

A1 – Dean Sandvold – 1920 Minnesota

This is my story of obtaining a 1920 Minnesota passenger plate. The 1909, 1910 and 1911 passenger plates are somewhat hard to find, but the 1920 is like the Holy Grail to find. Minnesota had combined 3 years on plates in the years 1912-13-14, 1915-16-17 and 1918-19-20.

324,999 pairs of the 1918-19-20 were made. In 1920 the state was going to run out of plates to issue so the made single year 1920 was created. The Crisler guide book says that numbers 325,000 to 332,000 were made. That's 7000 pairs. I believe the state recycled many in 1921 as I have never seen plates with 330,000.

Finally after a 15+ year search I was able to buy an excellent single 1920. A Minnesota collector had found a decent shape pair and was selling his single plate. Arrangements were made for me to pick it up at the Knoxville Convention. I was extremely happy. To sweeten the deal was that this was the exact same plate that was featured in the February 2006 Plates Magazine. The cover story was Minnesota.

About six months after that I saw a high number 1918-19-20 on a plate dealers website. Number 323403 was for sale at a reasonable price. This was the highest number I had ever seen. Just 1,597 plates away from the start of the single year 1920 plates



B2 - John Ewing - Manitoba

This is a story about a couple of plates that were part of a trunk full of old 1939 Manitoba plates that shingled a shed in the country. My dad, the original ALPCA 688, spotted this shed and asked the farmer to call if, and when, the sad looking shed was ever torn down, as we would love to get a few plates. Well, a call came back shortly thereafter and we returned with a trunk full of old 39's, that were nailed up, shingled style, and now covered with silver paint, except on the overlap area.(we have all seen this abomination!). First picture is my little sister in about 1967, pointing to a trunk full of dirty old 1939 Manitoba plates in the trunk of dad's, virtually new, 1967 Coronet. I can recall many years with these plates sitting along the floor in the garage back home, and moving away from home in the 70's... they all got sold or traded away. So now the pursuit part that I didn't realize I was into until I saw 2 of these 'trunk plates many years later.

One is number D686. I saw it on-line at auction a few years ago (some 50+ years after I last saw them). It was for sale, and, seller would only sell to, and send to, a US address ... enter my AZ plate buddy, '16'. He agreed to make the bid for me and we acquired the plate... now hanging in my 'dealer plate run'... see the picture, with the paint still as found over 50 years ago, with the silver paint over 90% of the plate.

The other plate. is another dealer plate D688. Turns out dad had repainted this plate and it was in a local museum. I mentioned that this had sentimental value as it was restored by dad, and it was his old ALPCA number, 688. A few years went by., and now it is back in the family, up in my garage run of 688's.

You meet a lot of friendly people in this hobby, and that a big part of the fun for me...not to mention the cool plates!



C3 – Beau Yaddie “Bo Islander” The Great Wave Off Kanagawa

I have always been fascinated with art since I was a child, whether it be painting or drawing by hand, or viewing it in museums and or online. The first time I heard that Japan would be unveiling a motorcycle license plate depicting one of the world's most famous artists, I knew that I had to have it for my collection.

The most famous and recognizable work of Japanese art is The Great Wave Off Kanagawa. The art is also known as The Great Wave, or simply, The Wave. The Wave is a woodblock print by the Japanese artist Hokusai. The image depicts an enormous wave threatening a boat off the coast in Sagami Bay while Mount Fuji rises. The Wave is sometimes assumed to be a tsunami. A local student decided to take Hokusai's painting and add a creative addition to it. The student painted The Great Wave Off Kanagawa, and added the Capital Modern Skytree Tower and the Red Mountain Fuji, while still respecting Hokusai's original work. Motorcycle license plate(s) depicting the artwork done by Hokusai and the local student (shown in the photo provided below) were released and announced to only be available to Sumida residents, which is the area of Tokyo where the artist lived in the 18th Century. Additionally, there were only to be 2000 of these plates administered.

My interest in this plate was first sparked in 2016 when I discovered a sample plate of The Wave in the ALPCA magazine. The sample was submitted for a Best Plate of the Year award. From my knowledge through communicating with other collectors, I emphasize that no other collector I've come across had seen the plate before. I had only seen it in an article that was published in Japan regarding the plate. Since the day of the release in 2016, I've been on a hunt for The Wave license plate. The chance of obtaining one of these is like finding a needle in a haystack. Residents of Sumida, Japan, are very strict with distributing their license plate dedicated to their community. Many people have found it challenging to obtain one of the license plates, especially if they have no relation to the Sumida culture or community. I have spent a significant amount of time contacting friends that live in Japan, expressing my desire to obtain one of the rare and fascinating works of art, and if there is a chance, someone could find one. Their response: they have never heard of The Wave, let alone, the rarity I've searched years for.

