



National American Glass Club

THE LOWELL INNES PITTSBURGH CHAPTER

Newsletter from the President

June 2016

Next Meeting Information

Meeting: Tuesday June 14th

Program: Homestead Glass Works:

Bryce, Higbee & Company, 1879-1907

Presentation by Author, Paul Kirk

Location: Heinz History Center

Room: 3rd floor

Gathering Time: 7:00pm Program: 7:30pm

From the Presidential Assistant

What a great program we had in May hosted by our Heinz History Center allowing us access to their exhibit on Toys of the 50s, 60, 70s and curator, Emily Ruby, provided a private tour for us and then time to show our 50s, 60s, 70s glass members brought to share. Janet has provided a fabulous report for us on page 2 of the newsletter.

Please join us on June 14th for a special program on Bryce Higbee Glassworks of Homestead by author Paul Kirk who will be our special guest from Cleveland.

Anne Madarasz

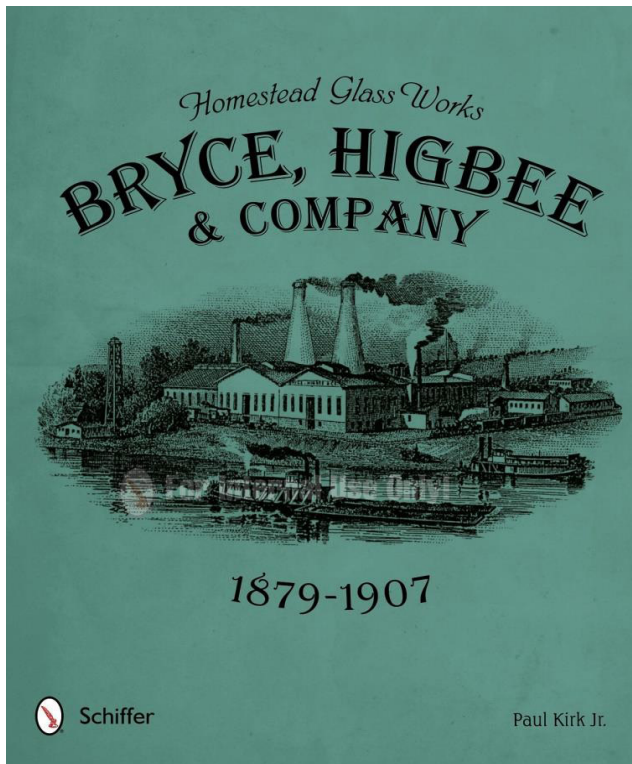
Tuesday, June 14th Program

***Paul Kirk to speak on his new book on
Homestead Glass Works***

Paul Kirk has been collecting and researching antique glassware for over twenty-five years. His research philosophy is to go straight to the source whenever possible. Paul is a trustee for the Early American Pattern Glass Society and also does pattern identification for the organization. He writes and lectures on many subjects pertaining to the Victorian era, especially how the styles and forms of EAPG fit into the context of the time in which it was made. Paul is also a prolific fiddler and tunesmith and has composed over 500 folk tunes.

Paul will have copies of new book. Please invite friends and glass enthusiasts to share this special program and bring glass for show and tell or show and ask.

Homestead Glass Works: Bryce, Higbee & Company, 1879-1907



The book cover shows the Bryce, Higbee factory as it appeared in the mid-1880s. This is the only full image of the factory known to exist.

The glassware made by Bryce, Higbee & Company of Homestead, Pennsylvania is well known for its beauty and quality, yet is quite misunderstood by even the most knowledgeable collectors. Paul Kirk's recent book, *Homestead Glass Works: Bryce, Higbee & Company, 1879-1907*, enlightens the reader about the history and products of this prolific nineteenth-century glasshouse. The book was researched from rare period sources, many of which are not available to the general public. Mr. Kirk specializes in the decorative arts and customs of Victorian America, and is especially known for presenting factual information gleaned from original sources and educating collectors regarding the intended use of the multitude of items made during the Early American Pattern Glass (EAPG) era.

For his presentation at the Heinz History Center, Paul will discuss highlights from *Homestead Glass Works: Bryce, Higbee & Company, 1879-1907*. Afterward, he will open the floor for questions and will be happy to comment on pieces of glass brought by members and guests.

