

The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors – Serving the National Capital

February 2013

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Meeting – February 26th at 7:30 PM

We will have our annual dinner in February because our members have difficulty finding time for a holiday party in December. We will aim to meet at 7:30 because 8 seems a bit late to eat. The club will provide soft drinks and sandwiches. Members are encouraged to bring a dish to pass, but we will have enough food to share with all members and guests. Please bring bottles for show and tell.

Baltimore Bottle Show is March 3rd

We hope to see everyone at the Baltimore Bottle Club's 33rd annual show and sale from 8 AM to 3 PM at the Physical Education Center, Essex Campus of the Community College of Baltimore County, 7201 Rossville Boulevard, Rosedale, MD 21237. For more information contact Rick Lease (410/458-9405 or finksburg21@comcast.net) or check the web site BaltimoreBottleClub.org.



Roland Longerbeam displayed this group of Portner bottles at the January meeting.



We will announce the winners of our annual contest at the February meeting. However, the shard and digger contest results are no secret because these contests garnered only one entry each. We hope people will be less reticent about bringing in their 2013 acquisitions.

Mike Cianciosi displayed the damaged Gilbert & Co bottle from Philadelphia, which is shown above. This bottle is shaped like the more common Genuine Essence bottles and probably held some sort of extract.

Peter Rydquist dug the Ed Goddeyne bottle shown at right during a trip to Michigan.



Meetings: 8:00 PM on the last Tuesday of each month January-June, October-November; picnic in September.

President: Andy Goldfrank

Vice President: Al Miller

Secretary: Jim Sears

Treasurer: Lee Shipman

Pontil: Jim Sears (email: searsjim@usa.net, PH: 609/472-5473) & Andy Goldfrank (email: amg_sticky@yahoo.com, PH: 202/588-0543)

Web Site: www.potomacbottlecollectors.org

Maintained by Mike Cianciosi (chos@cox.net)

Washington, D.C. Under Glass

By Jack Sullivan
[Special to the Potomac Pontil]

Glass paperweights have been a favorite kind of advertising both for businesses and tourist attractions for almost a century and a half. They began to be manufactured about the late 1870s. Most early weights were made in Eastern States like Pennsylvania and New Jersey. They exhibited a considerable elegance in design and sometimes historical significance. That said, District of Columbia merchants were not as likely as businesses elsewhere to employ them in advertising. More common are DC weights that depicted the public buildings and monuments of the Nation's Capital.

An exception is a weight from the Pittsburg Water Heater Company (Fig. 1). It advertised its appliance as able to give the customer 100 gallons of hot water at the cost of a dime. No more cold showers with an installed Pittsburg heater. This company was located at 1305 G Street N.W. A bit of research yielded a 1920 photograph of the store front (Fig. 2) In the window at far left is the water heater. At the center is a primitive washing machine with a wringer on the top.



Fig. 1: Pittsburg Hot Water Heater weight



Fig. 2: Pittsburg Co. storefront photo

The A.S. Caywood Company was real estate and insurance brokers with offices at 933 Ninth Street and a branch office at “Herndon Falls Church” that handled farm sales and country homes (Fig. 3). A Caywood ad of that time listed a seven-room house with a two-story stable in the rear on M Street N.W. between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Boasting “all modern improvements,” the property could be bought for \$4,150.

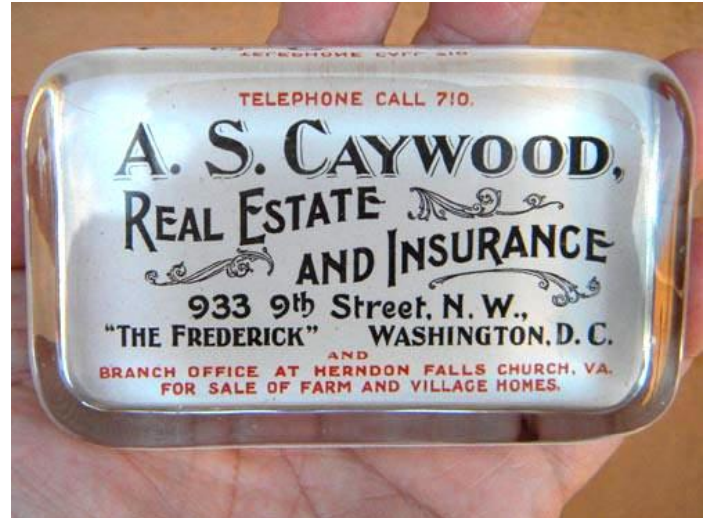


Fig. 3: Caywood Real Estate weight

Both these paperweights appear to have been made under a patent issued on September 5, 1882. Filed by the Maxwell Company of Pittsburgh, the patent provided a method for putting lettering, monograms and designs on a thin plate of translucent glass. This plate was placed in a mold and molten glass was poured on top thus sealing the message. Paperweights manufactured in this way can be identified by the white milk glass appearance on the underside.

