

# The Potomac Pontil

The Potomac Bottle Collectors Serving the National Capital



December 2002

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## Happy Holidays – No Meeting in December

Because our meeting date would fall on Christmas Eve, The Potomac Bottle Collectors will not meet this month.

## Meeting January 28th

**Annual Contest:** We will hold our annual bottle contest in January. Categories are collector, junior collector, digger, shard, and go-with. Club members will bring in their 2002 acquisitions, and we will vote on our favorites.

**Collector of the Year** will be awarded for the most impressive bottle collected during 2002.

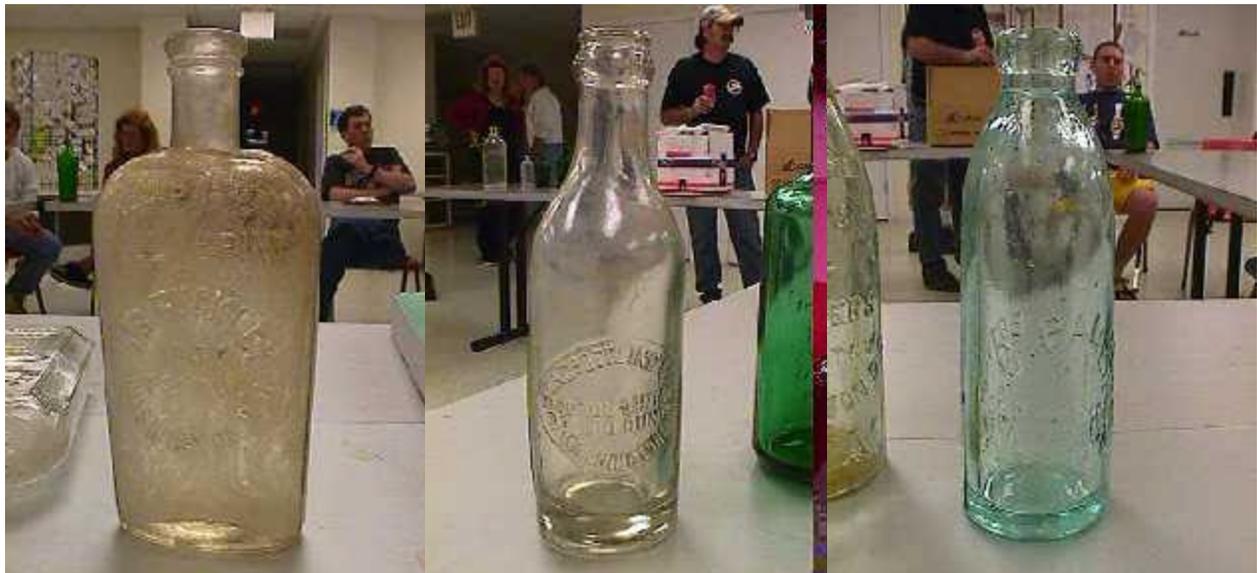
**Junior Collector of the Year** is limited to club members under age 18.

**Digger of the Year** will be awarded for the best bottle dug by a club member during 2002.

**Shard of the Year** is traditionally awarded for the best broken bottle dug during the past year. Please do not break one of your favorites in the hope of winning this contest.

**Go-with of the Year** entries are collectibles that complement a bottle collection. Most go-withs are advertising materials for bottled products.

**Recent Show & Tell Bottles:** Butler flask, C & C Bottling Company, and a Palmer Hutch.



Meetings: 8:00 PM on the last Tuesday of each month in the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Dr., Bethesda, MD 20816.  
President: Matt Knapp Vice President: Henry Fuchs Secretary: Jim Sears Treasurer: Ken Anderson  
Pontil: Jim Sears (email: searsjim@usa.net, PH: 703/243-2409) & Andy Goldfrank (email: amg\_sticky@yahoo.com, PH: 202/538-0543)  
Web Site: <http://members.aol.com/potomacbt/bottle2.htm> Maintained by Peter Rydquist: pehraug@aol.com

## LUKE KEARNEY: THE SALOON KEEPER WHO LOVED CHRISTMAS

by Jack Sullivan  
(Special to the *Pontil*)

At the beginning of the last century, in a saloon on the north side of L Street in the heart of downtown Washington, D.C., there once dwelled a publican who loved Christmas. His name was Luke J. Kearney.

