



# Glass Shards

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL EARLY AMERICAN GLASS CLUB

Founded 1933

A Non-Profit Organization

Winter 1993/94

## Support to NEAGC Chapter Publications

The Board of Directors of the National Early American Glass Club, Ltd. has voted to initiate a matching funds program for NEAGC chapter publications beginning with the 1994 calendar year. The program is open to all NEAGC chapters and applies to existing publications as well as to those which may be planned. Also included are the joint publications of two or more chapters. The following are the conditions under which NEAGC chapters may participate in the program:

1. The NEAGC will provide up to \$500.00 in matching funds per annum per participating chapter(s).

2. The publication must contain at least one 500 word, previously unpublished article on glass per issue and authored by a member(s) of the NEAGC.

3. Publication must occur within one calendar year from acceptance into the program with publication occurring at least semi-annually.

4. Chapters will have complete control over content and standards of quality.

5. Participation in the program will not restrict the inclusion of other items which chapter editors may deem of interest to their readers, e.g., club and chapter news, glass events, news about other glass organizations, etc.

6. Participating chapters may not accept paid advertising in their publication.

7. Chapters may disburse program money in any way they deem necessary for support of the publications, e.g., supplies, printing, mailing, etc.

8. Chapters may not award honoraria for articles appearing in publications under the program.

9. Charging a nominal fee to cover additional costs of printing and mailing is left to the discretion of the chapters participating in the program.

10. Chapters participating in the program will be required to add the President of NEAGC and the Publications Committee Chair to their publication subscription list.

11. Funding for the program will be drawn from the NEAGC General Fund by the

Treasurer, who will convey such funds to the participating chapters as directed by the NEAGC Publications Committee Chair.

12. The NEAGC Publications Committee may, at any time, discontinue such support because of financial considerations or because such publications would be in conflict with Articles I (Section 2), II and XI of the NEAGC By-laws.

13. Participating chapters must provide NEAGC Publications Chair with only minimal accounting information for their publications, e.g., annual costs for illustration, printing and mailing per x-number of issues.

14. The NEAGC reserves the right to republish any chapter articles published under this program.

15. Applications, in writing, may be submitted at any time to the NEAGC Publications Committee who will administer the program. Applications should be sent to: Jane S. Spillman, The Corning Museum of Glass, One Museum Way, Corning, NY 14830-2253.

## Spring Seminar in Winter Park, Florida

The Tenth National Glass Seminar, sponsored by the National Early American Glass Club, Ltd., will be held at the Langford Hotel in Winter Park, Florida, May 11-14, 1994. The focal point will be the Tiffany stained glass windows in the outstanding collection of Mr. Hugh McKean. It is the largest collection of Tiffany windows in the world, many having come from Louis Comfort Tiffany's summer home, Laurelton Hall, Long Island, N.Y.

Featured speakers will be: Alice Freylinghuysen, curator of American Decorative Arts at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gary Baker, curator of glass at the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, VA, which houses the world-renowned Chrysler collection of Tiffany glass; Julie Sloan, author of the recent book, "Frank Lloyd Wright Windows"; Kathy Deagan, anthropologist and archeologist

with the Florida Museum of Natural History; Ken Wilson will give us a sneak preview of his newest treatise, "Mt. Washington Glass"; Diane Grimes, author and collector of micromosaic jewelry of the 19th and 20th century; Joan and Richard Randall will present an audience participation program—the topic is "T. G. Hawkes Glass."

The participants will have the unique opportunity to tour the storage areas of the Morse Gallery of Tiffany Glass and also spend part of a day in historic St. Augustine behind the scenes at the Lightner Museum. This museum houses a vast collection of cut glass and American art glass along with an eccentric exhibit of 19th century furniture and American decorative arts.

The Langford Hotel is a treasure of old Florida, located in the center of the charming village of Winter Park and within walking

distance of Park Avenue, the main shopping area, and the Morse Gallery of Tiffany Glass. It has a wonderfully large swimming pool, lots of palms dripping with Spanish moss and is close to several fine restaurants.

Brochures with complete details will be ready in January and mailed to all NEAGC members. So mark your calendars for May 11-14; we'll meet you at the Langford!!

## LIFE MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASED

At their last meeting, the NEAGC board voted to raise the dues of Life Membership. Hereafter, Life Membership will cost \$400.00 for individuals and \$500.00 for household, effective May 1, 1994. Presently dues for both categories are \$300.00.

