

GHOST TOWN ECHO

APRIL 2014



President: Niel Smith

VP: Pete Hendricks

Treasurer: Warren Lhotka

Secretary: Keith Ferguson

Email: wbcaweb@gmail.com

APRIL 2014 MEETING

Friday April 11 2014

TOPIC: “Foolish Things” – your most foolish bottle dig, bottle buy, selling story or ??

March Meeting Highlights

- May show dates are the 16th & 17th - More info enclosed again - we are rapidly selling out so act now to reserve your table!
- Another meeting with low attendance - we'd love to see you in person at the April Meeting - thanks to everyone who took time to come.
- Some neat inks were out on display - including a rare Scribblers giant crock/jug and other colored masters and cones.
- The show was discussed - great activity in signups - thanks!

Whiskey Wars – Tales from Washington’s Prohibition Era

By Ellen Levesque

In November of 1914, Washington State voters approved Initiative Measure #3, prohibiting the manufacture and sale (though not the consumption) of liquor statewide. Coming on the heels of a long fight to end the so-called “Local Option” measures adopted in 1909 that allowed towns to decide whether they’d be “wet” or “dry”, the new law saw all saloons shutdown as of midnight December 31, 1915. The law did allow those with permits to import up to two quarts of hard liquor or 12 quarts of beer every 20 days. One side effect was that drug stores, where prescription liquor could be still be obtained, saw a booming business, until November 5 1918, when the so-called “bone-dry” referendum (modeled after Federal law) was passed into law.

But, like any good outlawed substances since time immemorial, booze was still to be had. Tales of attempts to bypass the legislation abound in local newspapers from the time - here’s a few “colorful” examples:

In June of 1918, the Morning Olympian blazed with the headline; “*Moonshiner Gets Caught Still is Found*” and detailed the federal officers who raided the still of a Mr. William Stalmaker near Shelton. Confronted by the “revenueurs” Mr. Stalmaker, who was apparently partly blind, lifted a floorboard in

his one room house and revealed that evil thing - a bottle of whiskey. Hauled into court in Olympia, Mr. Stalmaker proclaimed "I wish I was dead" repeatedly and "I regret the day I ever built that still."

In July of 1916, the Olympian once again reported on a raid - this time caused by a shipment of "alcoholic honey" - a case of whiskey allegedly shipped in a crate labeled "honey". Police got a tip that the honey would be delivered to Mr. Thomas Taylor of 709 East Fourth Street in Olympia. The crafty Mr. Taylor had apparently been tipped off himself and was not at home, but that didn't stop the police from finding bottles of soapy water in the basement with a suspiciously high whiskey content!

In May of 1915, the Pullman Herald announced that a gentlemen of Austrian descent ratted out his friends and "Says "Crazy Water" made in Pullman." The paper colorfully described the booze as being made in the "boxcar hovel of the Austrians on the N.P. tracks." When police searched said box car, not only did they find booze but three loaded revolvers, a sawed off shotgun, brass knuckles and "eggs enough to stock a good sized grocery store."

The town of Tenino saw another "crafty" case in October of 1916, when two Olympia boys suspected of violating the town's booze ordinance announced during their trial that the whiskey in question was "no longer whiskey", but was now harmless cider. The bottles had apparently been displayed each day in court, and the boys noticed several of the bottles had been "hit," and mysteriously the whiskey had been replaced with sweet cider. Hmm....

Meanwhile, Tacoma had it's own problems with booze not being booze, as lamented by Mayor Fawcett, who lambasted police for raids where suspected booze turned out to be water in January of 1916. That same day, ideas for hiding booze were discussed on the front page - fake steam registers, andirons, double floors and iron beds with extra hollow legs were all suggested.

Seattle had problems too, not the least of being a "Booze Scandal" as reported in the Seattle Star from June 9 1919 - over 900 quarts of liquor was apparently stolen from the chambers of Judge Clay Allen, by thieves who had their own pass key. The judge accused the prosecuting attorney's office of not delivering every confiscated bottle, the DA said he had, and meanwhile, a party was happening some place in Seattle ;o)

Camouflage and subterfuge appear to be the order of the day. In September 1916, headlines proclaimed that 22 cases of whiskey disguised as canned salmon had been found in Aberdeen. Shipped from San Francisco with labels from the Tilikum Canning Company, the cases were seized from the steam schooner Coronado by Aberdeen police.

This is perhaps my favorite headline, (dated December of 1917) because I have no idea what it means is: "*Arrests Follow Raids on the Blind-Pigs: Whiskey Also Found in Thurston Hotel*". The article deals with raids on various "blind-pig establishments in the city." Ok.....

And finally, those "prescriptions"? well, apparently some police departments kept track of just how many. A 1916 article in the Morning Olympian proclaimed that "*Doctors Dispense 76 Prescriptions For Booze in Week*", which translated into 66 quarts of whiskey and 159 bottles of beer. Olympia's police chief said it was "high time Olympia frowned on physicians who are doing this kind of work." And In July of 1917, Seattle's mayor declared his intentions to confiscate all liquor beings stored at local drug stores. "I'm not going to fool around and twiddle my thumbs while drug stores sell booze," declared the Mayor.

Always need your story ideas or articles. Go paperless today! Email us at [wbcaweb@gmail](mailto:wbcaweb@gmail.com)

WBCA Spring 2014 - DEALER INFORMATION

SHOW DATES:

Friday May 16th (1-5 pm) – EARLY BUYERS - \$5

Saturday May 18th 2014 1-6 pm - FREE

LOCATION: Kent Commons – West GYM

525 Fourth Ave N Kent WA 98032

SHOW CHAIRS: Pete Hendricks – Phone: 253-335-1732

Niel Smith – Phone: 206-783-0215 or

Email: wbcaweb@gmail.com



8 foot Tables @ \$40 per table – sharing tables allowed

Tables will be covered for your convenience. No personal chairs allowed. Items on floor must be on a rug or other covering to protect the gym floors. Thanks for your cooperation!

Dealer drop off begins at 11 am. No sales before 1 pm (what happens in the parking lot, stays in the parking lot) Set up ends at 5 pm Friday, with additional setup time on Saturday May 17th beginning at 8 am.

To leave unloading space for other dealers, please move your vehicle when finished unloading/loading. There is plenty of parking at the Commons for all.

As a courtesy to our buyers, we ask that **ALL** dealers be prepared to stay until the close of the show at 3:00 pm on Saturday. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Sales Table Reservation – Checks payable to WBCA

NAME #1 _____

NAME #2 _____

Phone :

Email:

of Tables @ \$40.00 each _____

Mail completed form to: Niel Smith 8319 16th Ave NW Seattle WA 98117