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Celebrating Zippo's 65th Anniversary



and the

Zippo/Case International Swap Meet

July 18th and 19th

SEE OUR PULL-OUT RESTAURANT AND ACCOMMODATION GUIDE - PAGES 25-32

Visitors center showcases Zippo, Case history

When lighter and knife aficionados came to Bradford to swap last year, a center to house the rich history of Zippo and Case was just beginning to take shape.

During a ceremony at last year's swap meet, dignitaries from both companies tossed shovelsful of dirt at the site, just down the street from Zippo's manufacturing plant on Congress Street.

Over the course of the year, onlookers watched as the once-empty lot began to change. First, it was the building. Then it was the street lights that looked like Zippos. Then the finishing touches were put on the Zippo/Case Visitors Center, which opened in time for this year's collectors and visitors to enjoy.

The new center will offer visitors a unique and interesting glance into the history of Zippo, Case and even Bradford.

Upon entering the museum, visitors are greeted by a moving sculpture of the Earth. The one-of-a-kind floor exhibit, designed by exhibit creator Steve Feldman Design of Philadelphia, displays rings of Zippo lighters circling a globe in one direction and rings of Case knives revolving around it in the other direction. Overhead, Zippo and Case logos are merged into another work of motion art.

On the wall to the left as you enter the museum is a time line which places significant events in Zippo and Case history in a context with happenings locally in Bradford and the world. Three monitors that are part of the time line will give visitors a

(See CENTER, Page 3)



ON THE COVER — The new Zippo/Case Visitors Center glows with the help of Zippo technicians who used digital enhancement to add the chimney, flame and lid, not yet installed when the photo was taken. This guide was produced in cooperation with the Allegheny National Forest Vacation Bureau.

LOVED ALL OVER THE WORLD — This is the first thing people will see when entering the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. As the globe rotates, a ring of Case knives spins counterclockwise at the same time that an outer ring of Zippo lighters travels clockwise. Above the display, both companies' logos slowly spin.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

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ZIPPO AT WAR — Visitors to the Zippo/Case Visitors Center will see this sculpture — also known as a tableau — in the Zippo at War section. The tableau was created by Quinlin Display of Philadelphia. The foxhole, which is all black and made of fiberglass, surrounds the two soldiers, who are white and made of fiber glass and plaster. The lighter the soldier is holding is a replica of the black crackle-finish lighters that were made and distributed to GIs during World War II.

(Era photo by Franice Long)

Center (From Page 2)

look at Bradford in the 1930s, the 1950s and a look at themselves in 1997.

A favorite of young and old, the ZAC cartoon character appears in the movie signifying transitions while also demonstrating how the lighter works. The actual ZAC, an audio/kinetic sculpture equipped with a Zippo lighter, Case knife, bells and more, can be seen on the other side of the museum in its own exhibit area. ZAC, which stands for Zippo and Case, is located in a special area that pays tribute to Zippo and Case collectors and their clubs from around the world.

Just past the time line, it's fitting that an icon of American quality for 65 years like the Zippo lighter comprises a wall of red, white and blue lighters to create the most recognizable symbol of the United States, the American flag. The wall of lighters is a "work in progress" as it will be added to over a two-year period with new and unique lighters, until it finally reaches a total of nearly 4,000 lighters and its full seven-foot-by-11-foot depiction of the American flag.

Colorful flags from around the world signal the entrance to the international portion of the museum which honors the 120 countries in which Zippo lighters are currently sold. Many souvenir lighters produced in limited numbers for ex-

clusive distribution areas are on display in this section.

Perhaps the most informative exhibit at the center is the new Repair Clinic which provides visitors with a look into how Zippo fulfills its famous lifetime guarantee. Visitors can watch through a 24-hour window as lighters are prepared at the clinic.

They can read about the repair process on a rail in front of the repair room windows. Also, this fall, a video of the process a lighter goes through when it is sent to Zippo to be repaired will be shown on monitors above the clinic windows.

A simulation of Zippo's first factory location on the second floor of the Rickerson and Pryde building on Boylston Street gives a visitors a look into the setting where George G. Blaisdell handcrafted the original Zippo lighter in 1932. A glimpse of his office as well reveals the early origins of a small local company that has grown into one selling products in more than 100 countries and has produced nearly 400 million lighters.

The museum also offers two interactive, touch-screen exhibits which add an element of geography to the history of the Zippo lighters. One deals with lighters from around the world and the other is an electronic map of the United States and Canada, featuring lighters from each state and province. The new exhibit re-

(See CENTER, Page 20)

Welcome to Bradford!
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July 18 & 19, 1997



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- Zippo/Case '97 Special Edition Guide on sale at the Zippo/Case Swap Meet 50¢.

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New Zippo/Case store now bigger and better

Zippo officials designed the new store in the Zippo/Case Visitors Center to be not only bigger, but better.

The new store is 3,900 square feet larger than the area of the old Family Store and Museum combined. Coming this fall, the store will have as its centerpiece the new Zippo Car, whose restored 1947 Chrysler Saratoga body is a road giant by today's standards.

The store will be better because of its expanded selection and improved displays. A newly introduced line of Zippo souvenirs is available to shoppers. Black canvas attache bags with Zippo stitched in bright gold will give visitors and businessmen and women something to take all of their Zippo collectibles home in, not to mention the bag's travel uses.

"We're really excited about the visitors center and the new store," said Kelly Platto, Zippo's personnel manager who also manages the store. "We love working with the public and meeting people from all over the world."

"The new store will double or triple our sales," said store coordinator Wendy Schwab. "We were very busy in the little store at the old Family Store and Museum. It's amazing the number of people

that visited the facility."

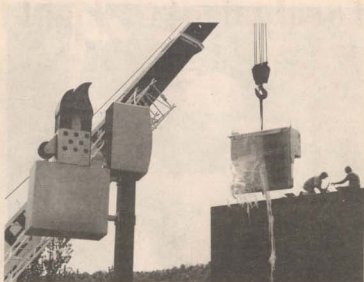
According to Schwab, the new store offers more items from which to choose.

The new store features something new and unique for every aspect of daily life, whether it is a Zippo mouse pad for a home computer or souvenir Case yo yo. Other new store items include freeze mugs with the Visitors Center logo, tote bags, fanny packs and much more. A new line of Zippo and Case clothing, including denim shirts, pullover windbreakers, polo shirts and caps are in stock. Also, of special interest to collectors, is an expanded display of random samples of Zippo lighters. Of course, the full line of Zippo and Case products and accessories are available. This is the only store in the world that carries the complete product line from both companies.

Schwab said the store also has much larger displays.

The store is equipped with all new display cases made locally by Allegheny Store Fixtures of Bradford. The cases are made of pressed wood and lined with solid oak trim.

The responsibility for appointing the bigger display cases belongs to Zippo employees Mary Fair and Michael



SOME PERSONALIZED DETAILS — Workers carefully install the bottom portion of the giant Zippo lighter that adorns the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. As work on the center progressed, some of the finishing touches were added. As the photo shows, the initials on the larger-than-life decoration are that of Zippo inventor George G. Blaisdell.

(Photo courtesy of Zippo Manufacturing Co.)

McLaughlin. The duo had designed and installed seven new product displays which serve as focal points throughout the store.

Another spot in the store that aficionados will enjoy is the ceiling, which was created by architect Ed Smith of Preston R. Abbey Architects of Bradford. The

ceiling features a unique multi-layered design that incorporates the shape of a giant "Z."

"We wanted to come up with things that would make the building distinctive and unique, and this was one of the ideas that went toward achieving that," said

(See STORE, Page 20)



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Local talent to 'Light the Night' with tribute

Local talent will "Light the Night" during the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet with a musical extravaganza designed to delight collectors and locals alike.

"Light the Night" will be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Tickets are available at Archer's and Poppy's Video Music Books in Bradford and Olean, N.Y.

The production is a tribute to the 65th anniversary of Zippo Manufacturing Co. and will feature a delightful selection of big band, rock, jazz, rap and contemporary melodies spanning six decades.

Most songs will have one common theme: a tie-in to the famous Zippo wind-proof lighter. Music will be chosen from the past 65 years and selections will include such favorites as "Windy," "Light My Fire," "Zippo Zip" and "Zippo-dee-doo-dah!"

Glitzy costumes, special lighting and choreographed dancing are part of the production, and Zippo's own Zippettes will sing backup as well as lead the crowd in sing-alongs.

"Everyone seems excited about how the show is going to be and their part in it," said Karen Manges, Zippette coordinator.

The Zippettes are Zippo office employees who volunteered to spend several hours a week rehearsing for seven numbers. Although there was some initial interest among male employees, their work schedules prevented them from participating, Manges said.

"We'll be doing a few dance steps," Manges said. They will be taught by choreographer Peggy Johnson.

Marlene Kijowski is designing the "real glitzy show-style type costumes focusing on the Zippo theme," Manges said.

Work on the show began in February when ...

"As we mark our 65th anniversary this year, we thought it only fitting to create a special celebration to salute the company," said Pat Grundy, marketing communications manager at Zippo and general manager for the "Light the Night" production. "We're sure it will be a crowd pleaser for the local community, our guests from around the world



ZIPPO-DEE-DO-DAH — Darren Litz, stage director of Light the Night, a musical celebration of the Zippo Manufacturing Co.'s 65th anniversary, shows the Zippettes a few steps during rehearsal for the production.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

and the thousands of Zippo collectors at Twin Tier's favorite musicians: Jan Maki and John Zinzi, formerly of Classic

Performing the concert are some of the (See TRIBUTE, Page 6)

New instrument to make its debut at 'Light the Night'

A new musical instrument made up of rich-sounding brass Zippo lighters will make its debut at "Light the Night," the musical celebration of Zippo Manufacturing Co.'s 65th anniversary.

The new instrument — the Zip-Tone — was developed by Jack Wells, who got the idea from listening to the wind chimes on his porch in Bradford.

"The Zippo lighter is a real instrument," said Wells, who has played the drums for nearly 60 years. "The sound of brass on brass is rich and distinctive," he said, "just like a Zippo lighter."

"We'll take full advantage of the sound of that brass," added Bob Lucia, whose Big Band Revival Orchestra will provide music from several decades. "There's nothing like the sound of a Zippo lighter."

The Zip-Tone, made up of 25 Zippo lighter cases hanging among five aluminum chimes, will be featured in a few of the numbers. The instrument, Lucia said with a chuckle, is pitched in B flat and

(See INSTRUMENT, Page 6)

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Tribute

(From Page 5)

Choice, and Bob Lucia and The Big Band Revival Orchestra. Lucia is also serving as musical director.

Maki is a vocalist with a smooth, right-on style and a performing career that debuted on the stage of Kleinhans' Music Hall in Buffalo, N.Y., when she was only in sixth grade. She hasn't stopped since, as she performed through high school until she got her first "professional" job as lead singer in a friend's rock and roll "garage band."

She has since honed her singing craft by fronting Top 40 dance bands and being active in the local music scene.

Zinzi will bring his easy-swing vocal style to the musical salute in honor of Zippo's 65th anniversary. Zinzi got his performing start in Olean, N.Y., in 1985, when he debuted in "Fiddler on the Roof," but it wasn't until seven years later that he took his confident stage presence and turned it to vocal performances. Along with Jan Maki, he was a member of the Bradford-based vocal group Classic Choice for three years and was also a performer in the Kiwanis Kapers. Zinzi has been heavily involved in Olean Community Theater.

Bob Lucia, a native of Rochester, N.Y., and graduate of Fredonia State Teachers College, came to this area in 1964 as a high school band director at Franklinville (N.Y.) Central School. Lucia helped organize and became music di-

rector of The Big Band Revival Orchestra in 1986. Since retiring from teaching, he has turned his part-time avocation of writing musical arrangements and playing in bands on weekends into a full-time activity.

Jim Gueffi, president the Bradford Creative and Performing Arts Center, is the production manager.

Other creative talents from the Bradford area helping out on "Light the Night" include Darren Litz, stage director; Skip Bond, technical director; and the Zippettes, Francy Anderson, Valerie Close, Audrey Dillon, Jill Hayden, Amy Hewitt, Lisa Kuret, Dorie Meabon, Lisa Moeke, Mary Montecalvo, Bettie Pagliano, Carol Vinca, Tina Vinelli and Laurie Yuhunke.

Instrument

(From Page 5)

could, in fact, he used to tune the band.

Lucia and Wells will also take advantage of the Zippo lighters' more familiar musical sounds. After all, the lighters have been used as a percussion instrument, most notably in the international theatrical hit "Stomp." But the world-famous windproof lighter developed by George G. Blaisdell 65 years ago, has, by all accounts, not been used with wind instruments — until "Light the Night" and the debut of the Zip-Tone.

The sound of a Zippo windproof lighter, however, has long been a famous characteristic of America's favorite lighter. The distinctive "click" that comes



TONIN' UP — Bob Lucia, left, and Jack Wells show off the Zip-Tone, a new instrument developed by Wells that will make its debut at the "Light the Night" musical celebration of Zippo's 65th anniversary. The event will be held July 18-19 at 7:30 p.m. in the Bradford Area High School auditorium. Lucia is arranging the music for the event.

with opening a Zippo lighter, followed by that reassuring final "thunk," has helped to make Zippo lighters the ones heard 'round the world.

"We'll use the lighter's opening and closing sounds as well, and particularly that scraping sound of the Zippo wheel grinding on the flint. There's nothing to

match the sound of a Zippo lighter working," Lucia said.

The audience of Zippo's "Light the Night," though, will decide the musicality of the Zip-Tone, Wells said, but, in any case, he's sure the instrument will "gladden the hearts of Zippomaniacs everywhere."

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Lighter street lights add uniquely Zippo touch

Those venturing out to the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center at night, or even during the day, can't miss the unique lighter street lights shining in the entrance way to Bradford's newest attraction.

The Buffalo, N.Y.-based Flexlume Sign Corp. recently created and installed 14 custom-made street lights that duplicate the shape, style and look of the world-famous Zippo lighter and illuminate the drive leading up to the Visitors Center.

The one-of-a-kind street light design depicts the rounded corners of the current Zippo lighter case in a stainless steel design. It measures 5 feet in height while sitting atop a 12-foot post. The lighter is flicked open, displaying the trademark windscreens and striking wheel, and you can all but hear the famous "click."

At night, the Zippo street lights glow from the top of the lighter, as the distinctively shaped cherry-red molded flame from the Zippo logo flows out of the lighter chimney. In addition to the decorative flame at the top, the base of the lighter provides plenty of light for the Visitors Center grounds and walkways.

Even brighter and more colorful is the

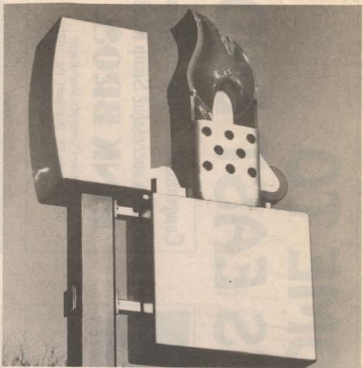
40-foot replica of the Zippo lighter that adorns the entrance of the Visitors Center. The lighter, which is similar to the one high atop Zippo's Barbour Street headquarters, comes complete with a pulsating — and windproof — neon flame. The larger-than-life lighter features creator and founder George G. Blaisdell's initials engraved on it.

The lighter doesn't shine alone, however, because below it is the class three-blade 6394 Gun Boat knife, the symbol of the Case Collectors Club. The red-bone-handled knife replica is about 10 feet wide. It has been manufactured intermittently throughout the years and stands as a symbol of the tradition and quality of W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery. Both the knife and lighter can be viewed from the expressway on U.S. Route 219 and are sure to generate interest for those traveling through Bradford.

Founded in 1904, Flexlume is one of the nation's oldest companies specializing in the creation and installation of electric signs.

"We knew Flexlume was a good, quality sign builder," said Mac Crumrine, Zippo's director of engineering.

(See LIGHTS, Page 20)



LIGHTING UP THE SKY — This is one of the 14 custom-made street lights that will light the way for visitors to the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. Flexlume Sign Corp. created the street lights which are fashioned after Zippo's famous windproof lighters.

(Era photo by Keith Anderson)

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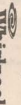
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Collectors add fuel to Zippo's blazing growth

Most-valued Zippos

The most valuable Zippo lighters are those mint condition, which have never been lit and are in the original box. Dealers typically trade at half the book value, though sometimes they pay more.

1932 or 1933 models

Originally sold for a little more than \$1, these lighters now sell for \$8,000 to \$10,000.

1934-1936 (outside hinge plate)

Originally sold for just over \$1, today these models sell for \$1,200 to \$3,000, depending on their surface treatment.

Mint 1936-1941 models

Originally sold for between \$2-\$3, these models now trade for \$500 to \$800.

Town and Country lighters

Considered by many to be the most beautiful and desirable series produced by Zippo, the regular production models, which originally sold for \$7.50, sell today for \$400 to \$600.

Prototype 1960s and 1970s models

Depending on the series, each lighter can sell between \$200 and \$600.

(Source: David Poore, author of "Zippo: The Great American Lighter")

A decade ago, Zippo Manufacturing Co.'s sales had reached a plateau. Today, sales of the famous windproof lighter have quadrupled to about \$150 million.

While many factors have contributed to this jump — increased marketing activities and advertising, overseas sales and the cigar craze — the main factor fueling sales in America is in the growing trend of collecting new — and old — Zippo lighters.

According to Jim Baldo, Zippo's vice president of sales and marketing, the company commissioned a market research study in the early 90s which was the first hard evidence that collectors comprised a substantial portion of sales.

"We felt we had strong brand recognition, and the survey results proved this was true," Baldo said. "Ninety percent of Americans recognized the Zippo lighter. But what really was a shocker was that 30 percent of our U.S. customers are collectors," Baldo said. "Many told us that they bought five or six lighters at once to add to their collection."

