

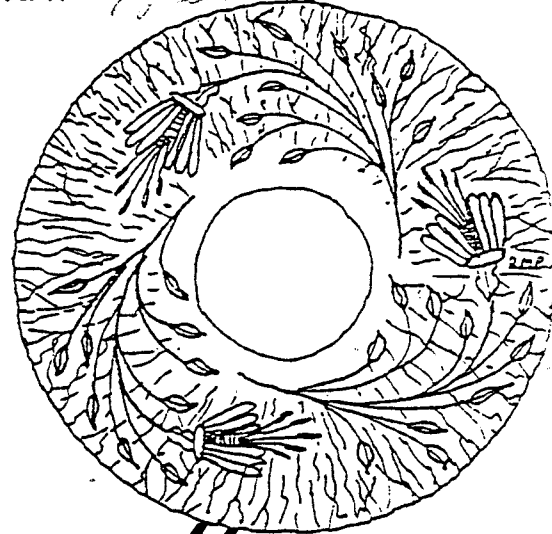
Cherry - red & cherries  
New 9 - "

Temp 6 - hand pages - Fenton  
Green - of glass

# Stretch Glass Society

VOLUME: X

NUMBER: 3



FOUNDED APRIL 21, 1974 DENVER PENNSYLVANIA

OCTOBER 1983

## *In Memory: C. B. Carroll*

We're sure that you all have heard the news that Bill Carroll passed away in July. He was a very dear friend and we shall miss him very much. We've never known anyone that truly loved their glass as much as Bill did. His glass was his family and everyone that loved glass became part of his family as well.

The first time that I visited his house, I couldn't believe that one person could acquire so much beautiful glass in one lifetime. I was so amazed that he could tell you in great detail how each piece was acquired and the homes that the piece had been in before he acquired it. Each room of his house was iridescent glass from floor to ceiling. The glass would rattle as the nearby trains would go by, but Bill kept his glass on display. He told horror tales of Los Angeles earthquakes and how so many beautiful pieces of glass were lost to "Mother Nature", but he kept right on collecting. He had so much glass that each time you looked at an already explored shelf, you would spot another missed gem. Everytime I left his house, my neck would be stiff from looking at all of the glass but my heart would be filled with joy at seeing the beautiful glass.

When we would go out hunting for glass, Bill would spot a piece of carnival or a piece of stretch glass from across the room. He would travel miles for just one piece of iridescent glassware. He would get up at three a.m. (after retiring at midnight) once a month to go to his beloved Rose Bowl flea market just to find iridescent glass. When he would find that "special" piece of glass that you were looking for, he wouldn't hesitate to purchase it for you even if he wanted it himself. He was always fair in pricing his glass that was for sale so that others could also enjoy the glass.

We shall really miss Bill. He was a friend that we could always count on. At our Northern California Carnival Glass Convention in June, he was too ill to attend. It seemed like the convention was really missing something and it just wasn't the same. Carnival and stretch glass has lost so much with Bill's passing.

Russell & Kitty Umbraco

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I knew Bill for less than a year and met him for the first time in November of 1982. I was in California for a convention and Bill picked me up and took me to his home several times to explore his "glass museum". His house is exactly as Russell & Kitty state and it was an experience I'll never forget. I think that the most remarkable thing was when sunlight would come through Bill's windows and the rooms would glow with all of the iridescent colors. It was a sight to behold!

I think that I will miss him most for his knowledge that he acquired through years of collecting. He could tell the scarcity or rarity of a piece just by remembering how often he had seen the piece. His knowledge of colors was very accurate and he probably has seen more stretch glass than anyone else! All of us who knew him will regret his passing.

RMR

## CLEANING YOUR STRETCH GLASS

I'm sure that we have all come across that piece of stretch glass that either was not washed for thirty years or was used for a dirt and grease container. The problem is what do you clean it with? Dirt and grease are easily trapped within the fine stretch marks and groves and are difficult to get out at times. Vases especially often have built up water deposits which are probably the most difficult thing to remove.

Sometimes soap and water do just fine for cleaning glass, but it often doesn't do anything to bring back the brilliance of the piece. I think the key thing to remember is that the surface of stretch glass is metallic in nature and can put up with a great deal of abuse. If forty to fifty years of wear and tear have not removed the stretch marks and iridescence, nothing will!