We know Kearney's fondness for Christmas from the legacy he left of whiskey ceramic jugs that frequently are seen at regional bottle shows and at auction on Ebay. These were his Christmas "give aways" to favored customers and judging from the numbers around, he was generous in handing them out. While other whiskey distributors and tavern keepers sometimes handed out holiday favors, Kearney's are distinctive. Virtually all are two-toned stoneware with an Albany slip top and Bristol glaze body about 5 and 1/2 inches high. Most important, each has an individual slogan -- something for the drinking public to ponder while draining the contents of the jug.



The earliest seems to have been issued in 1900. Its underglaze label read: "You are not left.. 'Not by a Jug Full'...Compliments of...Luke J. Kearney...Christmas 1900." Later ones would add his address at 1811 L Street in the District of Columbia. This was followed in 1901 by "Another Jug Full...Compliments Of..."



In 1902 Kearney borrowed a slogan from the Detrick Distilling Company of Dayton, Ohio. Detrick was giving away slightly smaller jugs with a series of 12 mottoes, not tied to Christmas or any specific years. A customer who bought one gallon of Detrick's whiskey could choose one of these jugs; if he bought four gallons, he could choose four.

In 1902, Kearney used Detrick's slogan: "While we live - let's live." The next year the Washingtonian employed a personal motto: "Well I'll be Jugged...Here's Another Jug with Compliments of Luke J. Kearney. In 1904 and again in 1906, however, he reverted to Detrick slogans. The 1904 version was "If You Try Me Once, You Will Try Me Again, and in 1906, the enigmatic, "As I Go Up the Hill of Prosperity, May I Never Meet a Friend."

What does that mean? We don't want to meet this friend because we are doing well and when we meet him coming down the hill it means he is doing poorly? Or if we meet a friend when climbing to prosperity are we afraid he may ask for a loan or make some other claim on us? My wife's interpretation is that since becoming prosperous may mean manipulating other people to get ahead, we would rather take advantage of a stranger than a friend. Presumably Luke Kearney

knew the answer to this puzzlement and thought the motto appropriate for Christmas.

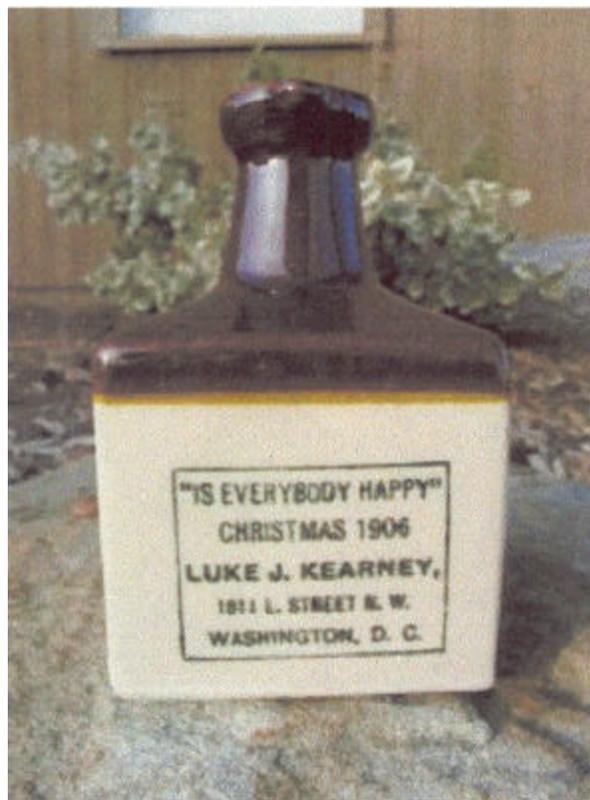
Although I have yet to identify a give-away for 1905, it appears that Luke issued a second version in both 1904 and 1906. The other 1904 jug contains a verse that says:

“To Be Healthy?  
That’s the Question;  
Drink Arlington Club  
It Aids Digestion.”