Collecting Zippo lighters is a top-of-mind activity for David Poore, owner of one of the largest rare Zippo lighter collections in the United States and author of

(See COLLECTORS, Page 11)



MONEY TO BE HAD — Zippo collector Jim Kessack of Nixa, Mo., shows some of the money he made selling some of his lighters during last year's Zippo/Case International Swap Meet.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

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Collectors

(From Page 10)

the just-released "Zippo: The Great American Lighter."

"As a child, I was always intrigued with miniature lift-arm lighters that came in gumball machines," Poore said. "My interests evolved, and I began collecting turn-of-the-century lighters. But it wasn't until I attended a lighter convention where I saw such enthusiasm over Zippo lighters, that I took, found myself caught up in the deal."

Today, Poore has bought and sold thousands of Zippo lighters. The most sought-after lighters are those manufactured in the early 1930s. In excellent condition, these models can sell for as much as \$10,000.

The Zippo windproof lighter, made in Bradford, has been called an American Classic. Its unique shape, feel, look, as well as the distinctive click, all made for a uniquely American product. But Zippo lighters are also popular collectibles, because they led themselves to the hobby: They are mechanical devices that work; they are compact and come in a wide variety of styles; new models are readily available to start a collection; and older models are easily identified by a date code stamped on the bottom.

Over the years, Zippo lighters have been imprinted with illustrations of classic cars, warships, prominent people, current fast items and famous international landmarks, making them popular nostalgia items. Many of the early series are hard to complete because of their rarity. Some of these hard-to-find lighters include the very first Sports Series, Town and Country set, NFL Helmet set, Denim Look and Zodiac Series. Older gold, silver or special-edition lighters also are difficult to find.

"The great thing about collecting Zippo lighters is that they can sometimes be found in flea markets and garage sales where they can be purchased for as little as \$5 and then be sold for \$300 to \$500," Poore added.

Clubs for collectors of lighters have been organized in England, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, The Netherlands, Japan and the United States. The largest of them, On The Lighter Side International Lighter Collectors is based in Quitman, Texas, and boasts more than 500 members in 10 countries. Other lighter clubs meet regularly to discuss, exchange, sell and buy lighters including The Lighter Club of Great Britain, the Pocket Lighter Preservation Group, Funke und Flamme, the Zippo Club Deutschland and Zippo Italia.

Fueling recent interest in Zippo collectibles is a series of four Zippo Manuals published by World Photo Press in Tokyo. These manuals for lighter collectors feature large, glossy pages of full-color photos with text in English and Japanese. The four volumes document Zippo history and the lighters themselves.

Zippo produces The Zippo Lighter Collectors' Guide that contains illustrations of selected lighters and descriptions of the series. It also explains the date code devised by company founder

George G. Blaisdell in the mid-1950s. A series of dots and slashes engraved on the bottom of each lighter identifies its year of production. Originally planned for internal use, the date code has been a favorite among collectors. More than 250,000 Zippo collectors' guides have been printed and distributed over the last five years, and an updated version will be available beginning this summer.

The enthusiasm of Zippo collectors prompted the company to begin producing Limited Edition Collectible of the Year lighters. The first, in 1992, was a 60th anniversary collectible. Since that time, the Collectible of the Year has paid tribute to such diverse topics as the 50th anniversary of the D-Day invasion and the environment. The 1997 Collectible of the Year celebrates Zippo's 65th anniversary with a design reminiscent of the art deco influence of the 1930s. The vintage-style lighter bears an antiqued pewter emblem and incorporates Zippo logo styles from the past 65 years. A special bottom stamp identifies it as a limited edition anniversary commemorative.

Zippo produces nearly 80,000 lighters each day and ships to more than 120 countries around the globe. Other products from Zippo's diverse line include a variety of pocket knives, key holders, money clips, writing instruments, Zippo-Light pocket flashlights and FixaFit pocket tools. Zippo employs more than 1,200 people.

'ZAC' even more energetic with the help of animation

If you thought ZAC, the audio kinetic sculpture named for Zippo and Case, was full of energy before, wait until you see him in a new "animated" state.

ZAC will make his debut on the small screen as a character in the introductory film at the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center. The animated ZAC appeals to young and old, emphasizing not only the usefulness of the Zippo lighter and Case knife, but also the history of the two companies and their products. Equally important, ZAC helps to convey the need for safety when handling a lighter or knife.

The ZAC cartoon character, developed by Zippo marketing communications manager Pat Grandy, Sirriano and Associates advertising agency of Jamestown, N.Y., and the Magic Lantern audio/visual company of Pittsburgh, stars in one of two interactive displays in the new visitor center. ZAC plays host in a trivia game featuring an electronic map of the United States and Canada and lighters from each state and province, letting trivia lovers know if they have answered correctly. He will also be part of the lighters of the world interactive exhibit.



Motorcycle Fun Run

Saturday, July 19th

Rain or Shine

- Register at the Swap Meet (Saturday, July 19th 10-10:45 am)
- Starts and ends at Zippo/Case Swap Meet
- Blessing of the Motorcycles & Riders at 11 am

(St. Bernard Church, East Corydon St.)

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(mapped route approx. 120 miles...around 4 hours)

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	10:30 am
	12 Noon



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Lighter artists on hand to meet with Zippo fans

The 1997 Zippo/Case International Swap Meet will provide a brand new opportunity for the average fan and Zippo and Case aficionados alike to meet one of the famous artists whose work adorns popular lighters.

Abstract artist Richard Wallich will be on hand to give a glimpse into the artistic process as he-hand paints lighters for sale to the public. Wallich will also be signing a limited-edition lighter he specially designed for the swap meet.

Previously commissioned by such entities as R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., M&M Mars, American Airlines, Days Inn and many others, Wallich will produce a series of lighters for 1998 with a musical theme that will capture the energy and sounds of musical instruments. Zippo has also commissioned him to cre-

Zip tips ...

A regular Zippo lighter weighs 2.05 oz.

200,000 Zippo lighters were used by Americans in Vietnam.

Vietnam-era Zippo lighters are highly prized collectibles.

There are 10 lighter clubs around the world: three in Germany; two each in the United States and Italy; and one each in England, Japan and Switzerland.

21 percent of the people who own Zippo lighters are collector.

Zippo has produced more than 300,000,000 windproof lighters since 1932. If these lighters were laid end-to-end they would stretch halfway around the world from New York City to Los Angeles 3½ times.

If all of the 300 million Zippo lighters were laid side by side, they would pave the streets of Zippo's hometown, Bradford, Pa., 1.8 times.

All the 300 million Zippo lighters that have been produced would fill 122 football fields, including end zones.

Zippo lighters are made in two locations, Bradford, Pa., and Niagara Falls, Ontario. The location is stamped on the bottom of every Zippo lighter.

Some items equally important in the Zippo product line are no longer made. The list of "products from our past" from Zippo and its subsidiaries include Zirenn, a sunburn ointment and diaper rash; Zip-slip, a zipper lubricant; imprinted golf balls; Out-o-matic ash trays; pill boxes; letter openers; magnifying glasses; and table lighters.

"The activities in the licensor tent will help visitors to understand what we do at Zippo."

— Violet Snyder

ate a painting that includes the Barbour Street and Congress Street buildings and the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center.

A specific time will be set for the public to meet Wallich in the licensor tent.

Also, companies whose products' likenesses are displayed on Zippo lighters will be set up at tables in a new tent designated for the company's licensors. The licensor exhibits will include giveaways for free gifts, such as shirts, hats and other apparel throughout the two-day event.

Jim Baldo, Zippo's vice president for sales and marketing, came up with the idea to have a licensor tent, and Zippo licensing coordinator Violet Snyder has been handling the arrangements for the participating companies.

"The companies that have licensed their brand names to Zippo will be able to participate in all of the events at the swap meet," Snyder said. "The activities in the licensor tent will help visitors to understand what we do at Zippo. The company representatives will be there to answer questions, hand out catalogs and brochures and let visitors learn more about their companies."

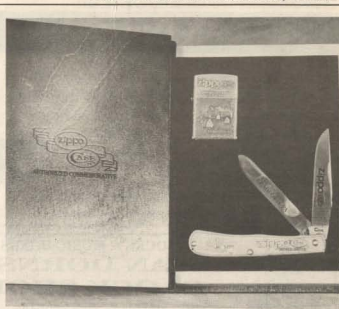
If the July sun isn't hot enough in Bradford, Tabasco will be sure to warm things up as bottles of the famous hot sauce carrying a Zippo label will be given away to winners. The company joined the Zippo family in 1996 when a series of four lighters was introduced with the Tabasco brand on them.

The company that owns the license to the Petty Girls series of classic pinup lighters, Twenty First Century Archives will also be on hand as well as R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. Jim Beam representatives will be under the tent selling clothing with the company's namesake on it.

Representatives from Cigar Aficionado, a magazine for cigar lovers, will be taking part in the events under the tent. The magazine, which has praised the Zippo windproof lighter as an icon of "machismo and quality," is depicted on a set of eight lighters bearing its name and logo.

Phillip Morris Tobacco Co., owner of several companies including Marlboro, will also be giving products away. Representatives from Hamilton Projects, the company which licenses Red Dog and Miller, will also be on hand at the swap meet.

The licensor tent and the swap meet are free and open to the public.



MUSEUM COMMEMORATIVE — This is the commemorative set being released this year by Zippo Manufacturing Co. and W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co. in honor of the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center, which will have its grand opening Friday. Both the lighter and the knife bear a likeness of the front view of the center, situated at 1932 Zippo Drive, as well as both companies' logos and the city's name. The lighter and the knife are packaged together in a lined wooden box which denotes they are the authorized commemorative for the center's opening.

(Era photo by Francie Long)



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Case president takes to the road to visit customers

By SUZANNE ENGLISH
Era Reporter

Proud of having regained its place of honor in the knife field, W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery is taking its show on the road.

President and chief operating officer George T. Brinkley and executive assistant Joette Tripodi are visiting the small, largely Southern towns that are the bedrock of knife collecting.

"What we're really doing is getting out and meeting and greeting the consumer, the people who carry our knives in their pockets," Brinkley said.

They kicked off the tour in May in Booneville, Miss., population just a hair under 8,000, setting up shop at the historic Booneville Hardware Co., 109 years old and counting.

"No one can remember how long they've been carrying Case knives," Tripodi said, adding that one visitor came up to show them a Case knife that had belonged to his grandfather, who died in 1911.

"When people show you a Case knife, they want to tell you the story behind it," who gave it to them, how it's helped them, Brinkley said. While the visit was scheduled to be from 2 to 4 p.m., they started at 1 when people arrived early and "we finished at 10 after 6," he said.

One grandfather came in and showed

them his knife, which the grandson had ground the blade down on. Brinkley presented the youngster with a My First Case of his own.

"I learned so much more about the romance of our product," Tripodi said, noting Brinkley received the key to the city and the duo were honored with a cake and gifts from the chamber of commerce. "They're just so thrilled that you take time out of your schedule to be there."

Other stops included Nashville, Tenn., Stevenson, Ala., and the Smoky Mountain Knife Works, the country's largest knife retailer.

The visits get the company in touch with its customers, Brinkley said. "It's a great sounding board for us, and it's a lot of fun."

As an additional draw, collectors have the opportunity to purchase a special knife — the President's Knife — a mahogany-handled smooth bone trapper available only on the tour or at the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet in July.

"The only way you can get one is to purchase it from me," Brinkley said. "There'll only be 500 of them produced ever."

Also on sale are copies of the company's Cookbook and Historical Companion, a compilation of favorite employee recipes, old photos and company history.



WINNING A YOUNG FAN — George T. Brinkley, president and chief operating officer of W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co., presents a youngster who came to visit with a "My First Case" during a visit to Booneville, Miss. Brinkley and assistant Joette Tripodi visited several Case distributors in the heart of "knife country" prior to the swap meet.

(Photo courtesy of W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery)

Half the proceeds from sales of the knife and the cookbook will be donated to Big

Brothers/Big Sisters of McKean County and the McKean Literacy Team.

Northwest Savings Bank
is proud to be a hometown
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Case Cutlery.

We salute our neighbors
and wish you all the best
during Zippo Case Days.



Congratulations
Zippo on your 65th
Birthday!



zippo



Zippo gets enlightened on first production date

Zippo Manufacturing Co. officials have discovered documents that shed new light on the founding of the company that produces the most famous lighters in the world.

These documents — letters, purchase orders, sales inventories — confirm that while Zippo founder George G. Blaisdell started the company in 1932 and was preparing for production throughout that year, he didn't begin to produce the now legendary Zippo windproof lighter until 1933, not 1932 as has long been believed.

This new information not only clears up details about the company's history but will be of keen interest to the thousands of lighter collectors around the world.

What does this redating of the original Zippo windproof lighter mean?

"For Zippo, the information gives us a clearer picture of what happened when Mr. Blaisdell was organizing the company," said Mike Schuler, Zippo's president and chief executive officer. "For the collectors, this information refines the chronology of Zippo's early production, giving them a firmer base on which to date and organize their collections."

As the story goes, Blaisdell got the idea for the Zippo windproof lighter at a party at the Bradford Country Club on South Avenue. Out of money, Blaisdell bumped into a still-identified friend us-

ing an awkward and unsightly Austrian lighter.

"You're all dressed up," Blaisdell told his friend. "Why don't you get a lighter that looks decent?"

His friend replied, "It works!" That was it.

Blaisdell got started by borrowing \$800 from another friend. He acquired the rights to the Austrian lighter and redesigned the case, attaching the lid with a spring-loaded cam so the lighter could work with a flick of a finger. That was 1932. Zippo Manufacturing Co. was founded.

Blaisdell struggled throughout the 1930s, the darkest days of the Great Depression. He set up Zippo's first plan over the Rickerson and Pryde gas station on Boylston Street paying \$10 a month rent. It was during the 1940s and the epic production caused by the war that the product caught fire. Blaisdell gave away hundreds of lighters free to the men and women in the armed service and sold the windproof lighter only in PXs. There were no civilian sales during the war years. This combination of patriotism and marketing built a loyal customer base and introduced Zippo lighters around the world.

Just after the war, Blaisdell spent more than \$250,000 to improve the lighter's

(See 1933, Page 20)



1933, NOT 1932 — This is the first Zippo lighter ever produced. While Zippo lovers for years thought it was produced in 1932, the first year of the company, it was actually manufactured in 1933. The tag attached to the lighter is a business card from the former Boylston Chevrolet Motors Inc. Zippo creator George G. Blaisdell wrote "Do not touch," and "GGB" on the card which is attached to the lighter to this day.

(Photo by Michael S. McLaughlin)



Congratulations Zippo
On 65 Years

Serving 48 States and Canada
for over 10 Years!

"We Care about Your Load"
NBS TRUCKING LTD., Bradford, Pa.

Ad campaign reflects Case heritage, quality

By SUZANNE ENGLISH
Era Reporter

Handmade, with a long, proud heritage.

That's what a Case knife is, and company officials hope recent ad campaigns convey precisely that message.

Less than 10 years ago, the 100-plus-year-old firm underwent a turbulent period during which its reputation for quality suffered. American Brands Inc. purchased W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. in 1972, and invested in a new plant on Owens Way as well as safer, more efficient machinery. But the corporation asked, and finally forced, Case to cut its payroll.

After a strike, Tennessee businessman James F. Parker purchased the company at the end of 1989 and began stressing the bottom line above the Case heritage. Both employee morale and quality suffered.

Nearly Zippo Manufacturing Co., the largest maker of refillable lighters, came to the rescue in 1993, purchasing Case and putting it on a firm financial footing, but it took time to rebuild the company's reputation for quality.

"The brand had been so tarnished through that transition, we needed a multi-year campaign to re-establish its quality reputation," said sales and marketing manager Dick Kearney.

As chief operating officer George T. Brinkley stressed empowering workers to return to trademark Case quality, the company's ads began to echo it: "For those who are into cutting everything except corners."

While those early ads were four-color, "we felt the nostalgia, the heritage of Case, was best suited to black and white," Kearney said. "We decided to create an ad shape and format and feeling that would be recognizable even without reading it."

Thus was born the black-and-white, vertical half-page format that is fast becoming a company trademark.

Black and white is not only more economical — at half a color ad's \$18,000 price tag — "it fits our strategy — looking back to keep moving ahead," Kearney said.

The black-and-white format highlights familiar faces and places — Case workers and Bradford locales — stressing not so much particular products as the brand itself, getting across the message that "this is a small town where people make knives differently," he said.

Print magazines such as *Field & Stream*, *Game & Fish* and *Gun and Ammo* aren't the only medium for the ads either.

"It fits our strategy — looking back to keep moving ahead."

— Dick Kearney

Case also wages a trade campaign in magazines such as *Blade* and *Knives Illustrated*, promotional ads that boost specific products including collectibles.

And a television ad, directed by Dana Altman and narrated by Ed Asner, again features local scenes, closing in on the *Sleepy Hollow* bridge. It airs mainly on The Nashville Network, a favorite of pocketknife owners.

Regardless of the medium, the romance of Case is the essence of the message.

"We're probably more focused now than we've ever been. Other companies make canoes and trappers, but they don't romance it the way we do," Kearney said.

"We are the most collected knife in the world — and the interesting thing is that by and large, the most collectible products we make are the knives we make every day," Kearney said.

And the company really does listen to its customers. At the 1996 *Blade Show*, the largest knife show in the world, a collector came up and suggested Case introduce a lock-blade trapper.

Case associates went to work, and the result was the CopperLock, a new addition to the Case line for 1997.

"It's probably been 20 years since we introduced a new Case pattern," Kearney said, noting that the CopperLock is designated 549, while most knives are known by two digits.

