

Glass Shards

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL EARLY AMERICAN GLASS CLUB

Founded 1933

A Non-Profit Organization

Winter 1988-89

Memory of Helen McKearin

One lovely summer day Ruth and Joel Davis and I rode the ferry to Nantucket to have lunch with Helen McKearin, who spent her summers there. We dined out-of-doors at a pleasant hostelry, the Jared Coffin House, then taxied to Miss McKearin's summer cottage, where we spent a good part of the afternoon talking glass. I had brought along copies of her books, which she kindly inscribed, signing herself Helen McKearin. We hit it off, and thus began for me a decade of privileged association and cherished friendship.

At the time of our first and only meeting, "Mickey" Powers (Helen McKearin Powers) was close to eighty and partially blind. She could read with the aid of a large magnifying glass and her mind was open to the electricity of thought.

We corresponded on a ratio of about 5 to 1—five letters from Mickey—and for some years I often responded by phone. Her flow of information was a glassy stream, pebbled with questions and proper definitions, that flowed over rocks of speculation. Mickey had witnessed glassblowing at the New York

World's Fair of 1939; had cataloged the glass for the American Index of Design; and among dozens of her articles appearing in *Antiques*, had published the glass vessels appearing in paintings of The Last Supper. She was fascinated by the progress of American studio glass, which by now she could only imagine.

The time came when her hearing aid deceived her and we could no longer talk successfully on the phone. But if one spoke very slowly and distinctly she could decipher tapes. I began taping all the latest glass news and scuttlebutt, confessing my research and writing problems. Mickey responded with autobiographical tapes delivered in a warm, measured voice. She commented on my comments. Fragments of glass history were untangled with meticulous accuracy. From years of experience Mickey had the ability to pinpoint a glass truth in the fewest possible words. She also had a treasury of anecdotal material relating to examples of hilarity, incompetence, and fakery in connection with glass that made the tapes a treat to listen to.

Blinder and more blind, deafer and deafer,

often more prone than up and about, Mickey persisted right to the end with matter-of-fact tolerance of a dozen malevolent afflictions, and with a calm optimism that caused her to descend from her bedroom each evening for a hand of rummy with her sister Mary O'Neil and a scotch, or, on special occasions, a manhattan with a red-dye No. 7 cherry. She would look out the windows of Mary's lovely Valley Falls house, welcoming the weather of each day like a visitor—the long green view, turning leaves, sunlight on snow, a particular sunset. She never stopped doing this.

—Paul Hollister

(On Wednesday, October 19, 1988, Helen McKearin passed away; she was 90 years old.)

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Chicago, Chicago . . . It's a Wonderful Town!

The Fifth National Glass Seminar, sponsored by the National Early American Glass Club and hosted by the Greater Chicago Glass Collectors' Club, a chapter of NEAGC, will take place on May 10-13 in Chicago, Illinois. Headquarters for the seminar will be the handsome, recently restored Midland Hotel; all lectures and workshops will be held there and it is within walking distance of the Art Institute of Chicago. Festivities open with a reception on the evening of May 10th at the hotel; the closing banquet will also be held there on Saturday evening. Ellen Roberts and her committee are hard at work finalizing seminar speakers and workshops. Glass lectures and workshop subjects include: sulphides, French lacy glass,

Midwestern glass, pre-Brilliant Period cut glass and Joseph Locke and his glassware.

Lynn Springer Roberts, Dwight Lanmon, Paul Gardner, and Miriam Mucha have all accepted invitations to lecture. A mailing will go out to all NEAGC members sometime this winter. In the interim, mark May 10-13 on your calendar. Join us in forming new, and lasting friendships; share with others in the common pursuit of learning and collecting!

