

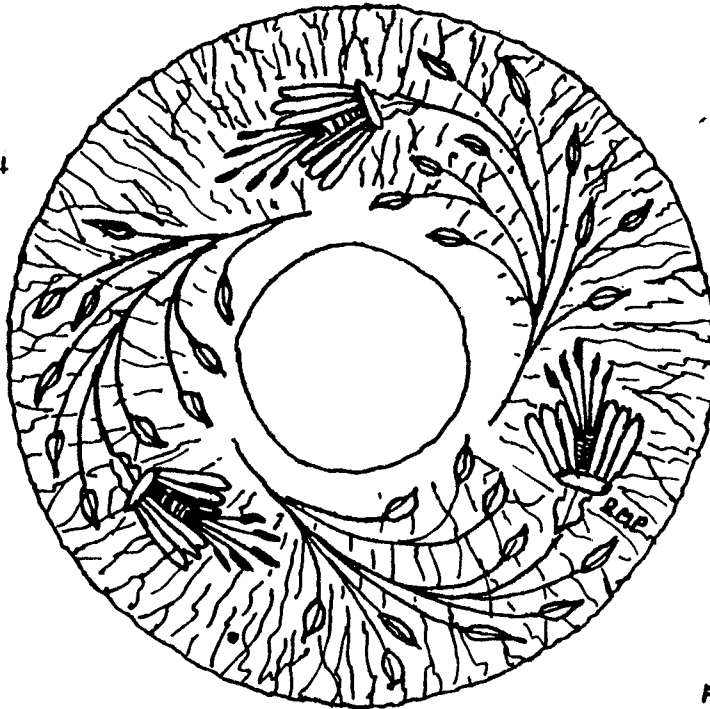
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STRETCH GLASS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

July 1981

A message from your President . . .

At best perhaps, the economy is worse than I thought for more people than I thought or, at worst, maybe I am overestimating the interest in stretch glass. At any rate, the attendance at the Convention in Marietta was not exactly a record-setter. It may be easier for some people to gloss over the bad, but I'm more prone to "tell it like it is."

The officers of the S.G.S. were well represented - in fact, everyone was there. However, there were only five tables of displays (albeit many interesting pieces and some rarities). Fourteen were present for the breakfast on Friday morning and 30 for the brunch on Saturday.

Martin and Helen Stozus from Connecticut, Ken and Ruth Clark from Texas, Roger Van Patten from New York, and Carleton and Rose Schleede also from New York, were there and none of them had any trouble at all with gasoline. As a matter of fact, most agreed that gas was cheaper in Ohio.

The Schleede's had to leave immediately as Rose's mother died the day they arrived. We (Alma and I) as well as the Stretch Glass Society extend our sincere sympathy to Rose and her family.

Roger claims the membership is growing, but one would never know it from the interest shown by said members. Those who were not there (at the Convention) missed an extremely interesting visit to the Fenton plant. We were able to watch one of their real artisans making one of his unique vases and applying a pulled feather decoration. Also, the blue (Velva Blue) stretch bell was production and Mr. Frank Fenton (who accompanied us on the tour of the factory) had the men change the bottom edge crimp as special for the S.G.S. There are four bottom edges which are different from the production model and there were not many made - so they will be scarce.

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Mr. Fenton also gave us a very informative, interesting and illustrated talk after the brunch. A part of his informative talk will be published in this issue of the Newsletter.

I will close by again reminding you that the major reason Clubs fold is because of lack of interest. As far as I am personally concerned, there are many pieces of stretch glass which are much more beautiful (and more rare) than many carnival glass pieces. However, if the attendance at a convention and the interest of members is any measure of popularity, the recent A.C.G.A. Convention in New Philadelphia sure puts the S.G.S. in a precarious position.

If we are not doing it right, then why don't you write and let us (the officers) know what you want?

Plans are already under way for the next S.G.S. Convention and now would be a good time to add your input. I sure hope to see you there.

Ken Magenau

BUSINESS MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the President after the breakfast as a group on Friday morning May 1, 1981. The minutes of the Business Meeting for last year were read by the Secretary-Editor and were approved as read.

