

# ON THE LIGHTER Side

March 15, 1990

Vol. VII, No. 2

**ETC., Etc., etc.**

PLEASE READ pages 6 & 7 for details on the 1990 OTLS Convention!

CONVENTION LIGHTERS! I will be ordering the Convention Lighters soon. Please send money NOW! The cost this year will be \$12 each, which will include lighter, padded envelope for mailing & postage. Please send convention lighter money separate from Convention registration fees. For you newer members, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO TO THE CONVENTION TO ORDER A CONVENTION LIGHTER - THEY ARE FOR ALL MEMBERS!

After discussion with a few members, it seems agreed that we shouldn't always order the same type Zippo every year. So far, for 3 years we have had the 'brush' finish. This year the Convention Lighter will be the 'mirror' finish, rather than 'brush' & will be imprinted on both sides - 1 side with Aladdin logo & 1 with our club name - should look nice!

WELCOME to our new members - please note our first member from Canada! Also, please note 4 new female members - you guys watch out - we will outnumber you yet!

In a recent paper, I offered a different video of the 1989 convention for sale. There has been a good response to this. HOWEVER, one tape was returned because the label had been torn off - I have no way of know who should have gotten this tape? So who has paid for a tape and not received it?? Please let me know so I can try again.

PLEASE could someone send me some more pictures from the 1989 Convention! Thanks to John Grawe & Tom Prylinski for their copies.

YOU MAY BE TIRED OF HEARING THIS - BUT GOING TO AN OTLS CONVENTION IS WORTHWHILE!!!

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT.....

A LOOK AT 1984...  
AND A GOOD FRIEND!

Looking at old Membership Rosters really brought a smile to my face ... in May, 1984, there were only 11 members...didn't even fill up a page ...and now look at us!

The May '84 Roster included Dee Collins, John Cuevas (who talked me into this!), Jenelle Flowers (no longer a member), Bob Gee, Warren Gerber, Helen Hoermann, Raymond Kerns, Don Ruffles (no longer a member), Judith Sanders (this writer), Charles Stapert and Larry Tolkin. A round of applause for each of you for staying so long!

Regressing even farther back...to March, 1984. I was in the middle of starting this OTLS when I took a break to go to an Estate Sale. And there I met a lovely lady...Helen Hoermann.

You should know that when I started this club I had never met another lighter collector (except by mail, John Cuevas). I remember vividly walking up to Helen and asking if she had any lighters. Instead of saying 'yes' or 'no', she said "I collect lighters!"

Helen had also never met another lighter collector, so we had a great conversation. And, of course, I told her I was in the process of starting a club for lighter collectors. Although at the point the only members were John and myself!

Helen said to me later "I thought it was such a neat idea and I wanted to see it get off the ground." And she joined on the spot...becoming one of the Charter Members of OTLS.

Some of you long time members have no doubt wondered why an article has never been written about Helen. Over the years since the club was formed, I have asked Helen a couple of times

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if I could do an article on her, but she always said "...but I'm really not much of a lighter collector".

Helen called last month to tell me she was finally going to resign as an OTLS Member. She said she has had major surgery this year and although she is doing OK now, feels she is going to have to give up a few of the claims on her time.

Helen and her husband, Harry, live in Dallas, where Helen has been in the Antique business for 15 years. As well as buying and selling antiques, Helen also has been in great demand over the years to "do" Estate Sales. With her knowledge of antiquity and her great ability to deal with the public, she is a 'natural' to conduct Estate Sales for families, who otherwise would have no idea how to price items.

In fact it was an Estate Sale that originally peaked Helen's interest in lighters. While going through a box of items, she found a musical table lighter she liked. So she bought it. She recently told me "Since that time, when I see a musical lighter, I buy it".

Helen went on to say that she still doesn't have very many lighters...but they are all musical. She also said that even though she is 'retiring' from OTLS, if she ever decides to sell the ones she has, she will definitely let OTLS know!

So now you know a little more about Helen Hoermann. She is a good friend, has been a loyal member and I couldn't let her 'resign' without sharing a little about her with you. Helen, we will miss seeing your name on the Membership Roster --- but I can still see you when I come to Dallas!

- IMPORTANT - Read page 6 & 7 for 1990 Convention Details
- Next paper will be 5/15/90 - send next ads by 5/5/90
- Order 1990 Convention Lighters NOW (Zippo)!
- Send information for OTLS "Book"
- Send photos for Club Scrapbook (also need more photos from 1989 convention)

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: Following is a Press Release received in our offices from PLPG. As a result of recent telephone conversations with Ron Eyerkuss, their President, we are exchanging press releases to be published in our respective papers. For further information on this group, please write them direct.)

