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THE GLASS CLUB BULLETIN

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Official Organ of the National Early American Glass Club

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GREETINGS, GLASS CLUB MEMBERS

This first number of your Club BULLETIN comes to you equipped with a binder to hold this and future numbers and the Constitution and By-Laws, which every member should read and keep for reference.

Succeeding numbers of the BULLETIN will be issued "every little while" (frequency as yet undetermined), becoming, we hope, ever wider in scope and more worth-while as it progresses. The BULLETIN is designed to integrate the interests and activities of the Club in order that members everywhere may mutually serve and be served. The BULLETIN Committee invites your comments and suggestions as to making such a Club organ of greatest value to the whole membership.

ON THE MAP

Letters to our Regional Groups announcing the publication of a BULLETIN brought enthusiastic response from three of them. We hope to hear from the others before the next issue.

First to reply was Mrs. W. A. Haseltine, secretary of the Portland, Oregon, Group (Mrs. Harold Broughton, President). Mrs. Haseltine reports a membership of 22, with prospects of growth. "Our program for the coming year," says Mrs. Haseltine, "will include a thorough review of the study of old glass, talks by outside speakers, and a 'barter and sale.' In the spring, a sizable down-town glass exhibit. Our most interesting meeting last year was a glass exhibit in the home of one of our members, the rooms filled with tables attractively set with old glass — the clear glass on black sateen, the colored glass on pastel-colored, an effective contrast. We found it a delightful and intimate way to hold a glass show."

Mrs. Paul K. Sticelber, secretary of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, Group (Mrs. J. L. Miner, President) writes of a very enthusiastic membership with almost perfect attendance and with each member responding to roll-call with something pertaining to glass. Their program — monthly, September through June — includes this year "Collector's Luck," "Glass — What's in a Name?" "Decorative Value of Glass," "Flower Arrangements in Glass," and a "barter and sale." "We are very interested in what you do in the East," adds Mrs. Sticelber.

And from Mrs. John J. O'Brien, program chairman of Seattle Group No. 2 (Mrs. Arthur M. Hare, President) we learn that this Group meets monthly at members' homes for luncheon, followed by a short

business meeting and program. Here is a typical program: (1) short discussion (*not* a paper), by a member, on a particular type of glass, followed by brief general discussion on same. (2) Each member, having brought at least one piece of glass, is called upon to discuss the piece as it circulates among the group. "Much enjoyable and useful information can be gathered in an afternoon in this way," says Mrs. O'Brien; "in case a member has an unidentified piece, volunteer information is requested." This Group intends to give more time and thought to reproductions, both through reading and through relating personal experiences. Replies to a questionnaire sent out last March showed, among a number of things, that the Group preferred an exchange of ideas and experiences of members rather than outside speakers. They are looking forward to the BULLETIN as a means of keeping in touch with the Club and its branches.

These smaller and more intimate Groups have much to offer to each other and to the parent organization. Let's make the BULLETIN an Idea Exchange!

HIGHLIGHTS

First of the season's Boston meetings (October 13) took the form of an auction. The main trouble was an overstock of glass. Auctioneer Watkins carried on bravely until his voice went on strike. White Elephant contributions moved slowly by the "Scotch auction" method, and the abundant remains were gathered up and stored for future sale.

A capacity audience greeted the four member-speakers at the November meeting. Mrs. Grace Lyman Stammers showed and described Stiegel

flower-decorated flip glasses, enameled tumblers, engraved pieces and others; Mrs. Lura Woodside Watkins illustrated her talk with various types of New England glass; Mrs. Charles F. Hutchins pointed out marks of excellence in pieces of Sandwich glass from her collection of rare "lacy" and other types; and Mr. Paul A. Revere presented findings from his research into the products of the Portland factory. For the benefit of those not present, a future BULLETIN will attempt to give some of the "highlights" of these discussions. For those who were present, a delightful "highlight" was the tea so hospitably and graciously served from the chrysanthemum-bedecked table by Mrs. Nichols and her committee.

Letting memory drift back to last spring, we recall highlights of the April and May meetings, and refresh recollection by re-reading an article by Mabel M. Swan in the *Christian Science Monitor* of April 24. The lecture was on "The Decorative Value of Glass;" the lecturer, Roger Withington, interior decorator. Quoting from M. M. S.'s article: "The speaker stressed the fact that two things must always be kept in mind in order to gain the proper effects. These are: design, which includes balance and proportion; color, and color harmony. These must be recognized whether one is arranging a shelf of glass for shop display or devising a dinner-party centerpiece.

