



Glass Shards

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL EARLY AMERICAN GLASS CLUB

Founded 1933

A Non-Profit Organization

Fall/Winter 1990-1991

New Bedford Glass Museum Closes

In mid-summer, Peter C. Bullard, President of The New Bedford Glass Museum, announced that the museum would be closing its doors forever, after thirteen years of service. By September 1, 1990 the Bedford Museum ceased to exist.

The decision to begin dissolution of the institution, officially known as The New Bedford Glass Society, Inc., was made unanimously at a summer Board meeting.

"This was an extremely painful decision to make," added Mr. Bullard, "but with earned income from tourism declining more than 50% in the past two years, and the local economy not capable of supporting a capital campaign sufficient to cover the deficit, the trustees truly felt there was no viable option to dissolution."

The Museum had no endowment. Opened in 1977 as the showcase of the then-new Waterfront Historic District, the Museum was housed in the historic 1821 Benjamin Rodman House.

Janie Chester Young, Museum director since 1982, went on to cite the efforts of Board and staff to cut expenses and increase revenues over the past few years, even while services and standards of collection care were being improved.

"We had cut spending back to 1986 levels, but it wasn't enough," she stated. "Many factors contributed to the Museum's closing, including an increasingly competitive tourism industry, in which New Bedford, as well as Massachusetts in general, are being squeezed out. The Glass Museum has always been too

dependent on earned income."

"The irony of achieving accreditation only a few months before closing is very painful. The staff, especially, worked valiantly to gain this honor for the Museum," added Mr. Bullard.

The Glass Museum was one of only 683 accredited museums in North America, out of 6,000. In 1985, the Museum was recognized for its historic preservation as the only New Bedford site on the Massachusetts List of Totally Preserved Buildings. The Museum owns a collection of over 4,000 objects, including glass, metals, porcelain, and archival materials documenting New Bedford's historic glass industry from 1867 to 1956.

The exact resolution of the Museum's operation is not yet final. The Board of Trustees is now examining various options, with the dual priorities of keeping the collection in New Bedford, if possible, and accessible to the public. A final recommendation will be made to the Museum membership in the near future. As of August, new memberships were no longer being accepted, as the staff prepared formal meeting announcements and proxy ballots.

"All efforts are being made for the secure and orderly withdrawal of loaned materials, the sale of Museum Store stock, as well as the completion of our financial obligations and staff commitments," reported Mrs. Young.

The Museum's historic building, it has already been decided, will be put on the market for sale. Funds from the sale, after final financial obligations are met, will be

used to establish an endowment for the collection. It is the Board's hope that sufficient funds can be created to display the collection locally and assure its preservation.

Restored with the help of a Massachusetts Preservation Grant in 1985, the 170 year old building will be sold with perpetual reservation restrictions imposed both by the Commonwealth and the building's previous owner, the Waterfront Historic Area League (W.H.A. Le.).

Completed in 1821 by Quaker financier Benjamin Rodman, the granite Federal style mansion is considered to be one of the finest homes of this early period in southern New England. In 1965, Catherine Crapo Bullard, grandmother of the current Museum president and of the Mayor of New Bedford, led the drive to restore the derelict building, which finally opened in 1977 as the centerpiece of the nationally acclaimed New Bedford Waterfront Historic District. Since then, it has been the only historic residence open to the public in the District.

Editor's note: For the last four months, the New Bedford Museum staff has been working with the Massachusetts Attorney General to settle the property of the museum. Proposals from several museums in and outside Massachusetts have been received. Hopefully, a final resolution can be reached by mid-December or early January, according to Janie Chester Young, Director of the museum. It is hoped that the collection will remain in Massachusetts.

Seminar '91 - Wild, Wonderful West Virginia!

The National Early American Glass Club is sponsoring the 7th National Glass Seminar, May 1-4 at Oglebay Park in Wheeling, West Virginia. The Oglebay Mansion Museum houses one of the finest collections of documented American glass, especially from Wheeling glass factories—one of the highlights is the Sweeney punch bowl. A tour of glass factory sites and private Victorian homes

will be included in the program. Lectures by outstanding experts in the field will focus on glass produced in the Ohio River Valley, including the work of the Northwood factory. Speakers include: Gary Baker, Curator of Glass at the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, VA (AND a Wheeling native!); Kenneth Wilson, former Director of Collections at the Henry Ford Museum; James Measell, author

of the recently published "Northwood, the Early Years"; Kirk Nelson, Curator of the Sandwich Glass Museum, Sandwich, Mass.; Paul Hollister, adjunct professor for the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, N.Y.; Rowen LeCompte, stained glass artist and designer of the west rose window and clerestory windows in the National Cathedral,

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Letter From the President

Re: Taxes and the NEAGC.