#### PRESS RELEASE

The Pocket Lighter Preservation Guild and Historical Society, A "Not-For-Profit" educational Corporation, was founded in 1982 and Incorporated in 1988 by a group of collectors under a charter which states in part: "The PLPG, Inc. will provide information concerning lighters and the collecting of, to our membership and any interested individual or group."

Our Bi-Monthly, Flint & Flame is rapidly becoming a world standard, being read on four continents and subscribed to by three museums around the world. The Officers and Board of Trustees cordially invite you to join the PLPG and enjoy the benefits of membership. Inquiries to:

PLPG  
36 Four Seasons  
Chesterfield, MO 63017

It is our goal to: maintain, preserve and re-inspire interest in this virtually undocumented sector of everyday life.

## [COLLECTORS' CORNER]

### MEETING JOHN BECKWITH

by Tom O'Key

I'm not sure what makes a person a collector, but I suspect it's something that is in the blood. When the right thing comes along and strikes that nerve, well, who knows what might happen. Lighters have become an absolute passion in my case.

The early days of lighter hunting were hindered by ignorance and lack of money. Luck was the main thing that helped me find the things that started the ball really rolling.

The day that I met John Beckwith was such a stroke of luck. I had been collecting for about 7 years and hadn't met anyone who collected lighters until that day.

John was not only a collector, but had also manufactured lighters during the 1950's. The Beckwith Manufacturing Co. was located in Los Angeles and its sales territory covered mainly Southern California. John designed the lighter himself with a little help from the French for their pocket watch trench art lighters from WWI. He changed some things in order to take advantage of more modern methods of manufacturing metal items and personalized the final product with improvements that made it more durable and adaptable to his marketing plans.

The main parts were cast in molds and the smaller parts were machined. The front and back were designed to accept round metal discs that had the same diameter as a silver dollar. Advertising logos on these discs were the main thing that sold his product although many were made with real silver dollars that had been sawed in two. A variety of small rotating slide rule calculators also had been used and this made the lighter a very unique item. The front of a lighter might have a logo for a gasoline company and

the calculator on the back would be for miles to the gallon and so on.

It is hard to imagine these days about going into business and doing all the hard work it takes to produce a lighter. The idea that a guy would make a great success of such an endeavor is not likely today. "In the 1950's there were no less than 65 companies making lighters in the Los Angeles area alone", John told me. "The competition made it tougher" John said. He probably produced ten thousand or so lighters in all, and that was about the time the Japanese competition had the lion's share of the market of advertising lighters.

John recently moved into a retirement complex in Encinitas, CA. He is 87 years old and can remember the day he first became interested in lighters some forty years ago. He had sold most of his collection to an antique dealer just before I met him, but had kept his favorites, and his interest in lighters is as strong as ever.

I have a number of Beckwith lighters and also many from the little companies that he competed with during their hey-day. They are all gone now except for the examples of what they did that you can find at a flea market. John is just one of a hundred guys that have made our hobby possible. Small, maybe. Nonetheless it's the motivation to pay attention to and the ingenuity that is so evident in the assorted ways that lighters have been made. The friendship I have with John has opened a whole new appreciation for me with this hobby and I find myself looking a little closer at lighters on an individual basis. They don't have to all be "Banjo's" to have a point of interest. We can all thank fellows like John for their enterprising efforts and the wonderful devices they invented. And to think - Matches were free all the while!

(Please see photos on page 4)

COLLECTORS' CORNER continued

FOLLOWING ARE PHOTOS TAKEN BY TOM O'KEY OF DIFFERENT BECKWITH LIGHTERS. THIS ARTICLE WILL DEFINITELY BE INCLUDED IN OUR BOOK! THANKS, TOM FOR SOME NEW INFORMATION FOR ALL OF US!

