

# ON THE LIGHTER Side

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ETC., Etc., etc.

CONVENTION NOTES: A letter will be coming shortly giving more details on the convention. In the meantime, 2 different motels have quoted me a rate of \$45 per night so we will use one of them. \$45 is a good rate for Dallas and hopefully will be agreeable with all of you.

IMPORTANT!! For all you new members (and to remind old members) - Bob Gee (OTLS Member) has "The Occupied Japan Club" (also has a newsletter) for those interested in Occupied Japan items. For membership info, write Bob. Jacques Cole (OTLS Member) has a magazine called "The Pipeline" (for all area of tobacciana). Write Jacques for subscription rates.

Collectors' Corner has been left out this month due to lack of space - will be back next month.

New Membership Rosters are enclosed. I think I got most of the phone numbers listed of those members who want them on the Roster - I'm working in Dallas this week and next (and don't have files with me) so if I missed any phone numbers I will include them on next Roster.

AND NOW A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT.....

First, let me say "Thank You" to those who helped elect me President of OTLS. I look forward to helping our membership in any way I can with his or her collection. I would like to encourage every member to take a few minutes of their time to write an article about their collection (how it got started, size, favorite lighter, etc.). It would be very enjoyable reading for all other members and we could all get to know each other better.

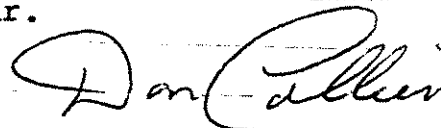
Our hard working and dedicated

Sec/Treas/Editor (and Founder of OTLS), Judith Sanders, would appreciate your input. If you send pictures with your article, Judith tells me that black and white pictures make better copy for our newsletter.

In visiting with your newly elected Vice President, Dee Collins, and Judith, we felt even though we are a young organization, it was time to initiate an annual gathering (convention) of OTLS members, so we could exchange hand shakes, knowledge, and yes, hopefully, even some lighters. If we are successful in making it an annual event, my hope is we could hold it each year in a different part of the country, therefore making it more convenient to everyone. Each year we could decide at our convention when and where the following year's would be so everyone would have ample time to make their plans.

Dee, Judith and I would be more than happy to hear any comments our membership might have. Please make plans to attend our first OTLS Convention the weekend of June 20, 1987 in Dallas.

Again, let me say Thank You and I am looking forward to seeing you in the coming year.



Don Collier

IN THE SPOTLIGHT.....

UNIQUE ARRAY OF COLLECTIBLES LIGHT UP THIS HOBBYIST'S LIFE

by Ann Gallitte

For Tom Prylinski, it is an interest that has flickered for years.

Prylinski, an Erie resident, is a collector of cigarette lighters. Since 1971, he has amassed 3,000 of them in different sizes, shapes and materials from all over the world.

His venture into collecting began, oddly enough, with a football injury.

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"I was playing football at a picnic, smashed a couple of ribs and went to the hospital," he recalls. "On the way back from the emergency room, I happened to see a flea market. As I was wandering around, I happened to see a couple of unique lighters so I grabbed them. I think I came home with 20 or so lighters that day.

"I started playing around with them and getting them to work," Prylinski continues. "Once I got the concern over lighters, I started asking my mother-in-law and then my brothers if they had any old lighters laying around. I started collecting them then and, before I knew it, I had something like 100 lighters. I really took an interest in that, so I kept on going to flea markets and fixing them."

Prylinski, who works at a desk crammed with parts and materials, has been able to repair all but 50 of the lighters in his collection.

"I try my best to restore them to their original form," he says. "I keep the decals on them. I try to keep the originality of the lighter. That's the main thing - keeping them original. If I can't find parts, I just let the lighters go until I find the parts, because I want to get them back to their original shape. I have magnifying lighters I work with because the mechanics are so small."

When selecting a lighter for his collection, Prylinski, an AMSCO employee, looks for three important things besides uniqueness.

"When you categorize a lighter, number one would be the manufacturer or company name. Then you'd look at the materials it's made from and the location where it's made. I also look at the different styles, shapes and mechanics of a lighter."

His collection, which he has dubbed The Hall of Fame, includes lighters from all over the globe: Japan, Korea, Germany, Switzerland, France and Ireland.

They masquerade as ships, eggs, pens, clocks, guns, cannons, apples, and airplanes. They're created from brass, pewter, glass, steel, marble, bone china, silver and gold - and some are musical.

The largest lighter Prylinski owns is in the shape of a Zippo pocket lighter and measures 6 by 9 inches, while the smallest is about three-quarters of an inch square. His most valuable lighter - and one of his personal favorites - is a solid brass flint-lock gun for which he was offered \$300.

Some of his collectibles date back to the early 1900s, and most are unique in one way or another.