I have found that most pieces of stretch glass that I have bought can be returned to what was probably their original luster by using mild abrasives to clean them with. Fine cleansers or porcelain surface cleaners work very well for this purpose. These milder cleaners are good for cleaning things like pitchers or candlesticks which have a smoother surface. More care must be taken with these items because their surface will show scratches easily. Gentle scrubbing, I have found, generally does not damage the surface. I use a soft sponge and work in a small amount of cleanser into it, then gently rub the surface of the glass. I have yet to scratch any of my pieces utilizing this technic.

For more difficult cleaning problems, I have resorted to steel wool or Brillo pads sometimes with the help of additional cleanser! I have used this technic on pieces that have heavier stretch marks or for surfaces that would not show scratches. I have found this useful for cleaning my opaque pieces of stretch which sometimes show built up dirt and grease more readily. When using this method, I advise to try cleaning the underside of the piece or a more obscure portion to see how the surface reacts with the method. This way, if the surface shows damage for the cleaning, it won't be an area that is obvious or observable. Experiment with commoner pieces of stretch or some of the pieces you bought when you first started collecting and weren't very selective about! Before you know it, you'll be an expert at it.

One of the most difficult things to remove are water lines or deposits. I do have a few suggestions, but no great cures! I first try the steel wool method and have found that this sometimes works. Another method, which Berry Wiggins taught me was to use denture tablets! I fill the piece with warm water and then add a number of tablets and let the piece soak for at least 24 hours. After soaking I'll give it a cleanser scrub and sometimes it does the trick, or at least removes some of the "sic".

For the very brave, there are acids available, but EXTREME care has to be taken with these! Some acids will DEFINATELY damage the stretch surface beyond repair. I will be obtaining more information about these strong cleaning substances for future information, but I wouldn't experiment with acid except on pieces that you wouldn't mind possibly destroying!

So, in summation, practice and experiment on less valuable pieces. Don't be afraid to use some "elbow grease" when cleaning. I have used cleanser to clean my entire collection, including my red pieces and punch bowls, and have npt regretting doing so. Once you see how cleanser can return some brilliance to your pieces, you'll want to clean everyone of them! Believe me, I did so when I first found out what a beautiful job it does! If anyone has any other cleaning hints, how about letting me know for future newsletters? RMR

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## JOE ST, CLAIR AND HIS GLASS MANUFACTURE

The following article was submitted by Mr. Jabe Tarter. I thought that it may be of interest to know more about the man who made our 1982 souvenirs. \*\*\*

The Joe St. Clair Art Glass Company has been in the glass business for more than fifty years. It started first with his father and four brothers in Elwood, Indiana. He had taken his training in the McBeth Evans Glass Company in St. Louis. Since the glass was cheaper in Elwood, he moved there to start their first glass works.

Paperweights were always the first love of the family. As long as their father lived and was head of the factory, the art of pressing glass was not practiced at the factory. Paperweights are so interesting and since no two are alike, being hand made, the family naturally gravitated to this beautiful line of glass making.

It was not until the last twenty years or so that Joe St. Clair has gotten into pressing. This was done so as a sideline because of the buying public's demand for pressed glass from his company.

Joe started the factory on North 5th St. in Elwood, Indiana in the 1930's during the Great Depression. The first house was burnt down, but it was quickly rebuilt and work started again.

During the early 1970's, Joe decided he would retire and sold the factory to a firm in Chicago. He and his wife Ellen then travelled to see their daughters in Florida. After their return to Elwood, about three months later, there was nothing to do. Joe decided to open another glass company, the Joseph St. Clair Glass Company on North 13th Street. He produced a new line from the older things made at the first factory. Within two years he bought back the original factory and went back to that site.

Paperweights again took prime priority over pressed glass. Joe introduced his calcyde weights, the bird in flight on seascape, the apples, pears, and bells weights. Color was important. With the interest building in Greentown Glass, Joe bought and incorporated into his weights the chocolate glass, bold ruby, amber and cobalt among other colors from Greentown glass cullets.

Iridization had begun with the making of a number of pieces for Mrs. Elizabeth Degenhart. She had several hundred pieces of glass pressed and iridized by Joe. He continued iridizing glass to the present time, although it was on a smaller scale.

