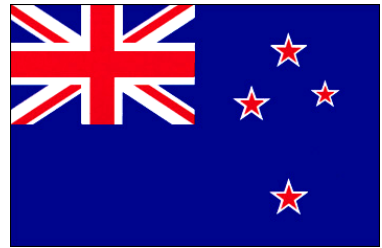


Issue 92

Autumn 2011



miNiZ

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW ZEALAND MINIATURE BOTTLE CLUB



Australasia's only Miniature Bottle Club - www.minisnz.com

EDITORIAL

There is more on the AGM below but the newly elected committee has a striking resemblance to the old committee.

President	Colin Ryder
Vice President	Ken Chin
South Island VP	Eric Sutton
Auckland VP	Erica Mulder
Treasurer	Ian Butcher
Newsletter Editor	David Smith (subject to membership support with miNiZ)
Secretary	Vacant
Supplies Officer	Erica Mulder
Publicity Officer	Peter Bonkovich

Notice that I am editor again but with an important condition. I am meant to be editor, which means tidying up and publishing the articles sent to me by other members. I am fed up of either writing all of miNiZ myself or with just the odd article from other members. I took the job on with everyone at the AGM agreeing to write an article for miNiZ in the next twelve months. So far I have had one article, from Erica Mulder, although the Christchurch members at the meeting do have a reasonable excuse! I have also had lots of snippets of information and photos from other collectors (see This 'N That). Lack of articles means that this miNiZ is three to four months late. Get used to it unless you all contribute!

AGM & EARTHQUAKE

The cover says it all. This is Robin Mellish's bottle room on Tuesday 22nd February. This was the second earthquake in Christchurch in 6 months. The first did some damage but this one was truly destructive.

The one last September was a 7.1 on the Richter scale. It was almost identical in size, depth (33km) and distance (30km) from the city centre as the Haiti earthquake earlier last year. The Haiti quake killed about 220,000 people and destroyed Port au Prince. Due to the time it struck, 4.30 in the morning, and New Zealand's very stringent building codes, the September Christchurch quake killed nobody and only seriously injured three people. There was building (and bottle collection) damage but it was not too serious.

The February quake (technically an aftershock) struck at just before 1.00pm on a Tuesday lunchtime. It was only a 6.3 quake so, in theory, it should not have been the more destructive one. However it was an 8km (5 mile) tear only 1 – 2 km below the Port Hills east of the city centre. The shock wave was focused directly at the city centre. I am sure that you have all seen the images on TV. When you see the destruction we were lucky to escape with 'only' 181 deaths.

The city is now one of two halves. The city centre and eastern suburbs were badly affected

but the northern and western suburbs were hardly touched. Although all are safe, unfortunately all our Christchurch members live in the eastern suburbs.

Robin & Jess Mellish's house is badly damaged but liveable. Robin's collection is mainly in glass fronted cabinets that need a screwdriver to open. Some of the glass fronts blew out but most of the collection is unbroken, although many bottles are piled against the glass so straightening it up will be a job and a half.

I managed to speak to Val Fretwell the day after the earthquake. Her house is/was immediately above the epicentre. The house is a write-off and Val was lucky to get out alive. As well as minis (15,000), Val collected other things such as Whisky jugs (which hung from exposed beams!) and plates. Probably nothing will be salvageable as the house will have been 'red stickered,' meaning it is too badly damaged for anyone to enter and will be knocked down complete with contents.

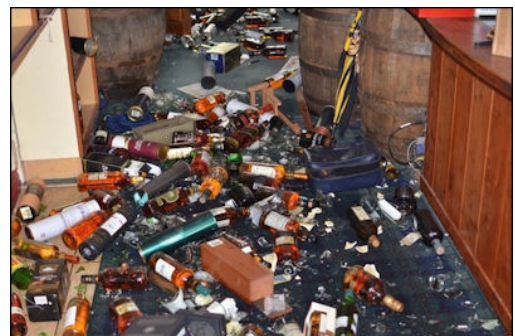
Robin has managed to contact some of the other members. A few days after the earthquake Trevor Harvey had still not been able to look in his bottle room and see how bad the damage was. Eric & Sheryl Sutton had the most damage from the September quake. They had got the place looking good again and we had the AGM and barbecue there, two days, or was that a lifetime, before the February earthquake. The September quake wrenched one of Eric's cabinets off the wall and threw everything off the bar. It appears that the second quake was a repeat. Neither Robin or myself have heard from any of our other Christchurch members.