"He showed the dangers of overdecorating; the advantage of mixing colors on the shelf and of arranging the pieces in a geometric pattern; the effect of building from the center down to the ends or from the ends down to the center; the necessity of avoiding tall pieces if the shelf is high; the value of planning your geometric pattern rather than unsystematic arrangement.

"A few of his many suggestions for color and color harmony were: Avoid putting clashing colors together. Blue is an excellent neutralizer; one piece of blue will often blend many others. Avoid too pale colors. Grade your group with one color predominating. To have contrast, you need three colors. If showing crystal, or even all cranberry red have a background of an interesting color. . . . For balance and proportion, bright colors on one side.

"Arranging glass in small country houses is usually simple, but the backgrounds in many city houses are difficult. Some suggestions are: Use warmer colors of glass in living-room, unless the room is very light. Glass becomes richer against a neutral background. Keep delicate colors for the bedroom. Opaque glass is effective with chintz.

"The speaker showed many beautiful flower arrangements in glass containers, one of the most

striking being a deep red bowl, fully 18 inches in diameter, filled with red tulips, blue iris, and a touch of yellow. Against a soft blue background this centerpiece attracted much applause. Among the many flower arrangements exhibited by members were two amethyst boats in the daisy-and-button pattern, filled with purple pansies; a rich amber Sandwich castor with its bottles replaced by amber glasses holding forsythia; a Burmese centerpiece filled with sweet peas matching in color the deep flesh pink and yellow of the container and flanked by candlesticks of the same lovely glass; a tiny Sandwich lamp filled with sweetheart roses; a blue-green bottle with a single rose — these were but a few of many most attractive arrangements in old glass containers."

At the April meeting, before proceeding to the scheduled program, the program chairman introduced Mrs. Edward Van Tassel, a direct descendant of "Baron" Stiegel. Mrs. Van Tassel was to leave soon for Manheim, Pa., to be the principal in a quaint and colorful traditional ceremony. At Manheim, in 1770, the "Baron" gave to the village church society three acres of land for their meeting-house and a burial ground. In payment he accepted five shillings and "the annual gift of one red rose, to be paid to himself or his descendants forever." This payment was made until the war for independence upset the country, then was lost sight of for many years. Near the close of the last century the custom was revived and has been observed every year in June. The ceremony attracts annually thousands of visitors from near and far. Mrs. Van Tassel is now the official-recipient of the "one red rose."

The scheduled subject for the afternoon was "Collector's Luck." Mrs. Florence Barnes showed miscellaneous pieces and reminisced amusingly about their acquisition—some received as bridge prizes unprired by their donors; a tall lamp included in a box of "junk" bought at an auction for 25 cents; and a diamond thumbprint compote for ten cents; a green panelled fingerbowl given her by a dealer "because he hated green!"

Mrs. Emily Bastian spoke from the viewpoint of both collector and dealer. "In getting bargains," said Mrs. Bastian, "someone is always on the other side of the fence. I know, because I've been there."

Mrs. Frank Dillaby, collector of around 200 small glass lamps, showed some of her prizes, oftentimes acquired with exciting adventure: a small votive lamp dug up at Sandwich; an early blown lamp reached from a dark top shelf, reacher precariously perched on a chair, big rat scurrying along the shelf; a tiny old lamp with a round wick coming through a cork stopper.

Mrs. Ada Danforth showed bits of color salvaged from the Sandwich "dump," fragments and whole

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pieces only slightly damaged, and told of uses to which these relics have been put: a nationally known stained glass artist using them in medallions, a jewelry craftsman having them lapidary-cut and setting them into handwrought jewelry, and a club member fashioning them into flower pictures to show the variety of color and brilliance.

Mrs. Austin Fitz showed rare pieces from her husband's collection of purple "slag" — a collection which has surprisingly mounted to the number of over 200 pieces of many sizes and shapes. Other pieces shown by Mrs. Fitz included a graceful, slender pitcher in Venetian type, attributed by tradition to Sandwich and probably made there by an Italian workman.

The recent Barter and Sale (December 8) called out a goodly number of members and guests. There was a bustle of busy-ness all the afternoon, and many a piece of good glass changed ownership, to the mutual satisfaction, it is hoped, of buyer and seller. Mr. Hood officiated genially but persuasively at the "white elephant" table and succeeded in making a clean sweep at bargain prices.