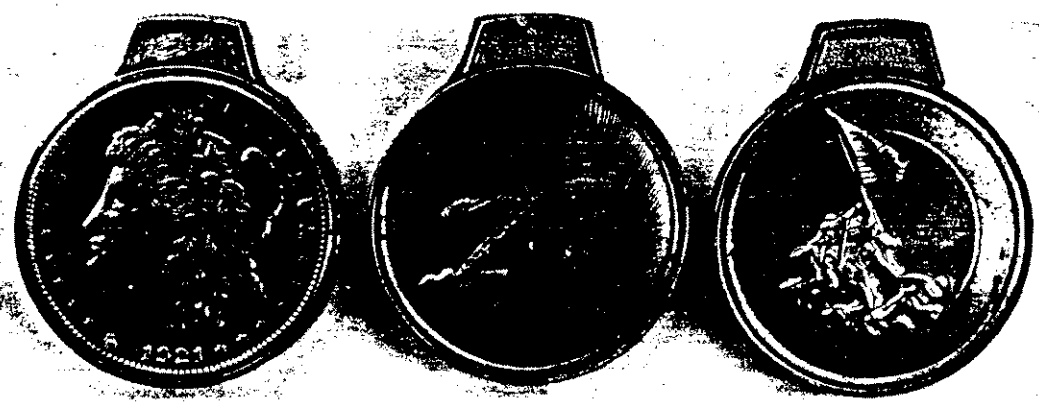
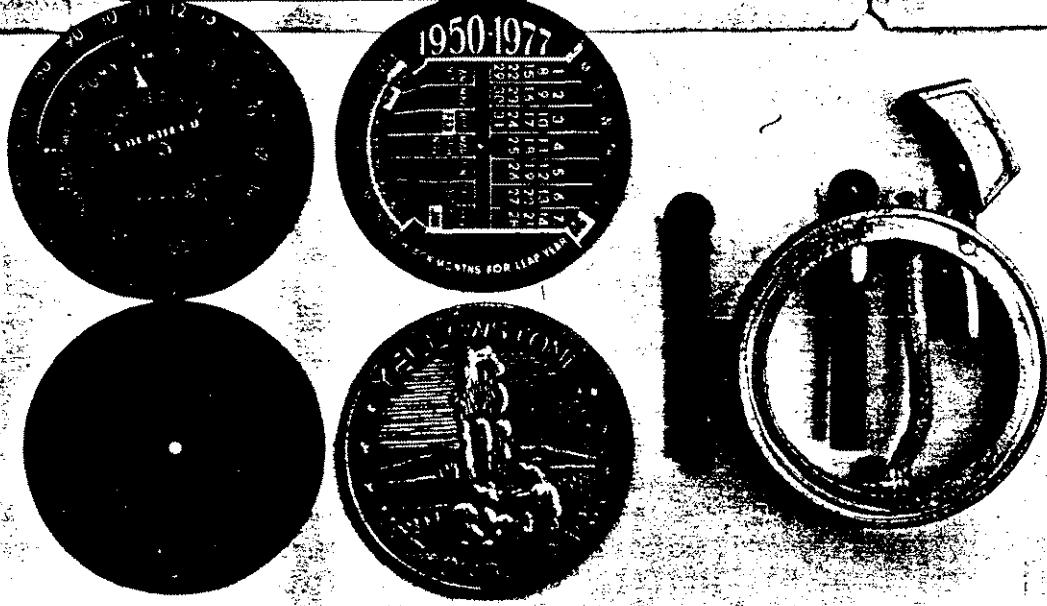
ck. Push twisting the bottom remainder saving 1/2

insure lighter when mailing.

**BECKWITH MANUFACTURING CO.**  
1107 SO. WESTERN AVENUE • LOS ANGELES 6, CALIFORNIA

CUT OFF

Name.....  
Street.....  
City.....  
My check in the California resident  
Cinco Peso Light



CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale or Trade

Two Dunhill Tinder Pistol lighters for trade. One U.S. made, the other only marked Dunhill on bottom of trigger guard. Want to trade 1 or both for rare old Ronson touchtip or strikers. Urban Cummings  
**ATTENTION CONVENTIONEERS!** Have over 500 Zippo, Dunhill, Evans, Occupied Japan, Novelty & Logo lighters. I want to trade for Ronsons at the Convention. Need to know your wants & what you have. Will also buy Ronsons & literature or trade through the Mail. Lynn D. Baker

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

1. Robt. K. Beaty  
2140 Hyder Ave., NBU #86  
Tucson, AZ 85708
2. Ronald B. Reichert  
1338 Pennsylvania No.  
Minneapolis, MN 55427
3. Randy Martin  
1602 - 7th Ave.  
Havre, MT 59501
4. Jacqueline Pratt  
Box 1106  
Chetwynd, BC VOC 1J0  
CANADA
5. Kevin Owen  
RR 2, Box 251A, Rosetown Rd  
Tomkins Cove, NY 10986
6. Sue Arters  
RD 3  
Union City, PA 16438
7. Thomas B. Mraz  
14020 Frontier Lane  
Burnsville, MN 55337
8. David Smarowski  
96 Sniputuit Rd.  
Rochester, Mass 02770
9. June F. Berliner  
430 Castle Pl.  
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
10. Magi Motola  
31 Allegheny Ave.  
Warwick, RI 02888
11. Gasper Gilardi  
119 Moss Lane  
Waggaman, LA 70094