Unfinished business: The election of a Treasurer. The Application Blanks which were to be printed by Mr. Fred Lynn were mentioned in the minutes for last year as not having been done. Fred promised to have them out right away and I'm happy to report that he has done so and he has done a great job. Thanks, Fred, for all that work at no cost to S.G.S. He also printed some flyers about the Convention for next year and you will find a copy of each in this issue of your Newsletter. Mr. Jabe Tarter, syndicated antiques columnist, is now putting them in mail which covers most of the U.S.A. This is greatly appreciated.

New business: The site for the 1982 Convention was brought up for discussion. All present agreed that the conventions should be held within the boundaries in which past conventions have been held. Since we have never been to Imperial Glass, a discussion followed to have the Convention for 1982 at St. Clairsville, Ohio, the nearest motel to Imperial.

A motion was made by Jabe Tarter that we hold the Convention close to Imperial Glass in 1982. Seconded by Fred Lynn. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Ken, Alma and I will make a trip in late August to the Holiday Inn in St. Clairsville, Ohio, to look over the facilities there. Fred Lynn has made the reservations and a confirmation has been received for May 6 - 8, 1982. Our contact there is Ms. Ruth C. van Curen, Catering/Sales Coordinator. The address of the Holiday Inn is RFD 4, St. Clairsville, Ohio 43950 - phone 614-695-0100.

Election of Treasurer: Motion was made by Berry Wiggins that Roger Van Patten be re-elected for another two-year term. Seconded by Mrs. Mildred Bicksler. No further nominations. Elected unanimously.

A vote of thanks was given Berry Wiggins for all of his work and help in setting up the Convention at the Lafayette Motor Hotel for this year. Everything went very smoothly.

No further business. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul B. Miller, Secretary-Editor

TREASURER'S REPORT

After last year's convention we had costs for the hospitality room, entertainment, etc., but I was able to put back in the treasury \$803.22. This was in August so the figures I'm going to give you will sound a little bleak but don't be misled by them because we are still growing and we're still going.

There is \$100.00 being held by our Secretary-Editor for the newsletter, that is in escrow. The cost of the newsletter last November was \$76.82, for January, 1981, \$79.74, April's was \$78.62 for a total of \$229.18. That is money going out.

We sold two complete sets of newsletters at \$24.00 each, or \$48.00. We sold \$51.55 worth of advertising in our newsletters. Dues have been coming in, they trickle in all year long. Right now we are only 30 days into our new year. We have only 45 paid members but they are still coming in, they come in every week. We have a total now of \$853.09 in our treasury, plus the \$100.00 in escrow. But I predict that if we had our convention in August as we had last year, we would have more than we had last year.

Proportionally it looks pretty good because we are only a couple of hundred dollars short of what we had last year. We are growing and I think it is really worth going on.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Van Patten, Treasurer

Ed. It was a privilege to have as our guest at this Convention Mrs. Barbara Shaeffer, Publisher and Editor of the all-glass magazine GLASS REVIEW. Many of us knew Barbara after meeting her at many of the glass happenings that she has attended in this Area for the past several years. Glass Review was moved to Marietta, Ohio from Costa Mesa, CA, last Fall.

It was also a privilege to have as our guest Mr. William Heacock, author of many books on Victorian Pattern Glass. He has published the two books on The Fenton Art Glass Company which have been such a great help to collectors and especially to all of us who collect Fenton's Stretch Glass. It was nice to have had both of these knowledgeable authors and collectors with us and we invite them to attend any Convention of The Stretch Glass Society.

As Ken has told you, all of the Officers of the S.G.S. were present at the Convention. Now -- if we could only get some of the members interested in making an effort to attend I'm certain more interest would be generated for the good of the organization. There is no need to tell you how discouraging it is for a few to work so hard for a get-together such as this where ALL can learn a great deal, and have so few turn out. You just miss the whole point of what the S.G.S. is all about, and that is just too bad.

On the other hand, we attended The American Carnival Glass Association Convention in New Philadelphia, Ohio, last week - July 8-9-10-11, and I could not even estimate the number of enthusiastic Carnival Glass collectors who made a great effort to get to the Convention and bring their most treasured possessions to share with others. I overheard someone say there were 261 attending the banquet, and I do not doubt that. Many came from all over the U.S. and Canada, and one young collector, Mr. Ray Notely, came from London, England.

Many collectors brought glass not only to display but to sell. I just have to tell you this: many brought Stretch Glass and didn't know it from Carnival, and every piece of Stretch that was for sale was sold. That should tell you something. We just want a better showing of members for the Convention next year and we expect you to attend.