Simple handling, according to Program Chairman Mabel Swan, is what makes this annual event — potentially a confused jumble — run smoothly. Spaces are reserved in order of application, and are limited in square footage but not in amount of merchandise. When the member arrives with his wares, he unpacks his display, arranges it effectively, and on the appointed hour is open for patronage. Although it is more of a "sale" than a "barter," many members have been heard to remark that they "would rather buy here than at a 'show' because both buyers and sellers are fellow members." And a good time is had by all!

WHO'S WHO

The Officers and Committees of the National Early American Glass Club are: President, Mr. Edwin Victor Spooner, Exeter, N. H.; first Vice-President, Mr. Philip B. Bradbury, Worcester, Mass.; second Vice-President, Mr. George L. Tilden, Northboro, Mass.; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Ada J. Danforth, Jamaica Plain, Mass.; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Nellie Swift Kenny, 267 Alewife Brook Parkway, Somerville, Mass.; Treasurer, Mr. Wallace P. Hood, Danvers, Mass.

Directors: (Term expires 1938) Mrs. H. H. Freeman, Boston, Mass.; Mrs. Charles F. Hutchins, Worcester, Mass.; Mrs. Florence T. Dibble, Newbury, Mass.; (Term expires 1939) Mrs. Wallace P. Hood, Danvers, Mass.; Mrs. Anna M. Goerner, Gray Gables, Mass.; Mr. Charles H. Watkins, Winchester, Mass.; (Term expires 1940) Mrs. Charles Dooley, Boston, Mass.; Mrs. Myra Hartman, Boston, Mass.; Mrs. J. H. Marble, Bradford, Mass.

Librarian, Mr. Albert C. Marble, Worcester, Mass.; Historian, Mrs. William G. Barnes, Halifax, Mass.

Research Committee: Mr. Charles B. Gardner, New London, Conn., chairman.

Finance Committee: Mr. Albert C. Marble, chairman; Mr. Philip B. Bradbury, Mrs. Myra Hartman, Mrs. Gustav Goerner.

Nominating Committee: Miss Eleanor Hudson, Winchester, Mass., chairman.

Hospitality Committee: Mrs. Melville C. Nichols, Medford, Mass., chairman; Mrs. Charles A. Holbrook, Haverhill, Mass.; Mrs. Francis Greaney, Woburn, Mass.; Mrs. G. Frank Hooker, Cambridge, Mass.; Mrs. Albert N. Peterson, Providence, R. I.

Custodian Committee: Mrs. Helen F. Adams, Kingston, Mass.; Mrs. Marietta Corr, Franklin, Mass., joint chairmen; Mrs. Charles A. Holbrook, Haverhill, Mass.; Mrs. Samuel W. Duncan, Waban, Mass.; Miss Gladys M. Smith, Holliston, Mass.

Program and Publicity Committee: Mrs. Mabel M. Swan, chairman; Mrs. William Preble Jones, Somerville, Mass.; Mrs. Bertram K. Little, Brookline, Mass.; Miss Grace Murray, Brookline, Mass.; Mrs. Etta Bigelow Spinney, West Roxbury, Mass.; Mr. Richard Healy, Worcester, Mass.

BULLETIN Committee: Mrs. Ada J. Danforth, chairman; Mr. Edwin V. Spooner, Mrs. W. A. Haseltine, Portland, Ore.; Mrs. Paul K. Sticelber, Tulsa, Okla.; Mrs. John J. O'Brien, Seattle, Wash.

OUR NEXT EXHIBIT

The month of March, 1938, will see an educational exhibit presenting a chronological picture of American glass-making, from pre Revolutionary times through the 1880's, in the Exhibition Hall, Fine Arts Department, Boston Public Library. President Spooner was pressed into service as general chairman, to formulate plans with the help of a planning committee consisting of Mrs. Bertram K. Little, Mrs. F. H. Dillaby, Mrs. Charles F. Hutchins, Mr. Albert C. Marble, Mrs. Gustav Goerner, Mr. Philip Bradbury, Mrs. Florence B. Barnes and Mrs. Ada J. Danforth. A large general committee will be called upon after the framework of exhibit plans has taken definite form. The names of those on the general committee will be published in the BULLETIN when the exigences of space permit.

