

# Winter Muncie 2010

As seen through the Stained and Uninformed Eyes of BallJarz.

## Side B – The Darker Side

Have you ever had a lapse of faith in yourself and your reasoning abilities? Have you ever questioned your knowledge quotient in regards to something you think you know well enough but because everyone else disagreed with you and on a grand scale doubt set in? Have you ever been the butt end of whatever was going on and wondered what did I do to deserve all of this? Has a situation ever gotten completely out of control and you had no idea how to put a stop to it only you seemingly started it in motion even if innocently? Well all of the above and more is true and happened to good ole little Bruce this year at Winter Muncie 2010.

As I mentioned, it all happened innocently enough and then it subsequently turned into a three day affair of major proportions. I still don't know all of the real facts surrounding this jar deal and the subsequent behind the



Base of Stained jar in question

scenes nonsense but I'm going to go over it here now and see if I can get to the bottom of it.

On Thursday

morning January 7, 2010 while in my room, I was going through my boxes to finish setting up all of my jars for sale. Low and behold I pull out an aqua quart machine made 1858 in which all I can describe about it is this; the jar IMHO was sickly stained and I mean big time. Rick Wheeler was in the room sitting on my bed talking to me and immediately asked about the jar. I told him it was badly stained and if he wanted it I'd take \$25 in which he pulled out his wallet and said, "You'll take \$20.00 for it." That was fine with

me because \$5.00 is nothing and I like Rick a whole lot. Well, I think a minute hadn't gone by when Rick started telling me "you don't know the difference between milk-glass swirls and stains." I completely



The main Instigators from left to right: Rick Wheeler, Jon Vander Schouw, Larry Munson, Dave Rittenhouse and Ron Ashby.

Major players, Ed Kincheloe & Michael Rutledge

disagreed and countered by saying, "if it's milk-glass than let's talk about another price because I obviously didn't know." He immediately mentioned that I "blew it" and that it was a "done deal."

Ok, so I left it at that. I mean what the heck, I had my opinion and he had his opinion and are there not 6 billion of those? Rick went his merry way and then shortly after that and no matter what language you say it in be it mierda, gówno, chachke, poo, poop, crap...it all hit the fan.

I of course was at Muncie, "THE" Show all about and for Fruit Jars so I was naturally room hopping having a good time. And besides, I'm supposed to be a fairly knowledgeable collector so I wasn't going to let it bother me that much so I thought. Yep, it wouldn't be long before I started feeling rather Estúpido and possibly thinking I was both an imbecile as well as an idiot all rolled into one.

It didn't matter what I did or where I went people I knew who passed me in the halls or upon meeting me in rooms would say how crazy I was to let go of such a good jar for practically



nothing. Or how come I don't know what milk glass is vs. a stain. It was like Chinese water torture...it just never ended. What was I going to do to get it all behind me? Absolutely nothing I'm afraid

because the process was a steam rollin.

Thankfully I did find some moments of peace but only because I chose to go to rooms with individuals that knew very little about me or I them. ☺ I think heavy Binge drinking also helped because I ended up dulling the senses quite nicely after awhile.

Ok, some of you are saying to yourself, "what's the big deal, just let it roll off of your back." You had to be me to understand fully because it was like experiencing multiple extensions of my ex-wife every time someone nagged me about that jar. So I did what I could to go with the flow but the drubbing was non-stop and I became non-plused.

What made it all worse for me was some of my good friends were in on the scheme and drafted as they entered the hotel for crying



I'm sure Marty would have been a player had he been there.

out loud. Yep, everyone

played their parts masterfully even too good to be believable at some points. Ron Ashby must have mentioned to me a dozen times how I should have showed him the jar first because he would have bought it in a heartbeat. My extremely good buddy Jeff Klingler basically verbalized the same thing to me which made me really question myself.

At some points into the three days of infamy I almost thought people



**A safe haven with Joe Merkel, Chuck Erb & Tina**

sounded rather rote in how they were approaching me. Yet I still had my doubts and that was enough to keep me intrigued to say the least. It was obvious many people weren't recruited and as I mentioned I found safe haven with them whenever I could do so. I spent a mucho amount of time with Chuck Erb (jars4erb) and at times Jon Black and I have to tell you Chuck is a great guy. He doesn't seem to let anything bother him

**Two more players, Phil Smith & my bud, Jeff Klingler**



and he made me feel right at home. He was also very generous in sharing his Mango Smashers which helped do me in at least two of the nights while at Muncie. And he sold me a gorgeous RB 234, 3L Balll MASON quart in a wonderful solid olive shade that is absolutely dynamite in every way. After all, color is king even with ball jars.