Toys and Glass of the '50's, '60's and '70's

Our members enjoyed a private guided tour of the fun exhibit Toys of the '50's, '60's and '70's before a show and tell of glass of the same era. Our tour guide, curator Emily Ruby, explained that the baby and financial booms of the post World War II era made this a golden age of toys. And we got to see almost 500 toys that had been gathered by the Minnesota Historical Society plus additions from the Smithsonian and our own Heinz History Center. They were cleverly arranged in living rooms of each era that had TV screens showing vintage ads for toys of that time.



Added locally was a gallery of vintage arcade and pinball games courtesy of ReplayFX.

Upstairs we continued to snack on the wonderful foods, including candies of the era, provided by Marilyn Hamay. Our members then presented their glass.

Naomi started with a Westmoreland Milk Glass Covered Wedding Bowl or Compote, on a pedestal with a hand-painted Bows and Roses design that she and Merle received as a wedding gift in 1965---a positive provenance! They were told that it was meant to hold a piece of their wedding cake, which it actually did for quite a few years!

She also showed paneled grape salt and peppers, a Fenton Silver Crest dish, a Coin pattern by Fostoria and a deep green cream and pitcher by Anchor Hocking in the Charm pattern.



cream dish from the 1940s, maker unknown, that currently 6 are on sale on E-bay for a very high price.



She also showed a 1976 four-chamber vase made by Toledo Studio Art Glass Movement artist Brian Lonsway.



Zita brought a "50's Chiller Set in the original box from Reizensteins. The inner bowl was for shrimp and the outer bowl for ice actually also had four holders for candles. They don't make them like that anymore.



Chris showed a most interesting double ice



Cheryl shared children's dishes by Hazel Atlas with the Three Little Pigs in red on Platonite a heat resistant milk glass. She explained that the popularity of food packing glass that was repurposed peaked in the '50's. Examples were a tumbler with a Scottie dog, a shot glass with lid for 1 ounce of cheese spread with a collie dog, and a Boscul peanut butter glass, possibly by Hazel Atlas that came in both a dog and flower series. And in the original box, a Home Bartender Set by Hazelware to serve the 1950's explosion in the trend of drinking at home.



Nancy brought a Morgantown pitcher and tumbler, one of four sizes made, in the Swirl pattern made from the 1950's through 1966 as well as a 1964 Viking mushroom that also was made in four sizes and can be identified by the textured bottom.





Among her other pieces was a Hazel Atlas tumbler advertising Multi Chrome Ohio School pictures. Attracting lots of interest was a glass Happy Birthday card by Houze Glass with a picture of an old lady sitting in her rocking chair with knitting and a martini saying "Some of us belles are still ringing".



One of my favorites was the 1964 Pyrex teapot with chrome stripes made in a most attractive shape.



Mary showed a set of Culver shot glasses heavily encrusted with gold and told how she discovered that the owner of the company was on the fatal Flight 93. She also had a juice glass, maker unknown, but with colors of the day and the same pattern as one her mother used to serve lemonade.

(Memories are one of the reasons we collect!) Mary also shared a green tumbler made to look like the Sandwich pattern that she thinks came from an Oxydol box as well as a Libby Silver Leaf stem.



Kathy brought a 1950's Hopalong Cassidy tumbler and a mug suitable for this campaign season that says, "Go Democrats All the Way". She also showed Pyrex divided plates---one with red animals and the other with a green train set as well as Hazel Atlas mugs with Ranger Joe and Davy Crockett.



Marilyn's contributions went back to the

more adult items such as a red pinched vase and three pieces in orange, Marilyn's favorite color, by Viking. A large yellow swung vase is probably by Fenton and a small green crackle piece was not identified, but definitely of the period.



Many thanks to those who helped us enjoy this trip down memory lane.

Janet Felmeth

Wednesday, May 11, 2016
Spectrum Glass Company to Close Operations

Woodinville, Wash. - Spectrum Glass Company today announced it will start the process of closing its operations, due to hard business and economic realities. The company will produce glass for another 60 to 75 days and will sell its existing inventory over the coming months.

Craig Barker, CEO of Spectrum Glass Company, shared this statement on the closure:

"After serving the art and specialty glass industry for 40 years, it is with very heavy hearts that we have decided to close Spectrum Glass Company.

"Our primary concern is to help ease this difficult transition for the fine employees, customers, retailers, and glass artists that we've been proud to work with and serve. We're committed to doing everything we can to provide career assistance for our people, and are of course offering severance to our employees. For customers and end users, we are exploring opportunities to transfer our product lines to other manufacturers to help minimize disruptions in sourcing. "The decision to close our doors has been extraordinarily difficult. We postponed it for as long as possible, and arrived at this conclusion only after immense consideration. However, due

to several factors, it's no longer financially feasible for Spectrum Glass to continue to operate.