The second 1906 stoneware is unlike the others, appearing in a squared jug with the simple question: “Is Everybody Happy?...Christmas 1906...Luke J. Kearney.” After 1907 the jugs appear to cease, although Kearney’s saloon continued to be listed in local business directories.

Details about Kearney life and tavern are sketchy. He at least brushed with celebrity in 1903 when he accepted a check drawn on the Riggs Bank from Harry K. Thaw, the young socialite who murdered famous architect Stanford White over the showgirl, Evelyn Nesbit, “The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing.” A sensation of its time, the incident has spawned a number of books and at least one movie. Thaw may well have been a customer in Luke’s saloon.

Sanborn fire maps of the time show the 1811 L Street address as a two story brick building 25 feet wide and extending rearward almost one-half block to an alley. There was an empty lot on the east side, possibly for



hitching horses. Today the address itself has vanished between a large office building at 1801 L St. and a restaurant & bakery at 1819. Although the address is gone, Luke Kearney’s Christmas cheer lives on in the series of whiskey ceramics that bear his name.

### **Richard Lilienthal** tackles a milk question

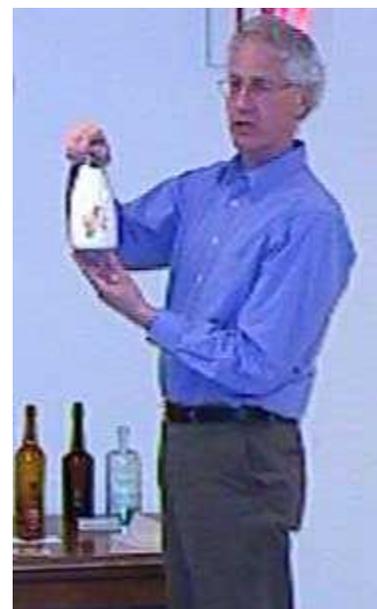
The date that homogenization began is not a simple issue. To quote from a reference book:

Although homogenization was introduced around the turn of the century, it was not generally applied to milk until the mid-1930's.

The first homogenized milk sold successfully in this country was distributed to restaurants in 1919.

By 1940, about 16 of the 48 states recognized homogenized milk in their regulations and only about 33 percent of the milk sold in America was homogenized.

By 1946, about 50 percent of the fluid milk volume was homogenized and just 3 years later the percentage rose to 70 percent. And by the late 1950's non homogenized milk was practically unavailable in the US.



## Upcoming Area Bottle Shows

**February 2** (9 AM to 2 PM) **South River, New Jersey:** New Jersey Antique Bottle Club 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Show & Sale at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 88 Jackson Street. Info: NJABC, 24 Charles Street, South River, NJ 08882 or **Joe Butewicz** PH: (732) 238-3238, email: [botlman@aol.com](mailto:botlman@aol.com) or **Ernest Bower** PH: (732) 868-0510, email: [xrdsrev@aol.com](mailto:xrdsrev@aol.com).

**March 1** (9 AM to 3:30 PM) **Maryland Line, Maryland:** Chesapeake Bay Insulator Club's 15th Annual Show & Sale (Sat. 9 AM – 3:30 PM) at the Maryland Line Fire Hall, I-83 just south of the PA border, Maryland Line, Maryland. Info: **Larry Novak** PH: (301) 680-8910, email: [cbic@clubs.insulators.com](mailto:cbic@clubs.insulators.com), web site: <http://www.insulators.com/clubs/cbic>

**March 2, 2003** (8 AM to 3 PM) **Baltimore, Maryland:** Baltimore Antique Bottle Club 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Show & Sale at the Physical Education Center, Essex Campus of the Community College, 7201 Rossville Blvd. Info: **Bob Ford** PH: (410) 531-9459, email: [bottles@comcast.net](mailto:bottles@comcast.net).



## Unless You're New, Your Dues Are Due

New members who joined the Potomac Bottle Collectors partway through 2002 should consider their dues paid up through 2003. For everyone else, the 2003 dues of \$10 per individual or family are due. Make checks payable to Potomac Bottle Collectors. Please renew at the January meeting or mail to Jim Sears, 4211 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Rd., Apt. 1, Arlington, VA 22203.

As you renew your membership, please take this opportunity to update your information. We will print a membership list soon.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Collecting Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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