showing off these gems.

It has been my policy since July to continue the tradition of contacting every new NIA member and Crown Jewels subscriber in the region and sending them informational material. Lately, I've been pleased to find out that the letters don't go into a black hole. I've received some responses! The character of these responses has been such that I have to conclude that many if not most of the newer collectors are really excited about the hobby and in some respect are like sponges waiting to absorb information, help, advice and above all, friendship and interest from veteran collectors. Although there are many great collectors out there who for one reason or another choose not to join the NIA (it's a free country!), I feel that the NIA members are the core of insulator collecting and must take on the task of befriending, educating and nurturing the newer folks. Little things like inviting them over to your house or to a dig or seeing that they get to a show, exposing them to magazines, books and informational material or just giving a few inexpensive pieces to a younger collector can go a long way. Any hobby needs new blood to grow and flourish. By the way, urge them to join the NIA. The response is usually pretty good.

Good collecting and hope to see you at the shows,

Dick Bowman , NIA #597




Eastern Region Vice-President

P.S. HELP! Ev will not be able to attend the NIA show in Orlando. So--I would appreciate a few volunteers to fill in my time slots at the NIA table so I can tend my sales tables. Thanks.

1991-1992 SECOND QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT
NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION

<u>BEGINNING BALANCE</u>	10-1-91	\$6430.30
<u>REVENUES</u>		+ 470.56
MEMBERSHIP DUES	408.00	
INTEREST	62.56	
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>		- 1037.70
DRIP POINTS	405.55	
POSTAGE	217.64	
SUPPLIES	49.66	
MEMBERSHIP ADV.	290.85	
CROWN JEWELS REFUND	58.00	
(old Drip Point subsidy)		
MISC.	16.00	
<u>BALANCE</u>	12-31-91	\$5863.16

Respectfully Submitted,



Ross E. Huth, Treasurer

PAPER WEIGHTS

Where are your extra insulators ... packed away in boxes? ... on a shelf in the garage or basement? ... stashed away in the attic? How about giving a few of them away to a local Boy or Girl scout troop. Some restaurants have old bottles and utensils setting on shelves as decorations ... give them an insulator and they will give us some free advertising for the hobby. Don't let your old Milholland's collect dust ... donate it to the library. Sometimes that one piece of glass or a reference is what it takes to get someone started in the hobby ... it was for me. I had a couple of "paper weights" on my desk the we had found along the tracks in Omaha and wandered into the local library to see what I could find out about them. A tattered copy of Milholland's book (probably placed there by a Missouri Valley Club member) led to a wonderful letter from Evelyn and the address of *Crown Jewels* and a fantastic hobby. It doesn't take a million dollar Super Bowl advertisement to reach people ... just spread around a few of those paper weights. Good collecting ... Don

LIBRARY BOOK DONATION PROGRAM ANNOUNCED !

Over the nine years that I have collected insulators I have spoken with many new collectors who have a common complaint: that when they went to their local library they could find no current books on insulator collecting. Well, I for one would like to see this changed. A few conclusions I've reached in considering this problem are:

1) The NIA could never afford to meet the demand for books that libraries could use;

2) The libraries, themselves, are under such fiscal constraints that most cannot afford the acquisition of low demand titles;

3) The publishers/authors of the books are not going to give the books away.

OK, so how do we fill the informational void I've identified ? Here's the plan:

With the gracious generosity of John & Carol McDougald, the NIA has establish a "Book Donor Award Program" through which insulator collectors and clubs purchase McDougalds' latest book and donate it to the library of their choice. For a donation of one book the NIA will give the donor a free name tag bar which reads "Library Book Donor". For a cumulative donation of five books, a "Silver Book Donor" bar and for ten books, a "Gold Book Donor" bar will be awarded.

A special price on the books is offered for this program which will be coordinated by the NIA. The NIA will distribute the books to the library designated by the donor upon receipt of donation funds. A listing of donations will be maintained to prevent duplication of libraries. At-large donations would also be accepted to be distributed to libraries who have requested copies of the books. Since most libraries will want McDougalds' books bound permanently rather than with the plastic comb, the cost of this process is be included. Both volumes 1 and 2 will be combined into one hardcover book.

A list of donors and the library receiving the donation will be published in "Drip Points" each time a book is purchased. A letter to the library will accompany each book on behalf of the donor so that the library could suitably label the donation with the donor's name(s). The donor will designate whether or not their phone number can be listed in the book, library policies permitting, so that interested readers may contact them.