"Market factors have played the most significant role. Our facility was built to support product demand at the height of art glass movement, but our sales never fully recovered following the Great Recession. We have watched our sales dwindle dramatically to only 40 percent of production capacity, while overhead expenses have continued to increase. Our consistently reduced levels of sales simply cannot cover the fixed costs required to operate a facility of our size.

"Additionally, the entire U.S. art glass industry is now being evaluated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with respect to potential new regulations. Long-standing interpretations of air quality regulations are being reevaluated, and if new regulations were applied to our facility, it would require substantial capital expenses. Spectrum Glass Company has operated well within existing environmental guidelines and has been the only stained glass manufacturer to employ baghouse technology on furnace exhaust. Still, we have already accrued extraordinary, unanticipated expenses since the start of the EPA evaluation and cannot withstand additional investments of an unknown scale for an already faltering business.

"We would like to express our deepest

gratitude to all of our partners, customers, artists and others who have supported Spectrum Glass over the past four decades, and who continue to support us now. We will continue manufacturing for the next 60–75 days, and will continue selling the product inventory we currently have on hand over the months ahead. We will communicate updates as we wind down our operations.”

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EPA orders nationwide review of art glass makers in wake of Portland air pollution scare



By Fedor Zarkhin / The Oregonian/OregonLive

In-house artists work on a mosaic commission, February 26, 2016. Bullseye Glass in Southeast Portland manufactures glass used for architectural and art uses. The company is at the center of a hot spot for toxic metals pollution and has suspended use of Federal inspectors are investigating whether glass makers outside Oregon are emitting the same toxic chemicals that landed two Portland art glass makers in the spotlight, records show.

A top official with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said in a Feb. 25 memo that regulators have identified 14 factories that may make art glass using heavy metals, just as Portland's Bullseye Glass and Uroboros Glass did before coming under state scrutiny in February.

The Oregonian/OregonLive found at least three factories on the EPA's list, all in Rust Belt states, are using similar manufacturing methods to Bullseye and Uroboros. And the three companies, like Bullseye and Uroboros, are all exempt from a key federal rule designed to limit hazardous air pollution emitted by glass factories.

Two of the glass makers -- Kokomo Opalescent Glass in Indiana and Paul Wissmach Glass Co. in West Virginia -- use cadmium, a metal linked to lung cancer, regulators said. Neither operation has the technology to filter smoke that rises from their furnaces, officials also confirmed.

A third company, Youghiogheny Opalescent

Glass in Pennsylvania, makes colored glass named after the toxic metal cadmium, but state officials could not confirm its use when contacted by The Oregonian/OregonLive.

The federal search for these factories began after Oregon officials revealed on Feb. 3 that an air monitor in Southeast Portland detected high levels of cadmium and arsenic near Bullseye, prompting a swift local reaction. Bullseye and Uroboros voluntarily stopped using heavy metals to make glass. And the director of Oregon's environmental agency resigned, citing health reasons, amid public criticism that the agency responded slowly to the pollution threat.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., pressed a top EPA official on the federal response during a Feb. 24 hearing. Janet McCabe, acting assistant administrator who oversees air issues, reassured the lawmaker that the EPA was scrutinizing the glass factory rules. "We're also looking across the country to see what other facilities are like this, and will take appropriate actions," she said.

The next day, McCabe delivered the EPA memo seeking information about the plants within two weeks.

Her order sent local, state, regional and federal inspectors fanning out across the country to find potential emissions problems.

Extent of the problem

The search for potential polluters has led inspectors to all parts of the art glass industry believed to be using toxic heavy metals. The operations range from a small one-person shop in North Carolina to the industry's largest force north of Seattle, according to the EPA memo and interviews with regulators in nine states.

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection provided a copy of the document to The Oregonian/Oregon Live.

The niche size of the art glass industry allows regulators to identify and scrutinize a small number of plants relatively quickly. The sector is divided even further by the types of glass that each operation makes.

Bullseye and Uroboros are among the small number of colored sheet glass manufacturers. Aside from the Portland companies, just four other producers nationwide have similar specialties, according to a review of the industry by The Oregonian/OregonLive.