Gonnie is still waiting for your response to the poll for favorite colors. We have had only 5 respond. I apologize for not putting it in front of the NL as some of you may not want to tear the sheet from your copy. I suggest you do as the others did - go to the Library, or Post Office, or elsewhere and make a xerox copy of the sheet. We would like your response.

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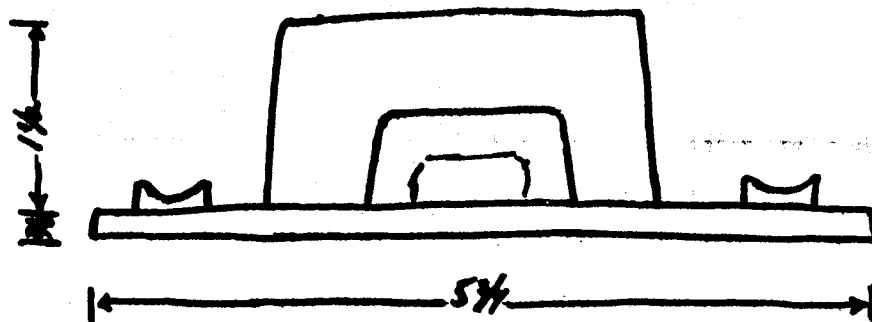
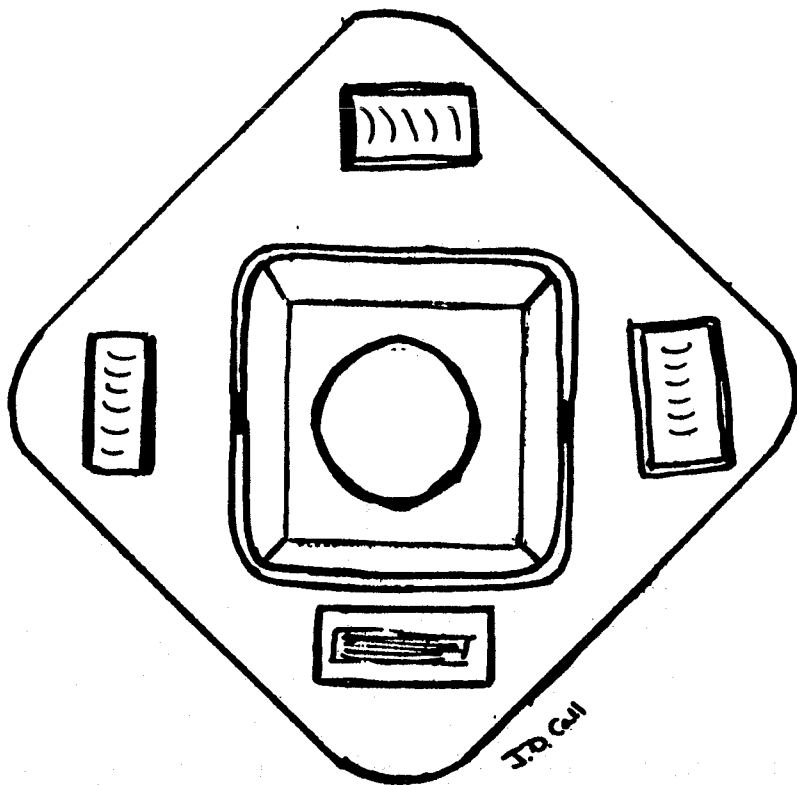
Dear Paul:

Enclosed are two photos and two drawings of a very unusual Stretch Glass item that we picked up at Brimfield in May. The photos may not reprint, but you can see the color. This would appear to be an ashtray-cigarette holder of some kind. It is TANGERINE (no question about the color, with super iridescence. Jim has drawn it from two perspectives - (1) looking down on the top and (2) side view. (And I never knew he could draw!)

This piece has a collar base edge on the underside and a slight recess as if it might have fit on top of something else. The top side has three "cradles" and what appears to be a holder for the small boxes of wooden matches. The center is an open square with two grooves or notches that could also cradle a cigarette. Mind you, we're just guessing - we've never seen anything quite like it.

Maybe Mr. Fenton can shed some light on it. It's definitely Tangerine (yellow-amber base glass with deep orange color on the surface). I'm afraid my description is less than adequate but hopefully someone out there has a clue.

