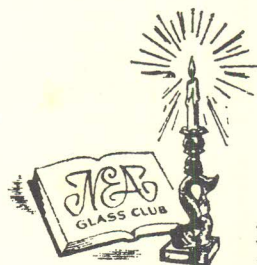


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The National Early American Glass Club

Newsletter

Next to having my head trepanned, I guess my favorite activity is to roll up my sleeves and do this Newsletter. The task would be immeasurably lightened were members to send me news: a hint. In case anyone is overcome with the urge to communicate, the address is: John Gotjen, 7 Lyndon St., Warren, R.I. 02885.

In the spirit of doing nothing by halves, I have bought and read Alastair Duncan's book Tiffany at Auction (Rizzoli, New York, 1981, 348 pages) and Egon Neustadt's The Lamps of Tiffany (Fairfield Press, New York, 1970, 224 pages). They are beautiful books; and each falls into the pleasurable category of providing a sop to the sight as well as meat for the mind.

The Duncan book is not, as I had feared, a paean to Messrs Christie, Manson, and Woods but a compilation of their catalogues showing 414 lots of Tiffany glass sold from 1978 through 1980. Most of the photographs are in color, measurements and markings are given, and on a separate sheet one can read the realized prices and be amazed. But this is only a third of the book. Photographs 415 to 1009 are a complete reprinting of three Tiffany Studios albums which were, literally, plucked from a pile of trash by an admirer of Tiffany's work when the New York City showrooms were closed in the early '30s. Finally, as an index, Duncan lists the design numbers of all the shades, bases, and "fancy goods" with a cross reference to the illustrations. Thus, besides being lovely to thumb through, this volume is a valuable tool for students of Tiffany lighting.

Dr Neustadt's book gives us wonderful color photographs and a careful analysis of the more than 200 lamps in his collection (in 1970). The text for each lamp appears on the same or facing page as its photograph. This book is organized so that the reader is led intelligently from plain to complex designs. Constructional details and bases are also discussed.

Whereas the Duncan book is practically without flaw, Dr Neustadt's offering is marred by errors which should have been caught in proofreading. Numerical mistakes are many, the Panama-Pacific Exhibition of 1915 is referred to as "Panama-Philippine", and Laurelton Hall is said to have burned in 1935 vice 1957. As with so many other glass collectors, Dr Neustadt has invented terms to replace those of the maker. Thus Tiffany's Apple Blossom becomes Cherry Tree, Peony becomes Bouquet, Snowball becomes Hydrangea, Woodbine becomes Autumn Leaves and I could go on. But these points are merely annoying. A serious lapse in judgement is evinced, however, where in twelve lamps Dr Neustadt has rigged lights to illuminate glass sections of bases; and they are so pictured. That these bases were not meant to be lit is obvious. To do so disturbs the visual balance between the darker, lesser mass of a base and the brighter, larger mass of its shade. I hope that eventually better taste will prevail and the trick lights turned off. Another piece, number 68, is also lit electrically. It is a shade for a candle, according to Robert Koch, and should be shown that way.

I must mention price. The Duncan book runs in the range of \$45. While not cheap, there is so much to recommend it that I unhesitatingly do. Dr Neustadt's book, with taxes and all, set me back \$180., an unreasonably stiff sum in my opinion. One must ask: Why?

Lest I seem to end on a sour note, I must add that one cannot help but be thrilled in seeing the collection Dr and Mrs Neustadt built. It is superb. Moreover, students of Tiffany's art have reason for cheer not only because of the lamps, but that the Neustadts also saved a large Tiffany Studios photograph album and the 500 crates, amounting to about 36,000 glass sheets, which were left as an unwanted legacy when the Corona manufactory finally closed down. So for this and, yes, the book too, we stand in their debt.

NEAGC Calendar: 13 OCT, 10.30 at the Park Street Church (and all succeeding Wednesday meetings) in Boston, the Glass Study Group, moderated by Larry Hilbert, will discuss "Looking at the Lily Pad". The Glass Study Group is open to all members.