## President's Letter

Here I am, on the "D" train to Brooklyn... what madness had driven me to the depths of a New York subway on a hot day in July. Climbing from the darkness, the train picks its way across a gallery of graffiti bridging the East River, on one side is a grand view of Grand Old Bridge, on the other side, the Lower East Side. Then, back into the darkness. Within minutes, a voice struggles above a cacophony of steel-on-steel saying something about "DeKalb"; that's my stop. Stumbling into dizzying sunlight, the street is a carnival of sidewalk mini-markets specializing in sunglasses—which way to head? Turning first one way and then another, clutching my little next-to-nothing map, I make my way through the ethnic diversity which has become cliché for Brooklyn. But scarcely two blocks away, my goal, a joining of architectural misfits on a quiet corner. Inside—another world, one in which I feel at home.

Last May, I signed up for "Glassblowing: A Beginner's Weekend" at the New York Experimental Glass Workshop, and, over the ensuing weeks, wondering what I had let myself in for. Arriving early I find myself sharing a reception area with members of two classes; students for "Neon: A Beginner's Weekend" are also there. The room is brightly lit; on one side are cases of wildly beautiful glass, undoubtedly the work of gifted students and professionals (one a Chihuly, some obviously Gudenrath). The opposite wall is windowed and looks out on the work area where, beneath meandering flue ducts, the fires of glass furnaces peek from behind closed doors. The Glass Workshop is dominated by an enormous square of pipes and pots centered on the third floor of a hangar-like interior with fifty-foot ceilings which used to be a movie theatre dating back to 1918; evidence of a balcony still angles upward along a rear wall. Three sides of the square are work areas, the fourth is for operations and everything is run by a computer from there. Inside the square is an energy-efficient plumber's nightmare of pipes, conduit and vents unifying furnaces, glory holes and oddly shaped tool heaters into one roaring monument to fire and technology. Our class is to work along the rear side; later, advanced students and professionals will arrive to do their fire magic on the remaining two sides. The old theater is well vented and shares space with studios for cutting, lost wax casting, bead-making, and glass fusing. It is there the neon class will learn to make glass that glowed; our dream is to learn glassblowing in two days.

Our instructor, James Horton, is quick to get started. The first fifteen minutes are devoted to safety.... do we have the right clothing? (jeans are best), the right sunglasses? (welder's goggles suggested), the right shoes? (sturdy, no open toes), where to walk, where to stand. And, we must quickly learn each other's names; glass at 2000-plus degrees isn't very forgiving. Partnering into three teams,

we draw from a common pot but each team has its own glory hole and chair at which to work. The steps are simple, or so it seems. A teammate (the helper) opens the furnace door, the other (the gaffer), finding new meaning in the word "hot," immerses a preheated blow-pipe into the pot to draw a first gather. The gaffer momentarily allows the glass to "homogenize" onto the blow-pipe but quickly learns that it must be continuously turned or the molten glass will homogenize onto the floor. The next move is to a steel-topped marvering table upon which the gather is gently rolled and given a first blowing. This will be a small bubble, only enough to clear the pipe and slightly expand the glowing mass. Returning to the pot, a second gather is taken and the team moves to "the chair," somehow remembering to keep the blow-pipe turning. Sitting at the chair, initial forming is accomplished with a hand-held pad of presoaked newspaper folded a certain way. This unbelievable tool is transformed from a soggy mass to a steaming and smoking "pot holder from hell." It's not for the faithless but it works! Through repetitive blowing, reheating, burning the pot holder and more blowing (don't forget the turning), your glass expands to a size and shape which, for us, seems to be guided by the glass fairy. Using jacks (pucellas), the gaffer works the gather where it joins the blow-pipe to form a neck. After many round-trips to the glory hole, a passable neck is achieved. Using a preheated pontil rod (punity), the helper dips a small amount of glass from the pot and moves to the gaffer who guides the molten glob onto the piece. For this gaffer, anywhere near center suffices since it cannot be moved once touched on. To separate the piece from the blow-pipe, the gaffer trickles a few drops of water down the jacks which hisses into the

newly formed neck. A sharp rap on the blow-pipe allows the piece to "crack off" thereby releasing control to the helper. Holding the piece by the newly attached pontil rod, the helper immediately moves to the glory hole to reheat the piece. The gaffer, meanwhile, places the blow-pipe in a bucket-rack to cool and takes over from the helper. Finishing is accomplished not only with the jacks, but with an abundance of patience, imagination, and the unseen hand of the glass fairy. The instructor may ask for a *soffiata* so that a piece, now attached to a pontil rod, might be further expanded. When finished (a subjective term), a few drops of water where the piece is joined to the pontil rod presages a trip to the annealing oven or *lehr*; a sharp rap on the pontil rod allows the piece to crack off in the oven. The whole process is repeated through the day and the next with helper and gaffer trading places under James' all-seeing eyes. He will also demonstrate various techniques and even a touch of color. But the real learning is in doing and through persistence. A two day class can only whet the appetite for searing heat, the satisfaction for overcoming gravity's love for molten glass and for having actually "made" some glass objects.