Footnote

Our 1988 seminar on Cape Cod in the charming village of Sandwich was a sellout! Kyle Husfloen, Editor of *The Antique Trader*, NEAGC member and early Ameri-

can glass collector, expressed his impressions of our Sandwich seminar as follows: "It was an absolutely perfect spring weekend, sunny and mild, to add to the enjoyment of the over 150 participants in this glass lover's weekend in Sandwich. People came from all over the country, including California, Arizona and points throughout the Midwest, including a contingent of 15 charming ladies from the Early American Glass Club of Minnesota. It was a truly grand weekend for collectors and students of American glass, the chance to renew old friendships and start up new ones. By all accounts, the weekend was a great success in every way."

SO, DON'T MISS CHICAGO NEXT MAY!

Chapter and Museum News

THE HELEN N. BARGER CHAPTER of Wayne County, PA., journeyed to Corning, New York, this fall to view the Ernesto Wolf Collection of European Glass, 1500-1800, at the Corning Museum of Glass. While in Corning, members also visited the Rockwell Museum to see Frederick Carder's Steuben glass. A club library has recently been established and members are presently compiling a library scrapbook featuring Dorflinger glass advertisements, many the contribution of a club member who purchased them at auction.

In PITTSBURGH a full year of lectures and field trips are scheduled for the coming season. On December 13th Dianne Gregg of the Bethesda, MD Chapter will speak on "Arts & Crafts Movements" and on January 10th, Frances A. Taylor will give a talk on "Random Patterns" in glass. THE PITTSBURGH CHAPTER OF NEAGC cordially invites anyone interested in glass to join them for these lectures; meetings are held at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and a panel discussion will follow each lecture. This club was chartered in 1940 under the direction of Lowell Innes, whose book, "Pittsburgh Glass - 1797-1891" is a classic in its field. Recently the PITTSBURGH CHAPTER OF NEAGC commenced publishing the *Pittsburgh Glass Journal*, a monthly newsletter full of information on various types of glass, their origins, as well as chapter news on future programs and field trips.

Dorothy-Lee Jones, Founder-Curator of The Jones Museum in Sebago, Maine, will address the PHILADELPHIA AREA CHAPTER OF NEAGC at their December 11 meeting. Miss Jones, a former president of NEAGC, has chosen as her subject: "Heat Sensitive Glass" - Amberina, Rubina, and Peachblow glass will be among the examples used to illustrate her talk. "Glass Drawer Pulls, 1820-1888" will be the topic of club member Frank Innes' February 12th program. Walter Bostick, president, invites all members or prospective members of NEAGC living or visiting in the Philadelphia area to attend any of the PHILADELPHIA AREA CHAPTER meetings. Write the chapter c/o P.O. Box 50, West Point, PA. 19486 or call (215) 699-3816.

THE FOUNDERS CHAPTER, NEAGC of Boston holds their 1:00 p.m. monthly meetings at the Church Hall of the Church of the Redeemer, 379 Hammond Street in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. On December 14, Bertram M. Cohen, collector and author, will speak on "Marbles and Glass Canes" followed by a January 11th lecture, "The History of Glassmaking in Rhode Island" to be given by Kirk J. Nelson, Curator of the Sandwich Glass Museum on Cape Cod. FOUNDERS president, Lemuel Brimmer may be contacted for further information.

THE EARLY AMERICAN GLASS CLUB OF MINNESOTA will hold their December

16 meeting and Christmas luncheon at the Midland Hills Country Club, 2001 Fulham Street in Roseville, Minnesota. The 11:30 a.m. meeting will be highlighted (no pun intended) by Bonnie Engle's talk, "Lights That Lit America." On January 20th Mattie Rupp will speak on perfume bottles at the home of member Phyllis Neher.

In Maryland, THE COLUMBIA GLASS CLUB has had several interesting fall programs, including one which featured a talk by James R. McDaniel, a long-time employee of the L. J. Houze Convex Glass Company of Point Marion, Pennsylvania, a major manufacturer of lamps and novelty items made of slag glass, still in operation today. On December 4th, COLUMBIA will co-sponsor a Christmas buffet with THE BALTIMORE GLASS CLUB at the Pargo Restaurant in Baltimore. George Schamel, past president of the Heisey Collectors of America will speak on Heisey glass and his involvement with the recovery of the Heisey moulds.