The G.A.R. Encampment weight appears to have been made under the Maxwell Patent (Fig. 4). It advertised the Crawford Shoe Store at 903 Pennsylvania Avenue NW. The Crawford shoe chain, which boasted outlets up and down the East Coast, was a major source of paperweights, usually involving the picture of a shoe. In this case, Crawford has chosen to commemorate the 1892 encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. The picture in the medal appears to be Rutherford B. Hayes. The former President and Civil War officer was Grand Marshal of the event.

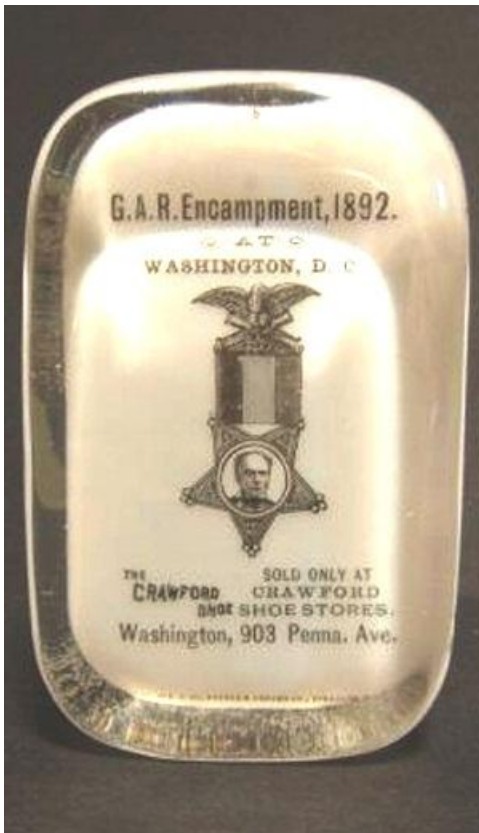


Fig. 4: GAR Encampment weight

Crawford also gave preferred or potential customers a glass weight of the Washington monument (Fig. 5). It showed the giant obelisk surrounded by a copse of trees that no longer exist at the site. It also serves to introduce us to a series of paperweights that were issued as souvenirs of Washington. These latter were made from a photographic process and date from after the turn of the 20th Century.



Fig. 5: Washington Monument weight

The first four all depict the White House, setting up a guessing game as to which one was the earliest image. My candidate is the round weight, a somewhat unusual shape since most are rectangular (Fig. 6). My reason is that the photograph shows very few foundation plantings. Those shown seem to be small and somewhat unkempt. By contrast the next weight was teeming with vegetation, much of it with a subtropical look (Fig. 7). Unlike the first example, this one had the American flag flying over the President's house. The third weight also showed a flag but the angle was different and pictured individuals in 1900's garb strolling up toward the front door (Fig. 8). The fourth weight might be dated by the indication that it depicted the "new addition" to the White House entrance hall. Best guess: A renovation during the administration of Theodore Roosevelt in 1902.



Fig. 6: White House weight (round, scalloped edges)



Fig. 7: White House weight (rectangular)



Fig. 8: White House weight (round, plain edges)



Fig. 9: White House entrance weight

Another early 1900s weight is of the Library of Congress (Fig. 10). It is notable in that a street or driveway appears to go right to the front door. There seems to be a small grove of trees in front and the current fountain is missing. Like the photos of the White House, the image was sepia colored. This indicates greater age than those featuring color illustrations, such as the two of the Capitol shown here (Figs. 11, 12). Both can probably be dated from the 1940s or 50s, with the oval weight being the newer of the two. The same dating would apply to the glass weight showing the Lincoln Memorial in cherry blossom season (Fig. 13).