What did I accomplish? Reliving the joy and excitement of A Beginner's Weekend at this keyboard gives me pleasure. That the misshapen objects now gracing our home are works of art is arguable. But, what is art? This beholder can only say that it was well worth the experience.

N.b. New York subway trains have lost their graffiti, are clean, air-conditioned and are the best way to get around.

—Francis N. Allen

For information on the Glass Workshop, write to The New York Experimental Glass Workshop, 647 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217-1112.

## From the Letterbox

Dear Sylvia:

I recently joined the National Early American Glass Club, Ltd. and I'm excited about the friends I will make and the things I will learn in the future.

Where can I find good information about "Gemels"? I'm speaking of the oil and vinegar bottles joined in some fashion. Is there a specialized book on gemels? I've found a little information in *American Glass* and in a few other books from time to time, but nothing substantial. Thanks for whatever assistance you can provide.

Sincerely,  
Dave R. Keel  
4238 North 22nd Street  
Waco, Texas 76708

*Editor's Note: Try the Corning Museum of Glass Library, Corning, NY 14830-2253. Perhaps there is a charge for a bibliography of articles written on any area of glass, but it will be well worth it and reasonable.*

## Bonnie Bledsoe-Fuchs New Bulletin Editor

Bonnie Bledsoe-Fuchs of New York City recently accepted the position of Editor of *The Glass Club Bulletin*, official publication of the National Early American Glass Club.

Ms. Bledsoe-Fuchs is a graduate of the History of Decorative Arts Program of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and holds a degree in Interior Design from the University of Missouri. Her diversified background includes extensive lecturing on the subject of decorative art history. She has conducted tours through the European collections of the Metropolitan Museum, and compiled bibliographies for the Cooper-Hewitt Museum Donald Deskey project.



## Toronto Hosts NEAGC

Kyle Husfloen

The weekend of April 29-May 1 brought over 90 lovers of fine glass to this beautiful Canadian city as our neighbors to the north hosted the Ninth Annual National Glass Seminar presented by The National Early American Glass Club.

A group of noteworthy speakers were on hand to cover a diverse selection of glass-related topics beginning with lectures on Thursday, April 29th. Dwight Lanmon, recently named Director of the Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum in Delaware, led off the agenda with a talk on "The Winterthur Way With Glass," focusing on the Winterthur Museum and how its collections have grown and evolved. Later in the morning Susanne Frantz gave an in-depth review of the lives and careers of pioneering Czechoslovakian glass artists Stanislav Libensky and Jaroslava Brychtova whose designs are now widely acclaimed.

Brian Musselwhite, Assistant Curator, European Department of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, rounded out the morning's program with an introduction to this notable institution and its collections. This preceded a lovely luncheon held at the museum itself, followed by an afternoon free to explore its vast collections and even take a behind the scenes close-up look at their glass and ceramics storage area.

After the NEAGC Annual Meeting on Friday morning, the day's program began with a talk by noted glass researcher and writer Paul Hollister who gave a fascinating account of the discovery and restoration of a unique glass-covered French table produced during the reign of King Louis XIV. Miriam Mucha, a specialist in the field of 19th century French pressed glass, next offered an in-depth look at the rare glass catalog of the firm Launay, Hautin & Cie, who were wholesalers of French pressed lacy glass. This unique survivor from the 1830's and 1840's provides a comprehensive guide to types of early pressed wares made by such firms as Baccarat and St. Louis and allows today's collectors to compare such items with their American-made counterparts which, sadly, are not nearly so well documented. "Hot Glass-working Processes" was the next lecture given by William Gudenrath. Mr. Gudenrath is an experienced glass craftsman who delved into the methods of production most likely used by ancient glassworkers, including those who made the unique Portland Vase. Well known antique lighting authority Catherine Thuro began the afternoon session with a talk on Canadian pressed glass of the late 19th and early 20th century. Her somewhat controversial presentation focused on the problems involved in attributing specific pressed glass patterns to factories in Canada, especially without proper research and careful archeological surveys of factory sites. Quite a bit of the previously published material relating to Canadian glass-

wares, according to Mrs. Thuro, does not stand up too well today when judged by the thoroughness and care needed for accurate attributions.

The lecture program concluded Saturday afternoon with a talk by Rosalyn Morrison who gave an overview of the work of a number of modern Canadian studio glass artists.