In 1982, we went to see Joe St. Clair about making a souvenir for the Stretch Glass Society. He told us that he could make red apples like the ones he used some years before for another group. He altered the apples for us by including a green leaf on the stem making them unique from the ones made earlier. He achieved this with the use of a monkey pot, which is a small container of molten glass. The apples were so beautiful that every one of them was sold!

Joe is one of the last of the "old time glass makers". He continues in the business because he loves the work and the finished products. It gives him and his wife of fifty years another sense of achievement when another glory has come from the hands of the glass workers under the directions of Joe St. Clair.

Thanks Jabe!

\*\*\*\*\*

### REFERENCE QUESTION

I had listed a specific reference book in my ad in July which one of the SGS members was not familiar with. Since there are probably many others who may not be as familiar with it as well, here is the full title and publisher information:

Depression Glass III, by Sandra McPhee Stout, 1976; Wallace-Homestead Book Co.

There are two full color plates of stretch glass in this book as well as an old ad in the back of the book. The old ad is attributed to Fenton by Ms. Stout, but we now know that the ad is from Northwood's catalogue. Don't get confused!!! There is also a price guide available with the book. It is also not an expensive book.



## BUBBLE, SEED, OR STRAW MARK???

Paul Miller forwarded the following article to me. It was taken from the monthly magazine "China, Glass & Tableware" Clifton, N.J., September 1982. It makes very interesting reading and he felt that it would be of interest to everyone. Thanks Paul!

Most collectors and dealers have had trouble at one time or another with those who seek flawless perfection in the glassware they buy. Perfection and "sameness" in glass can be achieved only in assembly-line products. It is not possible or even desirable in quality ware whose manufacture depends so much on the skill and artistry of individual craftsmen. Slight variation and tiny imperfections in hand-made glassware pieces are actually a confirmation of craftsmanship and individual artistry. Most people who appreciate good glassware understand this. For those who don't, here is a series of questions and answers that a collector can use to promote better understanding of these products.

Q: Does a "seed" or bubble in glassware constitute a flaw?

A: No. One of those tiny "seeds" or bubbles the size of a pinpoint may sometimes be observed in a piece of glassware when it is examined closely against a strong light. The bubble is formed by gases when chemicals are united in the fusing or melting of the raw ingredients. It does not affect the quality or beauty of the glass.

Q: Should all pieces in a set be exactly alike?

A: No. There are almost always slight variations in diameter, height, and other dimensions in any group of tumblers, goblets, plates, bowls, or other articles of glass. These variations are so slight that they can be detected only with a micrometer, rarely by the naked eye. This is the hallmark of fine hand craftsmanship, almost assuring that each piece has been made individually.

Q: Is a mold mark a sign of imperfection?

A: No. A mold mark is merely a ridge on a molded glassware piece that indicates the point at which the mold that formed the item was separated for removal of the finished ware. If it is overly prominent, however, it may be the indication of careless workmanship.

Q: What is a shear mark?

A: A shear mark is a slight puckering of the glass caused when the artisan snips off excess molten glass when shaping the piece, as for an example the end of the handle of a pitcher. It is a normal characteristic of glass and should not be considered a flaw.

Q: Why can't small irregularities be entirely eliminated from hand-made glass?

A: For the very reason that the glass is handmade. No matter how deft the touch of the sensitive hand of the craftsman, it is impossible to eliminate completely small variations. These should not, therefore, be considered flaws. Glass is one of the trickiest materials to work with. Even machine-made glassware cannot be made absolutely perfect. But consider this: even the finest diamond examined under a jeweler's loupe, rarely reveals absolute perfection.

Fine hand-blown glass frequently contains lead, which improves the clarity and adds to its weight. If a piece of stemware rings with a clear musical tone when struck lightly, this indicates lead content. Lime glass, on the other hand, does not have this resonance. But this does not make it any less desirable. The lime in such glass adds to its toughness and strength.

Q: What is the indentation at the bottom of a hand-made pitcher?

A: A pontil mark is the confirmation that a piece is hand-made. The indentation is where the glass was attached to the pontil in the final step of fire polishing. Some hand-made glassware is attached from the bowl end with the glass cut away at the rim, leaving no indentation.