By now all members will have received their copy of our 1990 By-Laws. Article I, Section 2 states: "Status. The NEAGC is a voluntary non-profit organization governed by the laws of the State of Rhode Island and is qualified for exemption from tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Service Code." As stated in a *Determination Letter* from the Internal Revenue Service, dated January 9, 1973, the NEAGC is not a private foundation and that donors may deduct contributions, bequests, legacies, devices, transfers or gifts to the Club or for the Club's use . . . provided the purposes, character, or method of operation of the NEAGC remains unchanged. A second letter from the IRS, dated December 14, 1989, reaffirmed the statements contained in the 1973 iteration. Questions that members raise are as follows:

Payment of income taxes:

The non-profit status of the NEAGC means that it is exempt from federal income taxes unless there is unrelated business income. In this regard the national organization should be encouraged that its fund-raising events are in keeping with the spirit of Article XV, Section I of our by-laws and that such activities not be construed as a profit motivated business. Non-profit status does not extend to our chapters, unless they are included in a *Group Exemption Letter*.

National dues:

Dues paid directly to the national organization are deductible . . . only for the amount that is more than the value of the benefits you receive." (Internal Revenue Service, *Your Federal Income Tax*, publication 17, For use in preparing 1989 returns, p. 124.) In this regard the *Bulletin* constitutes a benefit which presently has a monetary value of \$8.50 per year. Therefore, one may deduct their membership dues as a charitable contribution to the amounts of \$6.50 or \$11.50 for individual or household enrollments respectively when filing their annual income tax returns. The *Glass Shards* is a newsletter and is exempt from classification as a benefit. This rule applies to other non-profit charitable or educational organizations. For example, The National Geographic Society: their magazine (a benefit), accounts for eighty percent of the annual dues. The American Association of Retired Persons: out of the \$5.00 annual membership dues, \$3.25 are for benefits such as *Modern Maturity* and the *AARP Bulletin*.

Chapter dues:

Dues paid to chapters of the NEAGC are not deductible on individual income tax returns, unless those chapters are included in a *Group Exemption Letter*.

Sales taxes:

As a non-profit organization, the NEAGC is exempt from state and local state taxes, e.g., those associated with printing costs, hall rentals,

advertising, etc. Chapters are not exempt from such taxes, unless they are included in a *Group Exemption Letter*.

Contributions:

Contributions to the NEAGC are wholly tax-deductible. However, not so for chapters, unless they are included in a *Group Exemption Letter*.

I propose that all NEAGC chapters become included in a *Group Exemption Letter* from the IRS to the national organization. Therefore, I have asked our Chapter Coordinator to write the respective chapter contact persons advising them of what is required to be included in a group exemption. Any chapter, as described in our by-laws (Article XI), may, upon request by that chapter, be included in a *Group Exemption Letter*. It is my belief that any national organization should seek, and support, all efforts to provide as much material assistance to its affiliated organizations as possible. By pursuing group exemption under the aegis of the NEAGC, we not only provide a measure of that support, but strengthen the ties between our respective organizations as well. I strongly urge all chapters to include themselves in the proposed group exemption and take advantage of the obvious financial benefits to individuals and chapters alike.

Francis N. Allen, President
NEAGC

Museum Announces Recipient of Rakow Award

An American historian is the recipient of the 1990 Rakow Grant for Glass Research from The Corning Museum of Glass.

Dr. Virginia Chieffo Raguin, an associate professor in the Department of Visual Arts at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, received the prestigious annual grant.

Announcement of the award was made by the Museum's director, Dwight P. Lanmon. "This year's grant is intended to fund new and important research in the history of American stained glass," he said.

Dr. Raguin's award will help her complete *The Stained Glass Heritage of America, 1800-1980's*, a book commissioned by the Cambridge University Press. This volume, which will consist of more than 250 pages and include more than 200 illustrations, will survey the wide variety of architectural stained glass in American buildings.

The Rakow Grant was founded by Mrs. Leonard S. Rakow of New York City and the late Dr. Leonard S. Rakow to recognize and promote excellence in the history of glass. The grant, which now provides \$5,000 annually, is endowed and will eventually grow to \$25,000 per year.

