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ISSUE 307

Dedicated to those who have a passion for the history and collection of swizzle sticks

Hi Collectors,

Question for the day: What would history look like if told from the point of view of a Swizzle Stick?

In this issue we will do just that; I'm born and raised in Chicago and they say, "write about what you know", so this issue will be devoted to swizzle sticks from "my kind of town"...Chicago.

Pam Ashlund

Marshall Field's & Company

Marshall Field & Company introduced its famous candy, the Frango Mint, in 1929, but the illustrious downtown department store was founded much earlier, in 1881 (and tracing its history back to 1856). Marshall Field's (or just "Fields" as we called it back in the day) rebuilt from the ashes of the Great Chicago Fire in 1871; enlarged its floor space in anticipation of the 1893 World's Fair Columbian Exposition; added a candy line to boost sales during the Great Depression...and served as *the* destination for the lady's who lunch for decades.

Alas, after spanning over **a century**, Fields is no more, suffering the ignoble fate of purchase by Macy's in the 1990's. What is left to tell its tale? Swizzle Sticks.

Here are two swizzle sticks and the one pick that I have collected. You might have a few of these in your collection and not know it. The earlier sticks are marked with the scrolling script of the iconic monogram logo (MF&Co).

Another stick, more recent, is a figural stick featuring the landmark Marshall Field's clock on the corner of State Street and Washington. I wonder if this one might have been issued as a commemorative. Anyone know?

What's inside

- Marshall Field's & Company
- Ivanhoe Restaurant
- **NEW!** Ripped from the Pages of Past Issues
- Ideas for Next Issue: Where to Go From Here
- Note from the Editor



The Frango Mint Scandal of 1999*

Frango Mints were a chocolate-mint meltaway candy handmade on the 13th floor of the Marshall Field's Department Store. In the summer of 1976, Lillian Coleman arrived in Chicago from Mississippi; she landed her job at Frango Mints the same day. 25 years later, she (and her co-worker of 13 years, Helene Painter) related that the day the production line closed. She (and 150 fellow candy workers) "...were notified only two hours before the candy line was shut down on March 4th and that they were terminated, effective immediately. "

**CHICAGO
WANTS ITS**

Marshall Field's
(not Macy's)

"They just told us to take our things and go," said Painter.

*Excerpted from: Fired Frango Workers Seek Shoppers' Support | March 21, 1999 | William Presecky, Staff Writer | Chicago Tribune

If you want a treasure trove of information on Chicago History then Chuckman's Blog is a must read <https://chuckmanchicagonostalgia.wordpress.com/>; He has an incredible archive that includes photos, postcards menus and matchbooks. But not Swizzle Sticks (not yet, Chuck?)

IVANHOE RESTAURANT

The Seventh Wonder of Chicago

All the romance of medieval ages
Dining-Dancing-Entertainment in the Enchanted Forest
Weird Catacombs, 300 feet below
King Richard's Play House
Friar Tuck's Cellarage
The Black Knights Inn

"A Luxury You Can Afford"

Rumored to be the site of a "Speakeasy" during prohibition, the Ivanhoe went "legit" in the '30's becoming a very popular medieval-themed restaurant, with up to 10,000 people a day passing through its doors.

Guests coming into the Ivanhoe would take an "elevator" down to supposedly great depths and then let them off at the same floor; at the entrance of a dimly lit corridor to the popular tavern, the Catacombs. According to a 1947 newspaper "In the passage way three men dressed as skeletons would **harass the ladies and their escorts** which keep the guests screaming and happy".

Frequented by many famous people over the years including Babe Ruth, it was a sad day when a fire finally ended the Ivanhoe era; final closing for good in 1979 (reopened as a liquor store).

Side note:

Binny's Beverage Depot holds wine tastings in the former Catacombs.

CHICAGO, Sept. 20.—Proprietors of The **Ivanhoe**, a leading local restaurant catering to between 8,000 and 10,000 Chicagoans weekly, pointed with pride to their arcade, dubbing it "a great business booster."

The Ivanhoe's arcade currently has two photo booths, a novelty love-meter, two peep shows—all coin-operated—and a dart throwing game.

"The photo booths are one of the best advertising mediums," Ralph Jansen, the proprietor, points out. "Guests coming to The **Ivanhoe** often take as many as 10 pictures in the booths and pass them on to friends, each time giving a boost to our place. They also give a man a good excuse to put his arm around the girl friend," Jansen added.

