

I went to my first American bottle show in 1991 while living in Toronto and as a member of the Four Seasons Bottle Club. Vince Kwok and I decided to go to the Saratoga Springs bottle show which is hosted by the National Bottle Museum next door in Ballston Spa, New York. We had a great time and I still have the 2 stoneware beers that I bought there; a Chelmsford, MA ginger beer and a Christian Moerlein, Cincinnati, Ohio beer bottle. Saratoga Springs is a wonderful place just to vacation with the horse racing, mineral water springs museums and other attractions including great restaurants and night spots. If you want the best fried chicken north of the Mason-Dixon line, then try Hatties on Philia Street.

After I moved to the US in 1994 to work, I was also able to go to many other shows there as well, but the saratoga springs is still my favourite. For the last 7 years, I have been doing an exhibit for their educational side of the show, usually on some stoneware facet. You should also make some time to visit the bottle museum in Ballston Spa. It's well worth the trip.

This year due to scheduling problems, the show was held on June 27. Also, dealer setup which usually takes place on Saturday evening was delayed to early Sunday morning. In fact dealers were down about 25% due to other conflicting events. Paid admissions were over 300 but still down from previous years. From informal talks with dealer friends it appears sales were down as well. The show usually is at the first of the month, so timing is a major influence on its success.

Personally, it was not one of my best shows to buy. In the past I have bought 2 Canadian torpedoes among other great bottles and stoneware. It is rumoured that the 2005 show will move to Ballston Spa, the home of the National Bottle Museum. I have met other Canadians at this show selling and buying, so think about going next year.

The 2005 show will be on June 5 in Saratoga Springs at the convention center.