Also in Maryland, THE BETHESDA CHAPTER recently enjoyed a three-day trip which included a visit to the Oglebay Institute and several glass factories in West Virginia. Eight members stayed at the newly restored circa 1889 Blenner Hassett Hotel in Parkersburg. Members toured the Gentile Glass Company in Morgantown and the newly opened Dalzell-Viking glass company in New Martinsville. In Williamstown, Mr. Frank Fenton personally led them on a tour through the Fenton factory, where he revealed that he and James Measell, Greentown glass authority, are presently collaborating on a book covering "the third 25 years of Fenton glass."

On November 15th THE SANDWICH CHAPTER OF NEAGC hosted the nine area D.C. chapters of NEAGC to hear a lecture on Islamic glass, presented by Francis Allen, NEAGC director.

THE DORFLINGER GLASS STUDY GROUP of Silver Spring recently traveled to the Wheaton Museum to view the Durand glass exhibit. Seven members attended the 28th annual glass seminar at the Corning Museum of Glass, where a variety of lectures on American and European glass, coupled with the fellowship of old and new glass collector acquaintances, resulted in a week long to be remembered.

THE GREATER CHICAGO GLASS COLLECTORS' CLUB is hard at work and enthusiastically anticipating NEAGC's fifth National Glass Seminar. Chicago will host the reception on opening night, as well as handle the myriad of details associated with seminar registration. At their Christmas luncheon in December, members will view a tape of their nineteenth century glass exhibit at the DuPage Historical Museum last year.

Members of THE WESTCHESTER GLASS CLUB are looking forward to another successful annual glass show and sale

on April 29 and 30. As usual, this Annual Collectors' Glass Show and Sale will be held at the Woman's Club, 305 Ridgeway Avenue in White Plains, New York.

THE CORNING MUSEUM OF GLASS recently awarded the 1988 Rakow Grant for Glass Research to two scholars, Dr. Meredith Lillich, a professor of Syracuse University, and Ms. Martine Newby of London were the recipients of this prestigious annual award. Dr. Lillich is completing studies for a publication on European stained glass (prior to 1700) in upstate New York public collections. Ms. Newby is completing research on the glass excavated at the Benedictine monastery at Farfa, about 30 miles outside Rome. More than 4,000 fragments, dating from the eighth to the 18th centuries were recovered.

At their 28th annual seminar, CORNING awarded the Rakow Commission to Mary Ann "Toots" Zynsky, an American glass artist living in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Ms. Zynsky, recipient of numerous awards, including the Visual Arts Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts in 1986, studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence (B.F.A., 1973; Advanced Glass Program, 1979). She is renowned for using glass in ways that seem technically unfeasible. Her commissioned work, a glass bowl formed of pulled and fused threads in exotic hues of brilliant orange and black, will remain on permanent display in the contemporary gallery at CORNING.

THE BERGSTROM MAHLER GLASS MUSEUM has just released a reviewed edition of their classic 1969 reference work, *Glass Paperweights of the Bergstrom Art Center*. Two editions are available and each includes Baccarat design sheets, T. H. Clark's illustrated essays on designer paperweights (previously unpublished), and a collectors' price list, none of which were included in the 1969 edition.

In New Jersey, Barry Taylor, Director of the Museum of American Glass, WHEATON VILLAGE, recently announced WHEATON has been recognized as a "Distinguished Arts Organization" by the New Jersey State Council of the Arts. Grants totaling \$253,600 were awarded WHEATON; \$200,000 for general operating support, \$46,000 for the Southern New Jersey Arts Initiative Program and \$7,600 for a technical assistant.