I also hung out with Joe Merkel and his extremely energetic fiancée Tina. I tell you its tough keeping up with her so good luck Joe. It was easy to disregard the thorny jar issue while partying with Joe Merkel, Tina and others drinking the night away and immersing ourselves in frivolity and fun. Nights such as this got me over the top and helped alleviate the nagging feeling inside I felt when focusing on that darn milk glass jar. Oops, stained jar.



**I had to throw in a fruit jar shot**

**Tom Schumm hamming it up at the Show & Tell/Auction**

Friday night for some reason is a blur now and one of the reasons is simple; wine, mango smashers and tequila. A combination I don't recommend to anyone sane or insane for that matter. I believe I fell asleep by 4:00 A.M. and then was up around 7:30 A.M. on Saturday morning. I wasn't sick but I was still out there somewhere so I wore a pair of cheap sunglasses in-doors and when people saw me they knew instinctively what was going on. I was definitely running on empty for sure and in need of a second wind. I wasn't sure if I was prepared enough for the real onslaught to come because this was Show & Tell/Auction day and Rick threw in a zinger by mentioning at the breakfast nook how he was putting the jar in auction to see what it would bring. Just what I needed a real Show & Tell.



he mentions a certain "uninformed" collector sold him the jar and he was surprised I was of course that "uninformed" for such a long time collector but let's see what's it' really worth. I was in rare form too because when it came time to stand and say my name I said, "I'm uninformed from New Jersey" and crowd broke out in raucous laughter. Even Rick had to turn around to look my way laughing at my cool response.

Then the auction finally started. I won a nice original three piece set of Dick Rollers Patent books at what I considered within reason. Many very nice items came up for auction and I was amazed at the high prices being paid for older Ball paper items. I wish I could have bid on some and won but the prices were sky high. The auction was going well enough but it quickly became evident to me that the now famous jar in question was going to be the big shebang at the end and just what the doctor ordered, more drama.

Well zero hours finally arrived and I was in for it big time. When Rick was asked to stand and introduce himself he did it with a pizzazz only he could do. Lifting the jar into the air



**Rick mentioning how an uninformed collector didn't know the difference between milk glass swirls and stain.**

I can only imagine what the cast of characters were doing behind the scenes for so many days to get this dog and pony show in order. It was quite the affair and the drama continued...it appeared quite the genuine thing when Joe Merkel left the seat beside me to go and examine the jar along with Pete Peterson, Bob

Christ and Dan Corker and it was surreal to say the least.



Then Dan Corker stood along the far side wall with his cell phone to his ear from what I was told taking a phone bid. I'm still in-between here about all of this playing along and then the bidding started. \$50 for the first bid then I heard \$100 and then \$150 and I'm talking to Jeff k in utter amazement because I couldn't believe this was happening. The bidding continued to rise to my shear disbelief. Dan Corker raises his hand on a \$500 bid and I'm asking Jeff k what the blippy blip is going on here.

When Jeff raised his hand up for a \$600 bid and said to me, "Brucie, you don't know the difference between milk glass swirls and staining" I was taken in completely. All sense of reality was gone at that point and I wasn't sure of anything anymore. The final price of \$625 was a

real eye opener but then Larry Munson being the winning bidder was just once again a bit suspicious. Rick ran down the aisle mentioning me and stupid in the same sentence, yikes!

I'm still not sure even now what's the real truth of the matter but the consensus was split 50/50 in two camps whether it was the real deal or a dud. We might never know for sure. In the ultimate end it was quite the practical joke played on me and it was all in jest to get my goat and they

succeeded brilliantly.

Sunday at the Show brought a new day and all was forgotten and under the bridge.

I posed for

a photo with two big hearted guys from big sky country and literally these guys are big. I suppose I'm loved because they wouldn't have done it if I wasn't. Thanks guys.



Larry Munson, Me & Rick Wheeler...Man I'm a shrimp



Larry gifted me with a wonderful crude 20 series BPM with a glob of glass that ran down the front of the jar to the base and he topped it off with a very scarce flat Ball lid. Larry it's a Keeper for sure and it will always remind me of Muncie 2010.