## BLACK BASES

I am sure that many of you wonder about those endless varieties of black bases that we all come across in our glass hunting. One of the many helpful questions that Mrs. Eva Racine submitted to me dealt with identification of these bases. I knew of only one person to send this question to and that person was Mr. Berry A. Wiggins. I distinctly remember hauling a large box filled with black bases, at Mr. Wiggins request, to a carnival glass convention last year for him to examine! The information that follows was achieved through a great deal of research and observation. All of us owe Berry a great deal of thanks for all of his efforts! \*\*\*

There is a black base (BB) pictured in Bill Heacock's "Fenton Glass, The First Twenty Five Years" (Fenton I), on page 89 in the illustration of the punch bowls which I call the "three ring" BB. This is one of the most confusing of all the BB's. There were many look alike manufactured by Fenton, Northwood, Lancaster, Jeanette, Vineleand Flint and there could be more.

This three ring BB can be found with or without numbers and/or letters on the under-side such as: 616 NAP or the numbers 638 & 647. (Ed Note: I have one of these bases with the "6" of 647 barely visible as if it melted back into the base) The bases that have these numbers and/or letters I feel were manufactured by either Fenton or Northwood. These numbers may correspond to a specific glass mold number. Since Fenton and Northwood frequently used exactly the same mold numbers, these numbers are only of a little help. Mr. Fenton has indicated that the letters NAP may be an abbreviation for "nappy". We are making progress with these bases, but it will take more time.

We know of course, that Fenton made a five legged BB. These are very hard to find in perfect condition. There is a picture of this base in Bill Heacock's "Fenton Glass The Second Twenty Five Years" (Fenton II) on page 29, bottom left. Some years ago Fenton was ready to run this base again, but never did so.

My favorite BB is what I call Fenton's "patio". It has a lot of class. It is illustrated in Fenton I on page 90 in the top ad. There are four of them shown (See figure #1). In Fenton II there is a variation of this base shown on page 68 in the bottom ad bottom row. These bases have a "notch" in each foot to give an added Oriental effect.

There can also be other variations with the bases such as finding them in different colors. I was very fortunate in finding a blue base, similar to Fenton's Celeste Blue (not cobalt), and it is iridized! Does anyone else have or has seen one before?

Carl & Rose Schleede have been very helpful in my research and my thanks goes out to them. This summer I saw a base they had which is tomato colored (mostly red and yellow at the bottom). When I got back home, I dug out all the BB's I have which have what I call the "half-moon" (See figure #2) which was like the tomato base. They have been seen in white-opaque and I have one that goes from clear to opalescent. These bases were made by Central and U.S. Glass. Lancaster made one too but I have not seen this one yet.

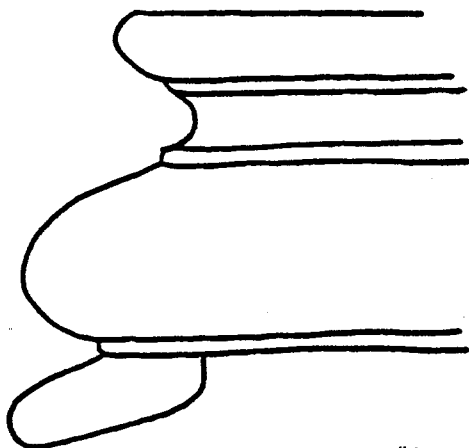


FIGURE #1

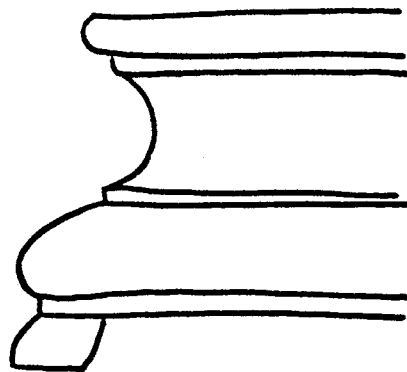


FIGURE #2

Cambridge made BB's as well. These are typically seen with numbers on the top in small, indented wells. These bases have a typical sharp, 45 degree angle which comes in from the bottom and then flares out just before the top (See figure #3). The sharp angle helps to identify these bases so that you can spot them immediately. Some have been found without numbers on the top as well.