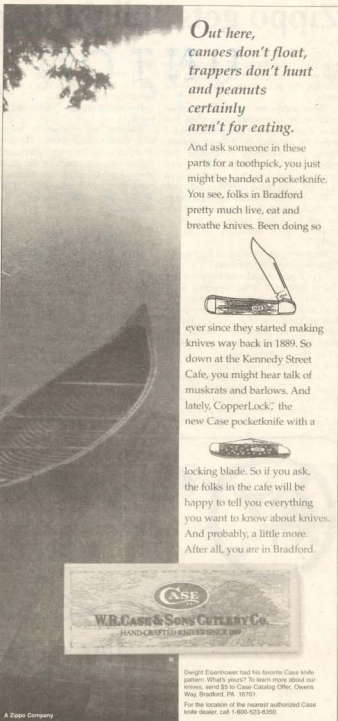
"That rings the collector's bell," because it is a combination of 54, the trapper pattern designation, and 49, the copperhead, a explanation. The knife's success shows "we really do have our ear to the railroad track."

Case has always responded to its loyal customers, filling their demand for natural, durable materials.

"We are the only mass-production knife company that does anything with natural-handled materials," he said. "The material's expensive, it's hard to work with, the waste rates are high."


While others have gone to synthetics, "the diehard Case consumers love our bone and stag handles," with each year's production particularly collectible.

The soaring growth in the Case Collectors Club, which doubled to 8,500




*Out here,
canoes don't float,
trappers don't hunt
and peanuts
certainly
aren't for eating.*


And ask someone in these parts for a toothpick, you just might be handed a pocketknife. You see, folks in Bradford pretty much live, eat and breathe knives. Been doing so



ever since they started making knives way back in 1889. So down at the Kennedy Street Cafe, you might hear talk of muskrats and barlows. And lately, CopperLock, the new Case pocketknife with a



locking blade. So if you ask, the folks in the cafe will be happy to tell you everything you want to know about knives. And probably, a little more. After all, you are in Bradford.



A Zippo Company

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Dwight Eisenhower had his favorite Case knife pattern. What's yours? To learn more about our knives, send \$5 to Case Catalog Offer, Owens Way, Bradford, PA 16703. For the location of the nearest authorized Case knife dealer, call 1-800-523-6300.

A SIGN OF QUALITY — This black-and-white advertisement typifies W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co.'s recent marketing strategy. The old-fashioned look and the wording of the ads both stress heritage and tradition, pointing up Case's renewed emphasis on quality. They mirror the company's overall strategy, "looking back to keep moving ahead," according to Dick Kearney, vice president of sales and marketing.

(Courtesy of W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery)

members in the past year despite the intense competition in the knife field, is proof of Case dominance.

"It's a sign that there's a lot more ground to be plowed out there," Kearney said.

2nd Annual UNION SQUARE SUMMER FESTIVAL

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- **Soda, Beer, and Refreshment Stand** (Sports Cafe)
- **Snow Cones & Cotton Candy** (Sports Cafe)
- **Free Bouncing on the Inflatable Clown Bounces for Kids** (Union Square)
- **Free Children's Train Ride** (Union Square)
- **Free Picture with Live "Bugs Bunny"** (Bradford Travel)
- **Strong Man Bell-Ring Contest** (Pure Tech, Inc.)
- **2PM - Arm Wrestling Contest** (Sports Cafe & Miller Brewing Co.)
- **Sidewalk Sales** (Union Square Tenants)
- **Free Face Painting & Helium Balloons** (Gaetano's BCCHS Skit)
- **Dunk Tank** (BAHS Football Team)
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- **Baked Food Sale** (BAHS Basketball Team)
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- SPORTS CAFE • ARMY RECRUITING

1933

(From Page 17)

striking wheel. This research and development project was meant to reinforce the lifetime guarantee accompanying all Zippo lighters.

"It works always or we fix it free," was one of Blaisdell's mottos, recalling the words of his friend who sparked the idea that started it all.

Through subsequent decades, Zippo windproof lighters became a product identified around the world with American ingenuity and quality.

As officials conducted extensive research and made preparations for the opening for the Zippo/Case Visitors Center, the documents were discovered. That discovery, in turn, puts Blaisdell's meeting with his mysterious friend who showed him the unsightly Austrian lighter in 1931 — not 1932 as has been assumed.

The documents include correspondent between Blaisdell and the Austrian lighter company from whom he acquired the rights of the lighter. This lighter became the inspiration for the Zippo windproof lighter.

These data clearly show that Blaisdell was still making plans and contacts in 1933 and could not have been producing lighters any earlier. One letter to the Austrian lighter company, for example, dated Jan. 9, 1933, states: "We have received your letter of December 15 and have received the sample lighter. ... It is quite likely that we will go into this business on a rather large scale."

Why hasn't Zippo known about this earlier?

"Filling in the details of history is an ongoing process, and changes to the stories should be expected," Schuler said. "It's exciting to discover more of the truth."

Schuler explained that even by the time Blaisdell died in 1978, no one could have anticipated the worldwide interest in lighter collecting or the interest by scholars in studying the lighter as a piece of social history. A number of international clubs of lighter collectors, other lighter museums, the interest in events like the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet testify to this burgeoning interest.

The details of the early days of a company, Schuler said, are often unintentionally shrouded in confusion and mystery. A newly successful company tends to go through a period where it's not interested in its struggling years. Only much later, such details become interesting, even heartwarming. It's at times like these — Zippo's 65th anniversary and the opening of the museum, that companies look back, scour the records and often bring new material to light.

Questions about the original 1932/33 Zippo lighter, however, are not new. Some collectors have long believed that Blaisdell could only have begun production in 1933, that he simply wouldn't have had the time to get the idea at the party, acquire the rights, set up operations and produce and distribute the lighters in

a few months, particularly in the early 1930s.

Some of the collectors newsletters, for example, have published extensive articles outlining the questions and controversy. Even some early media stories over the years state that the first Zippo lighter was produced in 1933.

"But our best evidence, until now, indicated that the first production year was 1932," Schuler said. "That, we now know, was in error."

"What is important is that Zippo is committed, particularly in light of the interest in our product from collectors around the world, to bring the facts out into the light as we come to know them," Schuler said. "As with all histories ... it's a process, not the acceptance of a static story. We have learned much from our collectors, some of whom believed this even before we did."

"They were right, and I salute their informed instincts. We will continue to supply information to our extended Zippo family, as best we can and as quickly as we know it. That's a pledge, that like George Blaisdell's lifetime guarantee, our customers and collectors can count on every time."

Store

(From Page 4)

Mac Crumrine, Zippo director of engineering.

Another new feature of the store allows visitors a chance to register, along with Zippo travelers from around the world, in a computerized visitors directory.

Center

(From Page 3)

places the large wall map in the old museum which displayed lighters only in the United States.

A military exhibit helps to demonstrate Zippo's battlefield contribution to American soldiers in every war from World War II to Desert Storm. The World War II portion of the exhibit illustrates Zippo's role through original letters penned by famed war correspondents Ernie Pyle and General Dwight D. Eisenhower and Douglas A. MacArthur.

Lighters are exhibited throughout the museum on rotating displays which resemble giant flint wheels. These units are the favorite display element of designer Steve Feldman. As the name implies, the displays are large replicas of the patented flint wheels which are used to showcase eight lighters apiece.

In the Zippo and Case manufacturing sections of the museum are unique hologram images of the Zippo lighter and Case knife. As a visitor walks around the Zippo exhibit, the lighter case appears to be stripped away to reveal the inner workings of the lighter. The similar knife exhibit seems to have the knife explode outward into pieces in a unique spectacle created by Feldman.

The famous 8-foot-long Case Kodiak Hunter knife adorns the entrance of one of the Case sections of the museum. The knife was once attached to the roof of the famous Checker aerobics that shuttered Case employees back and forth to the factory beginning during World War II. Most recently, it was part of the sign that is located in front of the Case building on Owens Way.

Another exhibit reviews the 108-year history of Case and its owners, while a future interactive video will review the various manufacturing processes used within Case's current and past manufacturing facilities. The many famous pieces from the Case factory collection are part of the display as are many rare and valuable knives dating back to the early 1900s. Many products that are no longer produced by W.R. Case and Sons are also exhibited.

Lights

(From Page 7)

"The model had to provide both enough down lighting to function as a normal street light and also offer a smaller light to illuminate the flame," Crumrine said.

"Manufacturing the Zippo street light was a challenging risk," said Paddy Rowell, owner of Flexline. "We wanted to make sure that we could duplicate the Zippo lighter in an authentic manner, and that meant working with materials that are difficult to mold and manipulate. Luckily, we were able to perfect the design, and now the visitor experience truly begins when a person walks or drives up the entrance way."

"I'm sure visitors from all over the world will be impressed with the unique and spectacular design of the street lighting," added Pat Grandy, Zippo's marketing communications manager.

Congratulations ZIPPO

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KOCH'S		RED BEER CATEGORY	
		GENTRY RED	RED DOG
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One-time event is now Bradford's biggest party

Swap meet takes a year of planning

It takes about a year to prepare for an extravaganza like the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet.

Preparations for this year's event actually began last August, shortly after the 1996 Zippo/Case International Swap Meet.

According to a time line provided by Zippo, officials began meeting last August to review the 1996 swap meet, generate a list of ideas for the 1997 meet and review what worked in 1996 and what didn't.

However, the information Zippo provided did not include all the extensive planning for the July opening of the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center, the organizing necessary for the collectors-only events or scheduling the Zippo International Sales Meeting which is being held concurrently with the swap meet.

The following month, officials began planning for "Light the Night," a musical tribute to Zippo's 65th anniversary. During October and November, Zippo and Case officials held a general planning meeting, assigned various responsibilities

(See PLANNING, Page 23)

By PAT FRANTZ CERCONI
Era City Editor

It's not easy to improve upon a two-day party that brings thousands of guest from all over the world to your backyard.

But Zippo Manufacturing Co. and W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co. plan to do it, again with help from the community.

The party of course is the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet, now in its third year, which will be held July 18 and 19.

Collectors from Russia, Australia, Sweden, Egypt, South Africa, Japan and 40 other countries will admire, swap, trade and sell from the thousands of Zippo lighters and Case knives displayed by 150 dealers.

According to Mike Schuler, Zippo's president and chief executive officer of both Zippo and Case, the original swap meet three years ago was meant to be a one-time event.

"Our research told us that more and more of our sales are being generated by consumers that collected Zippo lighters," he said. "We therefore wanted to host an event for them as our way of saying 'Thanks for the support.' Three swap meets later, we're learning that we have created something that has become much bigger than anyone ever would have imagined."

(See PARTY, Page 23)



TIME TO SWAP — This was how the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet looked last year, and company officials expect this year's swap to be even bigger and better. This year's extravaganza will be held on the grounds adjacent to the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center. (Era photo by Francie Long)

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July 17, 1997**

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Meet focuses media microscope on Bradford

By MIKE SCHREIBER
Era Reporter

This year's Zippo/Case International Swap Meet is going to put Bradford under a media microscope.

Media representatives from all over will be writing and broadcasting stories about the two-day swap meet, the grand opening of the state-of-the-art Zippo/Case Visitors Center and the 65th anniversary celebration which Zippo is celebrating this year.

Pat Grandy, Zippo's marketing communications manager, said all that media coverage is "partly responsible" for the growth of the swap meet. However, he noted that "the collectors' interest is another main reason."

In order to meet the needs of the incoming media, Grandy noted that this year three people in the public relations department at Zippo are working on me-

dia contacts unlike last year where "one and half of another were doing the job."

The list of the numerous national and international print and electronic media set to run stories on the swap meet as of late June is a long one. Fortune Magazine is planning a story in its July issue. U.S. News & World Report will offer a tidbit on the new museum in its New and Notable section.

Others mentions will be:

— in the July issue of Treasure Chest, a collectors magazine,

— in the July edition of New England Antiques Journal,

— in Antiques and Collecting Magazine, which will feature a story and photos in its July issue,

— in U.S. Air Magazine, Antique Week, the July/August issue of Smoke-shop Magazine, and the July issues of Tobacco International and Pittsburgh magazine.

— in the July issue of Collectors Journal, which will also use the information in its news story in a "Club and Convention" calendar of events in either June or July,

— in July's Antique Journal, which will feature a story and photos of old lighters,

— on CNN Radio Network, week of July 4 an entertainment piece with a follow up to 450 affiliates nationwide was broadcast,

— on WLMI-FM Radio, Kane and WKSX-AM Radio, Jamestown, N.Y., which will focus on the "Light the Night" musical celebration, which will be held at 7:30 p.m. July 18 and 19 in the auditorium at Bradford Area High School,

— in the July issue of Army/Navy Store Outdoor Monthly,

— in USA Today, which will feature a background story on Zippo and the swap meet,

— in the DuBois Courier Express, the Olean (N.Y.) Times Herald, The Derrick of Oil City and the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.

According to Grandy, other media members who were thinking about getting credentials as of now are CNN's "Inside Business" and the PBS show, "Morning Business Report."

WGRZ-TV, Channel 2 in Buffalo, N.Y. will do a short skit on the morning

show with a 65th Anniversary Zippo lighter, the black chrome Ziplighter and a cigar which will introduce the weekend's events and the program Gadget Talk will be having a feature. Even a television crew from Korea will be in town some time between late June and early July.

Such recognizable names as Business Week, the Today Show, The Wall Street Journal and WSEE-TV, a CBS affiliate from Erie seen in Bradford on Channel 5, are just some of the vast array of media outlets that have participated in covering the swap meet and the events that surround it since its inception in 1995.

And the special section you now hold in your hand is the second one that *The Bradford Era* has published to commemorate the swap meet and highlight interesting stories about both Zippo Manufacturing Co. and W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co.

In addition, Grandy said that during and after the weeks of the swap, Zippo will still continue to be under the media microscope, on an international basis.

The Japanese film crew from Nagoya that was in Bradford earlier in the year to shoot footage for a documentary on George G. Blaisdel, will return. The crew is shooting more footage at the swap meet to combine with that shot earlier for a hour-long film. The French will also be represented with 30 journalists scheduled to come in September.

Zip tips ...

The Zippo factory in Bradford, Pa., produces close to 80,000 lighters a day.

Zippo ran its first national advertisement in Esquire magazine in December 1937.

Zippo windproof lighters have been carried by GIs in every war from World War II to Desert Storm.

In the late 1950s, a Zippo lighter was removed from the belly of a fish. The Zippo lit the first time.

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Party

(From Page 21)

This year, there are several reasons why the swap meet will be even more grandiose than before. The Zippo/Case Visitors Center will have its grand opening. Zippo is celebrating its 65th anniversary, and the community is once again anxious to get involved in the two-day extravaganza.

The Zippo/Case Visitors Center is now open to visitors who will be able to view a wide assortment of exhibits and take part in hands-on displays and activities highlighting both companies.

In fact, this year's swap meet will be held on the grounds next to the center, located just off Congress Street at 1932 Zippo Drive.

Additionally, Zippo is celebrating its 65th anniversary this year, which has sparked a particularly special event that will be held during swap weekend. "Light the Night," a musical salute to the company's anniversary, will be staged in cooperation with the Bradford Creative and Performing Arts Center.

Bob Lucia and the Big Band Revival Orchestra will perform selections spanning six decades. Popular local vocalists Jan Maki and John Zinzi will sing all kinds of music, including rock, jazz, blues and more. Also, the Zippettes, a Zippo employee music ensemble, will take the stage. The event will be held at 7:30 p.m. both days of the swap in the au-

ditorium at Bradford Area High School.

And once again, the community will be taking part. As in the two previous years, the downtown merchants will sponsor numerous events such as an antique and collectibles show, a car show, line dancers, a folk art festival and much more.

In addition to all those activities, a "Flame the Main" parade will begin at 6:30 p.m. Friday along Main Street. "With everything on Main Street, we decided to have a parade," said Lisa Duke, who is chairwoman of the downtown merchants' Flame the Main Committee. "... It sounded like a nice idea."

The parade, which Duke said will take about 25 minutes, will include five floats, up to 75 classic cars, the race cars that Zippo sponsors, fire trucks from area departments and perhaps the refurbished Zippo Car.

When the parade concludes, national radio personality Jim Zippo will broadcast an oldies show in front of National City Bank.

Another new event planned for swap weekend is a motorcycle fun run. On July 19, motorcycle enthusiasts will gather at the visitors center for the run which will take them along a 125-mile mapped route through the Allegheny National Forest and the Kinzua Dam area.

Cyclists will meet at 10 a.m. at the visitors center. At 11 a.m. the Rev. Thomas Aleksa, pastor of St. Bernard Church, will bless the bikes, and the riders will be off.

Having all those additional activities during swap meet weekend, "is really a nice benefit," said Pat Grandy, Zippo's advertising communications manager. "For the casual person who's interested but not a die-hard collector."

Planning

(From Page 21)

and confirmed that national disc jockey Jim Zippo and his sidekick Maria Danza would be able to broadcast their oldies show again at the 1997 swap. Also, company representatives were deciding where to have the 1997 swap meet.

Officials got a break from preparations during the month of December, but then in was back to work in January when organizers gathered information for collectors' mailing. Also during January, company representatives created the swap meet theme and logo, decided what the swap meet collectibles would be for Zippo and Case, and surveyed the local and area accommodations in order to provide lodging information.

In February, organizers created the registration materials for the collectors and the official swap meet brochures. Also, they worked out the details for the ZipTrip contest on the ABC Pure Gold Network through which one lucky listener to Jim Zippo's show will win an all-expenses-paid weekend trip to the swap and other area attractions.

Collectors received their first mailing in March which was the same month

when swap planners formalized a site plan. Also during March, organizers coordinated weekend details with Jim Zippo and Maria Danza and coordinated activities with the Bradford Area Chamber of Commerce and its downtown merchants group.

