

MINI-Z

THE NEWSLETTER OF PORT NICHOLSON MINIATURE BOTTLE CLUB



COVER BOTTLE

"The Spirit of Free Enterprise" was bottled by Basil A Fitzpatrick of Rangiora to celebrate the start of the Lyttelton/Wellington service by the ship of the same name. The service started on the 31st. May 1983 and these bottles were given away around that time.

Why Spirit of Free Enterprise? The ship is a privately operated truck, car and passenger ferry which was set up in direct competition to the Railways Corporation's Picton/Wellington service. Free Enterprise is operating very successfully as there is talk of buying a second ship.

The label is green with darker green for the stripe and bottom writing. The "Spirit of Free Enterprise" in both writing and picture form is in black.

I very much doubt that many of these bottles have found their way into collections. The same would apply to the bottle shown on the right.

This is a Wilson's whisky bottled especially for the New Zealand Professional Photographers Association Conference held in Dunedin in 1983. The label is in different shades of brown.

My thanks to Robin Mellish for obtaining these two bottles for me.



CLUB ADDRESS

Just a reminder; articles, letters to the Editor, or suggestions for our Cocktail of the Month should be addressed to P.N.M.B.C., c/o P.O. Box 384, Wellington, N.Z. Complaints please to PO Box 384, Outer Mongolia.

DATE, TIME, PLACE of NEXT MEETINGS

Sunday 19th Aug. Dave & Jackie Smiths, 86 Rawhiti Road, Pukerua Bay.
Sunday 16th Sept. Janne & Chris Matthews, 4a Kinloch Place, Papakowhai.
Sunday 14th Oct. Marjorie Lynch, 51 Maxwell Avenue, Wanganui.

The Wanganui Meeting is our first one outside the Wellington Region - lets have a good attendance from members in Palmerston North, etc, and it won't be our last.

PLEASE NOTE that the October Meeting is the SECOND Sunday of the Month. All meetings at 2.00 p.m.

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE OVERDUE? IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE OVERDUE? IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE OVERDUE? IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE OVERDUE? IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE OVERDUE?

SCOTCH WHISKY MINIATURES

Why are whisky miniatures so popular with collectors? Perhaps its the romantic association with the glens and history of the Scottish Highlands. Perhaps its the sheer range and variety of whisky miniatures. Perhaps its the enthusiasm for the brown stuff inside the full size bottles which lends to a hankering to collect their smaller cousins.

Nobody knows exactly how many miniature whiskies are out there. It has been reliably estimated that they probably number more than 2,500 names and 10,000 label variations. That should encourage, and frustrate, the most impoverished collector (like me!), and the most affluent. Each collection is, therefore, likely to be unique in some small way from any other. Likewise, no one collection will ever have all miniature whiskies. Besides the myriad of whisky miniatures which actually originated in Scotland, we also have the situation where many countries have their own "whiskies". Well known examples being Japan with its "Suntory" and "Nikka"; Korea with its "Gilbert" and our own "Wilson's".



None of the latter are "Scotches" because obviously they did not originate in Scotland. Many countries also take Scotch malt Whisky and blend it with their own, a recent local example being Dunbar. Even these blends cannot be called "Scotch".

Although the staunch Scot will strenuously deny it, some people, obviously Sassanachs, believe that whisky, like bagpipes and Christianity, came to Scotland across the Irish Sea. It was known to be the domestic drink in the Highlands from the very earliest times. That's possibly why the clansmen were such fierce warriors (or perhaps it was the upset stomachs caused by all that haggis and porridge).