"There are lighters that were made here in Erie during the war. There (are) Army issue lighters. There are lighters that will not give an open flame - they used these in the foxholes during World War I. I have a knight in armor that plays the 'Anniversary Waltz.' When you pick it up it starts to play and when you push a button the face shield will lift up and light your cigarette. I have a matched set of his-and-her lighters and a stick lighter from the prohibition days. Some lighters are electric, some are battery operated, some are butane and (some are) flint and wick types that take fluid."

Although Prylinski still frequents flea markets and garage sales, he has never entered a show to sell any of the lighters in his collection and has no intention of doing so.

"I have never once had them on display," he maintains. "The number one reason I don't go to shows is because I don't want to sell them. I made that agreement when I first started - anything that's given to me will never be sold or piecemealed or anything. That wasn't the intention of the collection."

"I want to keep the collection in its entirety. My friends and family gave me a lot of my lighters. What would they think of me if they knew I sold it when they gave it to me in good faith? I'll gladly show it to people, but selling is out. If anything happens to me, it will go to my son. I want it to stay in the family."

Prylinski estimates the collection to be worth at least \$10,000, but he believes the figure is difficult to determine.

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"You can't put a value on a lighter," he says, "because the person who wants it puts the value on it. A standard Zippo lighter, even if it's used, is worth a dollar. But if it's got something on it that means something, it could be worth \$100 to somebody because he wants it."

Prylinski's immediate plan for his collection is to display it in a 10 by 12 foot room in the basement of his home which he shares with his wife, Joan.

"The lighters will fill the walls up from floor to ceiling. I think if someone could see them displayed they could appreciate them more. I like showing them, I'm proud of my collection!"

If you're looking for a light, however, don't ask Tom Prylinski because he won't have one.

"I don't carry a lighter," he explains. "...Everybody thinks that's odd - boy, you have 3,000 cigarette lighters and you can't even give me a light. That seems funny."

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Ann Gallitte is a teacher and free lance writer in Erie, Pa. We appreciate her allowing us to use this article and photos on Tom Prylinski's collection.



*Tom Prylinski, right, tinkers with one of the 3,000 lighters that compile his unique collection. Table varieties and pocket models, the lighters are created from many substances including pewter, glass, gold and bone china.*



1973 1 6 1907

For Sale or Trade

Gray colored ceramic head from armoured knight, 5" tall, lighter is in top of head. \$4 plus postage. Judith Sanders

For OPLS Members who also collect tobacco items, Bud Markham is selling his collections. For more information write Bud

Herman Keith would like to sell his lighter collection. He ran an ad last year in this paper, with no response. Herman has an extensive collection, including pocket lighters and table lighters and novelty type lighters. If you have an interest please contact Herman Keith

1 plain silver Reliance  
1 plain silver Zippo  
1 Continental with pictures of "pinup girls"

Make an offer to  
Hazel Maerker, P. O. Box 13,  
Coalton, OH. 45621  
(Non-Member)

2 Polaroid SX-70's to photograph lighters. 1 is stainless steel & leather covered at \$55 - the other painted metal and leatherette covered at \$45. Both are single lens reflex design & focus down to about 7". Al Grosskopf

Art Decco looking candle, base is dark green glass, gold metal candle, red glass flame - candle lifts to expose lighter - says "Giv-A-Gift Inc." - 7" tall. \$25. Judith Sanders

Wanted to Buy or Trade

Wanted - Ronson Banjo and pre-1958 Zippos - all msut be in good condition. For cash or swap for Australian made lighters or rare tobacco tins of Western Australian origin. Reply to: Rex Hodgson, 12 Ticehurst Way, Balga, 6061, Western Australia (NEW MEMBER)

Wanted: Any ceramic lighter that is marked "Made in Occupied Japan." Will pay \$50 and up for those I can use for my Thesis! Bob Gee

Ronson Table lighters, esp. unusual, or other working table lighters. David Chase

EDITOR'S NOTE: You will note I'm rerunning some old ads since we have more new members who might have what you are looking for.

Interested in Ronsons from the 20's. Eddie Dektor

Interested in buying or trading for very old lighters from 1880's to 1920's, and any watch lighters, working or not. Ira Pilosof

Authentic flint & steel flintlock tinderboxes & other pre-lighter firemaking devices. Warren Gerber

1910-1930's round, brass/copper, similar in size/shape to man's hunter case pocket watch, French, German, English, flint post pulls out, hole-fitting for wick, WWI scene or leaders or coins. NOT Japanese made "Belgium or French" coins. Warren Gerber

Thorens pocket lighters, swiss made, or similar lighters where flint is held in place on top of rasp wheel. Jim Lohr

Wanted to Buy or Trade

Want Dunhill lighters with watches in them. John Cuevas

Want to buy lighters for a reasonable price. Send picture & price and I'll respond soon after. Joe Fink

Will trade cigarette lighters for old fountain pens. John Cuevas

USE YOUR CLASSIFIED ADS TODAY!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Printed Once A Month  
For Lighter Collectors

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Dee Collins	VicePres.
Judith Sanders	Sec/Treas
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Ads in this paper are free for members. There is a \$1 charge for non-members. Please send ads in printed form. For information, write or call:

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