Glass Calendar

(Confirmation of dates and schedules advised)

March 9 - June 23

Glass Exhibit: "From the Cutter's Wheel: American Brilliant Cut Glass, 1880-1915." At M.H. deYoung Museum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California. Major exhibit of 55 pieces of brilliant cut glass that illustrates the excellence and diversity of American glass cut in this period. (Catalog available.)

April 6

Glass Show & Sale: Antique Glass Collectors' Sale, Armory Place, Silver Spring, Maryland. Sponsored by 10 D.C.-area Chapters, NEAGC. Corner Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street.

April 16 - October 18

Glass Exhibit: Blaschka Glass Flowers and Sea Animals — Corning Museum of Glass.

April 27 & 28

Glass Show & Sale: Westchester Glass Show & Sale, sponsored by Westchester Glass Club, a chapter of NEAGC. NOTE NEW LOCATION: Greenwich Civic Center, Old Hardin Rd., Old Greenwich, CT. For info. (203) 531-7004.

May 1-4

Glass Seminar: Seventh National Glass Seminar sponsored by The National Early American Glass Club — Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia.

June 21, 22, 23

Antique Show: Pittsburgh — Chatham College; sponsored by Pittsburgh Chapter, NEAGC. Info: (412) 828-2224. (Antiques of all types.)

August 17 & 18

Glass Show & Sale: Sponsored by the Sandwich Glass Museum and Historical Society, Oak Ridge Elementary School, 260 Quaker Meetinghouse Rd., E. Sandwich (Cape Code), MA. Sat. 10-5, Sun. 11-4.

October 16-19

Glass Seminar: 31st Annual Corning Museum of Glass Seminar; (607) 937-5371 for seminar brochure.

November 2 & 3

Glass Show & Sale: Montgomery County Antique Glass Show & Sale, Armory Place, Corner Wayne Avenue & Fenton St., Silver Spring, MD — Dorfingler Glass Study Group, chapter of NEAGC, sponsors. Tel. (301) 933-2339 or (301) 589-1806.

NEAGC Officers, Directors and Committee Chairpersons

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Director, 1 yr.:	Miriam Mucha P.O. Box 353 Langhorne, PA 19047		

Tips for the New Glass Collector

- Never collect something because "it doesn't take up a lot of room"; you will enjoy your collection more if you identify with what you collect.
- Try not to value a piece *solely* according to price guides or prices seen on similar pieces. Use these values as a frame of reference for future buying . . . but buy for less!
- Don't depend on the printed word for accuracy. Have your own glass knowledge. Know, too, that there are errors in many popular books on glass.
- Remember that diversification of form adds interest and value to a collection.
- Resist "gathering" rather than *collecting*; buy with an eye toward relative importance to the rest of your collection, aesthetic appeal, rarity of form, etc.
- Try not to collect mainly damaged pieces; save toward one or two good pieces. (However, a modest investment in a rare or extremely rare "as is" piece is wise.)
- Remember always that a "limited" edition does not automatically mean rare, or rare someday.
- Avoid depending *too much* on what fellow collectors and dealers tell you about a given piece; do research for *your own* information.
- Don't forget that *knowledge* and *time* (NOT money) determines who finds the best buys, the most often. READ, READ, READ in the area of your glass interest. Remember, too, curators are wonderful sources of information, but *never* do they appraise.

—Sylvia Applebee Lyon



I'm just hoping Clyde won't notice I bought it, until the check clears.

Westchester Glass Show Is Moving

The Westchester Glass Show and Sale, after 14 years in White Plains, will be moving to the Greenwich Civic Center, Hardin Road, Old Greenwich, Ct. The show under the direction of Molly and Duff Allen, has gained in popularity and the glass club finds it necessary to move the show to larger quarters to accommodate those on the waiting list and to have a more diversified variety of glass for the collectors. Show dates are April 27 & 28.

The speakers will be Dorothy Lee Jones on Saturday, April 27, 1991, and Ray Barlow on Sunday, April 28th.

For further show information, please call Molly Allen at (203) 531-7004. The show is sponsored by Westchester Glass Club, a chapter of the National Early American Glass Club.

Chapter News

A Holiday Buffet meeting of the COLUMBIA and BALTIMORE MARYLAND chapters attracts numerous glass enthusiasts annually; this year, a color-slide program on glassmaking and glass decorating techniques highlighted the event.