Its name is derived from the Gaelic usage - beatha, meaning the water of life, which was sometimes shortened to Usky (and hence Whisky). Prior to 1505, when supervision of distillation in Edinburgh was placed in the hands of the Royal College of Surgeons of the City, cereals unfit for human consumption were in common use. Trust the Scots - what they wouldn't eat as porridge they drank as whisky. Needless to say the Do It Yourself Scots distilled a lot of their own Hooch. This tradition persisted when they emigrated to the Americas and the Antipodes. Earlier this century there was a thriving industry in the Hokonui hills of Southland. Rumour has it that even today, those white wisps over the hills are not always fog. A miniature with the Hokonui label and purportedly containing the illicit brew was auctioned recently in Palmerston North. It was probably a fake, however, a lot of collectors would give their eye teeth for such a bottle. A full story on the bottle appears in the Feb/March issue of the Club Newsletter.

There are two main classes of Feedstock whiskies, malts and grains. Grain whiskies are almost exclusively used to blend with the heavier and more expensive malts to form the almost limitless range of "blended" whiskies. The only single grain whisky miniature of which I am aware, originates from the North of Scotland Distillery at Cambas.

The first "named" whisky was Ferintosh from the village in Ross-shire in the late seventeenth century. Bottles weren't common until late in the nineteenth century.

Nobody seems to know for sure when the original Scotch miniature was issued, or what it was, but the first large quantities were issued for the American market following the repeal of the prohibition laws in 1933.

I hope that this brief opening article will give you a flavour of the history behind your prized collection of Scotch miniatures. In future articles we will look at examples of the different types of Scotch, some representative whiskies from some of the major distillery areas as well as some of the variations in the presentation of Scotch miniatures.

We will conclude the series by looking at some of the "Own Label" and novelty miniatures.

COLIN RYDER

Do you know someone who collects minis and is not a member? Why not tell them about the club, about our newsletter 6 times yearly and the bottle offers we have for members from time to time. If that doesn't work, strike them with a blunt instrument and rob them of \$10 (or \$15 for a family/household or US.\$9, A.\$9 or £7). Send the amount to the Treasurer c/of P.O.Box 384, Wellington, not forgetting to give us their name and address.

WHAT IF I LOOSE THEM?

Two articles have appeared in the Miniature bottle Collector on insuring a miniature bottle collection (Collectors Beware - Vol.V No.2 1978 and Insuring Your Collection Vol.X No.2 1983), but neither of these adequately cover the position in New Zealand (or Australia or the U.K. where insurance law is very similar) where insurance policies are written very differently from the States. I would go so far as to say that the articles are dangerously misleading to those living outside the U.S. I have been meaning for some time to write an article on this subject but it has taken Kevin Hewatson's letter in the last edition and questions from Robin Mellish to prod me into action.

The first rule of any insurance is to minimise your loss and maximise the payout should the worst happen. The former can be easily accomplished by keeping your minis in a cabinet, preferably screwed to the wall. This is doubly important in N.Z. where even a small earthquake can send minis tumbling off shelves. Incidentally, perspex is better than glass in New Zealand (although dearer) as it will flex rather than smash in a large quake. Cabinets will also provide some protection from the effects of smoke and/or water in a small fire as well as keeping your minis away from 'little fingers'. (There is less dusting too!)

To maximise the payout you should do three things:

1. Fully insure them (I'll come to that later)
2. Keep an up to date list, keep it away from the minis and preferably out of the house altogether.
3. Take some photographs of your collection. You don't need to photograph every bottle, general shots will do. They will be guaranteed to impress the insurance company's assessor (adjuster - U.K.). Remember that to someone who doesn't collect, your collection probably looks more valuable than it really is - a great advantage if you've had a loss.

Now to the tricky part, how much are your bottles worth and how much should you insure for?

The myth I must explode is that you DO NOT have to insure them separately from your other household effects, although you may do so if you wish. An 'All Risks' type of insurance will cover you for more eventualities than a standard household policy, but usually at a greater cost. Whilst most Insurance Companies operating in N.Z. have a cut-off point for collectables and "works of art" under which they do not have to be specifically declared, eg. "\$400 or \$500 or 10% of the sum insured, whichever is the less", my own insurer does not. This means that provided no one bottle is over this value you merely have to assess the value of the bottles and add that to the value of your other household contents. The Policy Warnings/Conditions do vary between insurers and it would pay to check with your own insurer on this point. (One Insurance Company specifically excludes breakage of china, crystal or porcelain). You will have to bear the first few dollars of any loss (the amount varies with each policy). In the event of loss by earthquake this is fixed and amounts to \$200 or 1% of the loss if greater.