Saturday was the day set aside for a bus tour of Toronto and a stop for antiquing at the restored Harbourfront. The weekend ended on Saturday night with a formal banquet and a musical program by entertainer Donald Vair.

The event was proclaimed a great success and all of the members from the States enjoyed having the opportunity to get to know our Canadian friends better and share the beauty of one of their largest cities. It was announced that next spring's National Glass Seminar will be held in Winter Park, Florida where a wonderful collection of Tiffany glass will provide the center of attention.

Reprinted from *The Antique Trader Weekly*, courtesy of Antique Trader Publications. Kyle Husfloen, Editor.

## Memorial Fund Donations

*Philadelphia Chapter*  
IN MEMORY OF LEON COHEN

*Betty Iber*  
IN MEMORY OF DUVAL RADFORD

*Miriam Mucha*  
IN MEMORY OF DUVAL RADFORD

*Francis & Dorothy Allen*  
IN MEMORY OF DUVAL RADFORD

*James H. Rose Chapter*  
IN MEMORY OF JOEL ROBERTSON

## In Memoriam

It is with regret that we report the passing of two former presidents of The National Early American Glass Club. Details are not available, but many of us well remember Blanche Robinson of Sandwich, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod. Blanche served on the board of the Sandwich Historical Society and was a past President of NEAGC.

duVal Radford, a lawyer from Bedford, Virginia, was only able to serve about 6 months of his presidency, due to poor health. Mr. Radford was active in politics and was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates where he served for six years. He also was elected chairman of the 6th District Democrats, a position he held for 12 years.

On behalf of NEAGC, we offer our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Blanche and duVal.

## Glass Calendar

(Confirmation of dates and schedules advised)

**February 5, 6, 1994**

ANTIQUITY SHOW & SALE, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Museum of American Glass & Heritage House of Wheaton Village, Rt. 55, Exit 26, Millville, NJ. Fifty quality dealers. Adm. \$6 for adults. \$3.50 students, \$12 family. Info: tel. (609) 825-6800, ext. 2739, Joanne Galloway.

**Through March 6, 1994**

EXHIBIT: "Contemporary Glass From Murano, Italy." On display 7 days weekly 10-5. Wheaton Village, Rt. 55, Millville, NJ, Exit 26. Info: Tel. (609) 825-6800.

**April 23 & 24, 1994**

WESTCHESTER GLASS SHOW & SALE, Greenwich Civic Center, Old Greenwich, CT. Sat. 10-5 and Sun. 12-5. Sponsored by the Westchester Glass Club, a chapter of NEAGC. Info: Molly & Duff Allen, Tel. (508) 540-5339. 56 dealers in all types of glass.

**May 11-14, 1994**

NEAGC GLASS SEMINAR, Winter Park, Fla., Langford Hotel. A seminar mailing will be sent to each member after the first of the year.

## Chapter News

Dorothy Reid, Chapter Coordinator for NEAGC, wants to be sure all of our chapters received a copy of the "Program Exchange," which she mailed to each of the chapter contact persons in June. (Some were given to chapter representatives at the Toronto meeting in May.) If there are any chapters that don't have this "Program Exchange" and would like a copy—please contact Dorothy Reid at 10340 Jody Ct. No., Stillwater, MN 55082, Tel. # (612) 426-5652. Also, if you have any further ideas for programs, new members, etc., PLEASE CONTACT DOROTHY; she needs YOUR INPUT!

THE MINNESOTA CHAPTER has recently lost a beloved member, Rose Ernest, a member since 1946—47 years a member of NEAGC. Rose was 103 in September. She very seldom missed a meeting; in fact, she had been to our October 15th meeting the day she died. She was an inspiration to all of us in the Minnesota Chapter, and will be missed by all who had the privilege of calling her their friend.

The HELEN N. BARGER CHAPTER presented the following gifts during 1993. The first was as contribution to the Dorflinger Glass Museum at White Mills, Pennsylvania, to sponsor a window display case, in memory of deceased members.

(continued on back page)

### Museum Announces Recipients of Rakow Grant and Commission

Major 1993 awards from The Corning Museum of Glass will fund a new work of glass art and a study of the history of marketing strategies and practices in the ceramics and glass industries.

The Rakow Grant for Glass Research was awarded to Regina Lee Blaszczyk, a doctoral candidate at the University of Delaware in Newark.

Fritz Dreisbach, an American studio glass pioneer, received the Rakow Commission for a new work to be added to the collection of The Corning Museum of Glass. That work was unveiled October 15 during the Museum's Seminar on Glass.