In April, planners set up a master schedule for workers and ordered the necessary tents, food service and portable toilets. Company representatives also began work on a traffic plan and started discussing security issues. Swap organizers created press kits and starting making media contacts, designed and ordered special clothing for the event and planned video documentation of the swap.

The following month, signs for the tents and swap meet site were ordered, and wiring and physical installation for the area began. Both plants began manufacturing special edition products. Also, local government and law enforcement agencies were given information on the event.

One month before the swap, organizers began the swap meet promotions, and a drawing is held for the ZipTrip. The Zippo/Case store begins receiving shipments of souvenir products, and planners begin weekly committee meetings.

As the swap meet approaches, tents and other structures are set up to create a miniature city at the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. Organizers schedule local, national and international media interviews and finalize arrangements for myriad details.

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Community alive with swap meet activities

By ANNE SWEENEY HOLLIDAY
Era Reporter

From Union Square to the high school auditorium, from Main Street to the Allegheny National Forest, the entire community will come alive for the celebration of this year's Zippo/Case International Swap Meet.

Music, special sales, a motorcycle run and even a parade and fireworks are among the events scheduled for the week-end.

"We thought that with all the extra people in town this would be a good time to show off downtown Bradford," explained Lisa Duke, chairman of the Downtown Merchants Division of the Bradford Area Chamber of Commerce Flame the Main Committee.

"We're gearing toward a nice family atmosphere," Duke said. "We'll have something for all ages."

"With that many people in town," Duke said, "we wanted to provide a wide range of activities ... and variety."

And that they did. The "Flame the Main" celebration, which includes special sales and events in the downtown area, gets underway at 9 a.m. Friday and continues throughout the day and into the night.

To help show off the downtown area, special Zippo light-balloons will fly from all of

(See MAIN STREET, Page 33)



1998



1999



2000

A LIGHTER FOR ALL SEASONS — The lighter at left, the first in a series of four, will be available during this year's Zippo/Case International Swap Meet. The off-white lighter features pear trees and flowers in full bloom around the Veterans Square gazebo. To its right is an artist's rendering of the next three lighters in the series. Zippo will produce 650 of each design in honor of Zippo's 65th anniversary in 1997.

(Era photos by Francie Long)

Lighters immortalize Bradford as city for all seasons

Bradfordians know that Bradford is a city for all seasons. Now Zippo Manufacturing Co. has immortalized that sentiment on a series of new lighters.

The success of the 1996 Zippo/Case International Swap Meet commemorative lighter issued by the Bradford Downtown Merchants prompted the association to commission a new four-lighter series, the first of which will be introduced at

this year's swap meet.

The series celebrates Bradford as a city for all seasons and each lighter depicts Bradford's quaint downtown gazebo surrounded by the delicate pear trees — called Bradford Pears — which line Veterans Square and Main Street.

(See SEASONS, Page 33)

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Built at the height of the Victorian opulence, the Towne House becomes the perfect example of the homes and lifestyles of the wealthy in the early 1900's. Area craftsmen constructed the elegant home with Mahogany cabinets, located in the downstairs dining room. Still in place are leaded and stained glass windows, which like the Mahogany was imported from Europe.

Make your reservations or plan your next get together at the Towne House Inn. The Towne House Inn offers you the opportunity to enjoy a classic gourmet meal with spectacular service at a reasonable price. Your meal with us is guaranteed to be a memorable one. Fresh cut steaks, pastas, seafood, and fresh made desserts are all offered along with nightly specials.

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Continental Breakfast

Saturday & Sunday



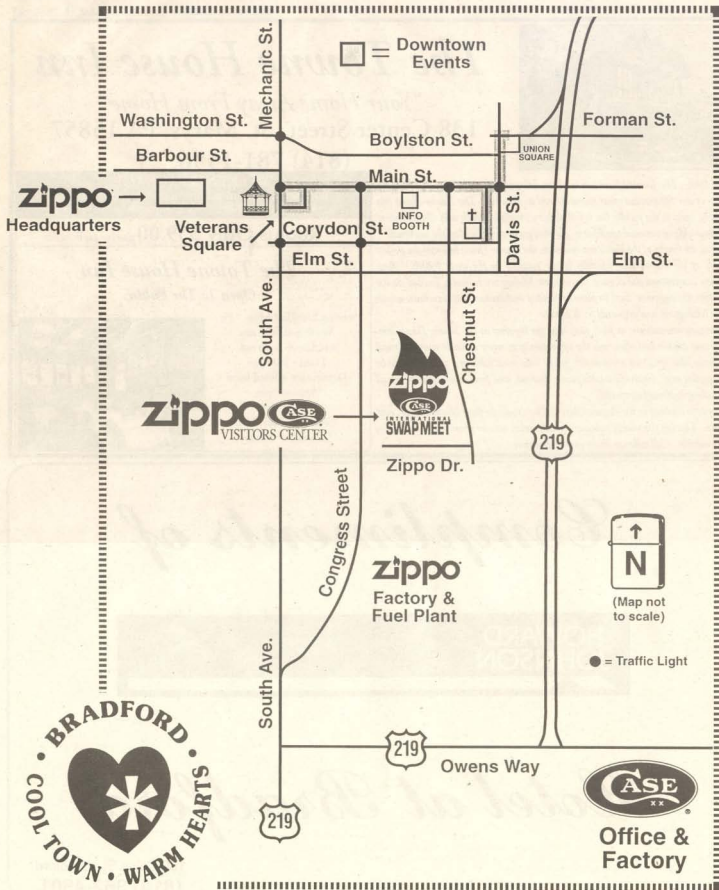
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Hotel at Bradford

100 Davis St., Bradford

(814) 362-4501



Schedule of Events

Friday, July 18

6 to 11 a.m.

Jim Zippo and his sidekick Maria Danza will host a live national broadcast of "Zippo in the Morning" on ABC Pure Gold Network. They will broadcast the show on the grounds adjacent to the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. The program will be heard on WBBR.

6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The new Zippo/Case visitors Center will be open. Visitors will be able to enjoy exhibits, hands-on displays, interactive activities and see the inside tory of how Zippo and Case products are made.

8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Swap meet is open to the public. Hundreds of Zippo and Case collectors will be showing off their coveted collections and hoping to make that one big trade or sale. This year's swap meet will be held on the grounds adjacent to the visitors center.

8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Zippo/Case MotorSports and licensing partners will exhibit. Zippo-sponsored Winston Cup, Busch Grand Nationals, and IMSA cars will be on display in the Motorsports tent. The MotorSports lineup will also feature bikes from Zippo's newest racing partner, Harley-Davidsons, in the AMA Superbike competition. The Watkins Glen pace car will complete the MotorSports display. New this year will be a sponsor's tent which will be devoted to special products, giveaways and prizes sponsored by Zippo's licensing partners which include Anheuser-Busch, Tabasco, Jim Beam Distilleries, R.J. Reynolds, Harley-Davidson and more.

9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

"Flame the Main" celebration will be held downtown which will include special sales and events including line dancers, a car show and a folk art festival.

11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Bradford Catholic Schools Antiques and Collectibles Show and Sale will be held at the St. Bernard Campus.

3 p.m.

The Zippo/Case Visitors Center will be dedicated.

6:30 p.m.

The "Flame the Main" parade will travel down Main Street. The parade will include five floats, up to 75 classic cars, the race cars that Zippo sponsors, fire trucks from area departments and perhaps the refurbished Zippo Car.



SHOWING THEIR WARES — These avid Zippo collectors show their most beloved lighters during the 1996 Zippo/Case International Swap Meet. Collectors from all over the globe will be in Bradford this weekend to do the same, and local businesses have slated a list of events to entertain them.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

7 to 7:45 p.m.

When the parade concludes, Jim Zippo will broadcast an oldies show from a makeshift studio in front of National City Bank.

7:30 p.m.

The "Light the Night" musical celebration will be held at the Bradford Area High School auditorium. Bob Lucia and the Big Band Revival Orchestra will perform selections spanning six decades. Popular local vocalists Jan Maki and John Zini will sing a wide variety of music. Also, the Zippettes, a Zippo employee music ensemble, will take the stage.

Saturday, July 19

8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Zippo/Case Visitors Center will be open.

8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Swap meet is open to the public.

8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Zippo/Case Motor Sports and licensing partners will exhibit their wares.

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Bradford Catholic Schools Antiques and Collectibles Show and Sale, St. Bernard Campus.

10 a.m.

Motorcycles will assemble for the Motorcycle Fun Run. Riders will travel through the breath-taking natural beauty of the Allegheny National Forest and Kinzua Dam area. The ride will begin and end at the visitors center. The mapped route will cover about 125 miles.

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"Flame the Main" activities will continue downtown.

noon to 2

The Bradford Township Lions Summer Festival will be held in the Bradford Township Community Club.

5 to 6 p.m.

Swap meet tear down

7:30 p.m.

The "Light the Night" show will be staged again in the BAHs auditorium.



ZIPPON ON PARADE — Zippos, Zippos and more Zippos. Visitors to this year's Zippo/Case International Swap Meet will see hundreds and hundreds of not only Zippo lighters but Case knives as well.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

THE CORNER
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ENTERTAINMENT
Friday, July 18
"OFF THE RECORD"
Happy Hour 5-7 pm

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25¢ Wing Night

Friday Night
Clam Night
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\$6.95 Raw & Steamed

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18-holes \$18.00



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All that seafood in addition to over 45 items including our Fresh Pasta Station,
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BRADFORD, PA

COOL TOWN ♥ WARM HEARTS

Friday, July 18th

Main Street USA
10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.

Sidewalk Sales Downtown
Collectible Zippo Downtown
Merchant Lighters for Sale
"Flame the Main" Parade

6:30 p.m.

7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.-7:45 p.m.

7:45 p.m.

7:55 p.m.

8:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

9:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Street Dreams Car Show
Jim Zippo at
National City Bank
Country Line Dancers
Vocalist-Michelle Reiley
with Rhonda Brinker
and Kevin Abbott
Peter James Band



Friday, July 18th & Saturday, July 19th

B.C.S.S.

Antique & Collectible Show & Sale

St. Bernard Elementary School
95 E. Corydon Street

11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Friday
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Saturday

One Block from Main Street

Sponsored by Bradford Catholic School System

- Admission \$2.00
- Free Appraisals



Zippo/Case International
Swap Meet Hours:
8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday
8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday

Sponsored by Downtown Merchants



BRADFORD, PA
Zippo/Case International Swap Meet
Division of Bradford Area
Chamber of Commerce

Saturday, July 19th

Arts Festival

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. • Main Street USA

Hand-crafted Folk Art, Fine Art - Along Main Street
Ethnic Food Booths
Main Street Merchants Sidewalk Sales

Live Performing Artisans at Gazebo
Veteran's Square, 2 Main Street, Bradford



- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Senior Country- Country
Western |
| 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. | Jazz Quartet |
| 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. | Us Two |
| 3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. | Peter James Band |
| 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. | John & Jerri Lea |

"Celebrate The Arts"

Saturday, July 19th
10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Arts Vendors on Main Street
Folk Art, Fine Art, Collectibles

Artisan Demonstrations
Veteran's Square

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. | Marian Aranyos- Water Color |
| 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. | Betsi Matz- Basket Weaving |
| 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. | Tina Faulkner- Abstract Painting |
| 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m. | Cyn-Dee Clark- Photography |

- Union Square Summer Festival •
- Children's Activities •
(Webster Street)



FREE ATA Bus Shuttle Service

Between Downtown Zippo/Case Swapmeet
Friday, July 18th: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
and Saturday, July 19th: 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Main Street

From Page 24)

Main Street's parking meters and the entire National City Bank area — the central location for the weekend's downtown activities — will be decorated.

From 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., many local merchants will hold sidewalk sales, displaying their wares in front of their shops.

From 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the St. Bernard campus of the Bradford Catholic School System, the second annual Antiques & Collectibles Show and Sale will be held.

Another highlight is the "Flame the Main" parade at 6:30 p.m.

Following the parade until 9 p.m. the "Flame the Main" car show as well as an oldies hop will be held downtown. Line dancers and local talent, including the Street Dreams song and dance group, Michelle Reiley, Kevin Abbott and Rhonda Brinker and the Peter James Band, will round out that event at the National City Bank parking lot.

At 7:30 p.m. at the Bradford Area High School Auditorium local talent — including the debut of the Zippettes, a Zippo employees musical ensemble — will perform in the "Light the Night" musical celebration.

A fireworks show at 10 p.m. on the hill above High Street will cap off the night.

Saturday's schedule is just as jam-packed with events as the Celebrate the

Arts/Bradford Arts Festival gets underway.

"We wanted to provide something for people who may be in town with a collector but don't necessarily want to spend all their time at the Swap Meet," Duke said.

Duke said the arts festival will celebrate "handcrafted fine art and folk art" and will be on display all along Main Street. Ethnic foods booths will be set up as well.

"We'll have a little bit of everything," Duke said.

Among the performers scheduled to appear at the gazebo in Veterans Square are the Senior Country Band, a jazz quartet, Us Two, the Peter James Band and Jerry Kells.

Also during the day at Veterans Square, local artists will display their crafts and offer tips in basketry, abstract painting, photography and other arts.

Activities for children are scheduled all day at both Webster Street and Union Square on Davis Street.

Also downtown, the antique and collectible show will continue from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Bernard School.

At 10 a.m., all motorcycle enthusiasts are invited to register for a motorcycle fun run through the Allegheny National Forest and Kinzua Dam area. The 125-mile ride will begin and end at the Zippo/Case Visitors Center.

From noon to whenever everyone gets too tired to party, the Bradford Township Lions Summer Festival will be held at the Bradford Township Community Club be-

hind the West Branch School on West Washington Street.

"Light the Night" will give an encore performance at 7:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Sunday, the Bradford Township Lions festival will gear up for more fun from noon to 10 p.m.

As for official Zippo/Case activities, they will start bright and early Friday as Jim Zippo and Maria Danza will host their nationally broadcast "Zippo in the Morning" radio show live from swap meet headquarters from 6 to 11 a.m. Locally, the show can be heard on WBRR FM.

Jim Zippo will also be in the "Flame the Main" parade. After that, he'll be in the National City Bank parking lot giving out fuzzy dice.

Seasons

From Page 24)

Different colored matte finishes and seasonal motifs identify the spring, summer, fall and winter issues.

Each lighter will be individually numbered and will come with a certificate of authenticity in a Zippo collectors tin. Zippo will produce 650 of each design. This number was selected in honor of Zippo's 65th anniversary in 1997.

Several downtown businesses will be selling the lighters — while they last — for \$18.95.

The first lighter in the series, "Summer," will be available during this

year's swap meet. The off-white lighter features the pear trees and flowers around the gazebo in full bloom in bright sunlight.

The final issue, "Spring," will be available during the swap meet in the year 2000. This purple lighter features the trees and flowers just starting to bloom as the sun peeks through cloudy but blue sky.

The rust-colored autumn issue depicts leaves swirling around the gazebo and will be issued in 1998. The dark blue winter lighter shows a snowman standing next to the gazebo, decorated for Christmas, while snowflakes gently fall from the sky. Collectors and other Zippo lovers will be able to purchase it in 1999.

The Downtown Merchants and Bradford Area Chamber of Commerce say the collection is "a great way to commemorate the closing of the 20th century — remember, the 21st century doesn't begin until 2001!"



*Congratulations
Zippo & Case
on another successful
Swap Meet!*



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Case's famed Kodiak knife boasts a well-traveled past



SURPRISING FIND — Jack Gorton of Aiken looks over the eight-foot Case Kodiak knife which appeared in his yard one morning in July 1982. The knife was firmly attached to the sign until it was removed in May, and now hangs in the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. A Pocket Worn Trapper will take its place on the sign.

One long-time facet of the local landscape disappeared recently — the massive Kodiak knife that presided over the sign in front of W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery on Owens Way.

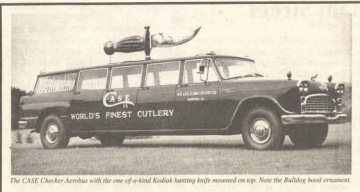
The eight-foot Kodiak, which was taken down by a crane on May 14, will be replaced by a Pocket Worn Trapper, a recently introduced but extremely popular knife.

A three-bladed Canoe will represent Case on the front of the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center.

But longtime Bradford residents may miss the Kodiak, a familiar sight in Bradford for some 40 years.

Initially, W.R. Case & Sons purchased a large vehicle during World War II to save gasoline and tires by transporting key workers to and from work. The one-of-a-kind Kodiak was created in the 1950s to grace the roof of the vehicle, promoting the Case brand as it traveled the roadways.

The last "Case car" was a 1963 eight-door Checker Aerobus. Embazoned with the company name, the double-X symbol and "World's Finest Cutlery" as well as the Kodiak on its roof, it was still used to transport company workers until the 1970s.



The CASE Checker Aerobus with the one-of-a-kind Kodiak hunting knife mounted on top. Note the BullDog hood ornament.

It performed its last official function after the purchase of Case by American Brands Inc. After the company built its new plant on Owens Way, vice president John R. Osborne Jr. used the Checker Kodiak to transport visiting dignitaries during the opening dedication on Sept. 24, 1975.

The vehicle was donated to the Children's Home of Bradford in 1976. When the vehicle was sold, the knife was mounted on the sign in front of Case, but it didn't stay there undisturbed.

In July 1982, pranksters stole the knife from the sign — and it was found by a couple in Aiken.

"They woke up Sunday morning and there it was, sticking in the yard," said sales and marketing manager Dick Kearney. "It looked like it had fallen out of

the sky.

Beverly Gorton agreed. "It was really surprising," she said. "We never heard any commotion ... We woke up in the morning and it was there. The handle of it looked like a giant banana."