Imperial bases are easy to identify because they made very few styles. The one base that goes with stretch glass bowls can be seen in Margaret & Douglas Archer's "Imperial Glass" on page 107 (See figure #4). Two sizes have been seen: the small one has roughly a 3½ inch opening on the top and the large one has a 4½ inch top. The small base has 15 panels on it, where as the larger one has 18 panels. These bases go extremely well with Imperial's panelled bowls.

Everytime that I visit with Mr. Fenton I have some glass to show him. The first thing he does is to go over the glass and look for the mold larks. This helps to identify the manufacturer. He is a good teacher and has helped me very much. Figure 5 shows three BB's which can be identified by their mold marks. Base 5A is from Central Glass and both mold marks are close to the feet. Base 5B is from Cooperative Flint Glass in Pennsylvania and both mold marks are away from the feet. Base 5C was made by U.S. Glass and one mold mark is close to one of the feet and the other mold mark is away from one of the feet. Thats all I have for you now!

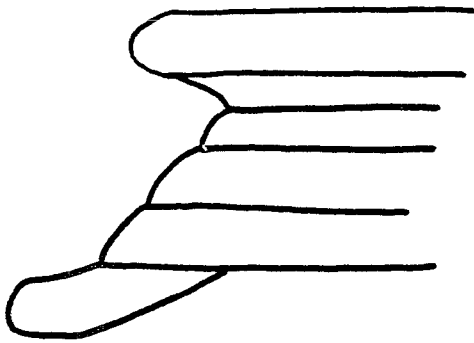


FIGURE #3

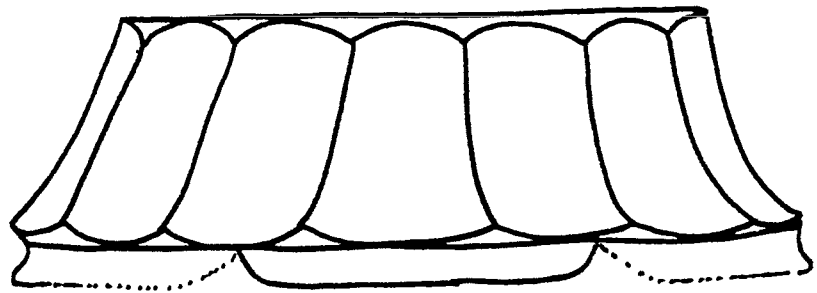


FIGURE #4

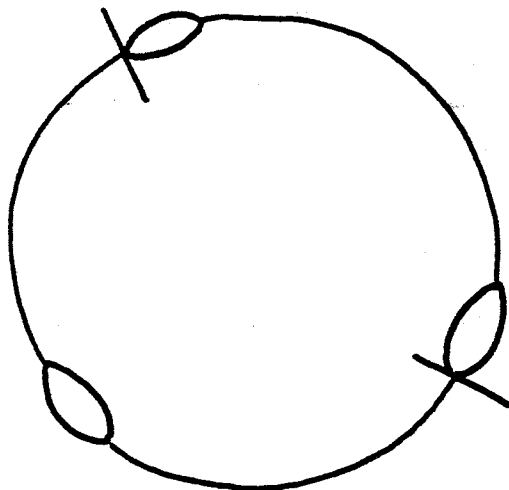
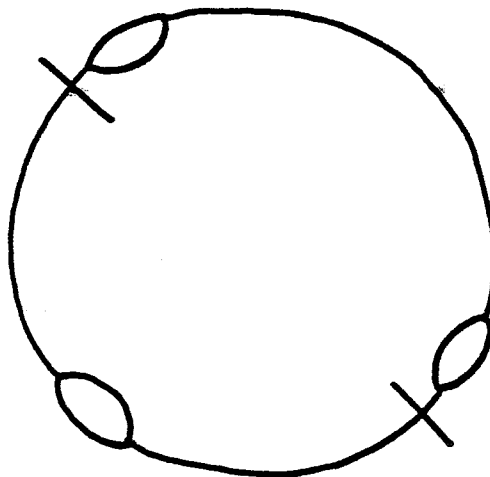
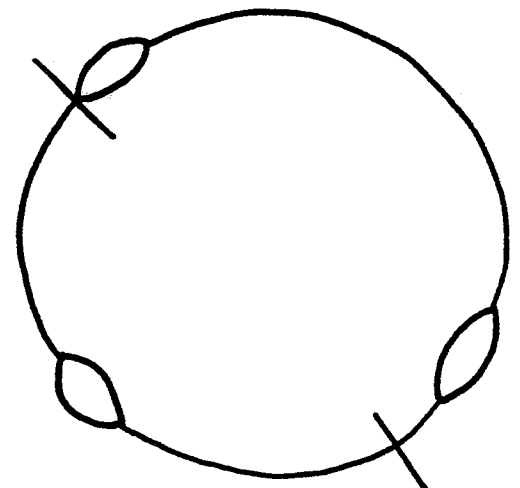


