



The Nutmeg State Marble Collectors Club, Oakdale, Conn., was on hand at the meet with an informational table.



John Duck, Beverly, Ohio



Paula Ciaramitaro, Saugus, Mass.



Tom Kingsley, Trumbull, Conn.



Mike Close, West Boylston, Mass.

A Banner Homecoming As Marbles Society Marks 40th Year



Elliot Pincus, Jenkinstown, Penn., holds up a choice lutz from his collection.



Hailing from Wayland, Mass., Rosalie (shown here) and Brenda Cohen, wife and daughter of the late Bertram Cohen, who ran this show in Marlborough, Mass., for many years, were on hand, downsizing items from Bert's longtime collection.

CROMWELL, CONN. — The 36th Northeast Marble Meet returned home to the nutmeg state Columbus Day weekend, with 32 dealers showing marbles of every size and color, from American machine-made swirls to handmade European lutzers. Sponsored by the Marble Collectors Society of America, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, the marble meet took place Sunday, October 11, capping a weekend that kicked off Friday with a room-hopping, buying session at the Crowne Plaza Cromwell and continued with an auction of 225 lots of rare and choice examples Saturday and the society's annual meeting. Auction highlights included a three-layer, solid core swirl and a single pontil onionskin, both just under 2½ inches in diameter. Each fetched \$715.

Stanley Block, who founded this society, which is the oldest and largest of its type in the country, also organized this marble meet, a fall tradition since 1980. The first five meets took place in Fairfield County, Conn., and the show moved up to South Attleboro and then Marlborough, Mass., for many years, under the longtime aegis of Bertram Cohen, who died at age 83, after last year's meet. This is the show's first year back in Connecticut. Stan was on hand at the meet but his son, antiques dealer Robert Block, also a marbles specialist, and longtime collector David Terrell were running the show this year for the society. By all appearances, all the transitions in management and location appeared seamless — dealers looked happy to be here, and buyers, most of them serious, longtime collectors, easily found the new venue and came to buy.

Bert Cohen may not have

been at the meet this year, but his presence was palpable, and a moment of silence was observed at 10 am to mark his passing. A good sampling of his longtime and storied collection was also here, along with his affable wife, Rosalie, and daughter, Brenda. Looking to downsize to a smaller home, Rosalie said it was time to let some of Bert's collection go to new homes, and she was sharing many reminiscences about Bert and their shared collecting journey.

"His pockets were always full (of marbles). If he met you, he'd marbleize you," Rosalie quipped, noting Bert's penchant for handing out marbles to new friends he met everywhere. A member of more than 20 marble clubs, Bert even traveled overseas with his marbles, including Tokyo and England. The camaraderie seen at this recent marble meet evinces that even though buying and selling might be the primary objective, the marble community is a tight-knit one, and relationships are key and long-lasting.

A full weekend of activities awaited participants, and the meet was well attended, with around 200 people engaging in brisk buying all day on Sunday. "The meet began on a wet note. Early evening on Friday, at the height of rush hour in central Connecticut, the heavens opened up and provided a deluge, slowing down the arrival of those attendees who had not gotten an early start to the three-day holiday weekend. This didn't stop those intrepid collectors who were at the hotel from engaging in brisk room-hopping during the evening. Some real treasures changed hands Friday night," said Bob Block. At its meeting, the society's board passed a resolu-



Two generations of marble collectors, Stan and Bob Block show off a couple of the featured items in Bob's collection.