Mrs. Gorton, a Zippo employee, said a nearby neighbor who worked at Case called to ask if she knew it was the Case knife. "All the neighbors were out looking at it."

Case officials recovered the knife and attached it firmly in its rightful place, where it remained until its departure in May. It now hangs in the Zippo/Case Visitors Center.

A Pocket Worn Trapper, expected to be installed this fall, will replace the Kodiak on the sign.

Collectors. . .
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July 19th only, Atrest Dee Smith will exhibit her Paintings
from 10 am to 5 pm

* Artist Collections & Collectible Lighters not included

Vincent's

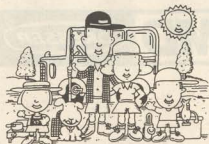
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- * Full hook-up Camping
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Owner:
**Jim
Rathbun**

Bright idea sparked Zippo Manufacturing

Editor's Note: The following information is taken from "A History of Progress," provided by Zippo Manufacturing Co.

Though Zippo Manufacturing Co. has been in business for 65 years, people still can't seem to get enough of them.

Ironically, it all started simply, on a muggy summer night in Bradford.

It was 1932, and George G. Blaisdell, who at the time owned the Blaisdell Oil Co., was talking with a friend at the Bradford Country Club on South Avenue. His friend was lighting a cigarette with an Austrian lighter.

Blaisdell was not impressed with how the lighter looked.

"You're all dressed up," he said. "Why don't you get a lighter that looks decent?"

"Well, George," his friend replied. "It works!"

And 65 years later, the lighters Blaisdell created still work and are coveted by people all over the world.

After that conversation, Blaisdell got to work. He obtained the U.S. distribution rights for the lighters but couldn't sell them profitably. They were clumsy to use. He decided to design a lighter that

would work but would also be attractive.

He took the Austrian lighter and made a few changes, designing a rectangular case that would fit in a person's hand. He attached the top to the bottom with a hinge, and surrounded the wick with a wind hood, so it would stay lit despite the weather.

Intrigued by the invention of the zipper in Meadville, Blaisdell decided to call his creation "Zippo."

Blaisdell set up shop at the old Ricker-son and Pryde garage on Boylston Street, where he employed six people. Sales moved slowly at first. However, he came up with ways to introduce the lighter to other people.

At the Bradford Bus Station, Blaisdell gave lighters to long-distance drivers, who then displayed them to their passengers. He gave them to jewelers and tobac-

(See ZIPPO HISTORY, Page 36)

HIS OWN CREATION — George G. Blaisdell holds an enlarged version of his invention, the Zippo lighter, in this photo that was taken in the 1940s. Blaisdell began Zippo Manufacturing Co. in 1932 and produced his first lighter the following year.



*Congratulations
to Zippo
On their 65th
Anniversary*

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Zippo history

(From Page 35)

consists. However, he learned that retailers were hesitant to stock the lighter since it wasn't being advertised anywhere.

So in 1937, with \$3,000 — most of it he borrowed — Blaisdell took out a full-page ad in *Esquire* magazine. The responses didn't pour in. However, the door did open to the specialty advertising market when an Iowan insurance company in 1936 ordered 200 engraved lighters for its salesmen as prizes, and Kendall Oil Co. ordered 500 for its customers and employees.

As sales grew, Blaisdell took over the entire second floor of the Rickerson and Pryde building, with a new office at 21 Pine St. In 1938, the factory and offices moved to a former garage at 36 Barbour St.

Zippos achieved fame during World War II when soldiers used them for nearly everything — lighting smoking lamps, starting campfires and cooking soup in helmets.

While many products weren't produced during the war, Zippos continued. Since brass was unavailable, the lighters were made from low-grade steel then sprayed painted black to disguise the steel's poor finish.

Zippo received even more endorsement from famed war correspondent Ernie Pyle, who in his daily columns referred to Blaisdell as "Mr. Zippo." The two exchanged letters after Blaisdell

wrote Pyle a fan letter, which distributed Zippos to servicemen through Pyle.

"I was amazed at his modesty of the president's letter," Pyle said. "He said 'You probably know nothing about the Zippo lighter.' If he only knew how the soldiers covered them. They'll burn in the wind, and the pilots say they are the only kind that will light at extreme altitudes."

And as the story goes, Pyle apparently wrote his shortest war story on a Zippo. In 1945, Pyle was aboard the USS Cabot in the South Pacific and a young officer wanted to know the ship's destination. Pyle borrowed the officer's lighter and scratched into it "Tokyo."

The announcement of the first all-out attack on the Japanese mainland was flashed throughout the ship on a Zippo lighter.

Zippo's popularity during the war helped post-war sales.

From 1939 to 1950, two cigar salesmen were the companies sales force. They covered vast areas across the United States and mostly dealt with tobacco wholesalers.

However, Blaisdell organized his own sales force in 1950, creating district managers to sell lighters in specific areas.

In Bradford, a new building was completed on Congress Street in 1954. Another small plant in Niagara Falls, Ontario, was built in 1950. And in 1955, corporate officers were built adjoining the Bradford Street factory.

One way that Zippo found a place in many people's hearts was by standing by its "it works or we fix it free" motto.

Though some customers sent money or return postage, it was always returned.

Employees at the Repair Clinic have brought back to working order lighters that have been embedded in mud, soaked in water and buried in snow. If possible, employees repaired and returned the original lighter. If a lighter had been mangled or flattened, the owner received a new lighter, and the company kept the damaged one for its museum.

As the years progressed, so did technology which enabled the company to produce more Zippos and also give them more faces. Zippos could be slim, they could sport etched designs or feature the faces of presidents.

Zippo also began producing other products like knives, money clips, writing instruments and key holders.

In 1993, Zippo purchased W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co., which joined two Bradford-based companies that produce quality American-made products. The following year, the Zippo Family Store and Museum opened next to Zippo's manufacturing plant on Congress Street. The store featured products from both Zippo and Case, and the museum offered fans a look into both companies' pasts.

But that store/museum wasn't big enough to house the rich heritage from both Zippo and Case so the Zippo/Case Visitors Center opened in July, offering lighter and knife lovers even more of what they crave.

In 1992, Zippo began producing limited-edition lighters, another product that collectors coveted. The limited edition

that year commemorated the company's 60th anniversary. Collectors liked it so much that Zippo decided to produce a limited edition lighter each year. In 1993, it was Windy, who was the Varga Girl featured in Zippo's first national advertisement in 1937. A year later, the 50th anniversary of D-Day was remembered.

In 1995, Zippo used a new process called Technigraphic to create a colorful four-lighter set called "Mysteries of the Forest," which highlighted animals and foliage from the rain forest. They used that same process the following year to pay tribute to pinups, and released a four-lighter set featuring one beautiful pinup for each season.

This year's limited edition lighter commemorates the company's 65th anniversary.

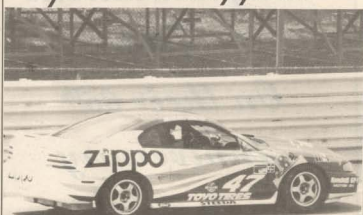
Though George Blaisdell died in 1978, his ideals did not.

"We attribute the firm's achievements to a strict adherence to the ideals upon which the company was founded — quality, service and integrity," according to company president Mike Schuler. "Dedicated employees and loyal customers are the mind, the hands and the heart of Zippo."

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Local collectors have Zippo, Case in their blood



KNIFE MAN — Carl Steinhauser from Custer City shows off a sample of his Case knife collection which currently is too numerous to count and growing every minute.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

By **SANDRA RHODES**
Era Reporter

Whether it stems from their childhood or an event that happened in later years, local collectors agree — once they started collecting Zippo products or Case knives, it got into their blood.

With well over 3,000 lighters that he keeps in a safe, it is possible to believe that George Wagner of Bradford would have every kind of lighter produced. However, as he reports, that is far from the case.

Wagner said he had lighters all his life, but only became a serious collector in the past 10 years. Both he and his wife, Jo, have added to the collection. "It's like a bug; it really catches you," George Wagner said.

It all started with accumulating lighters with local Bradford advertising, "then I started to collect and went for everything," Wagner said. Now the ever-expanding collection is too large to keep track of.

Wagner isn't the only local person who collects Zippo lighters or Case knives. Other collectors include lighter lover Clayton Vecellio of Lewis Run, and Case knife aficionados Carl Steinhauser of Custer City and Pete Peckynov of Derick City.

Wagner's collection is vast, ranging from several table lighters, to Elvis col-

lectibles, from Roseart table lighters with imported marble to war lighters from 1943, from Popeye lighters, which are discontinued, to lighters from the military. He also owns lighters which have presidential seals and Indian chiefs on them and also has a set of seven turquoise lighters.

His love of Zippo products, however, does not end there. According to Wagner, he has "everything they made." Also a part of his collection are a belt buckle with Quaker State on it, golf balls, ornaments and a lighter encased in a plastic ball that stood atop former Zippo vice president Howard Fesenmyer's flag pole.

Wagner gets his Zippos a variety of ways — going straight to the Zippo store and scouring garage sales and flea markets — but a lot of his lighters are bought from Zippo employees. As the owner of George's Tree Service, Wagner sometimes barters his services. He'll cut down a tree for a couple of lighters or pen set.



Wagner also said that since everyone in Bradford knows he is a collector, people will call him to sell their lighters. His favorite lighters are the Town and Country series from 1947. Some in his collection are in mint condition.



As far as the price for a given lighter, Wagner advises that it depends on how much the collector is willing to pay. Last year, a collector paid \$300 for a special (See COLLECTORS, Page 38)

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Collectors

(From Page 37)

lighter commemorating the 300,000,000 lighter produced. The fact that it was issued only to employees boosted the asking price for the lighter, which should not have sold for that amount.

After spending about \$12,000 at the swap meet last year, Wagner has a table reserved, and he plans to sell this year.

Veccello, another Zippo collector, was exposed to lighters at an early age.

Veccello, who has been collecting for four years, received his first Zippo lighter when he started smoking in 1942 — at the age of 12. That lighter was a black crackle that he no longer has.

His collection of about 2,500 lighters started when he went to a garage sale. When he was asked what he collected and the answer was nothing, he looked on the table and saw a couple of Zippos. From that moment on, he collected Zippo.

"I knew from way back, over 20 years, that a Zippo was a nice thing to have. It was a collectible thing," Vecello said.

As with other collectors, Vecello is attracted to a certain lighter. His favorite are ones with Bradford, Pa., on the face. Some of those in his collection feature the Riddell House, Vincent's Jewelers and Kendall.

The most he ever paid for a lighter was more than \$1,000 for one said to have been made in 1932. To buy the lighter

now would cost \$3,500.

As far as the change in the year the first Zippo lighter was produced, Vecello said it doesn't matter to collectors. "The first ones will always be known as a '32, that is the way it is going to be."

Last month, Zippo officials announced that while Zippo creator George G. Blaisdell started the company in 1932, records show he didn't produce his first lighter until the following year.

The lighter on Vecello's wish list is a "1932" in mint condition. He speculates there are only one or two in the world, but nobody knows for sure.

In addition to his massive collection of lighters, Vecello also has such rare items as golf shoe bags, ash trays, wallets, ties and other rarities such as two tops that were put together to make a lighter. He knows that both are before 1942 because of the shape of the tops.

Veccello buys his lighters at garage sales or from Zippo employees, but he does not think twice if someone from Buffalo, N.Y., calls to say he has a lighter for sale. He makes the trip if it is something he wants.

Veccello's advice for novices going to the swap meet is basic: "If it's got Zippo on it, they want it." Of course, a lighter that is still in its box, is in mint condition and has never been struck goes at a higher rate.

Case collector Steinhauser of Custer City is known in some circles as "Knife Man." With his impressive array of knives, it is no wonder.

From doctor knives with a flat end

used to smash pills, to veterinarian knives used to cut flesh only, to Boy Scout knives and citrus knives, Steinhauser has a collection that would make anyone jealous. He does not have an exact count; the collection is too expansive.

As far as trading, Steinhauser said the Case whittler is the most sought-after knife, and anything from the Bank Street factory is considered very valuable.

Steinhauser's knowledge of Case knives is as expansive as his collection. One time, he had a knife that the company refused to clean, stating that it was not a Case knife. It was not until Steinhauser produced proof in a picture of a Case display that the officials believe him.

As far as selling his knives, Steinhauser said, "They become a part of you. You keep them." However, "It is a hobby that can get expensive. You put in a lot of miles."

Steinhauser's began collecting more than 25 years ago when he had a back operation, could not work and needed something to do. From that point, he started collecting knives, then went to razors.

He does his best buying at auctions. Because people know he is going to buy all the Case knives, no one bids against him. "If it says Case, I am in love with it," Steinhauser said.

Reserving this year's swap meet as a time to sell his products, Steinhauser plans to set up a display dedicated to the Boy Scouts including his Boy Scout Case knives and a Norman Rockwell painting of scouts.

However, Steinhauser and Case collector Peckyno agree that the people in Bradford are at a disadvantage since many lighters are commissioned with an outside outfit and sent elsewhere.

Peckyno gets most of his knives through Smoky Mountain Knife Works as well as through Case and at yard sales. His favorite are those with stag or pearl handles. Stag handles are made from deer antlers.

He advises that trading is in pocket knives, not in sheaths. For collecting/trading, never use the knife. The value of the knife is cut in half once the knife has been used. He also uses a price guide to set the value of the knives he is trying to sell or buy.

Peckyno also pays close attention to the number on the knife; the lower the number, the more valuable the knife. He also credits the art department for making the knife attractive with the artistry and quality put into each Case knife.

For those interested in starting a collection, Peckyno recommends yard sales for early buys — a very inexpensive way to get started — or the swap meets. He also said that pocketknives are tradable knives, rather than those in sheaths.

"I always liked knives," Peckyno said. His first knife was a Case, which he received when he started to deliver papers in his home town near Pittsburgh. His dad gave him the knife so he could cut through the twine that was tied around the papers. The Case knife "cut right through every time," Peckyno said.



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Distributors: Zippo name revered worldwide

By SANDRA RHODES
Era reporter

Zippo distributors from around the world agree that when they think of the United States, they think of Zippo — a classic product with a lifetime guarantee.

Whether they live in Italy, England, Hong Kong, Venezuela, Israel, France or Germany, people love their Zippo lighters.

"Since the U.S. is a relatively new country," said Rolf Loeser, managing director and distributor in Germany, foreigners equate this country with consumer products. "Zippo represents the American way of life."

Zippo lighters rank up there with denim jeans, Rayban sunglasses, rock music and Coca-Cola as American icons, he said.

In Germany, the Zippo is viewed as an accessory. While someone may wear a scarf or earrings, Germans carry Zippos. Fifty percent of the Zippo owners use the lighter as a fashion accessory. The product increases appeal when it is with a leather pouch. "It makes a nice presentation," Loeser said.

The Zippo lighter is also viewed as a cult product with the advertising sector in Germany and France. The target customers are between 17 and 35, according to Pierre Laredo, general manager of Zippo distributor from Z.A des Petit Carreaux.

"There is also a mystic quality in American movies that Europeans associate with American and Zippo lighters," both men said.

Loeser and Laredo work as a team distributing lighters in Germany, Austria, Spain, Belgium and France.

Currently in those countries, the hottest-selling lighter is the 65th anniversary lighter, but whatever lighter is new that year is the best-selling.

For consumers in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland, the Zippo name is well-known.

"Every person above 16 years of age knows the Zippo lighter, that it was used in the second World War, and that it has a lifetime guarantee," said Jorgen Isbrand, distributor in the Nordic countries.

However, according to Isbrand, lighter sales are starting to feel the effect of anti-smoking sentiment. The percentage of smokers in Nordic countries has diminished. As a result, sales are gradually changing to writing instruments and knives.

Regardless of the decrease in smokers, collectors are still accumulating lighters. In addition to the smokers and the collectors, there is another group of Zippo lovers.

According to Isbrand, "We have, beside the categories of smokers and collectors, the Zippo freaks. They don't necessarily have many lighters, but they are



MI AMORE ZIPPO — Rolf Loeser, left, and Pierre Laredo discuss their love for Zippo products, which they market in Western Europe. Loeser, from Germany, and Laredo, from France, distribute lighters in Austria, Spain, Belgium, plus their own countries.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

smokers and the Zippo is part of their personality. They are our best ambassadors."

In several other countries, however, smokers are the biggest buyer of lighters; there are very few collectors.

In Israel, for instance, people have dis-

covered that a Zippo product is reliable.

"Zippo is viewed as a supreme high quality manufacturer of products," said Shalom Tito, managing director of T&U Marketing Ltd., "a product that is considered to be one of the symbols of a

(See DISTRIBUTORS, Page 40)

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Distributors

good American-made product."

The Israeli consumer has learned that "Zippo is the best, most reliable, highest quality, nice and fashionable lighter in the market today," Tito added. Throughout all the foreign countries, the lighters are the best-selling products.

"Many consumers associate Zippo as a cigarette lighter," said Anthony Chew from Concern Trading Pte. Ltd. "If they buy other products, it is because they possibly would like to associate the other products with a great name."

Chew distributes lighters in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

These Asian countries, like most other foreign countries, prefer the "250" lighter, chrome with shiny laser. The best-selling novelty lighter in Asia right now is the Harley-Davidson series.

"Any chrome lighter, 250 or 1610, is most popular in Korea," according to Won Choi, manager at Shin Myung International Co., Ltd.

Because of the Zippo brand name, people never tire of Zippo. "Various designs and the lifetime guarantee also appeal to them to buy Zippo," Choi states. The Venetian chrome, or 352, for Zippo experts, is the best-selling Zippo item in Italy.

According to Joe Romei from Zippo Italia, "Zippo products are very hot in Italy."

"In Italy, the Zippo brand is related to the lighters; Zippo means 'fluid lighter'

(From Page 39)

'Every person above 16 years of age knows the Zippo lighter, that it was used in the second World War, and that it has a lifetime guarantee.'

