

## Editor's Section

by Dave Thorpe

### What's in a name?

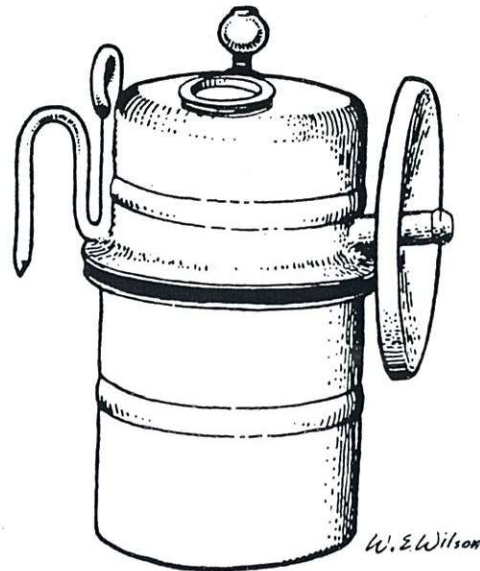
It's a fact. Collectors of mining artifacts love names. Names allow us to make easy reference and categorize. Names tell us a story: sometimes about the manufacturer or designer (e.g. Simmons, Baldwin, Lindahl), other times about an area (e. g. Scranton, Springfield, Montana) or even a mine (Copper Queen).

Names evoke feelings. The "Pathfinder" sounds cunning, brave...a true leader in the field. Then there is the "Buddy": definitely the one I'd want lighting my way alone in a deep dark hole. Names can be cute: "Luminum". They can be ugly "Scoby".

A collection is a family of objects. You would never raise a family without naming the children. With names we refer to our objects affectionately, almost as if they were a living family.

Historically, names have helped determine the commercial success or failure of objects. Thumbs up for the Mustang. 'Down for the Edsel.

Perhaps the most controversial name in carbides is "anthracite", a cap-lamp featured in this issue of the MAC. Anthracite, or hard coal, is found in and around Scranton, Pennsylvania. Several lamps were manufactured in Scranton: Hughes Bros.' Pathfinder, Scranto, Scranton, and probably the pre-Justrite Victor. But, the lamp known to most collectors as the "anthracite" (see illustration, right) is believed by most to be a product of Maple City Mfg. Co. from Monmouth, Illinois. The lamp is distinguished by its barrel shape and the peculiar loop at the upper end of its hook. It is the late George Bayles, distinguished collector of mining artifacts, to whom the usage of this name originated.



Some collectors, and at least one mini-editor from Denver, find the continued usage of this name to be simply wrong. The lamp was never officially named "anthracite" by any known company and, to anyone's knowledge, was not produced, marketed, or even used extensively in the anthracite area. Finally, they argue, Mr. Bayles was not referring to this particular lamp at all, but to a generic sort of lamp used in the eastern Pennsylvania coal fields.

Yet some of the older collectors, who knew Mr. Bayles, relate that he *did* specifically refer to these loop-hook lamps as "anthracite" lamps, because he felt that they may have been used in that area, and because he wanted a *name* for this species to use in correspondence with other collectors. Our need for names is understood, but was there a reason why Mr. Bayles felt there was a relationship to the hard coal area?

The answer is yes, and the key lies in the waterdoor. The lamp is found with two varieties of waterdoors. Both are unusually small and single-thickness sheet-metal. One is knurled and

screws in while the other is hinged. Waterdoors of this size and design are seen almost exclusively on lamps used in the anthracite coal mining area. The lamps manufactured in Scranton, (Scranto, Scranton, Pathfinder, and pre-Justrite Victor), are known to have waterdoors of only those two styles. The old boy noticed things! The similarity of design may have had nothing to do with a common manufacturer or market area, but the similarity is undeniable.

Time has passed, the name has been adopted, and the "anthracite" lamps have essentially become "The Anthracite Lamp". Just as English slang finds its way into Webster's Dictionary, this now well-used correspondence name has found its way to books, lists, conversations, and articles on the subject.

The hard-liners who oppose its usage have some merit to their argument. They are condemned, however, to call the lamp "the unmarked loop-hook lamp probably made by Maple City". The rest will simply say "anthracite", and everyone will know what they're talking about.

For myself, I like the name. It has a nice ring to it. I may justify it out of respect and remembrance of George Bayles. Maybe I just like names. In any event, if you choose to use the word "anthracite"...it's cool.

### **Editor Takes a Break**

Len Gaska has, for the time being, turned over duties of editor to myself, while he makes some career changes. Many of you know me already as one of the more avid cap lamp collectors. The MAC will be maintained according to the same basic format that Len established. The publication has undergone a tremendous evolution in it's short lifetime, and would appear to be generally expanding in volume and readership. I truly welcome suggestions, criticisms, new ideas, and information. Letters to the editor may be published if I feel they would be of interest to the readership. I will try to respond to all letters and may even ask you to help!

### **Acknowledgements**

One of the most satisfying parts of publishing the MAC, is receiving information, articles, letters, drawings...even ideas from the readers. Chances are, if an idea is interesting to you, it will be interesting to others...so don't be afraid to send in even small blurbs. Because so many have contributed material, this month's "Collectors' Talk" section is a good deal larger and more interesting. Thanks go out to Gregg Clemmer, Wendell Wilson, Len Gaska, Manfred Stuzer, Ray Drake, Bob Werner, Lester Bernstein, Dave Johnson, and all the traders and advertisers for their material.

This month's **inside front cover** is original artwork by George W. Foote. George is an accomplished artist, from Littleton, Colorado, who specializes in scenes from that state.

