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"America's Pipe Store"

**PIPE, TOBACCO & ACCESSORIES SELECTION**

## COLLECTOR'S HIGHLIGHT

Spotlight on Edsel James



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## SPOTLIGHT ON EDSSEL JAMES

The forty-five minute drive from Nashville to Murfreesboro, Tennessee affords me time to think about what to ask a man who has already answered more than his fair share of relevant pipe questions. For Edsel James is not simply a pipe collector or a salesman, he is an endearing anachronism and reminder of a different time in our cultural history. Known by many affectionate aliases such as Mr. Dunhill, a curmudgeon, Captain Dot Head, and just plain ole Edsel, he is a unique character in an industry in dire need of such.

Once initial salutations and formalities have been dispensed with, Edsel asks the inevitable question, "Have you ever been poor?" "Yes I have Edsel, I lived off a ten pound bag of potatoes for two weeks because that's all I had." "Well I guess you know" he replies as his thoughts trail off to another subject. His patented question always requires a response.

In his immaculate den Edsel has assembled a significant pile of articles and magazines that feature editorials about him and Dunhill pipes. I decided that instead of my normal Question & Answer interview, I wanted to pay my respects to a fellow pipe smoker who has spent the better part of his life both enjoying and promoting our wonderful hobby.

Edsel was born in middle Tennessee shortly after God created dirt; I won't share his real age with you. He learned to smoke a pipe at an early age; several of his relatives were pipe smokers. A most important period in his life was his founding of the Three Ten Smoke Shop just off the square in Murfreesboro. Edsel made his living buying, selling and trading pipes. He was absolutely convinced that Dunhill pipes were and remain the finest smoking pipes available anywhere. Edsel received accolades from Dunhill and he kindly showed me pictures of himself receiving an award pictured alongside his lovely wife, Ms. Alice, and Richard Dunhill.

He has worked hard his entire life. Holding a variety of jobs including as a banker, a car salesman, an insurance salesman, shopkeeper, and most notably as a wheeler and dealer of Dunhill pipes, Edsel endeared himself to people all over the country. A real entrepreneur, Edsel owned several businesses. Mind you dear reader, this is not an epitaph, he is just as feisty as ever. However, he has settled into a more leisurely role as a retiree.

Not only has Edsel's wife, Ms. Alice, patiently and lovingly supported his passion of pipes and tobaccos for many a year, she is the epitome of a gracious lady and host. Every night she loads tobacco into several pipes for Edsel to smoke the next day. If you ever have the opportunity to sample her delicious iced fruit tea, seize upon it.

Dunhill Pipes of London owes a great debt to their most ardent champion, Edsel James. Without his tireless promotion of their pipes, Dunhill would not enjoy their level of popularity in the United States. A match made in heaven, the quintessential southern gentleman and the quintessential gentlemen's pipe.

"Have you ever been poor?" he asks me again. No, not really, and neither has he. Edsel has always had a wealth of opportunity and passion at his disposal and he has shared his treasures with many fortunate souls. Thank you Edsel.

On the following pages, you will find numerous pipes from the fabled Edsel James Dunhill pipe collection. We hope that you find a new treasure.