On a brighter note the AGM weekend stated off well with a pot luck dinner at Robin & Jess Mellish's house. Robin has one of the most extensive collections in NZ and, although all but one couple had seen it before, you always see something new. The couple that had not seen it before was Graham & Maree Ramsey from Brisbane. It is the second time these Aussies have joined us for the AGM and, hopefully, they enjoyed the experience the second time also. I think that they had left Christchurch before the earthquake.

Saturday morning saw us touring the bottle stores, starting with Whisky Galore. This was a specialist Scotch shop that carried a small but hard to find elsewhere range of miniature Scotches.



Unfortunately three days later it ceased to exist (except on line), for the time being at least.



On Saturday night we went to the Richmond Club for dinner. The first photo shows Maree Ramsay (with Graham hiding behind), Sheryl & Eric Sutton and Robin Mellish. The second photo has Dianne Opie and Peter Bonkovich at the back, Erica Mulder hiding in the middle and El Supremo, Colin Ryder and minion David Smith at the front.



On Sunday morning most of us went to Riccarton market. There were some bottles for sale here and there but nothing at all exciting.

A lunchtime barbecue followed at Eric & Sheryl Sutton's house and the AGM was held there later that afternoon.



Maree & Graham Ramsay with Val Fretwell behind



Peter Bonkovich, Jess Mellish & Erica Mulder



Robin Mellish in Eric's Lounge / Bottle Room & Bar – it was very different two days later!



There is always too much to eat – eh Johnno!

These last four photos from Dianne Opie

David Smith

A FEW OF MY FAVOURITE MINIATURE CERAMICS



The **McCormick Collectors Club** miniatures were issued in 1983 and sold to members only. On completing the purchase of the set, you were given the surrounding frame. The set comprises BLACKSMITH, JAIL, GENERAL STORE, HOTEL, SALOON and STABLES.



The **Ski Country Voyage of Discovery** set of 3 mini decanters were issued in 1992 with a limited edition of 550 (I have #447). Pictured are the GLOBE, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS and his ship SANTA MARIA.



The **ESKIMO DOG SLED** was produced in 1977 by **Potters**, who many collectors think of as a Canadian company. Their bottles contain Canadian whisky but were made in Portland, Oregon, USA.

Erica Mulder

THIS 'N THAT

We will start with eleven great bottles that David Spaid found in China. The two 50ml bottles on the right come boxed to celebrate the oldest cellar (winery/distillery) in China. Obviously the 1573 date refers to the founding of the company (Maison Foundee).



I cannot tell you anything about these six Chinese minis or the pewter one on the next page. Good bottles though. The blown glass bull is a truly great mini and at first I thought it was Italian. The only identification on it is in Chinese. The blown glass pink rose is from ChangYu Pioneer Wine Company & Wine Museum, which David visited. There are at least two other colours.



David also sent us the photo of the three Ballantines 17 years old Scotches. Note the Japanese characters on the third bottle. All are 50ml, 43%



The final two bottles on this page are the last of those I have to show you from David Spaid. Both are from Poland. Crzeska, on the left, is a 50ml bottle produced in 2009. The Miodula above is 100ml and came out the end of 2010. Miod is mead in Polish (amazing what you learn collecting minis – see my astounding knowledge of Russian below). This appears to be a limited edition bottle.

Colin Todd sent me the photo of the Lionstone Beagle. He has been trying to get this for a number of years to complete his set of Lionstone dogs. You can see the full set at:
<http://www.minibottlelibrary.com/mbl/alpha/lionstone/index.html>



Colin has also sent me the photo of the McGibbon's Scotch golf putter.

This is 50ml, 43%. I did not know it existed when I did the golf articles last year.

Member Harland Johnson also wanted to complete one of his sets, this time the Camus books. Harland wrote "I'm missing the Renoir 'After the Bath' minibook so I bid on a set of three on Ebay -- I bowed out at \$65."