Being a great believer in insuring adequately, my advice is to work out the value of your bottles (yes, I'm coming to that) and add the (staggering) total that you arrive at to the value of your other household goods.

There are two types of householders policy, replacement with new and indemnity. Without getting too technical, there is no N.Z. company offering a true replacement with new policy as regards your more minor household items (including your bottles). However, even if there was, there is almost no difference between replacement with new and indemnity when we are talking about a mini bottle collection.

My advice (prices applicable to N.Z. members only,) on how to value your collection is as follows:

Count up all your 'ordinary' bottles and multiply the total by \$3. or \$4. To replace some will cost more, others less; \$4. is a good average at the moment, (remember that prices will rise). Be careful though of any very old bottles. These if rare, may need to be calculated separately. A couple of the very old and rare Scotches at the club auction last year fetched \$60. each! Count up all your micro-minis and multiply by \$5. or \$6. the fancy glass and ceramic bottles should be valued by references to dealers' catalogues (Montagues, Jon Sul, etc.), remember that if you have imported them from overseas yourself the cost of postage should be added also. Chances are that you will not find some of your ceramics listed for sale. If so, take an average price of the ones you do find and apply it to the others, unless you know they are especially cheap, or dear, ones. There have been several auctions in the last few years that should also help you establish a value. However, be careful to avoid 'fluke' prices. A Ben Eagles Curling Stone sold in Christchurch for \$40. last year - this is obviously a very inflated price as it was the only one on offer and two collectors were determined to have it.

Doing the above counts and research is not as time consuming as it initially sounds and the time could be repaid many many times over.

What if the value is so high that you feel you cannot afford to pay the premium? In New Zealand, household policies are generally not 'subject to average' as many are overseas, which is helpful. (Overseas members should check to see whether their policy is subject to average and if you don't know what that means may I respectfully suggest that you find out in a hurry - ask at your local company office as many agents, regrettably, know little about the workings of the policies which they are selling.) If your policy is not subject to average, it is your prerogative to, say, only include half of the value which you have calculated. If you only have a small or medium loss you will probably be O.K. You can still claim for the full value of all your destroyed bottles and provided that your total claim (as adjusted by negotiation with the assessor) does not exceed the total you are insured for, you will be fine - notwithstanding that a large part of your effects may have been undamaged. However, if a large fire, flood, or earthquake totally destroys your household effects including the bottles, you will wish you had paid the extra premium. A point worth remembering is that if you do make the attempt to fully insure your collection and other household contents, in the event of a loss the assessor will take a far more lenient line. You will be likely to settle at a higher figure and with far less argument. Remember also that New Zealand houses, largely being of wooden construction, burn well. YOU could loose the lot.

Incidentally, if any New Zealand member does loose their collection, contact the Committee, we will help all we can.

David Smith

LIQUEURS

In recent issues of the Club's magazine several articles relating to specific liqueurs have appeared. A liqueur is a spirit which has been sweetened and flavoured with fruit or herbs.

Liqueurs can be classified into 3 distinctive kinds.

1. Those with one herb dominating in their flavour, eg Kummel made from Caraway or Cumin seeds.
2. Those with only one fruit, eg Framboise made from raspberries.
3. Those with a mixture of flavouring agents, eg Benedictine with numerous herbs and other ingredients.

There are two main methods of making liqueurs. The first is by distilling all the ingredients together, the resultant distillate being sweetened and sometimes coloured. The second is to add an infusion of herbs or fruits to the base spirit. This latter method is generally followed as it preserves the freshness, colour and bouquet of the ingredients. The best liqueurs are usually made on a Cognac base.