Five of the six of the operations use intermittent furnaces that are exempt from a federal rule designed to limit toxic air pollution. Regulators haven't confirmed the type of furnaces used by the sixth factory.

Only furnaces that make glass without interruption, 24 hours a day and seven days a week, must follow the rule.

Kokomo Opalescent Glass is one example of a company whose so-called "batch" process exempts it, like Portland's Bullseye, from the emissions rule.

Kokomo, which shares a name with the Indiana town where it is located, is the oldest stained glass manufacturing plant in the United States. The company, founded in the 1880s, is a key part of the community's identity, said deputy mayor Randy McKay.

"It's in pretty much every brochure that speaks of Kokomo," he said.

But the tourist attraction could also be sending toxic chemicals into the town's air, records show.

Kokomo Opalescent Glass uses cadmium, a hazardous air pollutant, said Barry Sneed, a spokesman for Indiana's state environmental agency. Documents show the plant has three batch furnaces, which are exempt from the federal emissions rule.

Kokomo can make more than 4,000 tons of glass a year, while Bullseye's top capacity is around 3,000 tons, according to records from both states. Yet Kokomo's air pollution permit with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, issued in 2004,

makes no mention of filters on furnaces.

Subsequent inspection records, most recently in 2013, also list furnaces without noting any controls on them.

Aerial photographs reveal that rows of homes stand 200 feet west of the plant.

Sneed said state and federal inspectors went through the plant as part of the EPA investigation. He said his agency has no plans to change state rules to limit pollution from the plant's furnaces.

Neither the company's chief executive nor president responded to multiple messages regarding the factory's emissions.

Paul Wissmach Glass Co. is also exempt from the federal emissions rule, according to state regulators. Its factory is three blocks from a high school in Paden City, West Virginia, a 2,500-person town on the Ohio River.

State inspectors said the company has at least one dozen batch furnaces. It uses some of them to make stained glass colored with such metals as cadmium, manganese and arsenic. Mark Feldmeier, who runs Wissmach, said in an email to state regulators that the company recently decided to stop using arsenic altogether. When contacted for this story, Feldmeier declined comment.

West Virginia officials believe many of the

hazardous air pollutants are contained within the glass, an assertion Bullseye executives have repeatedly made. "A small portion would be released to atmosphere," Renu Chakrabarty, an agency air toxics specialist, wrote in an email.

Youghiogheny (yah-kuh-GAY'-nee)

Opalescent Glass, a third stained glass factory in neighboring Pennsylvania, sells glass colors called "cadmium orange" and "cadmium orange/green" in several sales catalogs. But the state Department of Environmental Protection said it has no information about the Connellsville, Pennsylvania company's use of metals or other aspects of its production process, because Youghiogheny isn't subject to EPA restrictions targeting heavy metals in continuous glass furnaces.

Company president Susan Triggs declined comment.

EPA and toxic air pollutants

The regulatory exemption that benefits certain art glass companies was created eight years ago, when the EPA finally got around to writing rules for hazardous chemicals emitted by the factories.

In 1990, Congress required the EPA to regulate dozens of the dirtiest industries. The new law split stationary polluters into two categories based on the volume of toxic particles they emit. Officials developed

a list of smaller polluters, and one by one, started drafting regulations for 70 distinct types of businesses.

It took 17 years to write standards for the first 28. The agency didn't tackle the glass making industry until 2007.

The first version of the EPA's rules stated that every glass furnace making more than 50 tons of glass per year with a toxic substance would have to limit its emissions.

But Bullseye Glass and other stained glass manufacturers had a problem with the rule. Eric Durrin, Bullseye's financial controller, argued in a written comment to the EPA that the proposal didn't take into account small businesses like art glass companies that could face "severe" economic impacts.

As The Oregonian/OregonLive previously reported, Bullseye Glass was one of three companies to submit comments at the time. Additional rulemaking records make clear that Bullseye was the only one to propose an exemption for batch furnaces in writing.

The EPA obliged. In the final version of the pollution rules for glass makers, only continuous furnaces are required to limit the emissions from their smokestacks.

Chris Edmonds, a Bullseye spokesman, has previously defended the company's lobbying efforts, saying it did nothing wrong in asking for rules that treat large and small

factories differently.

One expert said regardless of size, all glass operations put metal oxides in the air and create toxic waste. "The smaller the operation, the smaller the problem. But they are all a problem at some level," said Monona Rossol, an industrial hygienist and a leading voice on safety in art-product factories.