These books are from the Camus Grand Masters Collection and made of Limoges Castel Porcelain so Harland was being a bit optimistic to think that he might have bought the three for only \$65, which is about what you would expect one to sell for. But then again why bid more when you only want one? There were 33 bids in total and they sold for US\$800!



The photos of the Grant's Scotch set are from Erica Mulder. They are the standard bottle (centre) Sherry Cask (left) and Ale Cask (right). Each is 50ml, 40%. Also from Erica is the Ansett New Zealand 10th Anniversary Irish Mist mini. Unfortunately it only gives the information on the packaging, not the bottle label. The only other Ansett NZ bottle I know about is the first anniversary port. This is 95ml, 17.5%.



One advantage of running the club web site and Miniature Bottle Library is that people find the sites and send you photos of bottles they have, usually wanting to know what they are worth. I am always helpful if I can be.

I thought at first that the Lionstone Bar Tender was a mini but it is in fact the full bottle size. Notice something odd about it? I did. This is a sample bottle. Check out the final version on Miniature Bottle Library (address on last page).

Peter Bonkovich sent me the next photos and links to their auctions on Ebay. He wrote: "Glenfiddich 50 years old was sold only in the Japanese market. Full size bottles were bottled in 1991, and only 105 miniature bottles were made. So please don't miss this opportunity to have it"..... I passed up this wonderful opportunity as it sold for £1242! Somebody else with one of these must have decided to cash it in as another went on sale shortly afterwards, this time complete with box. A snip at only £1576 (about NZ\$3350!!!!)

We start the next page with another two bottles from Peter. Both are Glenrothes Single Malt Scotch. The first was distilled in 1978 and bottled in 2008, making it 30 years old. US\$250.50 bought it. The second is a 25 year old. This sold for US\$288. Does that mean the Scotch lost US\$7.50 per year between being 25 and 30 years old?

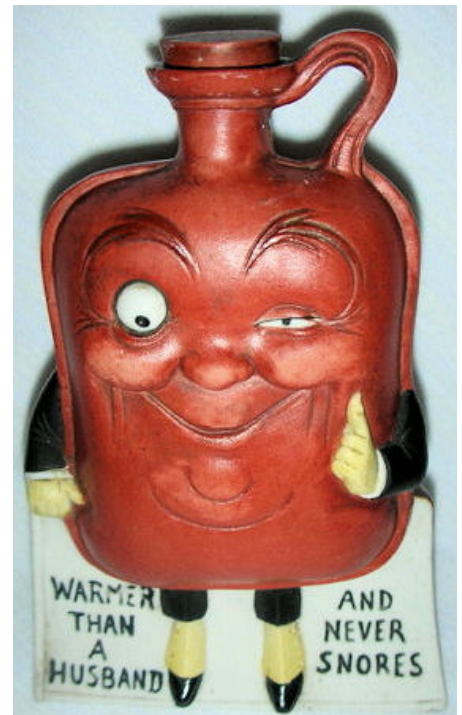




The Grant's Stand Fast Scotch sold on Ebay for about the same cost per litre as the Glenrothes. This is a Kiddicraft Gold Seal micromini from the 1950's. Some of these are common but not this one. It sold for £26 – the equivalent of over NZ\$5500 per litre – and it is not even real Scotch!

The picture of three new Belarus vodkas on the right came from Holm Hars of Germany. I can read the Russian word for vodka but most of the rest is a mystery to me.

Tetiana, a collector from Belarus, sent me the photo below of ten bottles currently available from there. They can speak for themselves.



The hot water bottle mini is a give-away from Schafer & Vater that caught my eye on

Ebay. Most give-aways are good but this one is truly special. US\$297.87 bought it.



Not a mini but this Bard's Town advert from 1940 caught my eye. It is a 20 page booklet in the shape of a fiddle and the size of a mini, 83mm (3.25") when closed. A bid of US\$22.50 secured it.



The Harper Whiskey to the left is from the early 1900's. It is a great old bottle with a nearly complete label. This again was sold on Ebay, for what I believe is a disappointing US\$46.05

My apologies to whichever member sent me the picture of the Red Stag bottle as I cannot remember who it was. This Red Stag is a Black Cherry flavoured Bourbon from Jim Beam. New Zealand made a Red Stag bottle that I showed you in issue 90 of miNiZ but this was a deer extract drink made for the Chinese market.