It is not difficult to confuse liqueurs with spirits or with bitters. When a liqueur is made upon a brandy or gin base it may be sold as a brandy or a gin such as Cherry Brandy or Sloe Gin - but these are liqueurs since they are sweetened. An unsweetened spirit cannot be called a liqueur. There is, for instance, a genuine unsweetened Hungarian and Yugoslavian brandy called Slivovitz which is distilled from plums. Confusion may be deepened when the same name is used for both liqueur and brandies; there is a sweet Apricot Brandy - a liqueur - as well as an unsweetened spirit made from apricots, also known as Apricot Brandy.

While Sloe Gin is a liqueur, lemon and orange gin are ordinary dry gins, with fruit added for flavouring. Although combined spirits are sometimes referred to as liqueurs they should not be unless sweetened. Similarly, "liqueur brandy" is a misnomer; the word liqueur only refers here to its use as a digestif or to its special good quality.

Bitters can be used as digestifs but they are usually aperitifs. They differ from liqueurs in that they are only very slightly sweetened, if at all.

The making of liqueurs was practised from earliest times. In 460 B.C. Hippocrates says that the ancients distilled herbs and plants, and because certain herbs were noticed to cure illness or to be effective as tonics, liqueur making had a close association with early medicine and medieval astrology. The Saxon word "wort" means a plant used in medicine. Certain plants were believed to keep away evil spirits, sometimes if they were merely pinned to a door. Some remedies were certainly effective when administered; Aniseed, caraway seed and mint, for instance, were long known to help digestion. Nicholas Culpepper, writing in the 17th Century, advises "a water distilled from (Angelica) root" for the same purpose; Angelica is frequently used in liqueurs, together with many other herbs, such as coriander, fennel, wormwood, gentian, amber, hyssop and thyme.

The alcoholic content of a liqueur, which is usually high, as well as the medical herbs which it frequently contains are both agents which have been recognised as curative and digestive since the middle ages. They were developed originally by physicians and alchemists as medicinal remedies, love potions, aphrodisiacs and general cure-alls.

Through the centuries they have been known as elixirs, oils, balms and ratafias as well as liqueurs and cordials. The variety of colours, flavours and combinations thereof is limitless; the one factor that makes them cordials is their sugar content. Under United States regulations a cordial must contain more than 2½% of sugar but all cordials contain considerably more.

A particular area of the world will often produce a variety of herb or fruit which is best for liqueur making, and it is there that the industry will be situated. For example, the small apricot that is found in the Ile-de-France is the only one that will make abricotine and the wild blackthorn of Devon and Cornwall makes the best Sloe Gin.

Liqueurs can be divided into two groups; those with generic names, produced in all parts of the world (sometimes referred to as cordials e.g. United States); and those with proprietary brand names, which are produced by the trade-mark owner, such as Benedictine and Chartreuse, and are made only at their places of origin.

The lists given below indicate the name, flavour, usual colour, alcoholic content and in the case of proprietary brands, the country of origin, of a variety of liqueurs in generic and proprietary categories.

GENERIC NAMES

<u>NAME</u>	<u>FLAVOUR</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>% Alcohol by Volume</u>
Anisette	Anise	White	27
Anis	Anise	White	39-48
Apricot	Apricot	Brown	30
Blackberry	Blackberry	Darkened	30
Cherry	Cherry	Bright red	30-32
Creme de Cacao	Chocolate, Vanilla	Brown or white	25-27
Creme de Cassis	Sweet currant	Red	12-25
Creme de Framboises	Raspberry	Red	30
Creme de Menthe	Mint	Green, white, pink	30
Creme de Roses	Roses	Rose	30
Creme de Vanille	Vanilla	Brown	30
Creme de Violettes	Violet	Violet	30
Curacao	Orange	Orange	30-42
Danziger Goldwasser	Orange spicy	white	30
Kummet	Caraway	white	39-46
Maraschino	Cherry	White	30-32
Ojen	Anise	White	42
Ouzo	Anise	White	45-49
Parfait Amour	Violet	Violet	27-30
Peach	Peach	Golden brown	35-40
Ponelle	Plum	Brown	40
Sloe Gin	Sloeberry, tart	Reddish	30
Swedish Punsch	Rummy, sweet	White	28-30
Triple Sec	Orange	White	38-40