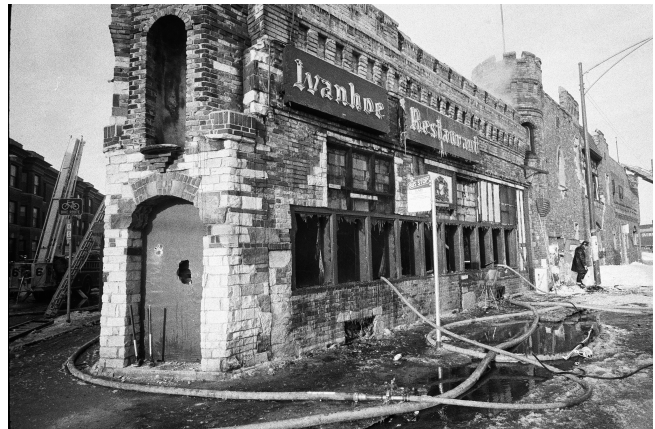
floor at the entrance to a narrow, dimly lit passage leading to The **Catacombs**.

In the passage three men dressed as skeletons harass ladies and their escorts with antics which keep the guests screaming and happy. The **Catacombs** itself, is a popular tavern in the basement below the Ivanhoe's main dining and ballroom.

Happy Guests

As a guest enters the arcade, a comic mirror distorts his or her features and, as Jansen puts it, "gets them laughing and into a fun-loving mood." From there on the arcade takes over.

"I highly recommend such features as the mirror and arcade to any place such as mine," the proprietor said.



The skull swizzle stick of Ivanhoe Fame was manufactured over the years and marked

All read on the front: IVANHOE - DINING & DANCING - CHICAGO

On the back, along with their individual names, they read:

RELIC FROM THE CATACOMBS

Each had the name of a medieval character: King Richard, Big John, Friar Tuck, the Black Knight, Bois Guilbert, Allan A Dale and Robin Hood. There may be other names as well.

I have found these sticks in many colors, bright red, yellow, green and black as some in Pastel Shades (graciously given to be by one of our lovely members at the 2015 Convention!)



The one I started my collection with was Yellow; very faded by the time I found them in my mother's house. Mom told me about visiting the Ivanhoe in the 50's. The next one I found was an ivory stick. These seem to be original but I haven't been able to date them. Something tells me the bright red and green and yellow and black (which seem to be made recently) would be the last issued before the Ivanhoe permanently shut its doors in the 70's.

They were, at some point, sold as a set in a coffin shaped box. I've only seen one of these on e-bay and I still regret not grabbing it, but bidding went too high... I have a poor quality photograph found on Google Images, so I imagine there are more out there.



I'll file these under "Help Wanted"; if you know a way to tie the different sticks to time periods please send me your stories!

And just as the question left my lips...

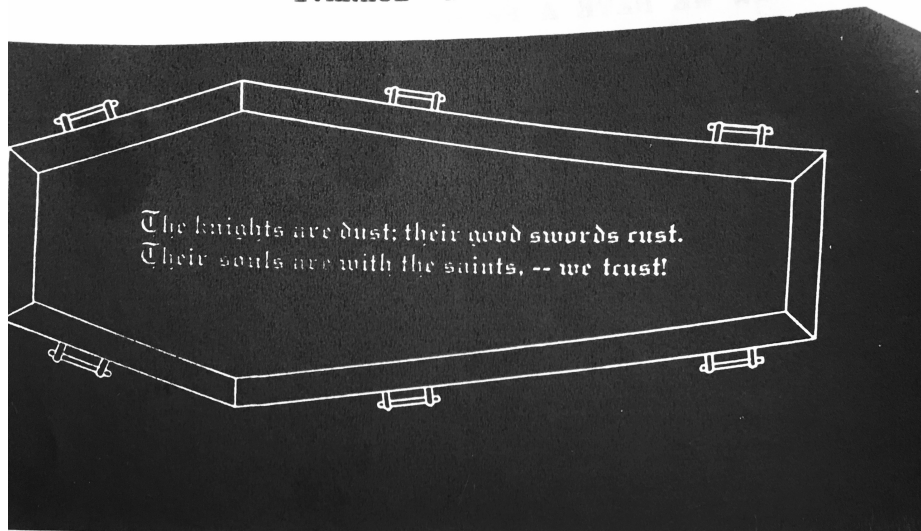
NEW FEATURE: RIPPED FROM THE PAGES OF PAST ISSUES

This from Volume 8 Number 3 December, 1992, Page 24
Written and illustrated by Ray Hoare

Ivanhoe Boxed Set

The Knights are dust; their good swords rust. Their Souls are with the Saints, we Trust!