— Nordic distributor Jorgen Isbrand

for everybody," Romei states.

Why are these consumers so impressed? Romei explains that Italians respond to Zippo lighters because "it works always" — no other lighter does the same.

Romei also said the lighter's distinctive "click" says something special — that sound belongs to Zippo only.

"Technically speaking," Romei said, "a Zippo lighter is like a piece of paper, where you can design everything you want." Besides, Romei added, "The Made in U.S.A. label still works in Italy."

"Classic, very strongly," is the way Zippo pens are viewed in Hong Kong and China, according to Brian Lui, distributor of those countries.

"In China, it is deemed as a semi-luxury product with a good value for the money," Lui adds.

In Great Britain, Zippo has become a generic term.

"Similarly shaped lighters are usually described as a 'Zippo-type' lighter," said Margaret Benady, director of W.A. Ingram Associates Limited in London.

Another attractive feature, according

to Benady, is the lifetime free repair, which is unique in the United Kingdom.

"People are amazed that a company can offer free after-sales service for all its products, regardless of age or condition," Benady said.

"People purchase a Zippo lighter because they want a dependable, trouble-free lighter, a lighter which in contrast to throw-away lighters, is environmentally friendly."

Cor Van Der Heijden from Kamco BV in the Netherlands said, "Zippo is by far the most popular and best sold refillable lighter in our country. It is a very well-known brand name and is seen as a company which makes very reliable products with an incredible after sale service."

People buy Zippo products, Van Der Heijden said, because "it is a very good product, which is almost indestructible. There are very few or no competitors with the same qualities as the Zippo product."

With well over 50 million Zippos imported into Japan after World War II, the Japanese are perhaps the country most enthusiastic about the product.

According to Nobuyoski Okamoto from Zippo Japan, the lighters are popular "because they are stylish, durable, functional lighters backed up by the legendary logo and lifetime guarantee. Other lighters are easy to break and cost money for repairs."

The popular models in Japan always change, but consumers prefer chrome or silver lighters over the golden colors.

"Sterling models sell best in Japan," Okamoto says.

Closer to home in Venezuela, the Zippo brand name is also very strong.

Guillermo Zobel from Coral CA said, "Luckily, we have been able to establish Zippo firmly in our country, to the point where many people refer to a lighter as a Zippo."

Zobel estimates that 30 percent of sales goes to collectors. In general, he, people between 15 and 40 buy the most lighters.

Venezuela, like other countries, Zobel said, has discovered an "American-made product with a high level of quality and an excellent value/price relationship."

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60 East Main & High Street
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62 High Street & Grove Avenue
66 High Street & Rutherford Run Road
07 Georgia Pacific
09 Zippo
10 Congress Street & Sherman Street
11 Congress Street & Thompson Avenue
12 Elm Street & Congress Street
13 S. Davis Street & Elm Street
14 Main Street & S. Davis Street
16 Northwest Savings
17 Emory Towers
18 Bushnell Street & Barbours Street
20 S. Bennett & W. Washington Street
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26 Pitt Campus
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31 N. Bennett St. & Edward St.
32 Bradford Regional Medical Center
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38 Jackson Avenue & Whitehead Avenue
41 Seaward Avenue & Schanberg
42 Seaward Avenue & Butler Drive
53 Bradford Mall a) Main Entrance
b) Juddies
c) Kmart

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STOP: a) Kmart
b) Juddies
c) Main Entrance

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Zippo, Case can boast long-term employees

By MIKE SCHREIBER
Era Reporter

A painted picture of Zippo Manufacturing Co. founder George G. Blaisdell hangs on a conference room wall over Bettie Ross's left shoulder.

"Mr. Blaisdell was a great man," she notes. "He would go through and talk to the people every day, and he knew everybody's first name."

Ross, a production manager, knows a little about Zippo. She has been an employee of the company since Aug. 1, 1946, going on 51 years, unheard of by today's fast-changing business standards. "I love it, it's my life. Everybody thinks I'm crazy, but I don't even think about retiring."

Ross is only one of several employees who have worked many, many years at either Zippo or W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co. Cheryl Snyder Lapallo has put in 27 years at Case, and George Deming has worked there for 41 years. Joining Ross at Zippo is John Macdonald, who has spent the past 40 years there.

As part of her job description, Ross oversees the ultra light, pen and pencil and the repair departments and basically sees that production gets out.

Ross' journey to Zippo started out in a department store.

"I worked at A.J. Olson's Department Store as an assistant manager of domes-

tics," Ross said. The store once occupied space at the corner of Main and Webster streets. "My sister-in-law talked me into coming up here (to Zippo)."

The shipping department, located on Barbour Street at that time, was the first stop on her long Zippo voyage. "At first I wrapped lighters and packages. I was a shipping clerk," Ross said.

From there, she moved to the factory on Congress Street, then back to Barbour Street and now she is headed back to Congress Street, although in not exactly the same spot or environment.

"I know I'll like it at the museum," Ross says as she talks about her new state-of-the-art digs, better known as the Zippo/Case Visitors Center. A unique aspect to the new center will be that visitors will be able to look through a glass window to see the repair department in action, and Ross, of course.

The company's repair department moved into the new center in late June.

More than anything, what has impressed Ross the most during her time at Zippo is "how the company has grown to such a big outfit, and how the management has always and still does nice things for the employees."

"Mr. Blaisdell wouldn't believe it," Ross said with a smile.

Lapallo and Deming have seen the ups and downs over the years at Case.



CHERYL LAPALLO



GEORGE DEMING



BETTIE ROSS

Lapallo works in the accounting department and Deming is a class A machinist.

"I just enjoy my job. I like what I do," Lapallo said. "I also enjoy working with figures." Lapallo, more specifically, is the payroll and accounts receivable clerk.

Before coming to work at Case, Lapallo plied her skills at Remington Rand in Elmira, N.Y., and at KOA Speer.

Her first years at Case were at the Foster Brook facility on Russell Boulevard.

"I worked in the shipping room for a year and a half before moving to the office," Lapallo said. In accounting,

Lapallo does "hourly payroll, bi-weekly reports and accounts receivable invoices."

Lapallo's years at the knife company and in her department have been far from stable though with the numerous changes in management the company has undergone.

"It changed all the time with the new management changes. Everything has improved, the work gets easier — it's change for the best I think."

What keeps Lapallo coming back to Case everyday though is not just one thing, it's many things.

(See EMPLOYEES, Page 43)

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Employees (From Page 2)

"I can't pinpoint just one," Lapallo said. "It's the people I have worked with over the years and of those that have retired, good memories."

Denning has had 14 job titles during his tenure at Case and has worked at both the Foster Brook site and the current plant on Owens Way, moving in 1975. He came to the company after 22 years in the U.S. Naval Reserve. "They've always treated me well; I've done a little bit of everything."

After retiring once and being called back, Denning, in addition to his work as a machinist, has done maintenance work and some quality control for engineers. At his current post, he does "fixturing for the assembly department and all-around machinist work."

Denning's most memorable moment at Case occurred when River Associates, in an attempt to break the existing union, let the employees go. "We all got fired and re-hired," Denning stated matter-of-factly. "We had to re-submit our application."

Both Lapallo and Denning agree though that the management changes at the company were for the best. Both the accounting office where Lapallo works and the factory, where Denning is employed, have been re-organized. The infrastructure of the factory has been re-worked, and the office has gone to a process known as module manufacturing.

"Everybody knows everybody's job," Lapallo said.

Macdonald is the supervisor of Zippo's photography department. The photography department works with silk screens that are used to decorate the lighters by creating a positive from the artwork.

"The whole process of making screens is much more intricate than before," Macdonald stated, explaining how his department's role in the grand scheme of lighter-making has changed. "The print is smaller, and the images are finer," he added.

Having always worked in the photo department during his time at Zippo, Macdonald has since moved from the Barbour Street facility to a larger area at the factory on Congress Street.

"We just moved out there three years ago. It's a lot closer to the work and is a much bigger area," he said.

Macdonald describes his 40 years at Zippo as having been "a good living..." "It's interesting work."



1997 LIMITED EDITION — This is the latest limited edition lighter produced by Zippo Manufacturing Co. The lighter commemorates the company's 65th anniversary and comes in a decorative tin. The company first started producing limited edition lighters in 1992; the first was in honor of the company's 60th anniversary. Zippo and Case are separately producing a commemorative lighter/knife set in honor of the opening of the Zippo/Case Visitor Center.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

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Area depends on Zippo, Case to provide jobs

By ROGER NEWTON
Special to the Era

The impact of Zippo Manufacturing Co. and W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co. on Bradford as well as the county at large has been "tremendous," according to community leaders.

Connie Cavallaro, Bradford City mayor, said that the companies have had a "tremendous impact; without them we would be a lot poorer."

Zippo employs 1,300 workers and Case 279. "That's a lot of paychecks to be spent in the city and around the city," Cavallaro said.

Concerning the companies' attraction to tourists, the Bradford mayor noted that is evident "when they have their swap meet." In addition, "I think a lot of people come into the area even during summer" to visit attractions such as the Zippo/Case store and museum on Congress Street.

She also said that she believed that the companies have put Bradford "on the map" noting, "there are quite of a few foreign markets now."

Then there is the philanthropy of the owners of the companies. "They (Zippo) don't like to publicize it; it is done very quietly; it has a great impact on the city ... We are so very pleased to have them here."

"They are kind of like Rockefeller in New York and Heinz in Pittsburgh," Dr. Richard McDowell, president of the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, said about Zippo and Case. "They want to see the community grow; this is good for the company also."

"There is a civic pride in Zippo and Case," says McDowell. "They have become wellheads of pride of the community."

"You look at it as a major (industry) that provides quality employees with an Opportunity to manufacture a quality product, run, owned and managed by quality people," according to Raymond McMahon, executive director of Bradford's Office of Economic and Community Development.

"Their products are accepted worldwide with respect to Zippo and nationwide with respect to Case," said McMahon. "Both are known for their quality and they have an impact on making people aware where Bradford is and ... what Bradford is about."

"They are a key player in our township," said Al Pingie, chairman of the Bradford Township supervisors. "They have a large impact: the people they bring to town, what they pay their employees, real estate taxes."

"Also we're quite honored to have them as a resident too, since we don't



IT'S SHOWTIME — Mayor Connie Cavallaro, seated, gets prepped for an appearance on a film about Zippo creator George G. Blaisdell which was done by a Japanese film crew. Cavallaro, along with many of the other local leaders, recognize the positive impact both Zippo Manufacturing Co. and W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co. have made on the community.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

have much retail," said Pingie. He also noted that the companies bring business to the township restaurants, such as the

Holiday House.

"I don't know how many they expect to the township restaurants, such as the (See IMPACT, Page 45)

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Stars among those proud to call themselves collectors

If you don't think you know any Zippo or Case collectors — think again. You may not know them personally, but you've certainly heard their names.

Tom Hanks may be the most famous Zippo collector. The star of "Philadelphia" and "Sleepless in Seattle" had lighters with the logo of "That Thing You Do!" made during the production of that movie, says Peggy Errera, Zippo's communications coordinator.

Zippo Manufacturing Co. made similar lighters for John Travolta during the

production of the movie "Broken Arrow."

Matthew McConaughey, who played a Southern lawyer in "A Time to Kill," has purchased custom-engraved Zippos to give the cast and crew of his last two movies. Errera said he also has one with his signature on it.

None other than famous cigar smoker Bill Cosby uses a Zippo to light his stogies. Errera says that he not only uses a Zippo, but that he loves Zippo-brand cigars.

Cosby ordered lighters with the

"Cosby" show logo for the cast and crew of his new show, and he and his wife both received one engraved with his signature, Errera said.

During a visit to Bradford early this year, entertainer extraordinaire Ben Vereen revealed his wish to own a Zippo like his father. Before the end of his stay, a Zippo employee had found one for him.

W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. has its share of famous fans, too, including country music star Randy Travis.

Travis, a member of the Case Collectors Club, features a Case knife in his

video for "The Box."

In the song, a man discovers after his father's death the box his father kept treasured items in. Among the treasures was "the pocketknife I gave to him on Father's Day years ago — I thought it had been lost."

In the video, Travis examines a Case pocketknife.

Ed Asner's voice is also linked with Case. Asner, most famous for his role as Mary Tyler Moore's grumpy boss Lou Grant, is a member of the Case Collectors Club. He also did the voice-over for Case's advertisement.

Bob Whittaker, president of the Grand Ole Opry, is also a member of the Collectors Club. Case helped the Grand Ole Opry to celebrate its 75th anniversary with a knife in a wooden box featuring a print by Nashville artist Bill Briggs on the inside lid.

Case president and chief operating officer George Brinkley personally presented #002 — the first remains in the company collection — to Whittaker.

"(Whittaker) bought one for each member of the board of directors of the Grand Ole Opry," Brinkley said.

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge is a member of the Case Collectors Club and purchases the annual Club Knife each year. Ridge had a chance to tour the new Zippo/Case Visitors Center the day after it opened.

Impact (From Page 44)

at that (the swap meet); everybody's got to eat... They're buying gasoline, places to stay." Pingle called it comparable to the Festa Italiana in Bradford which brings in many patrons from outer areas.

Pingle noted also that the companies, especially Zippo, quietly make contributions to various organizations and projects in the area. Pingle who is a Bradford City fireman, says they have contributed to that organization as well as taken out advertisements in various area publications. "I'm sure they do their fair share... and probably more so."

Nor are Zippo's and Case's effect on the county lost on the McKean County Commissioners.

"They have a dynamic force of about

1,300 workers" about a 10th of the some 10,000 workers of the county's tax base, said Commissioner Harold T. Beck.

Zippo is the largest employee in the county, agreed Commissioner James Weaver.

Zippo workers do not all live in Bradford, the commissioners noted, but drive to work from Port Allegany, Marshburg and all over the county. "Every dollar generates \$15" and naturally the wages are spent throughout the county, accord to Beck.

Zippo and Case also encourage tourism throughout McKean County, say the commissioners. Their annual swap meet brings people in from all over the world, people who need housing such as in the

motel in Smethport and the bed and breakfasts there.

The new state-of-the-art Zippo/Case Visitors Center will also attract tourists, bringing them into Bradford and the rest of the county to spend money.

The commissioners pointed out that Case and Zippo have helped put McKean County on the map. Other businesses and industries which have accomplished this, most of them now owned by larger international companies, include Dresser Manufacturing Division and the former Witco Corp.

Beck noted that Zippo had become part of the general vocabulary, becoming the generic term for lighters. If "you don't have a Zippo," you don't have a lighter," he said.

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BACK TO THE ORIGINAL — The original Zippo car, top, was a 1947 Chrysler Saratoga-New Yorker, which disappeared despite a 1970s search by Zippo creator George G. Blaisdell. At center and bottom are photos of the recreated Zippo car before and during its transformation.

Zippo car recreated for 65th anniversary

Those people who remember seeing the Zippo car may soon think they're experiencing *deja vu*.

However, the Zippo car that soon will be traversing around town is going to be a reproduction of the original Zippo car, made in honor of the car's 50th anniversary and Zippo's 65th anniversary.

The new Zippo car will be a fully restored 1947 Chrysler Saratoga-New Yorker that will replace the original car of the 1940s whose vanishing puzzled the most knowledgeable Zippo enthusiasts and even Zippo historians.

The engine in the new Zippo car was prepared by Joe Griffin's Custom Upholstery of Memphis, Tenn., with the restoration process beginning when Zippo acquired a 1947 Chrysler Saratoga-New Yorker in 1996.

Griffin said the car, which was still running with approximately 180,000 miles on it, was in respectable shape with a solid exterior and only minor dings and dents in the gray body that will be restored to black to match the original Zippo car.

According to Griffin, the process was quite extensive as he and six others worked on it as their main project since first being commissioned by Zippo. Griffin had to rely upon photos of the original

car to help build the new Zippo car. All of the parts for the interior and many for the exterior were fabricated because of the rarity of parts for a 1947 car and the unique obstacle of constructing a car with giant lighters atop it.

Griffin faced the same challenge Gardner Display of Pittsburgh, the original crafter of the Zippo car, did when they were commissioned by Zippo in 1947. Both companies had to convert a four-door model of the car to look like a two-door business coupe.

The engine in the new Zippo car is a unique story in itself and is nothing like those under the hood of today's cars. It combines both an automatic and manual transmission. The engine automatically shifts from first to second and third to fourth gear when the driver lets off of the accelerator slightly. However, the driver must use the clutch to shift into first gear and third gear, a type of engine referred to as a fluid drive.

While the engine remains the same, some things have changed. The new car is equipped with a 12-volt electrical system that allows for air conditioning, something the original Zippo car only

(See ZIPPO CAR, Page 47)

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Zippo car (From Page 46)

had with the windows down cruising over 35 mph. The suspension is much sturdier and overall the car is lighter than it predecessor, two things that along with more advanced, heavy duty tires, have kept and will continue to keep the new Zippo car from the ails of the original one.

The original Zippo car was a 1947 Chrysler Saratoga-New Yorker that was equipped not only with two larger-than-life lighters with neon flames but also with a public address system, a radio and record player with "wire recorder and playback," a 1940s version of a tape player. The unique hub caps all featured the Zippo logo on them. The car was customized at a cost of \$25,000, understandably less than the cost of the new Zippo car, but not an inexpensive car at that time.

The car toured the United States with local salesman Dick O'Day behind the wheel. It led many parades and celebrations, participating in nearly every major parade in the country in 1948 and 1949. In 1950, when Zippo started the first country-wide district manager representation, the Zippo car was returned to Bradford and was used by the district manager

on a rotating basis from territory to territory.

