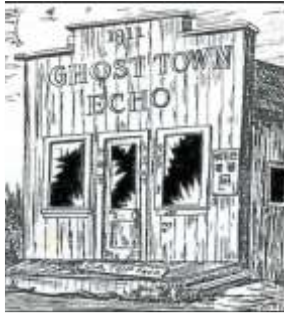


# GHOST TOWN ECHO

MARCH 2015

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## APRIL MEETING

Friday April 110 2015

TOPIC: **How to determine bottle values**

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## President's Message

By Niel Smith

### GO DEEP- OR GO HOME!!

"Wow! That's a deep one!" Two weeks ago Pete and I dug the final honey hole in a row of 6 DEEP toilets we had located in Seattle and boy was it an adventure! We knew that the area we were working was tricky because of the large amount of back-fill atop the pits which made each one at least 11' deep. We had no idea the real challenge would be the Maple tree from Hell!!

First, the back story: Over 20 years ago I was shown a parking lot on First Hill in Seattle that held six privies tight in its clutches. They were clearly marked on the map and no amount of angle probing could locate them. For years we would drive by the site on the way to other digs and lament how we would love to know what was buried in them! We had managed to dig one of the holes sometime in the early 2000's (through a neighboring yard) which netted 3 Cooper and Levy whiskey flasks in the top portion of the ash layer. The remaining pits were obscured by a large concrete bulkhead which made probing impossible. Then finally, as evidenced by last month's story, the apartment building was being refurbished giving us a chance to get at those pits!! The first pit excavated was full of bottles dating 1895-1905 and ended up being in the upper fill layer (just like the Cooper and Levy pit dug many years earlier.) We knew that the territorial pit was there, we just had to find it! We persevered on and located the third pit (which was the loaded one) giving up a Big Kellogg W.T. drug and a rare Sheldon Hutch soda from Seattle.



Going on down the line we found the fourth hole - only the last 3 feet remained due to an old sewer line repair, but it yielded some very rare Seattle drugstores and a great little perfume with an embossed insect on the front!

The following weekend Pete and I returned and located the fourth hole which was FULL of yellow privy seeds, but not ONE-SHARD-OF-GLASS, bummer! As a last ditch effort Pete ran over to the corner of the large lot and found the last pit which was directly under this nasty old Maple tree that was more roots than anything else.

Naturally when we removed the asphalt, a giant 6" diameter feeder root dove down into the pit and took us (no joke) 2 ½ hours to chop, saw, breaker bar and tug on before we could make any headway. Once removed, we buried the 6' probe through ash and not a sign of glass!! Powering



down in a little slot we took it to 6' feet and buried the probe again! "Groan....Do we want to go 12'?!! Is it a well? No.....it was a toilet, just really deep and no backfill on top!

Finally, the bottles came out when we reached 10' and they were OLD! A rare and valuable Dutch gin with embossed horse in profile was smashed in place by a pure red Gilka bottle. Other finds



included: 2 quart Rainier's, a Warner's safe cure with beautiful rainbow swirls of stain, an intact dip mold gin and a rare Herbert Haven druggist Seattle. This was the oldest of the holes on the site. Once we cleaned up the site we went to another location where we probed out two more pits which we had high hope for. We returned with Scott the following weekend and dug all day without one significant find! The previous 5 holes really spoiled us and gave us the reminder that not every hole can be a good one! As the wise old digger always says: "The

amount of bottles you dig is proportionate to the amount of Earth you move!" Ain't it the truth!

#### **REPORT FOR THE NIA YEARLY POTLUCK AND SHOW**

Well, another year has passed and we were back to getting together with our friends from the Emerald City Insulator association for their yearly potluck and sale. Lots of club members from the WBCA were present including Tony Vincent, David and Julie, David Bork, Rich Agers, and Steve Hubbell. Pete and I had sales tables as did Warren and Vicki! Vicki made a spectacular caramelized

Flan dessert that I ate WAY too much of because it was SOOOOooo good! Tons of good food and great friends at this event! It was fun to talk with members from the NIA and see what was new in the Insulator hobby. I scored a fantastically menacing Southern Grotesque face jug from Vi Brown's daughter and a San Francisco Sarsaparilla to boot! It was fun to watch show chair Gil Hedges argue with one of the church ladies who told us not to bring our bottles through the kitchen into the hall. We quietly continued to squeak past them while they shouted at each other paying no attention to our continued procession! HA! Sales were slow, but the food was great and the weather spectacular! Hoping next year we won't have to bring our boxes through the kitchen!

### **Meeting Minutes – Thanks Lisa and Keith!**

Meeting theme: Bottle Patina

#### **Old Business:**

- Several members (Tony, Warren, Peter) at Chico show and having a lot of fun! Pete took flyers for our show and is handing them out. Highlights so far: Major Owl collection came up. Pete purchased a Fire Aqua Quart – pure blue
- Spring Show update:  
Many tables sold but there is still room - \$40 per table, contact Neil (as of 4/6/2015 have 42 tables reserved.)
- The FOHBC National show is coming up on July 31 in Chattanooga TN

#### **New business**

- Ron Aldrich has Old Washington Territory maps for sale if anyone is interested Smaller are \$2.00 each
- Spring Show - Gift cards for dealer raffles are purchased for the show, reconsidering door prizes as they can slow down the line. Looking for giveaway bottles for guests & kids for our show
- Lisa asks "Does the Club need a new "logo" to replace the GTE one designed in the 1960s?"

### **Don't Forget – Coming SOON!**

**The WBCA SPRING BOTTLE SHOW –**

**MAY 15 & 16th 2015 at the Kent Commons – early buyers \$5 on Friday**

PRESIDENT: Niel Smith

VICE PRESIDENT: Pete Hendricks

TREASURER: Warren Lhotka

SECRETARY: Keith Ferguson

Club Email: [wbcaweb@gmail.com](mailto:wbcaweb@gmail.com)

**PS – Have you paid your dues today? ;)**