IVANHOE BOXED SET



TOP: THE KNIGHTS ARE DUST; THEIR GOOD SWORDS RUST.
THEIR SOULS ARE WITH THE SAINTS, -- WE TRUST!

FRONT SIDE: FROM IVANHOE CASTLE

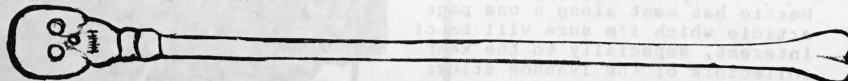
BACK SIDE: 3600 NORTH CLARK STREET - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

ALL STICKS READ THE SAME FRONT AND BACK.

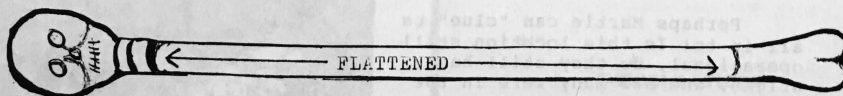
FRONT: IVANHOE - DINING & DANCING - CHICAGO

BACK: (CHARACTER NAME) RELIC FROM THE CATACOMBS

THE BOXED SET OF STICKS HOWEVER WERE MADE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT.
THE FIRST STICK BELOW IS FROM THE BOXED SET. THEY ARE NARROW STEMMED,
AND THE STEMS ARE ROUNDED. THE SKULL IS ALSO A BIT NARROWER.



THE STICK BELOW IS THE TYPE GIVEN OUT WITH DRINKS. IT IS WIDER ALL
OVER BUT IS ALSO FLATTENED ON THE STEM FOR THE WORDING.



WRITING OUR OWN HISTORY: WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

"When an elder dies, it is as if an entire library has burned to the ground." African Proverb

I.S.S.C.A. history can also be traced through Swizzle Sticks, in particular the swizzle sticks made by members. Reading through back-issues I see that the late Polly Rusk, co-founder of I.S.S.C.A. frequently issued her own (one for General Schwarzkopf (aka Stormin' Norman) and one for David Letterman. I own one or maybe two made by Polly. One has a trailer with the slogan "Our Rollin' Hogan" and another (maybe one from Polly's?) was a commemorative to Desert Storm.

I have also found Sticks from Bill Price and several of our current members as well.

Please send photos (or mail sticks) and share your memories of past members and we will include them with their Swizzle Sticks in future issues.



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

a new member reflects on her first ISSCA convention

It was history that I was struck with as I met my new friends at the convention this year; a group of friends who meet in 1989 at the first convention or long before.

Here I met folks with collections of 40,000 swizzle sticks, some categorized by State, some carefully logged, some with a focus on one area, some collect all, some only glass, some only figural and some “collect everything”.

The wealth of information in the room was astonishing. For some reason all I could think of is we cannot lose this treasure trove of information. Several members echoed my thoughts with ideas of a Swizzle Museum.

I had the pleasure of interviewing, videoing and photographing some of our conventioners. One interview was with Louis Bernstein, cousin of the late Manny Bernstein and the great-nephew of Jay Sindler the swizzle stick inventor and founder of Spir-It. It's fair to say we wouldn't have anything to collect without the innovation of “Uncle Jack”. Louis shared a poem with me, used in the first advertisement of Spir-It:

*Manhattans martinis old fashioned and sours-
You struggle for cherries and olives for hours.
The Spir-it will help you, the Spir-it will spear,
The olive, the cherry, the cherry, my dear.*

Spir-it ad, The New Yorker Jan 25, 1936.

When tracking down history, physical evidence is key, and it disappears faster than you might realize. Imagine what we could know about evolution and dinosaurs without a fossil record. Swizzle Sticks are our record of history, they let us follow the history of Prohibition in America; they lead us from Speakeasy's to Gangsters to Cocktail lounge; from the mad men era to the space age, they give us a window into a world in transition, a time and place.

We all know that Swizzle Sticks had a golden age that by some accounts has ended.
That leaves us collectors to tell their stories before they are lost to the past.

PAM ASHLUND