Bullseye provides one example. Until it voluntarily stopped, the company used cadmium to make warm-toned colors and arsenic to smooth the glass.

Oregon regulators monitoring air near the Southeast Portland facility in October detected levels of cadmium 49 times the state health benchmark and arsenic at 159 times the benchmark. Regulators said Thursday that test results conducted in February, after Bullseye stopped using the materials, showed "dramatically lower" pollution levels.

Creating a loophole under pressure represents a broader pattern for the EPA, said Frank O'Donnell, a clean air activist who has monitored the EPA for 20 years.

"The EPA is often mischaracterized as some overly aggressive agency," O'Donnell said. "My experience over time is that the EPA is more like a kind of Play-Doh where if somebody pushes in they'll be able to make an impression."

He said the agency has a good track record tackling high-profile pollution sources like coal plants and vehicles. But small sources, such as art glass manufacturing plants, haven't received the same media or congressional attention, making it easier for industries to obtain exemptions from pollution regulations, he said.

Neil Gormley, an environmental attorney who specializes in air toxics, said the EPA's inattention to less prominent sources of pollution is a problem.

"These sources often are more likely to be located in close proximity to people, to homes, to schools, than major sources," said Gormley, an attorney with Earthjustice, a nonprofit environmental law group based out of San Francisco.

"They're a lot more dangerous."

In a statement responding to questions by The Oregonian/OregonLive, the EPA stood by its record on addressing smaller-scale polluters, saying the regulations of 68 industries resulted in "significant improvements in air quality across the nation."

A solution

At least one company exempt from the federal pollution rule for glass making has been required to put a lid on their

smokestacks anyway. That's because some states have gone much farther than the federal Clean Air Act in attacking toxic emissions. Washington is one example.

Spectrum Glass, north of Seattle, has produced stained glass since the 1970s. It uses cadmium to make yellow-colored glass. Since the 1990s it's been required to have industrial filters called baghouses that clean the exhaust coming from its two large batch furnaces. The filters catch at least 99 percent of the pollutants in the smoke, according to the EPA.

Washington's Clean Air Act requires all polluting facilities to install the "best available technology" to limit their emissions, said Brian Renninger, an engineer with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. In the case of the two batch furnaces Spectrum Glass uses to make sheet glass, the best available technology was a baghouse.

Renninger said batch furnaces are a lot more turbulent, kicking up dust when they're loaded with raw materials and allowing heavy metals to escape while the glass is cooking. That's why Spectrum's two major batch furnaces have baghouses, while its two continuous furnaces do not need them, he said.

Spectrum itself was a voice against the batch furnace exemption, records show. A company engineering manager at the time

wrote to the EPA in 2007 to tell the agency that he was "shocked" by the proposal, which he said got the pollution controls backward.

"Periodic furnaces, in our experience, actually emit much more particulate and contaminant into the atmosphere than continuous furnaces," wrote Brandon Byhre, who is now a company vice president.

Edmonds, the Bullseye spokesman, would not answer questions about the company's stance on the dangers posed by batch furnaces.

Oregon environmental regulators are now taking steps, as Washington did long ago, to go farther than EPA rules for glass makers. The decision follows a public backlash over Portland's recently disclosed air pollution hot spots.

On Monday, Oregon officials proposed emergency rules that would require pollution controls targeted at the state's art glass makers. The rules would catch the companies that fell through the 2007 loophole. But the rules also would apply to much smaller factories that make a different type of glass known as borosilicate. Three factories in the Portland area make the glass, which artists use to make figurines and marijuana pipes.

Oregon's Environmental Quality Commission hoped to vote on the new rules Tuesday.

But top lawmakers urged them to slow down, and regulators acquiesced amid public outcry.

In the meantime, Bullseye has reacted to the recent attention by applying to install a baghouse atop one furnace, as Spectrum did two decades ago in the Seattle area. Uroboros, the second company under the spotlight in Portland, signed an agreement with the state Wednesday to stop using the chemicals until it installs emissions controls.

Rob Davis contributed to this report.

-- Fedor Zarkhin

Bullseye Glass

A lot has happened since our last update on Bullseye's environmental issues. There's no question that the art glass industry is beset by troubled waters. Here are some highlights:

□ The Environmental Protection Agency is conducting an investigation into at least 16 facilities that manufacture art glass. In addition to Bullseye, Uroboros, and Spectrum, the list certainly includes Kokomo, Wissmach, Youghiogheny, and more.