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

1. Kevin Kelley  
940 Hastings Ranch Dr.  
Pasadena, CA 91107
2. Tracy Musack  
4355 Questa Ct.  
Las Vegas, NV 89120

For Sale or Trade

**IMPORTANT!** Gwen Thomason has now sent Luke's lighters to the OTLS Office for sale to OTLS Members. I have catalogued all of the lighters - about 100. A few novelty (a boot, cigarette, football helmet, etc.), table, advertising (no Zippos), a lot of beautiful Butane pocket lighters (Ronson, Colibri, etc.), also petrol/lighter fluid pocket lighters. All prices are reasonable, per her instructions. If you will send a stamped (45¢), self addressed envelope, I will send you a complete list. Please remember this money will go to the wife of our late OTLS Member, Luke Thomason.

For Sale: 1. T/L, Made in Austria, 1890, leather cover & very unusual - \$95. 2. Case & lighter - unknown mfg. - \$45. 3. Typewriter lighter, made in Japan - \$125. All work & nice cond. Sid Chase.  
 I have many 50's, 60's advertising lighters & misc. duplicates. Will trade for 20's, 30's, 40's pocket lighters. I like lighters that show use, but still work. Contact Mike Holm

Wanted to Buy or Trade

New Collector & Appreciator would like to buy some representative Zippos of earlier eras. Not the best or worst of shapes, but good examples of all Zippo styles (seems to be a good place to start?!) Michael Kolb  
 Want ticker tape lighter. Collin Day.

YOU CAN BUY MORE LIGHTERS  
 AT ONE OTLS CONVENTION  
 THAN YOU CAN BUY IN TWO  
 YEARS SOME WHERE ELSE!!

Wanted to Buy or Trade

Wanted: Any very different, rare or old lighters, both in shape or in structure. The larger the better. Write & describe or photo. Chin Hsu  
**WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE!** Zippos & Dunhills. Will trade from my 1200 pocket lighters. Write to me 'Down Under'. Peter Cavanagh

Wanted: Thorens lighters & parts, especially Standard Original model. Al Grosskopf  
 Wanted: Imco Pocket Lighter, Model 2200. Also interested in other old Imcos. Greg Smith

Pocket or Table Watch lighters wanted. Bob Stowe  
 Interested in locating an extra "Kool" penguin lighter. Judith Sanders  
 Willing to buy entire, quality collections, John Cuevas

IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ  
 THE FOLLOWING 2 PAGES  
 CAREFULLY!!!

<p>ON THE LIGHTER SIDE                  International Cigarette                  Lighter Collectors</p>	
Bob Beyers	President
Lynn Baker	V.Pres.
Judith Sanders	Sec/Treas Editor
Jay Meddaugh	Historian
<p>ALL ARTICLES &amp; PHOTOS USED                  IN ANY NEWSLETTER ARE THE                  PROPERTY OF JUDITH SANDERS                  AND "ON THE LIGHTER SIDE"                  AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED                  WITHOUT PERMISSION. FOR                  INFORMATION, WRITE OR CALL</p>	
<p>Judith Sanders                  Rt. 3, 136 Circle Dr.                  Quitman, TX 75783                  214/763-2795</p>	

On The LIGHTER Side

1990 Convention

*Las Vegas*



Dear OTLS Members,

The Fourth Annual Convention of OTLS will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada on June 8 thru 10. The Convention will officially begin at 5:00 P.M. on June 8. However, your Editor will be there from June 5th on, so if you come early ask for the OTLS Suite No., or Judith Sanders.

The hotel chosen for the convention is the "ALADDIN", 3667 Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas 89109, (Phone 702/736-0111). The hotel rate will be \$40 (+ tax) per night for any night you stay there. This rate is for single or double occupancy. PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS WITH YOUR EDITOR, JUDITH SANDERS, IN ORDER TO AVOID CONFUSION IN SPACE AND ROOM RATES. (See attached form)

As always, your OTLS Officers are providing an OTLS Suite. This suite will be for (1) coffee & sweet rolls in the mornings (2) cocktails or soft drinks in the afternoons, and (3) and a place to get together and visit.