All of the information in this issue of GLASS SHARDS was forwarded by NEAGC chapters and museums prior to our annual deadlines 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, 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

President's Letter

Dear Members:

As I anticipate the culmination of my four years as your president, I am doing all that I can to make it possible to turn over a more smoothly-operating organization to a new NEAGC administration next May in Chicago.

If you are called to serve on the new board of directors of the National Early American Glass Club, please consider your answer carefully. Your willingness to serve is essential to our existence. *Don't* say "NO" to NEAGC. Help us grow and continue to deserve the great respect we have enjoyed through the years. Say "YES" to a most rewarding opportunity; say "YES" when you are asked to be a committee chairman or to serve on our board of directors. I guarantee your life will be enriched for having done so.

Sincerely,
Ken

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The National Early American Glass Club Nominating Committee is presently working on a new slate of officers and directors. Anyone wishing to suggest names to the committee may do so by writing to the Chairperson, Mrs. Phyllis F. Locke, 825 6th St., Patterson Heights, Beaver Falls, PA 15010. The committee consists of Miriam Mucha, Helen Meng, Betty Iber and Bill Sheriff. Deadline for suggestions is December 31, 1988.

"Dining at the White House"

The first exhibition of glass and china from the White House will be shown at The Corning Museum of Glass.

"Dining at the White House: Two Centuries of Presidential Tableware" will be on view from April 30 through October 15, 1989.

This exhibition will show the style in which guests were entertained by presidents from George Washington's first inaugural dinner in April 1789 to the present.

Because the White House is prohibited by law from loaning its collections except under special circumstances, the exhibition will be a rare opportunity to view the official services of glass and china as they were used at the presidential table.

"Dining at the White House" will include more than 100 pieces of American glass from sets ordered for the presidential residence during the 19th and 20th centuries. Some 50 pieces of French, English, and American porcelain that were used with the glass will also be on display.

The exhibition will be organized by The Corning Museum of Glass and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, with the assistance of the White House.

NEAGC CHAPTER PROGRAMS

When you receive your new 1988-1989 NEAGC directory, please notice that there is a list of programs available for use by your club which you may arrange to receive through our Education Chairman, Bill Sheriff. Director Francis Allen has generously assisted Bill in compiling this information. Our thanks go out to both of them for all that they have done. More programs will be added as they become available. Chapters are encouraged to do a taped slide program or videotape for use by NEAGC chapters seeking programs for meetings. Our board will consider helping to defray any reasonable production costs for exceptional programs. The program listing is written on the blue centerfold pages of your directory.

Glass Calendar

(Confirmation of dates and schedules advised)

Mid January-Mid March

Exhibition: "Nature In Glass" - Wheaton Museum, Vineland, NJ (Glass from Wheaton's permanent collection).

February 5-March 5

Exhibition: "87 Works of Dominick Labino, 1964-1985" - The Toledo Museum of Art (Gift of Libby & Dominick Labino).

April 7-October 30

Exhibition: "The Success of Wistar: Making Glass in America" - Loan exhibit of Wistar glass - Arlene Palmer Schwind, Guest Curator & author of catalogue. Celebrating 250th anniversary of Wistar as a glass manufacturer.

April 8

Antique Glass Collectors' Sale - Armory Place, Silver Spring, Md. - Open to all members of NEAGC who would like to sell glass; contact Wm. Sheriff. Sponsored by the nine D.C.-area chapters of NEAGC.

April 29 & 30

Glass Show & Sale/ Annual Collectors' Glass Show & Sale, Woman's Club, 305 Ridgeway Ave., White Plains, NY. Westchester Glass Club, sponsors. Tel. (203) 531-7004 for info.

April 30-October 15, 1989

Exhibition: "Dining at the White House: Two Centuries of Presidential Tableware" - Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.

May 10-13

Glass Seminar: National Early American Glass Club's fifth National Glass Seminar, Midland Hotel, Chicago, Illinois. The Greater Chicago Glass Collectors' Club, NEAGC, hosts.

October 11-14

Seminar: 29th Annual Seminar on Glass, Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY.

