



# EDITORIAL



## A Business Call

The telephone rings. It's a lamp collector I know vaguely. After 45 seconds of token chatter, the poorly camouflaged question is popped. "Say, uh what's an Ever Square Hold-A-Bright going for these days?"

In the nanoseconds before I formulate a response that is not overtly antisocial, my brain conjures up various images of my caller, for I know too well that this is no enthusiast who is excited about a new piece he has added to his collection. Rather, he is a would be entrepreneur who has stumbled onto a find that with *his own savvy* could make him a pile of dough and perhaps even launch a new career. I'm thinking that this caller has pegged me as a desperately avid collector or a big spender and is looking for a free appraisal to begin the sale. Well, free appraisals are bad business practice at worst, and hearsay gossip between collectors at best.

I answer politely, and acknowledge that this particular Ever Square is fairly rare, but that many factors are involved in establishing a dollar value. It comes as no surprise when he divulges that he has indeed acquired such an item and that he wouldn't mind trading it to a good friend for several dozen green portraits of Ben Franklin. It is obvious that he considers my evasive philosophy to be a waste of his long distance telephone time and that he now must make his point plainly: "Well", says he, "what's it worth to you?" "Not too much," I still evade. We'd be getting a lot farther if he had really called intending to offer the lamp to me. My response in that case is simple: "You set a dollar value, and I'll say yes or no."

Still, the aspiring businessman is determined not to let this capital expenditure become a loss, and he prods me for the names of others who might be interested. The names I provide him with are well known and he has already discovered their limits, thank you. End of conversation. I find out several days later that the piece has been sold after the caller has dangled it back and forth between a handful of hungry collectors.

Playing one person against another for the highest bid may be standard practice in an auction, but in our context it serves only to cause hard feelings between collectors and drive up prices.

The directors of EUREKA! have adopted a policy not to publish prices so as not to sensationalize their already high status. To the aspiring businessman

who *must* apply a buy-low-sell-high approach to what others consider a fun hobby, I can only plead: show a little class.

Dave Thorpe, Publisher

## James Welborn Storey 1935-1992

On January 11, 1992 Georgia lost one of her pioneer modern day cavers and a fellow lamp collector with the death of Jim Storey of Decatur.

Jim was born April 4, 1935 in Columbus, Georgia and had family ties to Harlan, Kentucky, deep in the heart of coal mining country. Some say this link may have attributed to his love of cave exploration. By the late 50's Jim had started to cave in earnest, using the favorite light source of most cavers at that time, the carbide cap lamp. Jim was Vice Chairman of Atlanta Georgia Grotto in 1961 and became the first Chairman of Dogwood City Grotto in 1962. He was also one of the first editors of the **Georgia Underground**, which was printed at Jim's own expense!

He was one of the first to write about technical aspects of caving and created the forum **American Caving Illustrated** in 1965. Jim and his wife Barbara belonged to a local cave diving group known as "The Descenders" where they helped design hauling methods. He presented papers at several NSS conventions on varied aspects of cave diving and wrote the background section on cave diving in the Society publication **Caving In America**. In 1971 he was awarded the status of Fellow in the National Speleological Society.

During the 70's and 80's Jim collected old and rare cave books. His vast collection included cave postcards, over 200 mining lamps, and cave related stamps. He was treasurer of the NSS Speleophilatelic Section at the time of his death.

Jim, who was described as a distinguished gentlemen, will be most remembered for his ever present cigar and Australian style headgear. Jim's friends and family contributed to this article, and I would like to thank Kenneth Storey and Larry O. Blair for sharing their memories. Jim will be missed.

Jim Van Fleet, Editor-in-Chief