Talking of the Chinese market, the Nhan Sam-Tac Ke-Hi Mi bottle on the left is from the country next door, Vietnam. It was sent to me by Anand Harirajah of Malaysia, who found it on a recent visit to Saigon. I have no idea what it contains.



Last but not least is the Larsen Collectors Club mini Viking ship from 2007. This was sold on Ebay, there were 39 bids and it eventually sold for €401

Enough for now. Keep sending me anything you like – preferably money but I will accept bottle photos.

David Smith

OCHAKOVSKAYA



It is always nice to find some new ceramic miniatures, but even more so when they are truly something special. Ochakovskaya is a company from Russia that I have never heard of before they started selling these minis. Each contains 50ml of Russian vodka and are issued as a limited edition (usually of 125).

I thought at first that there was a fairy tale theme but a few of the bottles, such as Yoda and the aeroplane, seem not to support that. I have been trying to find out the true story (pun intended!) and will bring you that information in a future miNiZ if I find out more.

One feature of these minis is that they are hand painted and that, on purpose, no two are exactly the same. There is an obvious attempt with some shapes to make each one different. This has made them hard to list on Miniature Bottle Library, <http://www.minibottlelibrary.com/mbl/alpha/ochakovskaya/index.html> as normally the site allows for painting variations. I got around that by not showing more than two of each and I have followed that principal here also. Note that some of the painting is very clever and a different paint job can change the character of the mini – see the castles.

I will let these bottles speak for themselves.....



Note the painting variations between the two cockerels above and the two with the accordion. The hen to the left is sitting on eggs with dollar signs on. This reminds me of the fairy tale of the goose that laid the golden eggs but, as these are Russian, this could be a variation or simply a totally different fairy tale. I don't know where the others fit in but the accordion player is clearly a caricature of a dancing Cossack.



The early castle bottles that went on sale had the polar bear on them. Clever painting produced King Kong on the castle and there is another variation with a brown bear.



The Christmas tree comes with differently coloured 'balls.' I have seen very little variation in the painting of the aeroplane. I presume that the next character is 'Mr. Mole' from 'The Wind In The Willows.' Note the minor variations of trouser and book colour.



The bear with the honey barrel is another clever use of paint. The first bear is dressed and the second 'natural.' So far I have not seen any significant variations with the barrels but I am sure there will be some as the painters do not seem to be able to help themselves. To the right is 'Yoda' from 'Starwars.'





There is not a lot of difference with the crows, or are they ravens? There are lots of legends across the top of the world regarding ravens so these may well be representative of one of those.



I think that these are fish not dolphins but I really am not sure.



There appears to be more variation in the painting of the elephants than any other subject.

There are two different frogs and so far I have not seen any significant painting variations for either of them. Rosie, my wife, collects frogs so these make great collection cross-overs.



Two the right we have two variations of the samovar – the Russian tea urn. Again, there are lots of variations with this mini but I still don't think they compare to most of the others.



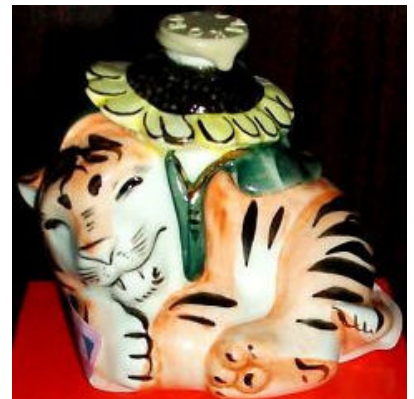


Hedgehogs are an introduced species to New Zealand. Poms like me regard them with great affection but native New Zealanders generally dislike them. In the 1980's we fed one, which we named Frederick, for years.

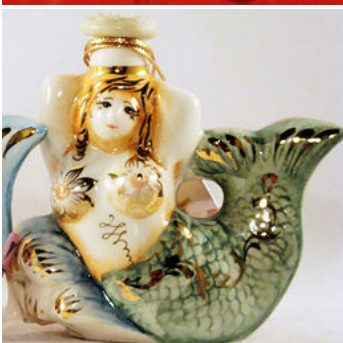
I have always had a soft spot for pigs, especially when roasted! Like the elephants these are a blank canvas for the artist to have some fun on.