NEAGC DIRECTOR, FRANCIS ALLEN, SPEAKS AT BRITISH MUSEUM

This past August, National Early American Glass Club Director, Francis Allen, was invited by Hugh Taft, Deputy Keeper of the British Museum, to give a presentation on the Hedwig Beakers at their colloquium on the "Aldrevandini Group" of medieval enameled glasses and related material. His presentation, a synopsis of his monograph on the Hedwig beakers, was given at the Historisches Museum in Basel, Switzerland. The event coincided with "Phoenix aus Sand und Asche," a unique and extensive exhibition at the museum featuring many outstanding examples of European and Islamic enameled glass, brought together for the first time. The exhibition included six Hedwig beakers and fragments of three others. Invited U.S. representatives included David Whitehouse of the Corning Museum of Glass and William Gudenrath, glass artist and glass historian of New York City.

JEAN WILSON APPOINTED CHAPTER LIAISON PERSON

Jean Wilson, Philadelphia Chapter, has agreed to work with any chapter to answer questions and assist in solving any problems that may arise. Jean has been active in NEAGC for many years and was instrumental in forming the Philadelphia Area Chapter of NEAGC. She is also an active member of the American Cut Glass Association. Feel free to contact Jean at any time at Bethel Road, R.D. 2, Lansdale, PA 19446, or by calling (215) 699-3816.



CHIPS

ARE OUR RECORDS STRAIGHT???

Some members believe that they are not receiving our publications and other material; some aren't even aware of what they should be receiving! Annual scheduled mailings are as follows: THE GLASS CLUB BULLETIN - October, January and April; GLASS SHARDS - November and April; ANNUAL DIRECTORY - November (the coming issue will include a list of programs suitable for club meetings); SEMINAR INFORMATION - sometime in March (Seminar details must be *completely* ironed out before a flyer can be printed); BALLOTS - late March. Any errors relating to your NOT receiving our publications and notices can be corrected by contacting Nancy and Bill Sheriff, 1222 Pinecrest Circle, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Address changes, address errors and name changes should be forwarded to them, as they handle our computerized mailing list.

Fund Drive Results

In late 1987, NEAGC initiated a fund drive to strengthen its ability to purchase a computer, to obtain new programs for members, and to produce a professional brochure, all of which has since occurred! We found the warm response most encouraging. The total amount received was \$4,920. Personal gifts ranged from \$5 to \$1000 and chapter gifts ranged from \$25 to \$1000. All personal gifts are tax-deductible for the full sum given. Including gifts from eight members who wished to remain anonymous, we gratefully acknowledge donations from the following:

Francis N. Allen	Ken & Sylvia Lyon
Molly & Duff Allen	Mr. & Mrs. John
Charles & Elizabeth	Malaguerra
Barger	Kathryn Manchee
Col. & Mrs. Z. D.	Fred Meyer
Blackstone, Jr.	Mrs. Lucy B. Mitchell
Alvina & Theodore	Pauline F. Morgan
Breckel	Miriam E. Mucha
Mrs. Jack W. Casper	Mrs. Hazel A. Mumford
Betty & Edman Chapman	Esther Murray
Bertram Cohen	Joan K. O'Brien
Mrs. James H. Elkus	Vivien Pfleger
Virginia Frenzel	Mrs. Shirley H. Pope
Mr. & Mrs. John D.	Mrs. Kathryn K. Porter
Glover, Jr.	Helen McKearin Powers
Beverly Graninger	duVal Radford
Irene Heartz	Mr. & Mrs. Roy Ranck
Jim & Jemmi Helmericks	Virginia S. Rockwell
J. Ed Hensley	Esther A. Routhier
Sibley & Ruth	Mrs. Paul Salanon
Higginbotham	Linda Sandell
Anna O. Hingle	Louis O. St. Aubin, Jr.
Paul Hollister	Eileen Schamel
Virginia Hurley	Bill & Nancy Sheriff
Dr. & Mrs. Frank L. Iber	Estelle F. Sinclair
Nedra Karrer Joyce	Beatrice Scheer Smith
Robert K. Keller	Helen R. Smith
Dierdre D. Kieckhefer	Maurine Soxman
Charles & Marian Leber	Mr. & Mrs. Paul Stankard
Albert D. Leopold	Robert M. Stern
Mary A. Lizzadro	Mrs. Veronica
Kenneth & Phyllis Locke	Strathmann
Mrs. Robert J. Lurvey	Mr. & Mrs. Glen Tripp
William S. Luttrell	Robert L. Vignolo