As an added incentive, any person purchasing a book for donation may also purchase a hardbound copy of both McDougalds' volumes for their personal library. This is the only way in which a hardbound copy can be obtained for personal use. Of course, one is welcome to donate a library copy without purchasing a personal copy if they so desire.

The cost of the books is as follows:

* The price for a library copy will be \$45.00 plus shipping costs (see order form). For this price, a book will be sent by the NIA directly to the library of the donor's choice along with a price guide donated by the McDougalds. This may be a tax deductible donation, check with your librarian.

* For \$100.00 (plus shipping), any collector will be able to purchase a library copy w/price guide plus a hardbound volume for themselves. This will be the only method by which a collector can purchase a hardbound copy.

The instructions for ordering are contained on the attached order form. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at the number on the order form.

The NIA thanks John & Carol McDougald for making this program possible. Please help spread the joy of the hobby to others by donating a copy of the latest insulator book to the library of your choice. A limited number of hardbound copies is available, so don't delay, order today !

Mike Guthrie

Program Coordinator



LIBRARY BOOK ORDER FORM

YES ! I would like to donate a copy of McDougald's books on glass insulators from North America to my local library.

Please send _____ copies of the book to the following library (please duplicate the information for more than one library):

Library Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone Number of librarian:(_____) _____

YES NO Do you want your phone no. placed in the donated copy if the library will permit ?

For each library copy ordered enclose \$50.50 (\$45.00 plus \$5.50 shipping)
Please make check or money order payable to: "The McDougalds" but mail to Program Coordinator, listed below.

Please send _____ personal copies of the book to:

Collector's Name: _____

Mailing Address (UPS): _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone Number:(_____) _____

Remember, personal copies of the hardbound book can only be purchased with a library copy.

For each set of books (i.e. one library copy and one personal copy) ordered enclose \$111.00 (\$100.00 plus \$11.00 shipping)

Please make check or money order payable to: "The McDougalds" but mail to Program Coordinator, listed below.

Total amount enclosed with this order:

_____ library copies at \$50.50 each for a total of _____

_____ library & personal copies at \$111.00 each for a total of _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED....._____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !

Mike Guthrie, Program Coordinator
1209 W. Menlo
Fresno, CA 93711-1477
(209) 435-6127

Chuck & Sis Haymond-----Show Hosts-----Len & Jacque Linscott
invite YOU to

THE 23rd ANNUAL NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION'S CONVENTION, SHOW and SALE

Location: Orlando Airport Marriott Resort &
Convention Center
7499 Augusta National Drive
Orlando, FL 32822

Date/Hours: Friday, June 19, 1992
NIA Day - 9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
(Members Only)



Saturday, June 20, 1992
9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Sunday, June 21, 1992
9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Admission: \$.50 (Good Fri.-Sun.)

Featuring: Antique Insulators, Lightning Rod Balls, Weather Vanes,
Telephone/Telegraph Items, Railroad Memorabilia, Bottles, Jars, and
other Table-top Collectibles.

For Convention Packet/Information Contact: L. L. Linscott, 3557 Nicklaus
Drive, Titusville, FL 32780 (407-267-9170)

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From:

The show hosts for the 23rd National.....Orlando, Florida.....June 19-21,1992.....Airport Marriott Resort and Convention Center.

Convention/information packets are available upon request from: L. L. Linscott, 3557 Nicklaus Drive, Titusville, FL 32780 (1-407-267-9170)

The 23rd NIA Convention, Show and Sale is going to be tops! Reservations for the luau at Sea World on Thursday night are coming in quickly. We just need to receive full payment (check or M.O.) for your reservations by June 15th. The very reasonable cost of \$37.00/person includes transportation to and from Sea World, all you can eat luau, dinner show, free admission to the park with the choices of seeing shows(Shamu, Lazer Light, etc) after dinner or browsing in the park. Len and I were there for an evening of entertainment during the Christmas holidays and the food and shows were fabulous!

Sales tables are being reserved just as quickly-from front to back(unless otherwise requested)-and of course, the sooner you reserve, the sooner you're assured of getting a table(s). After April 15th, tables are available to other table-top collectibles. On Friday morning at 6:00 AM exhibitors will be admitted to set up their displays. At 7:00 AM dealers will be allowed in to set up their sales tables. There is only one entrance and in order to get in you must be a paid-up member with your 1992-93 NIA card in hand. If not, you will be directed to the New/Renewal NIA Membership table to take care of business. If you do have your 92-93 card you will proceed to the Registration table, receive your "dealers bag" which contains your name badges that you are requested to wear during set-up and show hours.

