

Commemorating the early days of NABA

by George Baley

Editor's Note: NABA Historian George Baley will be working on a series of short articles for this magazine as part of our great organization's 50th Anniversary celebration. This is the first in that series.

It was one of the coldest days on record in January 1972 when a meeting was called for interested breweriana collectors to gather in Milwaukee, WI at a Holiday Inn to discuss starting a new organization.

Attending were the three men who have come to be called "The Founders:" Herb Haydock, John Murray, and Dick Bucht. Joining their husbands were Helen Haydock and Katy Bucht.

The Founders' first meeting was held at the same Holiday Inn which became the site of the First Convention, from August 4-6, 1972. This meeting was followed by dinner at the Kalt Restaurant in Milwaukee, owned by Howard Kalt, who was soon to become one of the earliest NABA members.

Being a breweriana enthusiast, Howard decorated his restaurant with

all kinds of beer memorabilia making it the perfect place for a collector to dine.

The second NABA Convention was held in St. Louis in 1973. It was there that a special stained-glass emblem was created to commemorate the event. About 25 of the numbered shields manufactured by Unique Art Glass of St. Louis were made available for purchase by members in attendance.

One purchased by Howard Kalt was enhanced by incorporating it with added stained glass into a wooden door at his restaurant. I was not a NABA member that early so did not have one of these special shields from 1973. But years after the Kalt restaurant closed, I was fortunate enough to acquire the one from his restaurant at an NABA auction through Don Limpert.

It found a new place of honor with me, by being integrated into the entry door to my home collection.

For the 1977 Convention—the five-year anniversary once again celebrated in Milwaukee—a stained-

glass hanging light was commissioned to commemorate the Convention.

The circular light featured four sections, representing Pabst, Schlitz, and Miller beers, and a NABA logo.

I believe that Helen Haydock plans to donate one of these for the upcoming 50th Convention in Milwaukee, either as a raffle item or for the Friday Auction. This would be an outstanding opportunity for one of our members to acquire an important piece of NABA history.

Another NABA convention tradition was the offering of a ceramic mug, listing all of the NABA members who had attended the convention. This souvenir offering lasted from the 1972 convention thru the 1998 convention held in Columbus, OH. A future article will feature images of all 26 mugs.

In the meantime, don't forget to make your plans to celebrate our 50th anniversary convention from July 28th-31st, 2021 in (of course) Milwaukee, WI.



The original shield designed to commemorate the second NABA Convention (1973) held in St. Louis.



The 1973 shield purchased by Howard Kalt and subsequently incorporated, with additional stained glass, into a door of Kalt's restaurant. This piece is now displayed in a door to the author's personal collection display area.