Pat and Jim Call, N.H.



Talk by Mr. Frank M. Fenton, Chairman of the Board,
The Fenton Art Glass Company, Williamstown, West
Virginia, to The Stretch Glass Society, May 2, 1981

I wrote out what I have to say and I'm going to try to stick pretty close to the script because I had a 28 minute talk scheduled out at the Heart of America Carnival Glass group and they tell me I talked for 55 minutes. I'll try not to do it quite that way here. But it's great to have you here in Marietta and to have had you at the factory yesterday. We enjoyed it very much, and I hope you will come back again. After I finish this talk I'll be glad to answer any questions for those who are still awake. Any questions about the tour yesterday or about anything else, I'm not going to talk about Bill Heacock though.

I'm going to talk a little bit about Fenton and the early years of Fenton, not very much Northwood gets in here, and then I'm going to do what the school teachers do with the little kids, when they bring something and show it and tell something about it, so I'm going to have some show and tell. I think it is easier for you to understand, particularly with the crazy questions that Paul wrote to me. About the only way I can answer those understandably is to show and tell.

Right now I'd like to recognize the fine research work of Berry Wiggins. Berry has been spending hundreds of hours in libraries all over the country, including the Library of Congress. He has done a great amount of work in trying to find out information about - studying the trade journals really - for information about stretch glass, and about Fenton, Northwood, Dugan/Diamond, U. S. Glass, Imperial, and many of the other glass companies. He has done a great amount of work on it. He has shared this information with me, and with Bill Heacock, and Bill that's about all I'm going to let you in on this. He has been particularly interested in Northwood and Dugan and their years of operation up in Indiana, Pennsylvania, which is the town my father was born in. Jabe, you are not supposed to end a sentence with a preposition. Thinking about that, some of you may know of E. B. White who wrote Charlotte's Web. In one of his letters to a friend of his he was talking about the fact that he knew a sentence that ended with five prepositions, and if I can remember it I'm going to tell it to you. (This has nothing to do with glass).

The father was taking his little boy upstairs to read to him, a book that the little boy was not too much interested in, but the father was, and when he got upstairs he realized he had forgotten the book. So he went back down and when he brought it back up, the boy said "what did you bring that book that I don't want to be read to out of up for."

Now I'll get back to Berry. Thank you, Berry. I believe that what you've been doing is a real labor of love and I thank you for what you've done and what is still to come as you and Bill complete your book on Northwood, some day I hope. Maybe it's going to be a trilogy. I'm not sure, it may end up Northwood, Dugan, Diamond, or you might call it "40 years of making glass in Indiana, Pennsylvania." Now, those of you who want to order the book can place your order with Bill.

This is where I repeat a little bit, Byron (Rinehart), you can go to sleep a little while now. If you were a young man 26 years old and you had worked for Jefferson, and for Northwood, and you knew what their best sellers were, and you had been working in the glass industry for six years, you had been buying glass blanks from Northwood and from Imperial, perhaps from Jefferson, and you had been decorating these in your own decorating shop and selling them, and then if you decided that you were going to make your own glass, and go down to Williamstown and build a factory, how would you decide what things you were going to produce? What would be the first things that you would make? Well, so would I. If you follow me properly I think you would find that first you would need those glass blanks you had been decorating, so you would make the same thing that Northwood, Jefferson and Imperial had been making that you had been buying and decorating, as you want those same things. So you would make those first in order to keep the customers you have for the decorated products. Probably if I'd been doing it I would have sold those things for a little bit less than the other fellows in order to make sure that I got

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a share of the market. I'm convinced that is what Frank L. Fenton did when he first started to make glass in Williamstown back in 1907. So what kind of glass did they make in those early years, particularly during the first year? What did we do in the first six months? We don't really have any records for the first six months. We did interview some people who were here during that time. One was Pete Raymond. You say who is Pete Raymond? Well, Pete came to work for us in January of 1907, he was a glass worker, about 20 years old, and he retired at age 74 from the glass factory, so he had been with us a long time, and he was here when we first started. When I asked Pete, "what did they make then?" He said, "mostly we made tumblers in crystal." All the glass companies made tumblers and they were pretty much alike. So to get started and to work out the different bugs in making glass for the first time in a new factory building, why we made tumblers and water sets.