The Rakow Grant will help Ms. Blaszczyk complete the final stage of research for her dissertation, "Imagining Consumers: Manufacturers and Markets in Ceramics and Glass,

1865-1965." Her study will examine corporate strategy in a group of ceramics and glass firms in the period from 1865 to 1965 to gain a better understanding of consumer culture and industrial competitiveness.

Ms. Blaszczyk, who received master's degrees from George Washington University and the University of Delaware, worked for 10 years in the Division of Ceramics and Glass at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC.

Mr. Dreisbach is an artist, craftsman, educator, and glass technologist from Seattle, Washington. He began blowing glass at the University of Iowa in 1964. Three years later, he received his M.F.A. from the University of Wisconsin, and shortly thereafter, he became the first director of the glass studio at the Toledo Museum of Art School of Design. He is a founder, former president, and honorary life member of the Glass Art Society. In addition to working as an independent artist, he is a technologist for Spectrum Glass of Woodinville, Washington.

The Rakow Grant and Commission were founded by the late Dr. and Mrs. Leonard S. Rakow to recognize and promote excellence in the art and history of glass. Each award, which now provides \$5,000 annually, is endowed and will eventually grow to \$25,000 per year.

### Blowpipes

In 1962, an historic workshop at The Toledo Museum of Art initiated the contemporary Studio Glass Movement. This past spring—30 years later—another historic workshop focusing on ancient glass-making processes took place. **Toldeo Seminar in Experimental Archaeology: From Bellows to Blowpipe** initiated hands-on experiments to discover ancient processes of glass production.

Organized by E. Marianne Stern, guest curator of Roman glass at the Toledo Museum, with the support of the Museum's education department, the seminar was designed to research the development of the blowpipe in the Roman period (first century B.C. to first century A.D.); specifically, Dr. Stern's hypothesis that the very first blowpipes were not made of iron, but of fired clay.

In order to test this theory, over 20 glass blowers and ceramists were invited to bring a ceramic blowpipe of their own fashioning, and then to attempt to use it to blow from heated chunks of glass rather than gobs of melted glass. Following a slide lecture by Dr. Stern and Kathleen McCarthy, former supervisor of TMA's glass studio program, to introduce the historical precedents that inspired the hypothesis, the participants moved to the Museum's Glass Crafts Building, where over 30 clay blowpipes of various shapes and clay bodies were tested.

Toledo glassblower Tom McGlaughlin, present at TMA's historic 1962 studio glass workshop, blew the first bubble with his own clay blowpipe, confirming that it would indeed have been possible for ancient glassblowers to use a simple, short clay pipe with hot chunks of glass. The participants spent the afternoon enthusiastically exploring ways to use the pipes.

background for the Museum's display of a Dorflinger Gaffer's Bench and related tools. This woodcut may be seen on the cover of NEAGC Bulletin No. 89, March 1969.

The other two are a 37 inch by 50 inch of Dorflinger's Cutting Shop and a 10 inch by 14 inch of Dorflinger's Factory. These items are displayed in the Museum's Glass Room.

Last spring the EARLY AMERICAN GLASS CLUB OF MARSHALLTOWN, IOWA, acquired a 23-piece collection of States' Glass from Billie Wolfe, a retired professor from Lubbock, Texas, who is a pen-pal friend of Elaine Plett and two other Texas donors. The club sponsored an informal public presentation on states' glass. Sharon Eckles and other members shared information about the variety of states' pattern, made from 1897 to 1917. Each state has a pattern with several states having more than one.

### New Editor for Glass Shards

With the Spring 1994 issue of *Glass Shards*, Alice Walsh of the FOUNDERS CHAPTER in Boston, will become your new editor. Please mail all necessary material for inclusion in the next issue of *Glass Shards* to: Alice Walsh, 140 South Main Street, Mansfield, MA 02048. Please double-space all typewritten copy.

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I wish to express my thanks to Ken for his layout expertise on the first four issues of *Glass Shards*, and Mr. and Mrs. Burkholder (our typesetters) for their patience whenever I phoned to change a word or correct copy. These past 8 years have flown! So many of you have complimented me on my creation of this newsletter; you can make it better by sending news of your chapter or a profile on an outstanding member. Thanks!

Sincerely,  
Sylvia Applebee Lyon, Editor

### CHAPTER NEWS, continued

The second was to the the Wayne County Historical Society Museum at Honesdale, Pennsylvania, and consisted of enlargements of three woodcuts as seen in Alfred Mathew's History of Wayne, Pike and Monroe Counties and a framed reproduction of a photograph of Christian Dorflinger (approx. 1860).

The largest of the woodcut reproductions is of the Dorflinger Glass Blowing Department. This is 50 inches by 67 inches and forms the

**The National Early  
American Glass Club  
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