FIGURE: #5A



#5B



#5C



## FENTON GLASS CONVENTION

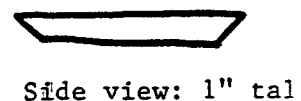
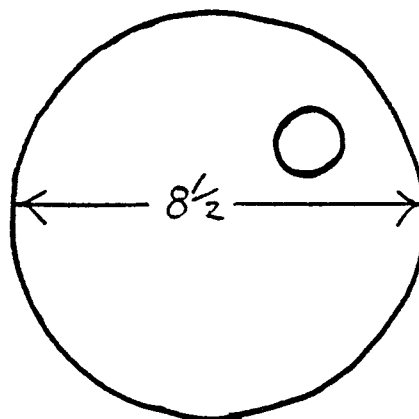
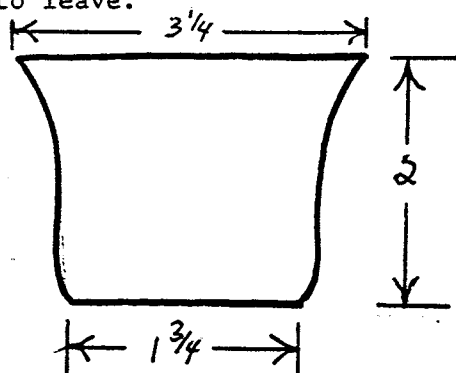
The Fenton Art Glass Collectors convention was held this past August in Marietta. I had the opportunity to attend the convention and set up a display of stretch glass in their large display room. I am very happy to report that I took second place in the competition for Best Old Glass (I was beat out by a Carnival Glass display!!!) My display consisted of 6 lemonade sets, 6 guest sets, and my punch bowls. The club always has a specific theme which you gear your display around. This year the theme was "quotes & quotations". I had selected a Chinese quote (proverb) which was: "A wise man adapts himself to circumstances the way liquid adapts itself to the vessel that contains it". This was perfect for the lemonade, guest, and punch sets. Some other clever quotes used by other members were "The glass is always greener on the other side".

The Fenton convention is really a wonderful experience. It is probably the largest glass convention in the country. There were well over 500 people in attendance. The best part is that there was glass for sale everywhere! There were only a few pieces of stretch glass in other displays, but this I feel is due to the difficulty in identifying Fenton as the manufacturer. Only Fenton glass is allowed on the display tables at the convention and Mr. Fenton personally walks around the display area and comments on the glass and removes anything which is not Fenton. It is quite an education experience to listen to his comments on the glass.

There wasn't a great deal of stretch glass for sale, but it was definitely fun to look for it. There were glass dealers set up in many different areas of the town. Many people had yard or garage sales with glass as well. I was able to pick up a few pieces of stretch. The best thing I found was a Topaz opalescent, drapery optic small pitcher with a little cobalt blue handle. It is fantastic! I showed it to Mr. Fenton and questioned him about it and he said that these pieces are quite rare and that many were made for decorative purposes only. I'd believe it because the cobalt handle is so tiny on my pitcher that it couldn't possibly stand up under the weight of a full pitcher and would have snapped off.

Below I have a drawing of an interesting piece of stretch that I saw. I have it on good authority that it was made by Northwood and they called it a "cup & plate". The cup had a gold rim around it and both the plate and cup had ground bottoms. The plate had an off-centered ring for the cup to fit into. I thought that it may be used for some sort of cracker and dip combination or possibly as a luncheon set. Any ideas?

By far, the best part of the convention for me was the tour of the Fenton factory and the visiting to the Fenton museum. The factory is amazing and we were able to observe the craftsmen making glassware for the convention auction. The special souvenir which you could purchase when you presented your membership card was a cranberry opalescent fairy lamp with a diamond optic pattern. They were very beautiful and were made exclusively for the club. The Fenton museum was an unbelievable experience for me. There are a great deal of examples of stretch glass with proper mold numbers. There is also a large display of Northwood stretch glass as well. I HIGHLY recommend visiting the museum if you have the opportunity. You will not regret it and probably find it hard to leave.



