

Santini Carbide Safety Lamp

by Dave Johnson

This will probably be a new one for most mining artifact collectors, especially in the U.S. In my 35+ years of collecting mining artifacts I have added two German Wolf, a German Seippel, a German C. Koch and two French Arras carbide safety lamps to my collection and thought I was doing very well. While at the mining artifact show in Wilnsdorf Germany last June an Italian collector brought in a carbide safety lamp I had not seen or heard of before.



The lamp is stamped F.SANTINI FERRARA on the bottom of the base. The water control knob is stamped SANTINI BREVETTO FERRARA. Ferrara is a city in Italy and is obviously the place of manufacture. When I first saw the lamp I thought it was so ugly that I paid it little attention. After leaving the show the more I thought about it the more I regretted not having bought it because it was so unique so I contacted the owner to see if he still had it, he did, and I bought it.

The lamp is all steel with the exception of the threads that attach the water chamber to the carbide chamber, the threads that attach the globe and gauze to the water chamber, the burner assembly, threaded water door and water control valve. The glass is heavy with wave distortions and a few bubbles. There is no locking mechanism, and the globe and gauze must be removed in order to adjust the water valve. There is an overhanging skirt that covers the water adjustment valve when the lamp is assembled. There is no igniter on the lamp, thus the only way to adjust the flame or re-ignite the lamp is to expose the burner, hardly a well thought out design. The only way to remove the globe or gauze is to remove the 4 nuts on the ends of the pillars that hold the skirt and threads in place, pull off the skirt and let the globe and gauze drop out. This is not a very quick or efficient way to accomplish this task.

