

Report on the Rushlight Club Annual Member Meeting October 5th to 8th, 2023 in Glen Ellyn, Illinois

Nineteen Rushlight members began arriving in the late afternoon and early evening on Thursday, October 5th at the Crown Plaza Hotel, the meeting headquarters for the weekend. Gathering in the hospitality room friends reunited and shared their recent experiences and lighting finds.

On the way to Glen Ellyn several members driving from the East took a break from the road and visited Myrna Newgent in Portage, Indiana. Myrna has a large collection of all forms of early lighting.

A visit with Donna and Don Schoenly began the events on Friday. Their spacious home contains a vast collection of lighting and antiques. The Schoenly's devised a novel way to view their collection. They prepared a "Can You Find" list of lamps and lighting devices in their collection. It was your job to search the house to find them. A scavenger hunt if you will. It was great fun and enjoyed by all. After several hours of searching, learning, and lots of laughs, the Schoenly's provided a delicious lunch for the group.

After lunch, the group traveled a short distance to the home of Lee Marks. Lee is a collector of fine American antiques and lighting. His home is filled with unique and rare pieces that most in the group had only seen in books or museums. Lee is also a member of the Glen Ellyn Historical Society. So, after showing his collection he led the group to the society's headquarters and a tour of Stacy's Tavern.



A small part of the Newgent Collection



Martha was all smiles after finding the elusive P. Derr Kettle Lamp in the Schoenly Collection



Stacy's Tavern

The tavern is an authentic restoration of an 1840's wayside inn. It was built by Moses Stacy in 1846 and has been restored through the joint efforts of the Village of Glen Ellyn and the Historical Society. The tavern was a popular wayside inn on the main road between Chicago and Galena in the mid-1800's. Lee recounted the history of the tavern and gave a guided tour of the building and the furnishings and lighting therein.

On Saturday morning the group visited the home of Lanny and Christine Green in Bensenville, Illinois. Lanny is an antiques restoration professional. His main interest is furniture, mainly Windsor chairs, but he also works on other objects for museums and collectors in the Chicago area. Over the years he has built an impressive collection of furniture, tools, and lighting devices which are displayed throughout his home. Some in the group got a brief lesson on how to recognize authentic period Windsor chairs.

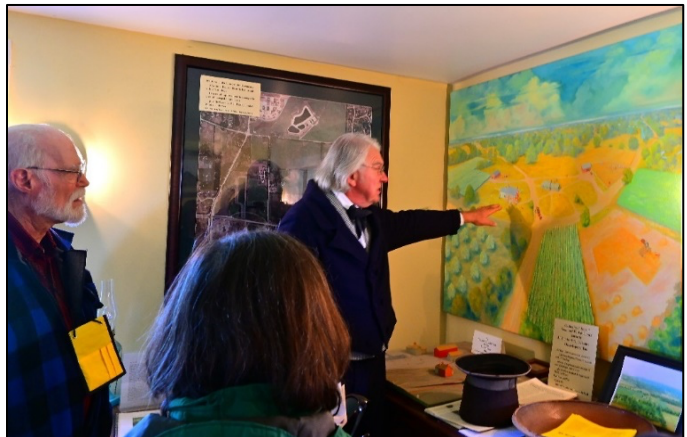
After a break for lunch the group traveled over forty miles west to the Geneva, Illinois area and the Garfield Farm Museum. Garfield is an intact 1840's prairie farmstead composed of multiple farm buildings, rare breeds of livestock, heirloom gardens, and a wayside inn and tavern. It is a living history museum that hosts tours and educational events throughout the year. The group spent nearly two hours on a guided tour of the property and buildings. Dressed in period costume, Mr. Jerome Johnson led this very interesting and entertaining tour. Of particular interest was the 1846 inn and tavern on the property that is currently being restored. It was built by Timothy Garfield to serve travelers on the same roads between Chicago and Galena as Stacy's Tavern in Glen Ellyn.

Saturday evening the group assembled again at the Crown Plaza Hotel for dinner and the annual membership meeting. After an excellent meal, Mel Zaloudek gave a very interesting and entertaining presentation on the R. E. Dietz company's rigorous defense of their tubular barn lantern patents. These patents, originally by John Irwin in the period from 1870 to 1886, ultimately secured the dominance of the Dietz company. Mel showed examples from his lantern collection of numerous competitors products that were guilty of infringement (blatantly or otherwise) upon the Dietz/Irwin patents. These companies were all taken to court, which resulted in unanimous verdicts in favor of Dietz and forced these competitors to cease production. Some ultimately went out of business. Many of these Dietz competitor lanterns are significant rarities today.

After Mel's presentation the annual member meeting began with the traditional lighting of the rush. Donna and Don Schoenly did this in recognition of their work organizing the meeting. Nominations Chairperson, Dick O'Connell, presented the nominations for elected club positions. Those nominated were approved by the members. Complete minutes of the membership meeting are in this *Flickerings*.



Lighting and More Surround the Hearth in the Green Home



Jerome Johnson Shows a Birdseye View of Garfield Farm



Donna Schoenly Lights the Rush

As usual there was a show and tell session during the evening. For nearly an hour a variety of lighting devices and miscellany were presented and discussed by Fred Bohl, Tony Cook, Larson Mick, Dick O’Connell, Fred Olufs and Don Schoenly.

As usual a silent auction was held during the evening. Many rare lighting devices, parts, books, and ephemera were offered for sale.

The Chicago area meeting was a great event! The member collections were very impressive, and the tours of Stacy’s Tavern and the Garfield Farm were very educational and enjoyed by all. Thanks to all who organized and participated in the meeting.



Don Schoenly Shows a Copper Lantern

CAN YOU FIND????

1. A Kenrick Rushlight
2. A signed and dated P Derr kettle lamp
3. A signed Miles lamp
4. A Dowler double wedding band hogscraper candlestick
5. A signed Christmas Barth lamp
6. A Hassepslug lard lamp
7. A signed Bacon lard lamp
8. A brass miner’s cap lamp with letter D
9. A J.EBY kettle lamp
10. A signed P.D. 1836 Betty lamp
11. A signed Minor’s lamp
12. A Drummond dated candle maker’s lamp
13. 3 variations of the Maltby Neal lard lamp. Patented 1842
14. 3 different curling iron holders
15. 3 colored skater’s lamps
16. A pair of whale oil peg lamps
17. A signed Gipsy lantern
18. A Railroad Presentation lamp
19. A “Unique” burner
20. A lamp with a double Newell insert
21. A H. Boker signed Betty and Frog Lamps
22. A pewter lamp signed Rust
23. A Swope patent lamp
24. A candy jar that becomes a candle lantern when empty
25. An Archer lard lamp with great stenciling
26. Bonus—Find the banana split ice cream dipper!

The Schoenly “Can You Find” List



Q&A on Lee Mark’s Lighting Devices



Garfield Farm Inn and Tavern