Paul Weiner
Carlese & Jon Westock
Doris D. Wilson

Dr. & Mrs. D. Stratton
Woodruff

Donations were also received from the following chapters:

Amelung Chapter (MD)
Dorflinger Glass Study Group (MD)
Early American Glass Club of Minnesota
Helen N. Barger Chapter (PA)
Pittsburgh Chapter
Sandwich Chapter (MD)
Seattle Unit #4 (WA)
Sun City Chapter (AZ)

Memorial Fund Donations

Since our Memorial Fund was created, various donations have been made in memory of MRS. ALBERT NEWMAN, ELIZABETH TALCOTT, CAROLINE MCCAUGHAN, DR. EDWARD TINNEY, ROSEMOND VANETTEN, RUTH HIGGINBOTHAM, and HELEN MCKEAREN POWERS.

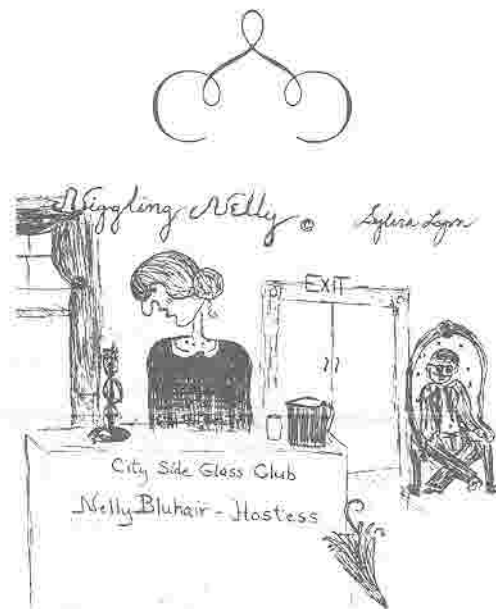
Donations to this special fund are to be used to sponsor yearly Memorial Lectures at our seminars. The total received thus far is \$1,271.00, including an anonymous gift of \$500. Donations have been received from:

Helen & Victor Harris	Adine Stockman
Sibley Higginbotham	Nancy & Bill Sheriff
John D. Kendig	Virginia M. Talcott
Kenneth & Phyllis Locke	Mrs. J. T. Trullinger
Ken & Sylvia Lyon	Rosemond VanEtten
Miriam E. Mucha	Rosemond & Leigh
Mrs. Shirley H. Pope	VanEtten
Virginia S. Rockwell	Helen Wainke
Carrie Schamehorn	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore R.
Charlotte Sittig	Wernecke
	Elizabeth S. Williams

If your name should have been included in any of these lists, please let us know.

NEW NEAGC BROCHURE

Hot off the press, NEAGC has a new look in a professional membership brochure! It is attractive, easy to read and includes a form for anyone who wishes to join us. Many of us are acquainted with people involved with glass—dealers, authors, estate appraisers, auction houses and museum personnel. Drop a note to Nancy Sheriff, 1222 Pinecrest Circle, Silver Spring, MD 20910 requesting brochures for distribution in your area. Considering our scope, our membership can more than double if each of us does our share... a few NEAGC brochures at your local library, nearby college, or wherever those interested in the decorative arts gather, will spell success, for *all* of us!



"Because he abhors glass research, all of his speaker's writings are completely original."

The National Early American Glass Club

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