Even though the general public (reportedly) is reluctant to spend their "disposable income" these days, the 37 glass dealers at the Montgomery County Antique Glass Show & Sale were pleased with their sales. After the show, members of the DORFLINGER GLASS STUDY GROUP, sponsors, were guests of members Evelyn and Ken Pinkard for a delicious buffet supper. Finally, after months of work, under the guidance of co-chairladies, Mary Rutley and Peg Hall, members could bask in the glow of a job well done.

On January 8, Dwight Lanmon, Director of the Corning Museum of Glass and Amelung scholar, will lecture on the museum's dig at the site of the old Amelung factory, to members of the PITTSBURGH CHAPTER, NEAGC. For program information call (412) 355-0888. The PITTSBURGH CHAPTER, NEAGC, will also have its annual antique show and sale at Chatham College on June 21, 22, and 23. In addition to fine glass, a wide range of other antiques will be for sale. For additional information, call Frances Taylor (412) 828-2224, or write Box 11204, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

THE WESTCHESTER GLASS CLUB, White Plains, New York, chose the Sandwich Glass Museum of Sandwich, Massachusetts, as the recipient of its annual award.

The presentation of a Trevaize vase to Kirk Nelson, curator of the museum was given at the Westchester Glass Show and Sale last April 26th. The vase is unusually

graceful in form and has a decoration of trailed loops and superimposed iridescent lily pads. Trevaize was made by the Alton Manufacturing Company in Sandwich for less than one year and is the only Sandwich glass made in the Art Nouveau style. This vase brings the number of examples in the Sandwich museum's collection to four.

The proceeds of the annual glass show are always used to benefit a museum or a contemporary glass school or project.

In October, members of THE FOUNDERS CHAPTER in Boston enjoyed a day trip to the Currier Gallery in Manchester, New Hampshire. A visit to nearby Strawberry Banke in Portsmouth, a restored village of early American homes, added further enjoyment to the day. A recent program by Frank Mahoney to the study group enlightened members on the fine points of historical glass. In the afternoon, a lecture by Roger Jacobsen entitled: "Paperweight Renaissance," was well received and exceptionally informative.

All of the information in this issue of GLASS SHARDS was forwarded by NEAGC chapters and museums prior to our annual deadline of Nov. 1 and Mar. 1. If your chapter news is missing here, it is because nothing was sent to me. For our spring issue, please mail anything you wish published to: Sylvia Lyon, Editor GLASS SHARDS, Box 57,

Seminar Sightseeing '91

In regard to traveling to the NEAGC seminar May 1 to 4, 1991: For those who are driving or who intend to spend some time in the Wheeling, W.Va. area, a listing of Glass Houses to visit in the Ohio-West Virginia area, and places of historical interest, is being sent to all chapter contact persons. If you are not a member of a chapter and wish this information sent to you, please write to: Jean Wilson, P.O. Box 50, West Point, PA 19486.

Fishers Hill, VA 22626. Information may be sent prior to November 1 and March 1. It is the responsibility of NEAGC chapters to remember our deadlines for GLASS SHARDS. Copy must be double spaced. Thank you and HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

—Sylvia

Sandwich Museum Publishes The Acorn Journal

Last spring, the premier edition of *The Acorn*, the new annual journal of the Sandwich Glass Museum, was published. Well-researched articles in the first edition included: "The Role of Women in the Sandwich Glass Industry," by Martha Hassell, museum historian; "A Mount Washington Inventory in South Boston," authored by Barbara Bishop; and two articles by Kirk Nelson, Curator: "Early Glass Pressing Technology in Sandwich" and "The New England Glass Company vs. George W. Robinson, Machinist at Sandwich." *The Acorn* will be published once each year and will contain articles and studies "relating to glass of the Sandwich factory era and to the history of Sandwich." NEAGC members wishing to receive a copy of Volume I may do so by writing: The Sandwich Glass Museum, Box 103, Sandwich, MA 02563. Enclose a check for \$10.95 to cover cost, including postage.

SEMINAR '91, continued

Washington, D.C.; Sheldon Butts, well-known for his excellent glass photography, Silver Spring, MD; and Eason Eige, Director, Huntington Art Museum and Editor of *The Glass Club Bulletin*, Huntington, WV.

There will be time for discussions with prominent glass historians, browsing in the Mansion Museum and enjoying the beautiful West Virginia hills surrounding Oglebay Park. For further information and a brochure write: Ellen Roberts, NEAGC Seminar Chairman, 1026 16th St., NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20036. *Editor's Note: NEAGC members will receive a special seminar package.)*

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