One license plate collector that I keep in contact with goes to Japan frequently. I reached out to see if he could acquire one of these plates on his next trip, a trip that had no luck. Another collector that I contacted lived in Japan and expressed to me that those that have the license plate(s) in their possession do not want to let them go due to the rarity of the item. I have gone to several license plate meets and have asked other collectors for any lead on finding one of these plates, every time finding myself with zero luck. I expanded my search to social media to widen my chances of obtaining The Wave, only to repeatedly have zero luck once again.

At the beginning of 2018, I met a collector from Canada that collects license plates from Asia. We talked about our collection and what particular license plates he was interested in. It turned out that he was also looking for The Wave. I asked him if he had any luck with getting the plate or any leads, to which he told me that he has been working with another fellow collector for years to get the plate. Six months later, I found myself in a significant trading deal, to which I received a message that he managed to obtain two of The Wave license plates. From there on out, I knew this was my opportunity to acquire one of the plates that I've been looking to add to my collection for years. Due to the collector recognizing my dedication to find at least one of The Wave plates, I knew our negotiation would not be easy, or cheap. After several months of negotiation, I convinced him to trade The Wave plate, rather than sell it. He mentioned that he was looking for an Okinawa plate that would help complete his

collection. I knew that I could get the plate that he was looking for due to networking done over the years. I completed another deal with another fellow collector to obtain the plate that he wanted. Once I was able to get the plate, I found myself in a challenging situation.

The collector that I was trading with was currently living in Taiwan and I would have to send the Okinawa plate to him. Six months before our deal, I tried to acquire a rare tribal plate from Germany that ended up going missing in a foreign mailing system. When working with foreign mailing systems, I become nervous, especially when it comes to sending or receiving something as rare as The Wave. The original tribal plate package was idling in Germany for over three weeks, according to the tracking, and my mind could only think of the package never reaching its destination. When the package from the original deal arrived, it was empty. Once again, I found myself unlucky. Filled with worry, I was reassured when The Wave plate arrived two months later without any damages or going missing. It was one of the happiest days of my life, to which I could finally say my collection began to feel complete. Experiences like this are why I have such a strong passion for what I do when it comes to the community of license plates and their collectors.



D4 – Eric Sundius – 1960's Connecticut and California



Many people started collecting plates after they came across some plates that piqued their interest to collect more. I am a person who knew I wanted to collect plates, but could not find any to start my collection. These two plates are very important to me because they are my first plates. In 1968 I was five years old and living in Connecticut. I was very much into cars and I was lucky I got to keep an instrument cluster from an old car my father junked. I began to get interested in license plates when they started putting small replica plates in cereal boxes (Honeycomb/Alphabits?). I wanted some real plates very badly but my parents did not know where to find any. In June of 1968 my family moved to California and we took a couple of weeks to drive there in our 1964 Ford Galaxie 500 convertible, acquired in 1966, and shown in CA.



My dad had said I would get the CT plates in several months once he registered the car in CA. The CT plates had been on our 1957 Rambler prior to buying the Ford (shown below).



But I was anxious to get my first plate as soon as possible, and it was hard to wait. I kept my eyes peeled for plates along the sides of the highways on the trip to CA but only spotted several hubcaps, which I was allowed to retrieve as consolation prizes. Going through so many states fueled my interest in plates even more.

Several weeks after we arrived in CA my family went down to our local lake in Westlake Village to watch a 4th of July fireworks show. This is a planned community and the artificial lake had recently been built, and there were some rough areas that had not been cleaned up yet. I walked around a little before the show and lo and behold I found a 1967 California plate on the shore of the lake. I was so excited to get my first plate!

I eventually did get our Connecticut plates closer to the end of the year, along with an accompanying toll road plate from the Merritt Parkway. I made some rookie mistakes on these early plates. I did a poor repaint touch up job on the CA plate with Testors model paint, and I peeled all of the stickers off of the rear CT plate so I could see the earliest sticker (I later regretting doing that because I would have preferred the 1968 sticker to mark the time of the move). But these plates started my collection and before long I was acquiring plates from around the neighborhood, as many people moved there from out of state. My hobby was off to a great start. I was not a serious collector until many decades later when I met Dave Pinter and he told me about ALPCA in time to join before the 2003 Tucson National Convention. I will never forget the excitement of the pursuit of obtaining my first plates to start my collection!