RMR





FIGURE #1

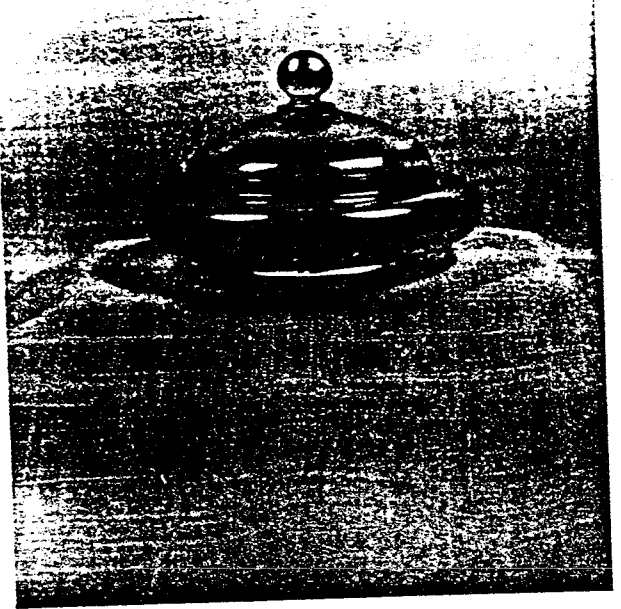


FIGURE #3



FIGURE #2

- #1 : Concave diamond vases; roughly 6" tall;  
Colors seen: Olive-green, blue, vaseline  
blue-opaque.
- #2 : Covered jar; 6" wide, 5½" high (with lid)  
Colors seen: Marigold (Note: jar is on a  
base in this photo)
- #3 : Powder puff jar; 6½ wide, 4" high  
Colors seen: pinkish/purple; tangerine
- #4 : Candlestick server; 8" high, 10" wide  
Colors seen: purple, marigold, grey

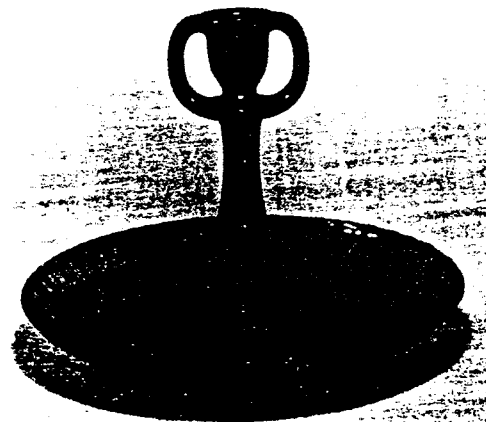




FIGURE #5



FIGURE #7

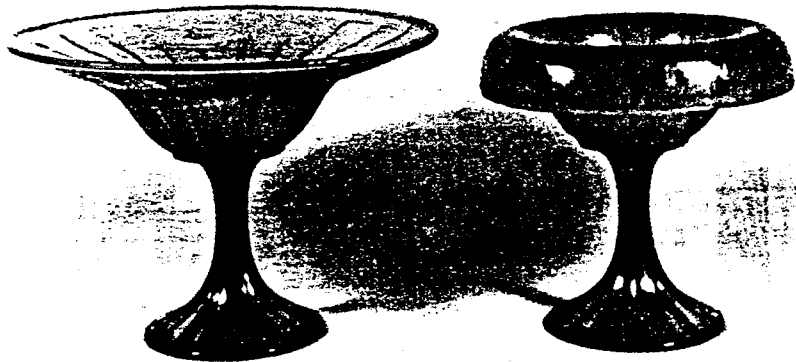


FIGURE #6

- #5 : Tankard lemonade/water sets; 9" tall  
Colors seen: green, blue.
- #6 : Ribbed (21) compotes: 5-7" tall  
Colors seen: Olive green blue, vaseline
- #7 : Tankard pitcher; 9" tall with applied  
blue handle (not cobalt); Colors  
seen: blue only
- #8 : Panelled (12) vase; 8x3  
Colors seen: blue



FIGURE #8