The registration fee for ALL PERSONS ATTENDING CONVENTION will be \$35.00, per person. (This means members, guests, wives, husbands, etc.). This fee will cover the continental breakfast each morning (in OTLS Suite), cocktails & soft drinks each day, the dinner on Saturday night and miscellaneous expenses. If any of you have non-member guests who are not attending all the OTLS functions, I will make adjustments in the registration fee for them.

For you who are attending one of the OTLS Conventions for the first time (and as a reminder for you who have been to one), on Saturday we have 'displays' all afternoon. Please bring some of your special lighters (not for sale) to 'show & tell'; as well as lighters you want to sell or trade. We have all learned at the conventions that members prefer to trade rather than just to sell, so you may want to start looking for duplicates to bring with you.

We always have the club scrapbooks at the convention for everyone to see. If you have never sent any pictures of yourself or any of your collection, please try to do so prior to June, for inclusion in the scrapbook. Also, please bring any information on lighters you think might interest the club.

Regarding the lighters you are bringing, if you would like to ship any lighters prior to the convention, Bob Beyers, our President, lives in Las Vegas and will be happy to have you ship to his residence. PLEASE MARK ON THE PACKAGES "HOLD FOR ARRIVAL" AND BOB WILL KNOW HE DOESN'T NEED TO OPEN, JUST HOLD. For you who might 'hand-carry' lighters in shoulder bags, there is always the chance airline security people will question you bringing several lighters aboard. The way to avoid this problem, is tell any security people, these are antique lighters, contain no flint or fluid, and that you are going to a lighter convention. THIS IS IMPORTANT AS ONE AIRLINE MADE AN OTLS MEMBER LEAVE HIS LIGHTERS BEHIND!

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For you who haven't been to a convention before, we are a pretty casual group. Feel free to bring shorts, slacks, sandals, etc. Las Vegas is HOT during June. I would suggest that if you plan to going to any of the shows at night that you men bring a sport coat and the women a dress or 'dressy' pants (although you will see any kind of dress in Las Vegas!). But for the OTLS activities wear whatever you want. For the Sat. night dinner if you wish to 'dress' a little, that's fine, some do and some don't. I would suggest bringing one pair of good walking shoes as we will probably go to a Flea Market on Sunday.

Also for you who haven't been before, on Sat. before dinner we will be holding an auction to raise money for various items. If any of you would like to contribute a lighter to this auction, please let me know. This is voluntary and don't feel you need to do this.

At this year's convention there will be booths sponsored by RONSON SERVICE CENTER and ZIPPO (to sell lighters, of course!). Perry Grover will bring whatever Ronsons and Wins he has available for sale. Zippo has offered to bring WHATEVER WE THINK WE WILL NEED. But they obviously can't bring everything! So when you fill out your registration forms, please note what Zippo Products you might be interested in, for instance, (1) the whole Presidential series, (2) the Elvis series, (3) the 1932 Replica, etc. After I get the registration forms back I can give them a better idea of what to ship. WE WILL ALSO HAVE A SURPRIZE SPECIAL GUEST!

Also, please note if you are driving to Las Vegas, as I need a count on automobiles at the convention. If you are flying, the airport is only 5 minutes from the Aladdin, you can catch the 'Gray Line' shuttle or 'Bell' shuttles, which go to all the hotels - for \$3 per person. These shuttles come to the airport every 15 minutes.

THE CONVENTION LETTER IS EARLY THIS YEAR BECAUSE WE NEED CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS EARLIER THAN USUAL (Las Vegas is a popular place!). SO PLEASE FILL THE REGISTRATION FORMS OUT AND MAIL PROMPTLY.

Sincerely,

Judith Sanders  
Editor

Please detach form and return to the OTLS Office

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NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NO.:

(PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SPACES) NEEDS RESERVATIONS FOR ROOM FOR JUNE (PUT ALL DATES) \_\_\_\_\_. I NEED (NUMBER OF ROOMS) \_\_\_\_\_ ROOMS. THERE WILL BE \_\_\_\_\_ PERSONS (INCLUDING MYSELF) AT THE SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER. MY REGISTRATION FEE OF \$35.00 PER PERSON IS ENCLOSED. I WANT A 1990 CONVENTION LIGHTER AND \$12.00 IS ENCLOSED FOR THE LIGHTER.

MY CREDIT CARD NO. AND EXPIRATION DATE: (TO GUARANTEE RESERVATION) \_\_\_\_\_

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POSSIBLE ZIPPOS I AM INTERESTED IN: \_\_\_\_\_

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REGISTRATION FEE AND DEFINITE RESERVATIONS SHOULD BE RECEIVED IN OTLS OFFICE NO LATER THAN APRIL 15, 1990.