PROPRIETARY BRANDS

<u>BRAND NAME</u> <u>ON LIQUEUR</u>	<u>COUNTRY OF</u> <u>ORIGIN</u>	<u>FLAVOUR</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>% Alcohol</u> <u>by Volume</u>
Benedictine DOM	France	Spicy	Golden	43
B and B DOM	France	Spicy	Golden	43
Chartreuse Yellow	France	Spicy-anise	Gold-yellow	43
Chartreuse Green	France	Spicy-liquorice	Green	55
Cherry Heering	Denmark	Cherry	Cherry-red	24½
Cordial Medoc	France	Orange-cocoa	Brown	44
Cointreau	France	Orange	White	40
Creme Yvette	United States	Violet	Violet	33
Drambuie	Scotland	Spicy-scotch	Golden	40
Falernum	Barbados	Lime-almond	White	6
Forbidden Fruit	United States	Orange-grapefruit	Orange	35
Galliano	Italy	Spicy	Golden	40
Grand Marnier	France	Orange	Orange-red	40
Gilka Kummell	Germany	Caraway	White	43
Irish Mist	Ireland	Spicy honey	Golden	40
Liqueur d'Or	France	Spicy-lemon	Light gold	43
Strega	Italy	Spicy	Light gold	42½
Tia Maria	Jamaica	Coffee	Brown	31½
Vielle Cure	France	Spicy	Golden	43

COLIN KILPATRICK

GIVE AWAY



We have reproduced a couple of articles from MBC on Give Away Bottles.

Pictured to the left is one I picked up in Devon, England. It is pale brown with a woodgrain effect on the back. Also on the back is the number 3348. It is in mint condition.

I was under the impression that these bottles were only ever distributed in the U.S. If so, I was incredibly lucky to get it - especially as I very nearly didn't bother to look in the shop.

I would be grateful if one of the American members could tell me a bit about it and what it is worth.

Cocktail of the Month



RAINBOW COCKTAIL

Use equal parts of --
Ouzo
Yellow Chartreuse and
Parfait Amour



and pour them gently into a narrow glass in the above order.



The second and third liqueurs, if poured very carefully down the side of the glass held on a slight angle, will float on top of the liqueur below.

COLIN KILPATRICK

NEW MEMBERS

We are very pleased to welcome eight new members this month:-

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Jean Davis, | P.O. Box 321, Fair Haven, MI. 48023, U.S.A. |
| Carl Dobson, | 2409 Glenfaire Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA. 95670, U.S.A. |
| Ada Felske, | 2380 Lawton Drive, Lemon Grove, CA. 92045, U.S.A. |
| Barry Kaplan, | 6909 Rocky Point Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89128, U.S.A. |
| Jerry Le Blanc, | 5592W Geddes Place, Littleton, Colorado 80123, U.S.A. |
| Brian McClelland, | Fords Liquor Store, 318E Old Lincoln Avenue, Anaheim, CA. 92805, U.S.A. |
| Garth Snell, | 203 Graham Road, Christchurch 5, New Zealand. |
| Lee Weiss, | 5626 Carning Avenue, Los Angeles, CA. 90056, U.S.A. |

Britain shocked by earthquake

Those of you who remember the 'Earthquake Cocktail' from Feb/March may recall that I wrote "This is probably about as close as most Englishmen would get to the real thing."

I was made to eat my words two weeks ago in the U.K. I was out minding my own business when we had a good one - 5.5 on the Richter Scale - the worst in Britain for over 100 years!!