Of course, we took those tumblers and Dad applied his own decorations. I find it difficult to tell the difference between Northwood's cherries that were decorated and Fenton's cherries that were decorated on the same kind of blank. I think there is a difference but somebody hasn't given me the key yet to unlock it. Berry will probably do that before too long.

We made the Water Lily and Cattail pattern, this is not a stretch pattern, but just to explain a little bit about our methods in digging up this information. During that first period of operation we made the Water Lily and Cattail pattern. Pete Raymond says we did; he remembers making it in crystal. You don't very often see a crystal piece. Bill Heacock tells me that is not enough, that "I can't depend on someone's memory for doing what we did." He says, "Frank, the fact that you remember that you made it back in 1936 when you first started to work in the glass factory, isn't enough. I want some documentary proof." This was Bill yakking at me. Well, the think we use for documentary proof is the inventory records, I've got inventory record here for the first 30 years, and they go clear back to 1908. Some of them are not very clear, and we miss a few years, we don't have 1909. I don't know how that one got lost, but it's gone.

We also have mould drawings. I brought some old drawings along, we have a whole bunch of books like this full of mould drawings. I'll use it later on to explain some of these things. We have catalog illustrations which most of you have seen illustrated in Bill's books, and in others. All of that can be combined with the memories of the individuals to give us a pretty good idea of what was made back in 1908. We actually have the mould drawings of the Water Lily and Cattail pattern. That pattern, incidentally, was also made by Northwood and by Dugan. The drawings that we have were made by Hipkins back in 1906 and they have F.A.G. Company written right on them and so, in addition to knowing that we had the glass in the right colors, we also found mould drawings.

Of course, we want to know how we made Chocolate Glass in 1907. Again, Pete Raymond says that we did make Chocolate Glass in 1907, but in addition to that we have a letterhead, an old letterhead with a letter dated July of 1907. On that letterhead it lists the various colors that we make, printed on the letterhead, and one of those colors is Chocolate Glass. This is pretty solid information, the type of thing that we try to depend on. Anyway, we have this letterhead and it's on display in the Museum. We have a whole letterhead display in the Museum, and it tells a little history of Fenton if you want to study it. They are in chronological order and each one has the letter or a list or something else that happens to be written on it and it gives sort of a history. You can see how the name's changed over the years, peoples names on the letterhead. One of the letterheads says "decorators of glass" and then later on it shows "manufacturers of glass." Look at it if you get back to the Museum. I like that display very much.

Another source of information that we have is The American Flint Glass Workers Union, they call it The American Flint, this is their trade journal, it goes to all the trade, and each Local Union has a correspondent who writes in to The American Flint and gives articles, little bits of information about his company and the people of his company. Today, they send in information the same way they did back in the early years. As a matter of fact, The American Flint Glass Workers Union was founded about 1879, and they just celebrated their 100th Anniversary a couple

of years ago. They have been around a long time, in fact, we had the Union organized (the first Local was formed in February, 1907) just a month after we started to make glass at Williamstown. Anyway, this little magazine has these letters in them and I want to quote from one in June of 1913. There's a fellow named P. T. Sorsby, the P stands for Percy. He writes, "This firm seems to be gradually changing their line from iridescent sprayed ware to plain crystal for cutting which is not as satisfactory to the men before the heat as it calls for more particular selection." In other words, they could get by with things in iridescent glass that they couldn't get by with in plain crystal, so the men preferred to work in iridescent glass. That covered up a lot of the sins, including those blisters I was talking about, Berry.

Another quotation from The American Flint in 1916 is that "The Fenton Art Glass Company of Williamstown, West Virginia, is working in full as usual. They are turning out a fine line of iridescent ware, both pressed and blown. This company also has a cutting shop in connection with their plant." Our inventory records at that time, 1917, 1918, are very incomplete. We really don't have very much on those inventories. We did have a slug of butterflies that showed up in 1918. I'm going to be through with this prepared part very quickly.

Another quotation that I want to give you at this time even though I gave it to you 3 or 4 years ago when I talked to this group. It is from the June 28, 1917, issue of The Pottery, Glass & Brass Salesman. It describes the beautiful line of iridescent glassware received from The Fenton Art Glass Company. Here's the quotation: "Included in the showing are novel baskets with hand formed handles in dainty silvery iridescence. Pinched vases with flared mouths. Uniquely formed compotes, relish dishes and candy trays. The line has been correctly named Silver Sun and is shown in a number of delicate iridescent colors. Every piece is in a different shade while some have been produced in a striking crackled effect." I think that this is the first reference that we have to Fenton's stretch glass. I think that perhaps Diamond might have made it in January of that year, and Northwood might have made it the year before, 1916. That's the way I remember it. Berry is sitting over there nodding his head.