Some time between 1951 and 1952, the car was returned to Pittsburgh to district manager Jim Pryor because the car's chassis, as it had from the beginning, was having trouble supporting the giant lighter tandem built into the driver's compartment and was constantly ruining tires. At some point in the 1960s, Pryor took the car to Tooley Motors, a Ford dealership in Pittsburgh, to correct the problem. They suggested the solution could be reached by placing the lighter display on a Ford truck chassis and adding Mercury fenders, hood and trunk, a reconstruction plan Zippo creator George G. Blaisdell approved.

The car was forgotten until the early 1970s when Blaisdell set out to find it by contact Tooley Motors, only to discover that the dealership had gone out of business. No one knew the whereabouts, a fact that remains true even to today. No one knows whether it's being stored in someone's barn or warehouse, if it was sent to be scrapped — giant lighters and all — or if Elvis Presley and Jimmy Hoffa are driving it around some desolate island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

The location of the new Zippo car is much less of a mystery, however, as the finishing touches are currently being applied to it in Memphis, just in time for its grand debut at the swap meet. The car will also celebrate its anniversary by taking a few laps around the Watkins Glen road course as the honorary pace car of the U.S. Vintage Grand Prix of Watkins Glen in September.

Winston Cup action coming to Bradford

Fast cars are as American as Zippo lighters and Case pocketknives.

Some very fast cars will play a special part in this year's Zippo/Case International Swap Meet.

On Friday, the Winston Cup Road Show, an R.J. Reynolds-sponsored NASCAR exhibit will let collectors and visitors feel what it's like to race in Jimmy Spencer's Number 23 car, co-sponsored by Zippo Manufacturing Co., during the Winston Cup races.

Area NASCAR fans will get to experience the thrill of a NASCAR simulator and the Rolling Thunder Theater before most others. Bradford will be the second stop on the Winston Cup Road Show's national tour, said Pat Grandy, marketing communications manager for Zippo.

Grandy said the simulator, which allows individuals to control a simulated NASCAR vehicle, has been "a huge draw" during appearances at Winston Cup and Busch Grand National circuits.

The Rolling Thunder Theater allows 60 people at a time to feel what it's like to be Jimmy Spencer. The

show features its own touring band — Blue Miller and the Kick in the Asphalt Band — that plays country-rock music as the live soundtrack for a thrilling ride around the track.

Grandy says the theater is so complete that when the car hits a barrel of water, the audience gets wet.

"It all comes on 18-wheelers," he said, and will be unloaded and set up for the day at the end of Chestnut Street (also known as the Zippo access road) near the Zippo/Case Visitors Center and the Congress Street Zippo plant. But it's only there for one day — open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. — then it'll move on to Pittsburgh.

The Kick in the Asphalt band will also play immediately following the grand opening of the Zippo/Case Visitors Center at 3:30 p.m. Friday.

The last part of the Winston Cup Road Show is the traditional display of two Winston Cup race cars. Those show cars will be on display in addition to the three show cars and Harley-Davidson show bike in the motor-sports tent throughout the meet.

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Case emphasizes quality from start to finish

By SUZANNE ENGLISH
Era Reporter

Action fills every corner of the W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. plant on Owens Way, where associates take raw metal and turn it into knives prized around the world for their quality.

National sales manager John Sullivan explained that the building is divided into two areas: Fabrication, where the knife parts are made, and assembly, where the knives are put together.

The plant definitely starts from scratch, taking in raw coils of brass, stainless steel, chrome vanadium steel and nickel silver.

"We make every blade, every spring," Sullivan said.

Progressive tooling adds the tang stamp and nail mark to the blades, which are cleaned up after they have been blanked. A surface grinder brings them to an exact thickness to match the springs.

The blades are heat treated twice — the foundation for the double-X tang stamp.

"It's heated up to nearly 2,000 degrees, then cooled to 200, which makes it hardened but not brittle," Sullivan said. "Then it is tempered for strength."

The annealing process softens the blade at the stress point, which prevents grinding against the softer metal of the spring. One to 5,000 parts can be done at a time depending on their size.

Some blades are ground on a computer

numerically controlled flat-taper grinder, which grinds between 10 and 12 thousandths of an inch off first one side, then the other.

Some are sent to another grinder, the concave grinder, which grinds both sides at the same time. Grinder operator Jim Coy can do 3,000 small knives or 1,400 to 1,500 large knives a day.

The blades are then smoothed by hand to produce a uniform grind pattern and clean the ends of the blades.

Grinding expert Ralph Banks is one of the professionals responsible for seeing that the blades take two trips through the grinding bowls, which can hold 8,000 to 10,000 blades each as well as a few hundred pounds of polishing material, made of triangular ceramic pieces, water and a grinding or polishing base.

The knives spend 24 hours in the grinding bowls, then another 12 in polishing before an electromagnet pulls out the blades, which are dried and sorted.

While the blades are being prepared, other teams are at work getting handle material ready in the bone room.

The workers go by feel to get the level surface they will need for the materials to adhere. After the bone is smoothed, the end is beveled so it lays flat for drilling.

A jigger puts the jig on the bone, which comes cut in plain slabs. It then

(See QUALITY, Page 49)

Case officials stress safety, proper use for young collectors

Since many Case collectors get their first taste of the product when they are young, Case officials are a bit concerned by moves to ban knives in schools and keep them out of children's hands, which is at odds with a resurgence of interest by young collectors.

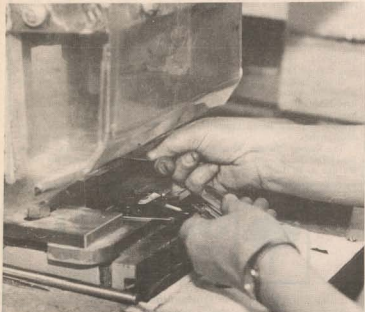
"A lot of the problem is that knives are looked at as a weapon, not a tool," said Jean Cabisca, manager of the Case Collector Club, noting the company stresses proper care and usage of a knife in its "My First Case" instructions and through its junior collectors' club.

"We're working on a junior section" for the newsletter, which will stress proper use and safety tips, she said.

Membership in both the junior and regular collectors' clubs has doubled in the past year, and Case officials hope that parents and youngsters alike realize the value of a good pocketknife.

"Getting a pocketknife is part of a kid's growing up," said sales and marketing manager Dick Kearney. He noted

(See YOUTH, Page 49)



MADE TO LAST FOR YEARS — A W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. associate uses a process known as "crinking," in which the blade is bent to provide proper blade configuration and, in turn, proper blade fall. Even the parts for Case knives are made right at the Owens Way plant, and the "Case XX" trademark is proudly placed on each knife to represent the quality that comes from more than a century of tradition.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

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Quality

(From Page 48)

goes into dye tanks for four hours, then into hot lemon oil, which waterproofs the bone and keeps it from aging. The bone then sits three days to reach full color.

It next is left in ground corn cobs, which draw the oil off the outside of the bone, and the back side is flattened to shape it to the sides of the cover.

As the bone is being prepared, the cover department is welding bolsters onto the scale, to hold it in place until the knives are assembled. The bone slab and welded scale are then riveted together in a series of steps, with the excess ground off.

Six different completion modules, or teams, then take the covered scale, adding a spring, center liner and another spring, pinning them together and cutting off the excess.

Next the blades are added, dipped in oil before assembly. The outside pins are brackered and the center pin is spun in, then brackered for a solid hold.

Next comes the three-stage hafting process, during which knives are run over fast-lying sanding wheels covered with a buffing compound. They grind, shape, color and add definition to the knives.

"Hafting is really the heart of what makes it a Case knife," Sullivan said.

Grease buffing smooths out the bone handle, while the two-step honing process colors and polishes to give the knife its shine.

Next, the knives are bored out for insertion of the shield and sent through an ultrasonic polisher before the shield is inserted. They are then wrapped and packed for shipping, each marked according to the module that produced it.

Members of a work module are cross-trained, Sullivan noted, and are held to account for each knife they produce.

"Each team is responsible as a whole to put out a certain number of knives a day," Sullivan said.

Each knife bears the "Case XX" trademark, the history of which goes back to the early days of W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. In those days, the "XX" was used as a quality check system during the heat-treating of the blades.

When blades were put through the initial hardening furnace, an "X" was

marked on the pan holding the blades. When the blades were returned to the oven for tempering, a second "X" was added. "XX," then, showed that each blade had been fully and properly treated. Today, the "Case XX" trademark is a mark of distinction and quality associates place proudly on every knife they make.

In the shipping area, a new software program has integrated all orders, speeding Case products to the company's customers.

And in the model shop, where warranted and consumer repairs are handled, employees are now cross-trained and can both do repairs and handle consumer calls as well as making samples.

"We can concentrate on the area that needs the most work," explained Sherri Southard. "It helps you understand everything better."

Co-worker Brenda Skaggs agreed, noting that to her a heartfelt "thank you" from a customer whose knife you repaired is a real lift. "That makes your day, and you're a little more aware of what the customer wants."

Youth

(From Page 48)

he personally saw it as a rite of passage: "It meant that you were responsible."

He takes heart from a resurgence of interest in nature and old-time values.

"People are starting to go back outdoors, teaching kids things to do with their hands, rather than play video games," he said. "We have a lot of faith that there is always going to be a core group of people that have those values."



POCKETWORN™

Zippo and Case moved, grew into new locations

By MIKE SCHREIBER
Era Reporter

From a garage on Boylston Street and a small building on a Bradford side street, Zippo Manufacturing Co. and W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. grew to fit their various business locations.

The world-famous Zippo lighter was first produced from 1933-38 above the now-defunct Rickerson & Pryde garage at 5 Boylston St. The office at that time was located at 21 Pine St. in back of what was then Simmons Laboratories.

"Mr. Blaisdell always had his office someplace else besides the factory," according to Rudy Bickel, a retired longtime Zippo employee who currently gives presentations to local groups on the past sites of both companies.

Zippo moved one step closer to its current location in 1938 when it purchased a former garage at 36 Barbour St., next to the Pennsylvania Army National Guard building. It was in this relatively small space that the office and factory were first joined, with

manufacturing done in the back.

During that time, the small building didn't have the capability or the room for every step of production. The cases for the lighters were not made in Bradford, but in Smetthport, by the Backus Novelty Co., according to Bickel.

Bush Brothers in Olean, N.Y. did plating work for the still-fledgling company.

"Zippo didn't have a plating machine at that time, so they sent a truck back and forth to Olean all day long," Bickel noted. It wouldn't be until the 1950s that Zippo would acquire plating ability.

In 1944-45, Zippo purchased both the Brown and DuPont buildings at 29 and 27 Barbour St., respectively. Four years later, in 1948, Zippo purchased property at the corner of Barbour and Whitney Place, site of the old Bradford Volunteer Fire Department. In November of that same year, Zippo added the Emery parking lot to its now growing collection.

Zippo bought the Clyde Cleveland Building at 8 Whitney Place in 1950. But it was in October of that year, (See LOCATIONS, Page 53)

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Local homes opening doors to meet visitors

By ROGER NEWTON
Special to the Era

Due to the filled motels and other commercial facilities, collectors visiting Bradford for the annual Zippo/Case International Swap Meet are turning to private homes for accommodations during their local stay.

"We chose a residence because we were told that Bradford is already booked out for months," said Franz Kummer, who along with a friend, Roland Popp, are coming from Germany in July to stay with Era photographer Francis Long and her husband, Dale, on Nelson Avenue.

Kummer, who will be staying three days, says he met Long through the Internet the first of the year when he needed some photos for a Zippo website he runs in his home country. They have communicating over e-mail ever since. Later when he told her he would like to come back this year (he came last year) to visit the swap meet in Bradford, the Longs invited him and Popp, both graphic designers, to stay at their house.

Long, who had heard that housing was booked for the swap meet within 50 miles of Bradford, said she thought inviting the men to her home would be advantageous to all parties: the visitors would have a place to stay (she has a spare bedroom and an office with space) and the Longs could learn some things about Germany.

"I just thought it really would be interesting, because we never had international visitors before as overnight guests," Long said. "I'd like to show him the sights around here in Bradford plus have a typical American family cookout. It just seems quite interesting to broaden our horizons. We probably can't get there (Germany) so he could come here."



GAVORSKY

She said she would like to take her new friends to some of the area restaurants, for a typical American meal and one that could provide a more international flavor. Kummer might bring such treasures as French champagne and wine.

"I own about 500 lighters," Kummer said of his collection. "I got involved in the hobby when my wife gave me my first Zippo as a present. Roland got into collecting later but had his first Zippo many years before me."

Kummer said that while Germany doesn't have anything (except perhaps the Volkswagen Beetle) which is signature to it, the Zippo lighter could be compared to the Swiss army knives, Maglite and Leatherman Tools.

The Longs, who also plan to attend the swap meet, have a modest collection of Zippo lighters, such as lighters commemorating the 1969 moon landing, D-Day and Bradford's Old Centennial in 1976, others from Desert Storm and Desert Shield, and a set of four which depicts the Rain Forest.

Mark Graham of Boliver Drive is also opening up his home for swap meet visitors for the first time. He will be hosting Lawrenceville, Georgian Gene Gavorsky, also known as "The Lighter King."

Graham, who works for Zippo, made contact with Gavorsky through a classified advertisement in *The Bradford Era*. He was also figuring to broaden his cultural horizons. "It might be nice... I want to get to know people," he said.

Graham, who does not have a large collection of lighters, also plans to attend this year's meet. "I always go down and look around. The only time I bought was on a couple special occasions such as the Olympics."

"This will be my first year to do this event," said Gavorsky. "I placed an ad in your paper. Mark was one who responded, and I accepted his offer."

"I placed an ad because I knew... that this event is growing to such an extent that it would be hard to get a hotel or motel room right in the Bradford area," Gavorsky explained.



BRADFORD VISITORS — From left, Franz Kummer and Roland Popp will be coming from Germany to visit Bradford for the Zippo/Case International Swap Meet. Instead of staying in a hotel, they will be the guests of Dale and Francis Long of 34 Nelson Ave.

In addition to other brands of lighters "I have many fine Zippos, that's why I'm attending this swap meeting," said Gavorsky, who is a maintenance technician for the Avery Dennison label company, and collects and sells lighters and information about them as a hobby and small part-time business.

Gavorsky said that he would drive up

from Georgia, visit relatives in Ohio and arrive in Bradford a day or two before the swap meet. He will visit relatives again in Ohio on his way home.

Last year he went to a convention in Las Vegas. Next year he plans to attend the Pocket Lighters Preservation Guild meet.

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Case Cutlery sprang from knife-making family

(Editor's note: This brief history is largely drawn from "Case — The First 100 Years," written by Bradford native James S. Giles and published in 1989).

W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. was one of several companies that sprang from the sprawling Case family of Little Valley, N.Y., late in the 19th century.

In 1886, a group of Case brothers including W.R. Case joined together with brother-in-law J.B.F. Champlin to form the Cattaraugus Cutlery Co. W.R. Case's son, J. Russell Case, joined the company as a young man, starting as a grinder and finisher in the factory.

But soon after Cattaraugus Cutlery's formation in 1886, three of J. Russell Case's uncles left the company to form Case Brothers Cutlery Co. of Little Valley, which sold knives made by Platts Cutlery Co. at Cattaraugus.

J. Russell Case followed his uncles and became a worker/salesman for Case Brothers, working in the factory winters and hitting the road with a horse and wagon each summer.

The Case reputation had spread, and he found ready buyers at feed and hardware stores, general stores, pawn shops, farms and other hotels, who accepted them as payment for room and board. But his success angered his uncles, who found he made more in commissions than they did from production.

When they proposed to cut his commissions, he left the company and moved on to establish his own, naming it W.R. Case & Son Cutlery Co. after his father but using the picture of his bearded 81-year-old grandfather, Job, in his advertising — with permission.

On Dec. 31, 1903, the company was incorporated in the state of New York as W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Co. In 1905, J. Russell Case proposed incorporating the company in Pennsylvania with the help of his brother-in-law, Harvey N. Platts, who operated Platts Cutlery Co. in Eldred. Plans called for building a new plant in Bradford with the Platts equipment to be moved into it.

The company received its charter from the state of Pennsylvania on Feb. 9, 1905. The city's West End Development Associa-

tion donated a \$2,000 lot on Bank Street, and a building was erected in time for production to begin that same year.

The company purchased smaller surrounding razor shop businesses to expand its line of cutlery and added on to the plant in 1910.

After the Case Brothers Cutlery Co. in Little Valley was destroyed by fire in 1911, W.R. Case & Sons purchased its double-XX trademark that signified the blades had been heat-treated twice. Also in 1911, J. Russell Case bought the Case Manufacturing Companies of Warren and Little Valley, with uncle Andrew J. Case taking over the Case Brothers liabilities and receiving W.R. Case stock in return.

That same year, W.R. Case & Sons purchased Crandall Cutlery Co., owned by J. Russell's brother-in-law, Herbert E. Crandall, who took payment in Case stock.

The company continued to grow, often buying knives from other companies to fill orders beyond its capacity. By 1925, its production employees totaled 116.

W.R. Case & Sons outgrew the Bank Street facility within 20 years, and in October 1929 — as it happens, the day of the stock market crash — the company moved into a new factory along Russell Boulevard, which the owner named for himself.

Years later, a new office facility was added across the street to free up more room for production, and strangely enough, J. Russell Case chose Dec. 7, 1941 — Pearl Harbor Day — to move in. After World War II, a Quonset-style storage building was added at the rear, later joined by a cabinet shop and garages.

Over the years, majority ownership in the company passed from J. Russell Case, who had no children, to his niece, Rhea Crandall Osborne, who had married John O'Kain after the death of her first husband, Harold E. Osborne. When John O'Kain retired as company president and became chairman of the board, Rhea's son, J. Russell Osborne, became president, followed by his son, John R. Osborne Jr.