Fig. 10: Library of Congress weight



Fig. 11: US Capitol weight (rectangular)



Fig. 12: US Capitol weight (oval)



Fig. 13: Lincoln Memorial

The next item is not glass but celluloid and has a silvered mirror on the reverse side. Pocket mirrors were popular giveaways by businesses in the early 20th Century. As collectibles they often are grouped with paperweights. This one is of interest because it showed the newly constructed Main Post Office Building, now the Postal Museum, next to Union Station (Fig. 14). The building was completed in 1920, a likely dating for the mirror. Best Bros. Keene Cement Company of Medicine Lodge, Kansas, was bragging that its cement was used throughout the building for all interior plastering.

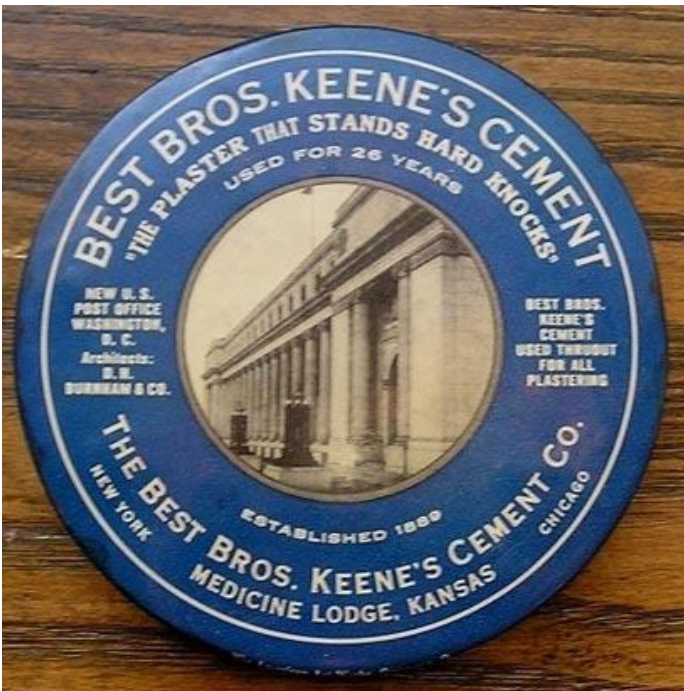


Fig. 14: Main Post Office pocket mirror

The final paperweight is glass with scalloped edges and clearly the most recent of them all (Fig. 15). It was occasioned by the Senate hearings of 1972 and 1973 into the Watergate scandal that eventually resulted in the 1974 resignation of President Richard M. Nixon. The provenance of this item is unclear, but the message

clearly is derogatory to the committee chairman, Senator Sam Ervin of North Carolina. His hearings were derided as "a circus." The perpetrator, however, has badly misspelled the senator's name as "Irwen."



Fig. 15: Watergate Circus weight

There they are, fourteen paperweights-advertising, souvenir, political – all with a Washington, D.C. origin or theme. They are artifacts of National Capital history, most of them under glass and well preserved for future generations.

Upcoming Area Bottle Shows



Feb 22-23 Phoenix, AZ
 Feb 24 Enfield, CT
 March 1-2 Deland, FL
March 3 Baltimore, MD
 Mar 8-9 Chico, CA
 Mar 9 Badin, NC
 Mar 9 St. Joseph, MO
 Mar 17 Flint, MI
 Mar 23 Daphne, AL
 Mar 24 Brewerton, NY
 Mar 30 Athens, GA
 Apr 7 Dover, NH
 Apr 7 Tylersport, PA
 Apr 13 Kalamazoo, MI
 Apr 20 Salisbury, NC

Mar 17 St. Louis, MO
 Mar 22-23 Morro Bay, CA
 Mar 24 Bloomington, MN
 Mar 24 Enfield, CT
 Apr 6 St Clairsville, OH
 Apr 7 Hutchinson, KS
 Apr 12-13 Antioch, CA
 Apr 20 Salisbury, NC
 Apr 21 Harrisonburg, VA

The
BALTIMORE ANTIQUE BOTTLE CLUB

Presents its
33rd Annual Show and Sale

Sunday, March 3, 2013



Doors Open 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

**Physical Education Center
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Community College of Baltimore County
7201 Rossville Blvd. (off exit 34, I-695)
Baltimore, Maryland 21237**

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Bottles, Jars, Stoneware, Advertising, Breweriana, Small antiques

**The Largest one-day Bottle show in the world!—over 300 tables
Admission \$3**

For Information Contact:

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For Contracts: Andy Agnew

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