Two more references, a reference to Fenton glass in April, 1914. The Pottery Gazette, which is an English magazine, says, "the Fenton Art Glass Company's wares are also freely represented in Mr. Kraft's rooms." That was our representative in England. "They have been responsible for a new rose tinted glass having an amber edge, which is supplied in dishes, plates, nappies, vases and bon bons. This is an advanced line of a quite new production which has been brought out to replace or at least to assist the iridescent glassware of which a great quantity is sold in the North of England and by the bazaars." So there is a lot of it over there in England if you want to go look for it.

In the period from 1924 to 1927 - who is here who knows what Victoria Green is? Victoria Green Bill does. Victoria Green or Victoria Topaz. Well, here's a piece of Victoria Topaz - I get my first show and tell here. That's Victoria Topaz. Iridized, opalescent. I want to read a quotation about it. There were tumblers that matched this but I've never seen one of them, so I'll read about Victoria Green, which was the same general thing. This is the April 14, 1924, issue of China Glass and Lamps. The trade notes were written by Jane Littell. She mentions Fenton's new Venetian Red in marbled effect, using cobalt bases instead of black. She says, "The combination of Venetian Red and cobalt is much more alive than the same Venetian Red combination with black." So Berry, you'd better look for some of those bases in cobalt. She continues, "Another Fenton item that is unusual was a line that includes as yet only ice tea and lemonade sets and bases of striped, opaque and clear yellowish green glass with handles and coasters of cobalt. The color is known as Victoria Green." That was in April of 1924. The inventory confirms that we were making items in Victoria Green in that year, and then in the January 18, 1926, issue of China, Glass and Lamps, they mention a new color in refreshment sets, lemonade sets and vases as Victoria Topaz in a new shape.

The inventory of that year shows three different sizes of these pitchers, and each one was also made into a vase, so that there were three different sizes of vases. There was one vase that must have had two handles on it because it shows a different number and is marked handled.

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Kitty Umbraco in California has one of these pitchers, and she says there are either two or three different sizes. We also have the mould drawings, not in this book but we have the mould drawings for these pieces but we have no catalog illustrations.

While we are talking about inventory records, just one interesting observation -- a 1924 inventory shows 17 pieces of the 549 candlestick in Chocolate Glass. No. 549 is normally one we made in stretch glass. It also shows 2 pieces of No. 607 salver and base in Chocolate Glass. It shows a dozen of the No. 600 salver and No. 7 vase in Chocolate Glass, and a dozen of the No. 600 salads in Chocolate Glass.

The inventories of 1924 show Victoria Green, the No. 227 vase and the 891 vase and I've never seen either one of them, but they must be out there somewhere. It also shows a Scale Band pattern in Marigold, Carnival Glass, with a sugar, creamer, spooner and a crimped comport in Scale Band pattern. And I've never seen any one of those. The Museum has a number of Scale Band pieces in tumbler, pitcher, the berry set, but I've never seen a table set.

To be continued.

Dear Paul:

Thank you for your nice letter. I am indeed happy to be a member of The Stretch Glass Society and look forward to receiving the newsletters. I am learning many things about stretch by reading the back issues of the newsletters that you sent me.

The availability of stretch glass in Las Vegas is very limited. The main source is from flea markets that are held every two or three months at the Convention Center. Many of the exhibitors are dealers from California and Arizona who hope to mix business and gaming fun while staying in Las Vegas for a weekend.

The most unusual items that I have found are a large ice blue diamond concave basket with a silver plated handle and a pair of 7 inch morning glory shaped car vases in sapphire blue. I was delighted to find one such vase and was lucky enough to find its twin six months later! I solved the awkward problem of how to display and use the vases by purchasing a pair of 2 inch crystal candlesticks to serve as bases.

I've enjoyed reading about the "new" Velva Rose and Velva Blue stretch glass being made by Fenton. Are any pictures or catalogs available? If so, would you please publish the address? I have had trouble locating two books and would greatly appreciate an address to write and purchase them. The books are Fenton Glass, The First Twenty-Five Years by William Heacock, and Carnival and Iridescent Glass by Rose Presznick. Until now, Stretch Glass In Color by B. Wiggins and Iridescent Stretch Glass by the Umbraco's have been my bibles and I have their pictures memorized.