The outcome of this investigation is unknown at this time, but it will almost certainly result in a requirement for tighter emissions controls at the glass facilities.

- Spectrum Glass, maker of System 96, has announced it is going out of business. Although the EPA investigation was cited as part of the reason for the closing, the main reason appears to be the decline of the stained glass industry and Spectrum's excess capacity.
- Several manufacturers, including both Uroboros and Wissmach, have announced plans to expand production of System 96 compatible glass in the wake of Spectrum's closing announcement.
- After detecting lead in the air at a daycare near Bullseye's factory in Portland, the governor of the state of Oregon has ordered Bullseye to stop making glass with "lead—as well as arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, all chromium compounds, cobalt, manganese, nickel, and selenium in any uncontrolled furnace." Since Bullseye currently has only one furnace with the necessary emissions control device in place, this virtually brings their production to a halt.
- Bullseye has responded to the cease and desist order by laying off employees (starting today) and expressing dismay at the way the situation was handled. The Governor's order is for 10 days (until around May 30), with an option to renew.

So where does this leave us, the folks who rely on Bullseye and Spectrum for our glass?

For starters, there's no question that the environmental issues are not going away anytime soon. The companies in the industry have a difficult choice: either install the emissions control devices on their furnaces, relocate to another country, or go out of business.

It's too early to predict with certainty what will happen, but so far both Bullseye and Uroboros have announced their intentions to install the devices and continue making glass. That's great news, but getting there does depend on the actions of a lot of groups outside the industry, notable the EPA and the state of Oregon.

Finally, it's certainly good news that Bullseye intends to continue and Uroboros and Wissmach hope to continue with System 96 glasses, but the really big unknown is the outcome of any lawsuits. One has been reported so far, and there may be more. Let's keep our fingers crossed that our suppliers can successfully navigate these troubled waters.

fwww.warmglass.com/art-glass-industry-update/

Upcoming Programs

July - No Meeting

August 7 - Hidden Treasures

September 10 - Annual Picnic & Auction

October 11- Royce Walters

November 8 - Joint Club Program with The Historical Glass Club of Pittsburgh. Author, Sid Lethbridge, on his new book, Campbell Jones at the Heinz History Center

November 11 - Bus Trip to Weston to MAG

December 13 - Holiday Party

Coming Events

June 11, 12

2016 Annual F.G.S.A. Elegant Glass Show
Former West Virginia Penitentiary 901
Eighth Street, Moundsville, WV. Includes
dealers from the Imperial Glass Club and
Moon and Stars Club

June 12

Historic Hanna's Town Antiques & Collectibles, 3 miles North of

Greensburg, PA. www.starofthewest.org

Sponsored by the Westmoreland County
Historical Society. 7:30am-1:30pm. Adm \$3

June 19

Flea-tique at Bull Creek, Located at Tour-Ed
Mine, Tarentum, PA Route 28, Exit 14,
8am-2pm. Sponsored by Allegheny Kiski
Valley Historical Society. \$2 per car 8am-
2pm. www.akvhs.org/FleaTique.htm

June 24-25

Annual National Cambridge Collectors Glass Show and Sale Pritchard Laughlin Civic
Center, Exit 176, 1/8 mile East on Rt 40
Cambridge, Ohio.

Featuring Cambridge, Heisey, Imperial, Fenton, Duncan, Tiffin and others - Admission \$5 Friday 4:30pm - 6pm; Saturday, 11am - 5pm Glass Dash, Glass Flea Market: Sat 7am-11am at St. Benedict's Activity Center. The directions to the Pritchard-Laughlin Civic Center are quite simple. To get there, take exit 176 off I-70, follow the road to where it comes to a "T" with US 40, turn right for about a quarter of a mile. Pritchard-Laughlin Civic Center on left.

June 26

Washington Antique Fair, Console Energy Field, Exit 15 off I-70 entrance at Washington Crown Center Mall in Washington, Pa. 8-2pm. \$3

July 10

Historic Hanna's Town Antiques & Collectibles, 3 miles North of Greensburg, PA. www.starofthewest.org Sponsored by the Westmoreland County Historical Society. 7:30am-1:30pm. Adm \$3

July 17

Flea-tique at Bull Creek, Located at Tour-Ed Mine, Tarentum, PA Route 28, Exit 14, 8am-2pm. Sponsored by Allegheny Kiski Valley Historical Society. \$2 per car 8am-2pm. www.akvhs.org/FleaTique.htm