06-07 NOV, the Dorflinger Group's 8th All Glass Show at the White Oak Armory, Silver Spring, Maryland. Ken Wilson will speak; Sheldon Butts has produced a slide-tape lecture on The Art of Glass Cutting; and Gerda Nugent will demonstrate glass cutting. Opens at 11.
 07 FEB 83, the annual Show & Tell meeting of the Westchester Glass Club will honor the 50th Anniversary of the NEAGC with an exhibit of gold-decorated glass.
 17-18 MAR 83, the National Capitol Seminar at the Kenwood Country Club.
 28-30 APR 83, NEAGC 50th Anniversary gathering at the Sandwich Glass Museum.

Exhibits of Interest: Tiffany Glass from the McKean Collection, currently at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago.

- Stained Glass, 10th-15th centuries, from the Louvain Cloister, currently at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.
- 300 pieces from the Howe Collection, currently, in the new Levy Gallery of the Cincinnati Art Museum, 19th and 20th century glass.
- Libbey Glass Historic Exhibit, until 30 NOV, at the HQ of Owens-Illinois, Inc., at SeaGate in Toledo, Ohio. This exhibit was mounted by the members of the Glass Collectors Club of Toledo. 215 items are being shown from all periods of Libbey glass.
- At the Jones Gallery of Glass and Ceramics, Douglas Hill, Maine: 09 OCT, "Glass and Ceramics in Maine Homes before 1830" with Laura Sprague; and 16 OCT, "The Art of Cameo Glass" with Dr and Mrs Leonard Rakow.
- At the Corning Museum: until 01 NOV, the grand exhibit of Cameo Glass; and 20-23 OCT, the 22nd Seminar on Glass with a host of eminent speakers.
- The New England Paperweight Collectors' Association will hold their Fall meeting on 30 OCT at the Sheraton-Yankee Drummer Motor Inn, Auburn, Mass. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- The Glass Gallery, Bethesda, Maryland: 25 SEP-09 OCT, Capitol Glass Invitational; 16 OCT-06 NOV, Graduates in glass of the California College of Arts and Crafts; 13-30 NOV, works by Fujimoto, Handler, and Langley, all from Wisconsin; 04-24 DEC, recent work of Sylvia Vigiletti.
- At the American Craft Museum II, New York City: 15 OCT 82-14 JAN 83, "Pattern", an Exhibit of the Decorated Surface, including glass by King and Bernstein.
- At the Heller Gallery, NYC: Uptown, 09-30 OCT, works by Glancy and Morris; 04-27 NOV, glass by Ann Warff; 04-24 DEC, works of Carlson and Myers. And Downtown: 02-24 OCT, glass by Shephard, Bernstein, and Vavrek; 06-28 NOV, the glass of Sidney Cash.
- At the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, Neenah, Wisconsin: currently, fifteen recent acquisitions including an early "Lithyalin" glass paperweight and a Tiffany footed Favre bowl.
- The schedule of the Glass Club of Toledo: 21 SEP, Lowell Innes on 19th Century American Glassmaking; 19 OCT, Raymond Barlow on Sandwich Glass; 16 NOV, William Heacock in a show, tell, & sell; 18 JAN 83, Donald Pettifer on Glassmaking in N.J.; 15 FEB 83, Max Erlacher on the Art of Glass Engraving; 15 MAR 83, L. Padgett and P. Grassler discussing "their plans to bring a new dimension to the world of collecting limited editions"; 19 APR 83, Nancy Merrill on Glass at the Chrysler Museum; and 17 MAY 83, Jane Spillman on Design Comparisons of American and European Pressed Glass.

Life for February devotes a few pages to modern glass artists. The March issue of Architectural Digest has an article on old Chinese glass. And Sea Frontiers for March-April reports on the discovery of glass (and much else) from a 1627 Dutch wreck at Bahia, Brazil.

I occasionally forswear the life of an anchorite to seek out others of my species. And so it was, while abroad in the land a few months ago, that I met a dealer for the first time. In the flow of conversation, he mentioned that a Third Party (as it turned out, a mutual acquaintance and NEAGC member) had told him all about my glass. I was irked and thought this more than strange because the Third Party had never seen my collection. Now let me say that I am very much in favor of the exchange of information: it furthers knowledge and promotes friendships. But blathering on about other people's glass, I'm against. So, allow me to suggest that we measure our enthusiasms by this rule: If it's not yours, don't brag about it.