Unlike the luau, we have a seating capacity of 200 for the banquet. Space is limited! The awards banquet is one in the same, so you need to purchase an awards banquet ticket for the Saturday evening event. If you wait until the last minute to make reservations, you may be left out. Because of limited

space and also the format of the program, there is no option of "coming to watch" after the dinner.

Upon receiving your reservation form and check or money order, you will be sent a packet which includes a receipt for your reservations, discount cards and coupons for use on your way to and from the 23rd and a 1-800-# to call for your Orlando Magicard.

Remember---Marriott convention rates are good several days before and after the convention. Also, U.S. Air coupon is included in the convention packet and it gives a discount for those of you who are flying into Orlando International Airport.

We can hardly wait to share all the good things we have in store for you, so make your plans and we'll see y'all very soon.

*Len, Jaquie,
Chuck + Sis*

From:

Jacqueline Linscott, NIA#1380 and your Director of Product Marketing

Spring is almost here and like the flowers, we begin to bud and blossom and think about the shows we're going to be going to....wearing NIA T-shirts, sporting our own personalized NIA name badges and topping off our attire with an NIA patch on our favorite cap, vest, jacket, etc.... and of course, our mode of transportation has an NIA decal on it....and we have our coffee or OJ in our NIA mug.

This past winter has been no different from previous winters....sales have been slow but once spring comes, y'all renew my faith in sales and start ordering.

The above analogy is brought to you to say...order early, especially for the 23rd National in Orlando. Home may be only a hop and skip from Orlando for me, but I have to order also.

For your convenience, an order form is included in this publication. I'll be watching for the mailman with your order.

See y'all in Orlando.....where magic happens.

Jaquie



Jacqueline Linscott, NIA #1380
 Director of Product Marketing
 3557 Nicklaus Drive
 Titusville, Florida 32780
 (407) 267-9170

NIA LOGO ITEM ORDER FORM

(Make check payable to National Insulator Association)



NIA LOGO
 Lg Logo on back

Quantity

Amount

_____ **T-Shirts** (50/50 Cotton Poly) Lt. Blue _____ @ \$12.00
 Sm_____ Med._____ Lg._____ XLg._____ XXLg._____



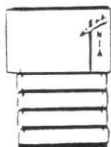
_____ **NIA MUGS** _____ @ \$8.00 _____



_____ **PATCHES** (3½" x 2½") @ \$3.50 _____
 (Send SASE)

_____ **DECALS** (2" x 1¾") @ \$1.00 ea. _____
 (Send SASE)

*** * * * ***



_____ **NAME BADGES** @ \$11.00/Badge _____

Complete information below

Name _____
 (No Middle Initials)

NIA# _____ City _____ State _____

*(States will be Postal abbrev. Provinces will be 2 or 3 letter abbrev.
 This is your final proof. No changes will be made after the order has been sent to engraving.)*

Bars denoting the following accomplishments and years are available at \$3.00 ea. _____

Present & Past board members (Pres., W.V.P., C.V.P., E.V.P., Executive Director, Treasurer, Information Director), **Nat'l** Show Hosts, Outstanding Service, and Lifetime Membership.

Please List: _____ (Yrs.) _____ (Yrs.) _____ (Yrs.)
 and add \$3.00/bar _____ (Yrs.) _____ (Yrs.) _____ (Yrs.)

Dear Don,

I was reading my Sunday paper and came across an article on battling the winter blues that discussed light boxes helpful for sufferers. Looking at the pictures contained in the article reminded me of display boxes used by many people in the hobby. I thought it a wonderful idea if the two interests could be combined, thus, I have enclosed a short news item for the *Drip Points* on the subject.

Happy Collecting



Rick Soller, NIA 2958

LIGHTING UP YOUR WINTER...

Lighted insulator display boxes can have another use besides showing off insulators; they can improve the health of some people. In an article in the January 12, 1992 *Columbus Dispatch*, Dr. Stephen Stern, director of the Ohio State University's mood disorders center indicates that up to 5 percent of the adult population in cities of the same latitude as Philadelphia, Columbus, and Salt Lake City, suffer Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), also known as wintertime depression. By exposing themselves to a good quality florescent light that's intense, non-glaring and spectrally balanced to the sun, a person can overcome this wintertime depression and can get his or her biological rhythms back in synch.