FOR STUDY GROUPS

For constructing a study outline on American glass, these books are suggested: Early American Glass, by Rhea Mansfield Knittle; History of American Glassmaking, by Lura Woodside Watkins ("brochure" of the Club's 1935 exhibit); Old Glass,

European and American, by N. Hudson Moore; American Glass, M. H. Northend; Early American Pressed Glass, Ruth Webb Lee; Cambridge Glass, Lura Woodside Watkins; Early American Bottles and Flasks, S. Van Rensselaer; Stiegel Glass, Frederick W. Hunter.

The modern method of studying "history in reverse" is recommended. By this method, the student begins with the types most commonly found and therefore most familiar, and proceeding backward sees unfold the development of technique, form, and decoration, through the less familiar, back to the early and rare.

The influence of Old World designs and techniques is important, as brought out in an article by Lura Woodside Watkins in the *Boston Transcript* of Nov. 20, 1937

ON GUARD

Increasing reproduction of early glass increases the need for collectors to keep their eyes open. Although many reproductions, no doubt, are manufactured to be sold frankly as such, and as such have their place, here and there are found dealers unscrupulous enough or inexperienced enough to try to take "antique" toll from the unwary in exchange for recent products of the glass industry.

Gift shops are filled with little inexpensive daisy-and-button hats, fans, shoes (with and without "pussy"), hand cornucopias, etc., in entrancing colors. Westward Ho goblets suddenly appeared in astounding profusion. Stiegel-type treasures tempt others than those in the tyro class, and every little while some new example of spuriousness appears. Collectors, share your observations and your findings, through the BULLETIN! We hope to have something from Mr. George S. McKearin before long. Meanwhile, look forward to Mrs. Surprise's talk, on February 9th. This will be summarized in a future BULLETIN.

BIO-BREVITIES

President Spooner is a very busy man. He guides the students of Phillips Exeter Academy through the intricacies of the French language, and in addition is the Director of Long Lake Lodge, a tutoring camp at North Bridgton, Maine. He also has a summer antique shop at North Bridgton, following the urge first contracted as an avocation. He is indefatigable in his efforts to make the Glass Club fulfill all its functions.

Librarian Albert C. Marble is known as "the cup-plate king." "Marble's numbers" are quoted wherever cup-plates foregather. Mr. Marble says he "started collecting in 1922, supplementing Mrs. Marble's collection of many years previous. Found I was getting duplicates, so started photographing

the plates; afterwards numbered them. Then some dealers and collectors wanted the photos.

"That is the way 'Marble's numbers' started. Mrs. Marble had about 250 when I started, which has been increased to about 900." Mr. Marble has been generous with his little plates at all Club exhibits, and an active worker in the Club since its birth.

More Bio-Brevities in the next BULLETIN.

FRAGMENTS TELL THEIR STORY

"Is it Sandwich?" The answer may be under the roof of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in whose Ceramic Museum now repose thousands of fragments of early Sandwich glass unearthed when the original floor of the upper glasshouse was pulled up a few years ago. Under the supervision of Professor Frederick H. Norton of "Tech" ceramic department, this collection has been classified and is now a valuable aid to the student of glass. Not only have the fragments been classified, they have been analyzed chemically for their basic ingredients and examined for other physical properties, such as density, hardness, and color. This scientific research placed Sandwich glass on the radio program of the American Chemical Society, on December 3, with Professor Norton as the speaker.

Professor Norton said, in part: "Apparently the first glassware made at the factory was the three-mold blown ware, such as cruets, decanters, inkwells, etc., much after the patterns of the Irish and English glass of that date, which is consistent with the fact that many glass blowers from those countries were brought over to work in this factory.

"Credit must be given to Sandwich for evolving the first practical machine for commercial pressing of glass in quantity, the forerunner of the automatic glass-forming machines of the present day. The first glass pressed at Sandwich probably consisted of the simpler types, like cup plates. Over fifty different types of these plates have been identified from the fragments found. . . . In colors, most of the early cup plates were clear, but fragments of amethyst, vaseline and blue were found.

"A little later there was produced the lacy glass so characteristic of Sandwich. . . . In the collection of fragments in the Technology Museum, already 200 different types of lacy glass have been actually identified by careful comparison with specimens in private collections. The chemical composition of this early glass shows it to be a flint glass with anywhere from 20 to 35 per cent. of oxide of lead, which accounts for its great brilliance.

(Continued in next Bulletin)

Please address all communications regarding the BULLETIN to Mrs. Ada J. Danforth, 38 Southbourne Road, Jamaica Plain, Mass.