I learned about The Stretch Glass Society from Pat Call of Metal Kettle Antiques. I have purchased several items from her and she mentioned that I would probably like to be a member of the club. She was right! My favorite color to collect is blue, yet I can't resist other colors in stretch if I like the shape of the item.

Looking forward to reading future newsletters.

Sincerely,

Mrs. M. Robb - Las Vegas

Ed. All information requested in the above letter from Mrs. Robb has been sent. This is the kind of letter I like to receive. She expresses appreciation and enthusiasm, tells of her

recent finds, and asks questions. I sincerely hope you will write again. I must tell you that Mr. & Mrs. Ted Parent of Canfield, Ohio, disposed of the remainder of the collection of new Carnival Glass and the books of the late Mrs. Rose Presznick. I talked to the Parents at the ACGA Convention in New Philadelphia, Ohio, last week and asked them about Rose's books. All of them have been sold. I doubt they will ever be reprinted so you have a real collectible that can only increase in price rapidly if you own a set of her books. Her drawings are truly superb.

Dear Paul:

As always, it was nice hearing from you and The Stretch Glass Society is always on my mind.

You asked about the "Big Sale" at Tiffin Glass Company and the closing of the plant. I was invited to the sale but didn't purchase anything. There were many fine one-of-a-kind pieces for sale. Most of the items were of the nature for which we do not receive requests. I did browse around the stemware items but many were chipped, unfinished, or had identification marks.

While it is true the factory furnaces are shut off, the statement "Tiffin Is Dead" is just conjecture. The same incident occurred in 1963 and they were re-lit, and in 1963 the entire factory was closed. Today they are still decorating and shipping. Once they use the blank inventory it will be decision time - "Do we re-light the furnaces, try to obtain manpower and produce glass, or purchase blanks elsewhere and continue to decorate; or close the doors." The decision will be Towle Silver Company's. It will be interesting to see what they do.

I, for one, think they will continue operations as they are now doing. Possibly expand warehousing, but that, too, is conjecture. So, no finale to the history of Tiffin Glass can be written just yet. I am still having pieces "cut" and they are being acid dipped at the factory. So you see, it is not closed.

Regards,

Carl Assenheimer
Tiffin Ohio Pattern Exchange
Tiffin, Ohio 44883

Ed. Carl is the member who furnished the History of Tiffin Glass which was published in the newsletters some time back. We thank him for this information. Please keep us informed, Carl, if there are any changes.

Another item of interest, since we are going to Imperial for the Convention next year, is that The Lenox China Company has sold the Imperial Glass Corporation to Mr. Al Lorch, just recently. It is my understanding that there will be another "new mark" used. Since the mark is now LIG, an "A" will be added onto the left side of the "L" making it read ALIG. More collectibles!

The membership of The Stretch Glass Society sends sincere congratulations to Dr. & Mrs. Ralph Cooper (Ralph and Helen) of Portland, Oregon, on the celebration of their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary on July 12, 1981.

I have received quite a few requests for information on The Stretch Glass Society due to the recent advertising of our Convention in Marietta, Ohio, and have replied to all of them. To date I have not actually received information that any of them have joined. But I do expect a few new memberships will be forthcoming.

I need material for the newsletter so let me hear of your activities and finds in stretch for this summer. The next newsletter will be in October so you have some time yet.

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By Berry A. Wiggins

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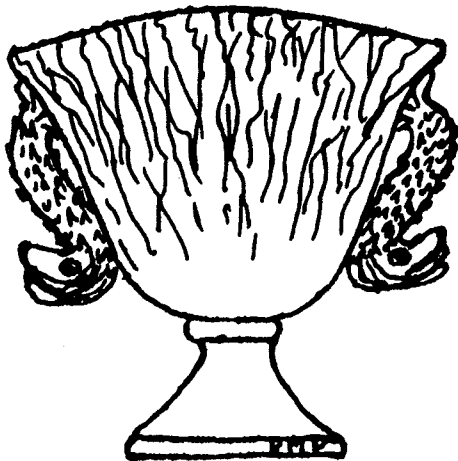
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