The tigers are another animal with like in the way of painting variation – for obvious reasons.



Don't you just love the idea of a hunting dog? Not exactly what the kennel club had in mind though...



Our only X-rated mini of the bunch is the mermaid. Nice boobs.....





Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall

Humpty Dumpty Had a great fall

All the king's horses and all the king's men

Couldn't put Humpty together again.

I don't know who this character is, I have nick named him The Nobleman. There is clearly no famine in his land as he is almost as fat as Humpty Dumpty.



I think that these are meant to be the pumpkin coach from Cinderella.



Father Christmas, or St. Nicholas was an obvious choice of subject for this series. As was the snowman.





Don't you think that the pine cone is boring compared to the other bottles? Probably only the barrel equals it.



The rocking horses are one of my favourites among these bottles. Can anyone think of another rocking horse mini? If so please let me know as I have racked my brains and cannot come up with one. Amazing as it is such a good subject. Rocking horses could even have been made in blown glass.

Last but certainly not least, my very favourite bottle in this series, and one which I have not been able to obtain, the woolly mammoth.



Isn't this the best ceramic set put out in years? Although they are expensive there is almost guaranteed to be one or more that any collector of ceramic miniatures will fall in love with – I WANT THEM ALL!!!!!!

David Smith

DATE, TIME & PLACE

The Christchurch meetings always get decided upon at their first meeting after the AGM. For obvious reasons there has not yet been one. If there is to be meetings in Christchurch this year we will try to let out-of-town members know.

Sunday 10th April 2011, 12.30pm Barbecue Lunch, Colin & Diane Ryder's, 20 Prospect Terrace, Johnsonville. Telephone: 04 478 4391 E-Mail: rydercj@xtra.co.nz

Saturday 18th June 2011, 6.30pm Pot Luck Dinner, Ken & Malee Chin's, 29 Norton Park Avenue, Fairfield, Lower Hutt. Telephone: 04 938 1488 E-Mail: Kenchin@ihug.co.nz

Sunday 21st August 2011, 12.30pm Pot Luck Lunch at David & Rosie's, 11 Trevor Terrace, Paremata. Telephone: 04 233 2997 E-Mail: minidavid@xtra.co.nz

Sunday 16th October 2011, 12.30pm Pot Luck Lunch, Ian Butcher's, 5 Sunburst Court, Paraparaumu. Telephone: 04 904 3157 E-Mail: poppa.chopper@clear.net.nz

Sunday 15th January 2012, 12.30pm Barbecue Lunch at David & Rosie's, 11 Trevor Terrace, Paremata. Telephone: 04 233 2997 E-Mail: minidavid@xtra.co.nz

Weekend of 17th - 19th February 2012 - AGM Weekend in Wellington

Programme to be confirmed later in 2011

The AGM Weekends have been very successful. All are BYO food and drink. Remember to book your flights early to get the best deals. This is a chance to meet or catch up with other collectors, view some great collections and obtain some new bottles.

Please E-Mail: minisnz@gmail.com to let us know you are attending.

If you want to hold a meeting please let one of the committee know.

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SOME FINAL THOUGHTS REGARDING AVOIDING EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

- Under no circumstances should you use open shelves
- Use Perspex (plexiglass) not glass fronts
- Do not have opening doors unless they can be and are kept locked
- Do not stagger bottles back on different levels within the same section
- Wall cabinets should be VERY firmly attached – use at least double the fixings you think you need
- Free standing cabinets should be secured to the wall
- All your collection should be photographed and the photographs kept off site

Some of these tips may also avoid other potential problems. Using screwed on Perspex will considerably help to avoid theft / damage in a break-in. Taking good quality photographs of your collection will greatly assist in an insurance claim whether it be after an earthquake, fire, flood or break-in.

You do have insurance don't you? Make sure that the insurance company knows that you have the collection. It should not be necessary to specify any individual items but they may ask for proof of total value – good luck with that!