In 1972, the company faced a turning point. Neither machinery nor process had seen major upgrades in years, and the Oc-

cupational Safety and Health Administration was demanding improvements. The employees were calling for wage increases, and O'Kain was in failing health and unable to deal with the problems.

The company was sold to American Brands Inc., a Fortune 500 corporation prepared to invest the needed money to make high-quality knives. Management remained essentially the same.

In 1973, the company purchased 20 acres of land south of the city along Toad Hollow Road, and in 1974 began construction of a new facility. Toad Hollow was renamed Owens Way, after the Owens-Illinois container factory on the same road.

The new building was completed late in 1974 and production started in spring 1975. On Sept. 24 of that year, state and local dignitaries attended a formal dedication of the new plant. A few departments remained on Russell Boulevard, with the last three relocated in 1987.

Still, nearly all production was done by hand, which required too many hourly employees. American Brands suggested Case find ways to reduce the payroll, but though attempts were made, little was accomplished by the end of 1980.

Finally, American Brands began making changes, cutting employees and installing new managers. But in June 1988, the company and its workers could not come to terms on a new contract and a

seven-week union strike ensued. After the strike was settled, American Brands announced that the company would be sold.

On Dec. 31, 1989, ownership was transferred to James F. Parker, a businessman from Chattanooga, Tenn. The new management stressed the bottom line. The Case factory knife collection — the first of each knife produced — was taken from the factory and sold, a tremendous upset to its long-time workers.

In December 1990, Case was purchased out of bankruptcy by River Associates, a Chattanooga, Tenn.-based investment firm.

The turnaround was complete by May 1993, when the company was acquired by Zippo Manufacturing Co. to begin the process of returning Case to its previous position as the number-one maker of fine quality, natural handle pocketknives.

In the ensuing years, Case knives have regained their reputation for quality, and George T. Brinkley, Case's president and chief operating officer, knows exactly who to thank.

He stressed the importance of the team-based, collaborative environment that has been developed at the company.

"Of everything we've done at Case, this is what we're most proud of," he said. "We believe — we know — the success we have enjoyed here has been because of the culture we have developed."

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Many hands work to make a Zippo lighter

By PAT FRANTZ CERCONO
Era City Editor

Before you can get your hands on a Zippo, it has to travel through many more at the company's manufacturing plant on Congress Street.

Making the world-famous windproof lighter involves many steps, from making the inside and the outside of the lighter and fitting the two pieces together to covering the portable flame with its own special design and packaging the product along with its famous lifetime guarantee.

And since the company is now making about 80,000 lighters a day, plant employees have to repeat that process that many times amid the clicks, ca-chunks, whirs and bangs of the company machines.

At nearly every work station, boxes and boxes of soon-to-be lighters are stacked next to the various machines. One box alone holds 800 lighters.

The process begins in the case fabrication department, where large coils of brass lie on pallets on the floor. Wide strips of brass, or sterling silver or gold, are fed through a press.

In one part of the room, a press called a Waterbury Transfer Press punches out of the metal the top and bottom of the lighters. From there, the pieces move by conveyor belt to a welder, who welds the tops and bottoms together, uses a machine to stamp the logo and dating code

on the bottom of the lighter and put a notch in the side for the hinge.

If the metal strips are fed into a newer press called the Minster Press, all of that is done at once — tops and bottoms are made, the bottom is stamped and the notch-slot is cut out.

Anita Wolkott, quality assurance supervisor, said the company is currently using both presses to produce enough lighters to meet the ever-increasing demand.

The parts are then welded together and move farther along where their edges are machine buffed. Then the rest of the lighters' surfaces are buffed, some by hand, others by machine. The lighters buffed by hand are those made of precious metals like sterling silver or those lighters that need another buffing after coming out of a machine buffer.

At another end of the plant, strips of stainless steel are fed into a machine called a regular inside blanker which stamps out the inside casing of the lighter.

In the screw machine department, the components for the striking portion of the lighter are made. In inside assembly, all the inside units are then assembled — wheel, wheel rivet, cam and cam rivet, cam spring and eyelet, wick, cotton, felt flint and flint spring assembly.

The inside and the outside of the lighters are assembled in the fit-up depart-



MAKING THEM PRETTY — Steve Bigley, an employee of Zippo Manufacturing Co., cleans an emblem before affixing it to the surface of a lighter, one of several processes that are completed at Zippo's Congress Street plant to give the lighters as distinctive a look as possible.

(Era photo by Francie Long)

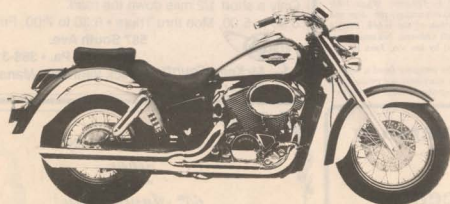
ment, where workers quickly combine the two sections and make sure the lighter produces the distinctive "click."

Once the lighters go through the fit-up department, they are then cleaned, inspected and packaged, along with the lighter's lifetime guarantee.

However, lighters travel through sev-

eral other departments at the Congress Street plant on their way to completion, (See PROCESS, Page 53)

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Edward Jones

Locations (From Page 49)

when property at 30, 32 and 34 Barbour St. was purchased, that the wheels were set in motion for its current modern business offices.

"The old factory was located on the second floor of the current two-story building where the stock room presently stands," Bickel said. "Etching was done on the first floor and engraving was done

on the second floor before Congress Street."

In 1951, the McKenna property at 28 Barbour St. was acquired and torn down for what is currently the Zippo office parking lot. Work on the new main office building began in 1954, and employees moved in in June 1955.

The year 1954 saw the development of

the current factory on Congress Street, which remained relatively the same until 1992, when additions and renovations to the facility were conducted. The Barbour Street offices received a facelift in 1993 when the facade was covered in black one-sided see-through glass. The Zippo Family Store and Museum came into existence in 1993; the Zippo/Case Visitors Center opened earlier this month.

Even though Bradford is the home of the Zippo lighter, the company did purchase property north of the border in Canada during the 1940s. "The Canadian lighters are made out on Congress Street," though the Canadian plant does some assembly, Bickel noted.

As with any successful company, the moves Zippo made were done for the good of production, but at the same time, the company has been able to sustain the quality the customer expects. "The only thing that has changed is the way they decorate the lighters," according to Bickel. "They went from being engraved to etching to emblems. Every time an improvement is made, production gets better."

Just as Zippo moved prior to finding its current home, so did W.R. Case and Sons Cutlery Co., which joined the Zippo family in 1993.

Case moved to Bradford from Little Valley, N.Y. in 1904 and located its first production operation on Bank Street.

The building is currently occupied by

Wilson Air Conditioning, Inc.

According to a listing of contracts from the book "Case, The First 100 Years" written by James S. Giles, contracts from the Bank Street location date back to 1910 and then some.

Although not much is known about the Bank Street location, it is known that approximately 20 years later, the facility became too small for the company's growing work force.

Case then moved to a new location on Russell Boulevard, just off East Main Street. The company, named the Case Land Co., was chartered on Oct. 18, 1920. A little more than 20 years later, due in part to a need for the expansion of the factory, a two-story brick office building was built. The buildings are currently used as incubator space.

In 1973, land was purchased from Quaker State Oil Corp. on Toad Hollow Road, later re-named Owens Way in honor of the Owens-Illinois Container Factory. The land was to be used for a modern factory for the production of pocket knives. It was at this time that the company was split between its ongoing operations on Russell Boulevard and the Owens Way plant.

The Owens Way building was completed in 1974 and occupied in 1975. Approximately 10 years later, the last three departments still at Russell Boulevard, the cabinet shop, photo etching and receiving, made the move to Owens Way.

Process (From Page 52)

depending on what they're going to look like.

Those lighters that ultimately will have a rougher-textured surface will traverse through a Harper Brush Finish machine which will do the trick. If they're supposed to get a high polish shine, workers will feed the lighters into the Harper High Polish machine.

If a Zippo is going to feature some sort of painted image, it will be done in the surface imprint department, where employees silk screen designs — one silk screen per color — on the lighter's face which are then painted. Since any dust or lint could ruin the freshly painted surface, the department is off limits. The room is both temperature and humidity controlled, and workers wear hair nets and smocks to keep the area clean. If dust gets on the lighter, it's ruined and has to be done over.

In another area, workers glue emblems onto the lighter's face ranging from In-

dian feathers to pyramids to miniature Zippos. Employees first clean both the lighter's surface and the design to ensure a good bond. Then they use an epoxy glue to attach the image to the lighter. The lighter is baked then cooled to make sure the emblem stays on.

For those lighters getting a powder coat, they're loaded on racks and sprayed with black, blue, gray or green powder. After they're sprayed, the lighters are baked an then inspected.

Several other techniques are used to give lighters their own distinctive looks.

In the etching department, designs are etched onto the surface of the lighters using acid. A relatively new imprint process called Technigraphic transfers an image onto the full face of the lighter by transferring the image to a brass chip that has been powdered coated. It's then applied to the surface of the lighter. Zippos can also be engraved using lasers and given electro-gold or chrome plating.



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Blaisdell Foundation aids children, elderly people in the Bradford area

By DIANE KERNER ARNETT
Special to The Era

Since 1950 the Philo and Sarah Blaisdell Foundation has gone about quietly meeting the needs of McKean County residents, particularly children and the elderly in the Bradford area.

Zippo founder George G. Blaisdell established the private foundation because "the community was so good to him, he wanted to give something back," explained Howard L. Fesemyer, Foundation executive secretary since 1991. Fesemyer had worked for Blaisdell's Zippo Manufacturing Co. 38 years until retiring as executive vice president in 1991.

In the world of philanthropy, the private family foundation is a rarity and one of the few which gives directly to individuals in need. Fesemyer explained that Blaisdell established the foundation "primarily for children" at a time when there were not many government programs in support of children.

Locally, stories abound about the founder's awareness of individual people's needs. How teachers had only to identify children without boots or coats, and the foundation would provide. How

if Blaisdell noticed a child with a physical impairment, he would carefully find out whether the family could afford surgery; if not, the surgery would be paid for anonymously.

"If he saw a need, a legitimate need, he was there," Fesemyer said.

The policy of anonymity, Fesemyer explained, began with Blaisdell and continues with his daughters, Harriett B. Wick and Sarah B. Dorn, foundation trustees and Zippo owners. The third trustee is Dr. Richard McDowell, president of the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford.

The foundation still "keys in on" children's needs, Fesemyer said, though the role has expanded over the years to include giving to medical, educational and community institutions. The foundation's role is that of a last resort when "all other areas of resources have been explored," said Fesemyer.

Both the company and its owners as individuals donate to the foundation, Fesemyer said, another reflection of its origin when Blaisdell began the foundation with his own resources.

As Fesemyer explained, the foundation was a natural outgrowth of the founder's generosity and concern, val-

ues his daughters share. One of the very rare projects to carry the family name is the Harriett Wick and Sarah Dorn Family Center on Congress Street. For many years prior to that, the family helped support the former Blaisdell School for mentally handicapped individuals.

As secretary, Fesemyer has been given authority to screen inquiries and applications, with the trustees meeting as needed. Requests for funding must be in writing in order to maintain the foundation's legal status, he said. Giving is basically restricted to McKean County where Zippo is the number one employer. On the wall of the foundation office in Bradford's Seneca building where Fesemyer works daily, Blaisdell's portrait hangs.

"The community has dedicated benefactors" in the Blaisdell family, Fesemyer said. That family includes Wick's children, Barbara Kearney and Blaise Wick, and Dorn's sons, George Duke and Paul Duke.

"There are so many needs. Thank God Zippo has the resources to fund them," he said. As the future, he said, "There will always be needs. When one is met, another is born."

Zippos known to make music

The world-famous click of the Zippo lighters has recently made its presence known in the music industry, as the group Counting Crows used a Zippo lighter to begin a song on its latest CD "Recovering the Satellites."

Zippo doubts the group was using the company's famous 1969 Moon Landing or any of the series NASA lighters when it recorded the tune. The group, most famous for songs like "Mr. Jones," "Round Here," and more recently "Long December," did start "I'm Not Sleeping" when drummer Ben Mize flipped open a lighter.

The Counting Crows aren't the first musicians, however, to recognize the musical applications of the Zippo. Rock legend Eric Clapton starts off a song with the famous Zippo click and maintains the beat throughout "It's Probably Me" with a flick of the Zippo lighter.

The former member of Cream, known in the '90s for "Tears in Heaven" and an acoustic version of "Layla," sat in on guitar as Sting belted out the lead vocals in "It's Probably Me," taped for the 1992 movie "Lethal Weapon III."



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Case, Zippo save lives in war and peacetime

By SANDRA RHODES
Era Reporter

Whether it's confronting an attacking 10-point deer or signaling an incoming chopper in Vietnam, Case and Zippo products have been around to aid in a rescue.

The Case Collectors Club newsletter features some of these tales in an occasional column of "911 stories."

Sonny Russell of Lexington, Miss., had just finished work at Indian Bluffs Hunting Preserve near Lexington when he felt something hit him in the back, pick him up and throw him down again. His attacker: A 10-point deer out for blood.

Its antlers struck through Russell's leg, the deer shoved his victim all around. "... Wherever he wanted to go, we went. From the patches of blood they found, it was obvious we covered a lot of ground," Russell said in an article in *The Clarion Ledger*.

"I always carry a knife, I believe in carrying a sharp knife," Russell said. In this case, the knife was a Case XX.

After Russell took out his knife, got it open and stabbed himself, he stabbed the deer, first in the stomach, then in the neck several times. After more wrestling, the deer finally left and was found dead later.

Russell survived, but suffered severe injuries including having his teeth kicked out and his stomach ripped open below his waistline. Somehow, Russell managed to get back to his vehicle and drive himself to a hospital, where he stayed a week.

Paul Trudeau shared another Case survival story from November 1987, when he had made his annual deer season visit to the woods of northern Michigan.

While walking peacefully in the early snowfall, he suddenly heard cries for help from a man and woman about 200 feet away who were injured when their snowmobiles wrecked.

Knowing that the injuries were potentially serious with blood visible, Trudeau, with the help of another snowmobiler, had to cut through the heavy canvas suits the victims were wearing in order to stop the bleeding. Trudeau took out his two

'I believe in carrying a sharp knife.'

Case hunting knives and cut through the clothing with ease.

"It's a good thing I had those knives," Trudeau said in a Case 911 story. "When a man's collarbone is four inches out of place, it's hard to twist him around trying to get his clothing off him."

After stopping the bleeding, the rescuers used the Case knives to cut branches from nearby pine trees to make splints for the broken bones. They also cut smaller boughs to make a "rope" to hold the victims on the sled to pull them out of the woods.

After the injured were taken to the hospital, Trudeau returned to the accident scene to retrieve his prized Case knives, but with three or four feet of snow on the ground, his search was fruitless.

When he returned to that same spot the following year, he found both knives on the bare ground, about 200 feet from the scene of the accident. Although the leather handles had been chewed away, the blades were as good as new.

"Other than the leather handles being gone — the porcupines had eaten them — they were in great shape," said Jean Cabisca, manager of Case Collectors Club. "We replaced them and sent them back to him."

Then there are the war stories of how people were saved while in the line of duty by either a Case knife or a Zippo lighter.

When Custer City native George Slotta enlisted in the U.S. Air Force during World War II, J. Russell Case gave his employee a hunting knife, with the instructions to carry it with him at all times.

That advice became invaluable when Slotta's B-24 bomber was badly damaged by ground fire and an air attack by Nazi fighter planes.

Slotta's pilot ordered the crew to get rid of all extra cargo to keep the plane in the air.

Slotta and the crew used his Case knife to cut all that was tied or strapped

down, then tossed out everything, including seats and air tanks. The only things that remained were the crew's parachutes. The plane made it to their base in Italy, so damaged it never flew again.

Slotta gave the knife to the tailgunner of the bomber crew, Sgt. Frank Moreland from Kentucky. When the war ended in 1945, the plane made it to their home in Maryland, in all of their letters, the knife was never mentioned.

Through the years Slotta forgot what happened to the knife. But when Moreland, then from Arizona, returned to Bradford for a visit, he learned Moreland had kept the knife prominently displayed in his home in reverence to the 35 missions of which the cutlery was a part.

No war story is complete without a Zippo anecdote. The lighter has been carried in combat almost since the company was conceived and inevitably, has saved lives.

In 1968, Cole Nocks was in South Vietnam during the Tet counter-offensive. After spending the day photographing a medical civic action program which aided local villagers, the "pathfinder" rangers were assigned to set up a fire base

on a mountain clearing, which would then be used as a helicopter landing zone.

Suddenly, according to Nocks, "all hell broke loose" as sniper fire rained down on the soldiers. With two feet of grass as their only cover, the soldiers waited as night approached.

Then, the radio crackled with news that a helicopter was in range, but would need a sign of where they were to avoid wasting time in the hostile clearing.

As the chopper approached, the pilot was able to home in on a flame coming from a Zippo lighter rising from the grassy area. All the soldiers were saved.

Today, Nocks, who now lives in West Nyack, N.Y., reports that he still has the lighter, and, it still works.



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Zippo/Case International Swap Meet July 18-19, 1997

Zippo's 65th anniversary adds a special element to the annual National Zippo Day and two-day Zippo/Case International Swap Meet. Thousands of Zippo fans and Case enthusiasts from around the world will join in the festivities.

- Grand Opening of new Zippo/Case Visitors Center
- Exciting new Zippo lighter and Case knife commemoratives
- Community events include special sales downtown, commemorative items, shows, and entertainment
- "Light the Night" musical salute with Bob Lucia & The Big Band Revival Orchestra featuring Bradford vocalists Jan Maki and John Zinzi

It's a Celebration!

Extended store hours: Fri., July 18, 6 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sat., July 19, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., July 20, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.