

Oregon Brewery Mugs

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It is good there are so many categories of bottles because the likelihood of any two collectors agreeing on a favorite can be remote. Some of us favor several, therefore challenged on multiple fronts and perhaps escaping disappointment that ensues when you cannot buy, beg or trade for those elusive, rare remaining pieces to fulfill a collection.

We simply defer and make more fervent efforts in another category, or better yet, investigate the world of go-with memorabilia to further enhance an existing collection.

This article is not an attempt to convince you that antique beer mugs is my favorite category; but is entertaining and sufficiently challenging.

Pictured are some prime beer mugs from Oregon. All are from the heyday of glorious lager beer in pre-prohibition Oregon (pre-1916). This is not a complete selection, to be sure, but a nice offering.

Most of you are well aware of how the Internet has changed personal contact. Automated auction services have elevated buying and selling activities for collectors to unforeseen levels.

Some of these old beauties came from eBay. The North Pacific Brewery mug is rare and a nice specimen fetches between



\$300-600 on a good day.

If this seems a wide estimate range, most collectors will agree it depends upon how many bidders are involved, and also pre-year-2000 market conditions have adjusted prices downward somewhat. Prices evolve based upon people's sense of rarity, value and perhaps their own net worth!

The North Pacific Brewing mug is also one of the few examples that have the gorgeous blue color, which makes it stand out in the display case. This brewery was Astoria's largest.

John Kopp began in 1884 and prohibition ended the firm's reign. Collectors seek no fewer than six amber embossed beer bottles from NPB (three blob top/quart, pint and split; and 3 crown

top/quart, pint and split).

The blob tops are the harder to find and beer trays are even harder to obtain. The other mug is a bit of an anomaly in that usually a bottle leads to a company. In this case, there are no known embossed bottles from this Mt. Hood brewing company. Paper labels surface, some nice beer trays and etched beer glasses, but no bottles.

This firm conducted business between 1904-1916. They continued in business through prohibition and in 1928, created a business empire when its owner, Arnold Blitz, joined forces with Henry Weinhard's company to form Blitz-Weinhard.

Weinhard left a host of artifacts to trace its legacy; the count is ongoing for embossed beers (probably at least eight, including blob tops) and a veritable array of trays, glasses, labels, ads, signs and more.

This early Portland merchant understood the value of publicity and public goodwill and created the largest brewery in the Northeast, whose beer was widely exported.

The H. Weinhard mug comes up for auction occasionally and is an attractive one.

An unusual offering is the Hot Lake Sanatorium mug pictured next to the Weinhard. The ruins of this world famous resort can still be viewed enroute to the town of Union, Oregon. Various artifacts which exist include embossed drugstore style bottles, postcards, etc. that reveal the



extent of their operation.

Turn of the century Portland newspapers carried numerous ads for means to get to their facility. The mug carries a detailed rendition of this resort.

The BPOE (Elks) influence in America has been substantial. Doubtless, many cities across the country boast Elk's Clubs today that continue to provide a wealth of community services.

In early America, the Elks were one of the most prominent organizations. This can be evidenced by collectors as many opportunities exist to obtain turn of the

The spectacular 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition had just occurred, generating enormous attention for the city (indeed, many would vote it a most successful campaign to attract people to the Northwest and the single most significant event that contributed to Portland's growth).

This event alone spawned a mass array of collectible material, including beer mugs, glasses and tokens. In particular, one of the finer beer glasses from Oregon is the Albany Brewing Co glass advertising their wares during the exposition and



Albany Brewery 1884-1906 by Dave Scafani

This largest brewery in the Willamette Valley of Oregon was founded in 1884 by William and Paul Faber. The brewery and bottling company was located on the northeast corner of Ninth and Lyon in Albany, Oregon.

With a production of 8,000 barrels a year, distribution using the railroad reached as far as Portland and San Francisco. Twenty-five barrels each week was shipped south to a San Francisco outlet. As with many late nineteenth century breweries, Albany Brewing had an ice plant to produce ice for lager beer production. Six tons of ice were produced daily. Excess ice was sold.

In 1906, William Faber, now sole owner, sold his brewery to the Salem Brewery Association for a branch outlet. They closed the site down in 1908.



century postcards, buttons, ceremonial tokens, tags, watch fobs and more.

Two coveted Oregon items (not pictured) are the Weinhard/Elks 1912 watch fob (from a special convention that year) and an elk pottery whiskey flask from the Lotus advertising Rheingold beer in Portland.

Featured are two panels of pictures showing various sides of three Oregon Elks mugs. From the left, we have a Portland Chapter 142. Next is a private firm, Elder's Buffet, which obviously catered to the Elks crowd.

I was fortunate enough to find a photo postcard featuring the interior of this elaborate eatery in Portland bursting at the seams.

featuring the likeness of Lewis and Clark; truly a beautiful glass and sufficiently scarce.

Finally, we have one of Portland's more enterprising liquor merchants, The Rothchild Bros., that created a beer mug for The Dallas Elks Chapter 303. Beer mugs are all quite collectible and frankly, getting hard to find.

Those additional collecting categories, often unceremoniously referred to as "go-with memorabilia" can create lots of additional excitement and opportunities for your collection.

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