

# Report of the Rushlight Club 2019 Summer Meeting & Aladdin 47<sup>th</sup> Gathering, July 21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>, Coralville, Iowa

Early arrival of Rushlight members for the 47<sup>th</sup> Gathering of the Aladdin Knights in Coralville, Iowa began on Wednesday. At that time room sales, a major feature of the Gathering, were already underway. Rushlight member Dick O'Connell reported finding a double wick Upton burner that was previously unseen by him. In the evening, room sales continued along with a preview of the auction to be held Thursday morning. The auction, limited to Aladdin items only, featured not only kerosene lamps and shades but also electric table and floor lamps, finials, electric lamp shades, accessories used for the lamps as well as ephemera and marketing materials related to the Aladdin Mantle Lamp Company.

The auction held on Thursday had very good attendance with many of the registered participants attending. Auction sales were brisk and competitive with most everything going under the gavel. Later in the week, early reporting indicated overall significant sales were realized at the auction. Thursday evening was the Gathering's opening dinner and the initial showing of the quilts, one for the raffle drawing and one for the auction at the Saturday night dinner. These quilts have been a favored tradition at the Gathering since 1978.

The International Lamp Show, held in conjunction with the Gathering, opened at noon on Friday. The show has a good percentage of good quality, early, lighting as well as many Aladdin items. Rushlight members Fred and Connie Bohl were set up for sales in the show. Their booth carried some fine early lighting dating from approximately the 1830's to the 1890's. Many fine items were in the show at a good price.



Mike Van Gorder Opens the Gathering Display Room and Explains the Various Items Shown

Among the more interesting items was an array of early metal center draft mantle lamps from Aladdin's 1909 model 1 to the model 12 made from 1928 to the mid 1930's. Also on display were items that were named Aladdin, including a brochure for Aladdin Ready-Cut Homes. The lumber was numbered and each piece was cut to size for easy assembly.



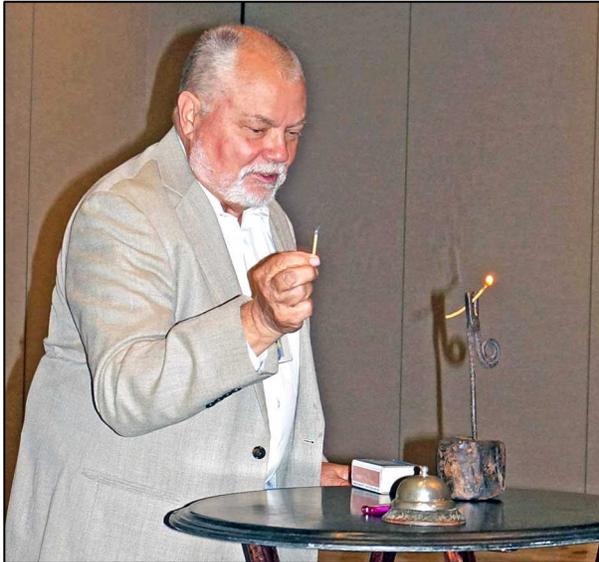
Fred and Connie Bohl's Lamp Show Table

Friday morning, the Gathering's Display Room opened and Mike Van Gorder explained the exhibits. This year, the display room mainly featured items made by Aladdin.



Aladdin Branded Products Not Associated with The Aladdin Lamp Co.

The Gathering's educational seminars began on Friday. Bob Culver's (Night Light Club) seminar, "What is a Miniature Oil Lamp?" gave three characteristics of miniatures. 1. Most miniatures are not a small version of a larger lamp. 2. Most miniatures are less than ten inches high. 3. Miniatures don't provide enough light for reading.



Keith Letsche Lights the Rush to Open the Meeting

Bill Courter, the "Bright Knight" of the Aladdin Knights, expressed his appreciation of the Rushlight Club's participation in the Gatherings. Bill also shared that next year's Aladdin Gathering will be held in Louisville, Kentucky.

On Saturday the lamp show continued, as did the seminars, with morning seminars related to collecting lighting. In the afternoon, Rushlight member M. J. Howell gave a seminar on "A Historical Overview of Lighting Devices and Fuels" which covered the types of lighting devices, fire-making means and fuels used through history. He dated the major advances in lighting made from Argand's lamp through the invention of the Welsbach gas mantle and its adaptation to kerosene lamps. As part of the seminar M.J. displayed some very early lighting and burned an open pan lamp, using raw animal fat, as has been done by man for many thousands of years. The seminar was well attended and provided good insight into how lighting developed through the ages. Some of the early lighting devices were also on display at the Rushlight Club show table. Surprisingly, few lamps or other lighting is burned at the lamp show so a lighted lamp draws some attention. The Club sold a number of lighting books and a new membership.



Bob Culver Explains Characteristics of Miniature Lamps

Friday evening the Rushlight Club dinner was held with approximately 30 people attending. Following dinner, Keith Letsche was asked to light the rush to open the meeting. Keith was being recognized for his completing three years as editor of the Rushlight Journal. Under his guidance *The Rushlight* continues to be the excellent premier lighting publication.



Early Lighting Exhibits Shown Include Lighted Open Pan and Whale Oil Lamps

Each year two complete, hand made, hand quilted, bed quilts are made by a group of volunteers, usually the wives and daughters of Aladdin Knights, who design, piece, and hand embroider squares for the quilts. They are “Aladdin Quilts” because the embroidered squares are realistic pictures of various Aladdin lamps and shades or Aladdin trade marks. One quilt is sold at auction at the Gathering dinner and one is the grand prize of the Gathering raffle. Many other donated raffle prizes were also handed out during the drawing. Rushlight member Laurie Copp won a copy of the Early Lighting book that had been donated to the raffle by the Rushlight Club. At dinner, each table had a lit Aladdin lamp that ended up as a table prize. The members at each table played a game, somewhat like a reverse form of musical chairs, to determine the winner. Rushlight member Martha DeBlieu won the model B53 “Washington Drape” Aladdin lamp that was burning at her table. After dinner, recognition was given to all the people who helped in putting the show together.

Sunday was the closing breakfast and then everyone was on their way home. The summer Gathering is a good forum for our Rushlight meeting and is a good opportunity for finding items to add to your collection. We thank the many volunteers who donate their time and effort to make this event successful.



Martha DeBlieu Wins the Aladdin  
Mantle Lamp Table Prize



Many Volunteers Make the Gathering Possible

Next year, the 48<sup>th</sup> Aladdin Gathering will be held August 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the Crowne Plaza in Louisville, Kentucky.

The following people contributed content and photos for this meeting report:  
Dick O’Connell, Bill Courter, Martha DeBlieu, M.J. & Pat Howell