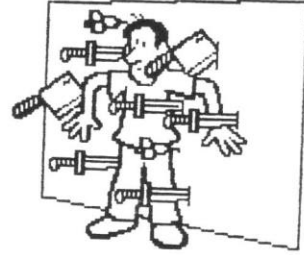
According to Jed Immel-Brown, a maker of light boxes used for treatment of SAD, the bulbs need a brightness rating of at least 2,500 lux, or about five times brighter than office lighting. Users don't have to look into the light but it must shine on the face and enter the eye to work. Owners of the box have them on from 30 minutes to several hours a day although some psychiatrists and SAO researcher Steven Dilsaver recommend caution to avoid overexposure which may produce redness or tears in the eyes, headaches, sleeplessness, irritability or a feeling of being "wired."

Adding insulators to such a box seems like a perfect idea. The spectrally balanced bulbs will give the insulators a truer color. The insulators will make looking at the box more interesting. And if health insurance would pay for the whole thing, that would be great. Unfortunately, although insurance companies are willing to reimburse people for drugs used to treat SAD, they have not yet shown a willingness to pay for light boxes costing from \$200 to \$350. At this price, though, I bet you could get a dandy insulator display case and put in the bulbs you need.

(Great article Rick ... wonder if a box of sand, a blanket, and some rolling surf sounds would help too? ... I get through winter depression by thinking about all of the insulators that are buried beneath the snow, waiting for someone to do some digging after the spring thaw! NIA member Bob Ryckman of Denver CO has been building some beautiful custom-made light boxes ... look for his display at shows this year)



LETTERS FROM MEMBERS:



Dear Editor,

I would like to provide some ideas/suggestions I believe are of importance to all insulator collectors.

First of all, I believe it is time for NIA to develop comprehensive grading standards for insulators. I know this will not be an easy task, but it is long overdue. The NIA Handbook I received (1984 Revision) upon becoming a member simply listed Mint as "Factory New Condition" and Near Mint (NM) as "Very Minor types of damage which detract little from the insulator's appearance or its monetary value as compared with mint specimens." As a new collector I am having a difficult time determining what NM and VNM mean. With the majority of insulators offered for sale in the Very Near Mint (VNM) category (which isn't even recognized yet by the NIA in their literature), I find myself guessing. I have learned what some fellow collectors believe these terms mean by purchasing pieces through the mail. But I have come across significant differences nonetheless between what some dealers consider VNM.

No doubt the lack of official NIA standards has been confusing to other collectors as well. And guessing just isn't fair to anyone. I can write a lengthy detailed description of the piece and eliminate all doubt as to its condition. But how many dealers out there have the luxury of time to go to such lengths? If standards were clear, we would only have to write a simple NM, VNM or Mint in the description. And worse yet, how can one possibly afford to advertise insulators if they had to provide such a lengthy description? I'm sure there are many seasoned dealers out there who can look at a piece and say "yep, that's VNM". But we must remember there are dozens of new collectors checking out the hobby every month. And without solid advice on what our standards are, they just may give up!

BUT WE MUST REMEMBER THERE ARE DOZENS OF NEW COLLECTORS CHECKING OUT THE HOBBY EVERY MONTH. WITHOUT SOLID ADVICE ON WHAT OUR STANDARDS ARE, THEY JUST MAY GIVE UP!

Therefore I propose the NIA sit down and establish authoritative references on what constitutes NM/VNM/Mint. For an example of the problem, how many of you would know how to grade an insulator that had cracks or potstones inside, but no chips? And how would you determine if these were factory caused (produced) or not? I would like to see the NIA join "the big leagues" by providing these updated standards.

Another item that needs to be addressed is that of color designations. I think that the NIA needs to take the step of determining the official names or actual colors that will be given to insulators.

IF WE ARE A SERIOUS ORGANIZATION THEN
LETS GET TO WORK AND MAKE IT HAPPEN.

We all love the color plates in the McDougald's book, but we all agree it was intended to be a reference only. But some photos focus more attention on a rare style insulator instead of the color it is meant to represent. And there are several colors not listed. I think it's time we take a serious look at: the Spec True invention. Can't the NIA board examine this new idea and decide whether or not to adopt this new method of identifying colors? (I wish I had a nickel for every insulator I bought that arrived in a different color than expected!)

Just a short browse through any Crown Jewels insulator advertisement will reveal how widespread the problem is. And I've seen this difficulty among even the most respected dealers and collectors in the hobby. Nobody is exempt from this problem until we develop a solution! We shouldn't have to guess! Eventually, collectors themselves will settle the matter, just by choosing to use it or not. But don't we owe it to ourselves (and fellow NIA members) to investigate this idea and adopt it if it merits? Never mind the work involved. If we are a serious organization then lets get to work and make it happen! And if there are some better solutions/ideas out there - let's hear them. I for one am looking for some answers and I hope that together we will resolve them.

