

Milk Bottles Have Both Sentimental And Collectable Value

If you have any old glass milk bottles lying around, you might want to dig them out and clean them up.

Recently, a green East End Dairy milk bottle, originally sold in Harrisburg, Penn., sold for \$3,738 at a Pennsylvania auction. Though the bottle was in excellent condition and rare (one of four known), don't expect to get rich on most bottles, warns John Tutton, a collector and author of a series of milk bottle collector books.

"This was a case where two people really wanted it," he notes, and they bid up the price. Realistically the bottle was worth about \$500.

Collectors particularly prize green bottles, made from 1933 to 1945 and used at Christmas time for eggnog. Amber bottles that held buttermilk are also highly prized.

The bottle everyone wants is a Thatcher, the first bottles made around 1885 with glass tops. When prices peaked they were worth about \$600, but now it's possible to buy a Thatcher for \$300, Tutton says.

Currently, the hottest bottles have WWII slogans and pictures of such things as Uncle Sam chasing Hitler and Mussolini. They sell for \$50 to \$1,000 on eBay, which has become

a popular place to buy and sell bottles.

"Six years ago was the peak. Prices have come down because of the economy," he says. "Bottles once worth \$35 are now bringing \$10."

Many collectors focus on bottles from their own region. Since many towns and dairies bottled their own milk in the early 1900's there's a wide variety of bottles to collect.

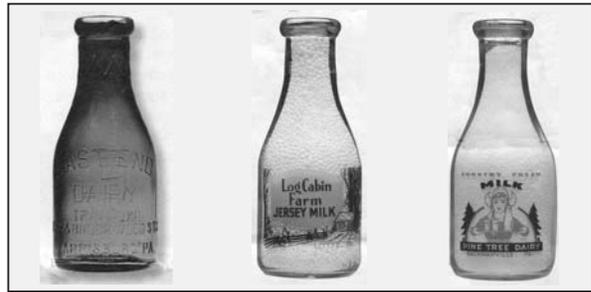
After embossed bottles which were expensive to mold - in 1932, the technique of pyroglazing allowed bottlers to add colorful labels that didn't wash off and were attractive to housewives.

As paper cartons replaced bottles in the 1960's, and many dairies went out of business, most old bottles were trashed.

The ones that show up for sale these days are often found in attics or in closets storing things like buttons, Tutton says. Occasionally they are found in town dumps.

Dairy-rich states like Pennsylvania and Ohio have had collectors for a long time. The hobby is more recently growing in states such as Iowa.

Some people collect bottles with their family name or from local dairies. Others



Rare, green glass milk bottle (left) recently sold for \$3,738 at an auction. The Log Cabin bottle, (at center) sold for \$1,265. The Pine Tree Dairy bottle, (right) sold for "just" \$489.

have major collections that require entire buildings.

Tutton and his wife had a dairy farm in western New York and started collecting bottles in 1968. Since no guidebooks were available, he started writing books about the history and value of bottles. His latest book is "Udderly Splendid".

Since prices continually change, Tutton recommends checking out the National Association of Milk Bottle Collectors, Inc. website (www.milkroute.org) for current

information. The group holds a huge annual convention in Hershey, Penn., and publishes monthly newsletters.

As a book author, Tutton is also sought out as an expert. He notes that he lists real-world values in his books - not fairy tale prices collectors would like.

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Basic "ATV" Changes Lives In Poor Countries

By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

Ever heard of a BUV? It's short for Basic Utility Vehicle, which is a low-cost ATV without all the bells and whistles. You're most likely to find them in remote villages in Africa.

The BUV is the brainchild of Will Austin, a mechanical engineer who worked at General Motors, Ford and Delco Electronics before "The Lord laid this on my heart" during a fly-fishing trip to South America in 1998.

After several trips to impoverished countries, he realized how much the quality of life depends on affordable transportation. Austin began working on prototypes. In 2005, his non-profit charity, the Institute for Affordable Transportation (IAT), sent its first production BUV to Honduras. That first one is still running thanks to the simple, but overbuilt, design.

BUV's excel in rough driving conditions. They carry up to 1,200 lbs., cost 1/5 the cost of a typical economy car, and travel at less than 20 mph. With attachments, a parked BUV can pump water, grind grain, generate electricity, or power other machines that can be driven by a V-belt. They can also cultivate, ditch and work gardens and fields with tillage attachments.

Starting at \$3,700 for a rolling chassis with no bed to \$5,000 for a complete unit with upgrade options, BUV's are generally purchased for mission and humanitarian organizations. IAT works with groups to send the BUV's in shipping containers to keep transportation costs as low as possible.

"In general, we expect each BUV to touch more than 1,000 people," says Austin. "Instead of hauling water and wood all day, women and children can grow food or go to school. BUV's can be made into ambulances to take people to clinics since most people in rural Africa have to walk more than 5 miles to reach the nearest doctor."

With a BUV, prices on goods are lower because of less expensive freight costs, and growers can get their goods to better paying markets. Materials for construction

projects - water, sand, concrete - can be delivered faster and easier.

Austin envisions that people will gain dignity, self-confidence and become entrepreneurs with BUV's. While transportation has been the biggest use for them, they can also be fitted with tractor-style tires for farming and logging.

"It'll go where other 4x4 trucks get stuck. It has very high torque," Austin says. "The components are simple because we wanted a vehicle that people could make their own parts for if necessary."

The BUV's are built in Indianapolis by four paid staff and many volunteers. Donors pay for overhead and salaries, including Austin's - just as missionaries are often required to raise their own pay. Austin's ultimate goal is to set up assembly factories in other countries, such as the one already established in South Africa. That way the BUV will also provide jobs and income for local people.

BUV's have a 10 hp diesel engine that gets anywhere from 30 to 60 mpg depending on terrain and load. They weigh 1,200 lbs. with a treated lumber 6-ft. long cargo bed. The front spindle/hub is rated at 1,750 lbs., and the axles are designed for 250 hp engines. They are simple to drive - middle steering and no shifting or clutch. They don't have a powered reverse, but pivot around easily and can be pushed manually.

So far, about 115 BUV's have been shipped to Africa, Haiti and Central America as Austin's organization builds awareness and excitement about the vehicle's capabilities.

"This is a hand-up, not a hand-out," he says. "BUV's empower people economically and spiritually. They help people help themselves. Providing transportation bridges a gap and helps connect people."

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The low-cost machines also can be used to haul kids to school or take people to clinics.



The Basic Utility Vehicle, or BUV, is a low-cost ATV without all the bells and whistles. It can be fitted with tractor-style tires for farming and logging.



Equipped with tillage attachments, BUV's can be used to till, plant and cultivate gardens and fields.



How to Help:

- Donate to IAT, a 501(c)3 charity to help cover overhead costs.
- Raise money with friends or your church to send a BUV to a missionary.
- Volunteer at the Indianapolis factory.
- Donate your car or truck.
- Take a BUV on tour to various car shows in your area.