Let's help educate new collectors on what NIA grading standards are, and provide authoritative guidelines for everyone to determine insulator colors. This will help to reduce the uncertainty involved in buying, selling and trading insulators. It may also help other hobbyists to see that we are serious about insulator collecting and that it isn't as subjective as they may think. This will increase the confidence level in our hobby, which appears to be lagging at some shows lately. And this is exactly what we need if we expect the hobby to have a bright future. As long as we continue to cater primarily to dealers who already know the standards, and have fancy (but little understood) names for every color shade of insulators, then we should not expect to see new collectors staying with the hobby. Just some thoughts from a new collector in the Land of Juan Valdez.

Sincerely,




Caleb Thimell, NIA 4610



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Time to renew your NIA membership! I know you hate me chasing after you each year, but it's the membership that keeps our hobby strong and growing. If you're attending the National show in Orlando this coming June, don't be stuck in the line renewing your membership when you could renew now. I want to note that dealers need to renew before setup time. Take the time and fill out the NIA renewal form in this issue of *Drip Points* and send it along to me.

The National Insulator Association (NIA) was officially founded July 7th, 1973 at the annual National in Hutchinson KS. Like myself, many members have actively stayed in the hobby since that first year. This year the NIA will be awarding a 20 years of service membership bar to eligible members. If you think your eligible, for either the 10, 15, or 20 year service award bar, please attach a note with your renewal and I will forward it on to you. If you are not eligible or have already received it I will let you know where you stand. Years of service printout of all members (active and inactive) will be at the national along with bars. You must be an active member to receive your award.

Good Collecting,

John deSousa

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

- REGULAR:** Regular adult member: \$10.00
 - FAMILY:** Regular plus all family members residing at the same mailing address: \$10.00
 - PROXY:** Proxy ballot for a family member: \$1.00
 - JUNIOR:** A member under 18 years of age: \$4.00
-

Use this form and send to:
National Insulator Association
5 Brownstone Road
East Granby, CT 06026

This is a () NEW () RENEWAL Membership

Name _____ NIA# _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

PHONE (opnl) _____ Date _____

RESEARCH SERVICE

Are you interested in the history of the insulator hobby? What do those patent numbers mean? How can you get a copy of a patent? How can you learn more about a specific company such as Hemingray, Brookfield, Fred Locke, Imperial, etc? Now there is a research service available. I have collected a great deal of information about our hobby and want to share it with you. All you have to do is ask.

My research files include: Jack Tod's files, more than 250 original and Xerox copies of insulator catalogs, nearly 500 trade journal articles from 1879-1935, over 340 advertisements (some of the better ones have appeared in Crown Jewels and my multipart insulator book), 30 reference books about early telegraph and power transmission, copies of 1050 insulator patents, 36 design patents, plus 34 trademarks and detailed information about more than 100 early power lines.

If you want information about your specialty, or have a question or patent that you want me to research, please ask. My research library is available to you. There is a small fee to cover cost of copies, shipping, and to purchase additional materials. Copies of patents are \$1.00 each and other copies are 25 cents per page (\$1.00 minimum). All copies are sent postpaid and unfolded. If you wish to trade Xerox copies of catalogs or other information, there is no charge for the service.

The offer of this research service will be available indefinitely. I will also accept donations of research materials or purchase them if you want. I feel that the hobby should have a central research library available to everyone. Please consider this service your window to the past, and a way to preserve and share knowledge of our hobby. Direct all requests and correspondence to:

Elton Gish (NIA #41), P.O. Box 1317, Buna, TX 77612,
(409) 994-5662

*** * * NIA WARNING * * ***
MEMBERS BEWARE -- TWO ETHICS VIOLATIONS

The NIA board has decided to publish the names of two collectors that have refused to either pay for their purchases, or communicate in any way with either the seller or the NIA Ethics Chairman. Repeated, unsuccessful efforts to resolve these two unrelated complaints have resulted in this action by the NIA. Thankfully, the monetary loss was small to each individual, but that still does not erase the fact that accepted NIA ethical behavior was ignored, nor does it reduce the damage caused to our hobby. Below are the names and addresses of the two people. Beware of any dealings with them.

Larry Church
Rt. 22, Box 145
Mooers, NY 12958

Russ Owen
1307 S. Joplin
Pittsburg, KS 66762

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