

QUARTERLY

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FEB 2011

President's Message

I received a "wake-up" call: It is time to start thinking about the 2011 Stretch Glass Convention Show and Sale! Whether you want to spectate, speculate, or just "vegetate," make plans to come and join in the fun! The dates are Wednesday, July 27, through Friday, July 29, 2011. Once again this year, our convention is scheduled to directly precede the National Fenton Glass Society (NFGS) convention, which in turn will precede the Fenton Art Glass Collectors of America (FAGCA) convention. All three conventions will take place at the Comfort Inn in Marietta, Ohio. So check the last page of this newsletter for hotel rates and phone numbers, and make your reservation early. Make sure to mention that you are members of the Stretch Glass Society to receive our group rate.

The schedule is coming together, and will include some of our favorite events from years past. After set-up on Wednesday, we can all renew acquaintances at the Wine & Cheese Welcome Party, again being hosted by Mike and Cyndi Getchius, and featuring a selection of cheeses from their home state of Wisconsin. Then to bed for a good night's sleep to get ready for an earlier "Sales Stampede" this year, perhaps as early as 9:30 Thursday morning, to make more room for other activities being planned throughout the day.

This year's club display will be iridescent stretch glass Comports. In preparation, Dave Shetlar has written a definitive article about these popular items for this newsletter, and will present the Club Display. Jan Reichling has volunteered to organize the display, and will have an article in the May newsletter soliciting your contributions. Because we all enjoyed the member presentations last year, the Executive Board is proposing that we invite members to talk about pieces in their own displays. Before we schedule this event, we'd like to get some idea of who will participate. Again, more on this in May.

Thursday evening will feature the Banquet Buffet dinner followed by our own Bill and Sharon Mizell, speaking on the overlap and interaction between Stretch Glass and Carnival Glass collectors. They have many years of experience with both. It should be interesting and informative!

We are planning another live auction Friday afternoon, which should include some nice Stretch glass. We're scheduling it earlier this year to allow more opportunity for mingling with visitors from the Fenton clubs.

Enjoy and Look Forward, *Tim*
Tim Cantrell, President



Comport or Compote? A Difficult Definition!

by Dave Shetlar

Our Stretch Glass Society officers have decided to have a club display on comports (or is it compote??) at our annual convention! This is a great idea, but soon everyone was asking for some guidance in defining exactly what we want members to bring for the display! So, several have asked me to give a better definition of these “dishes used to serve a fruit-based concoction contained in a sweet syrup.” In most current dictionaries, “compote” is designated as: 1. a fruit in syrup concoction, AND, 2. the serving item (glass, metal or pottery) used to serve up the fruit in syrup! Comport is simply designated as compote definition #2. However, upon looking at the history of these words, originally, compote was the fruit in syrup concoction that became very popular in the Victorian Era and many fine serving glass and silver or silver-plate comports were created. So, early on, comport was the serving container. As with the evolution of many English words, compote became the dominant word with two definitions.

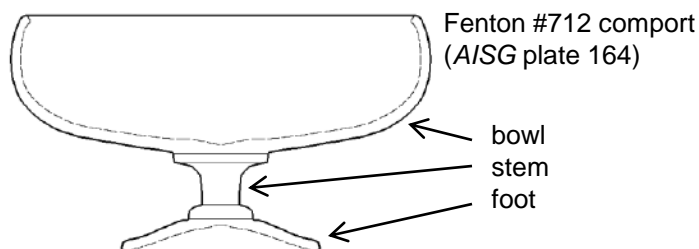
Upon reviewing many of the catalog pages of Victorian pressed glass manufacturers, you can find lots of items that we would call comports today, but they are often labeled as high-footed dishes, orange bowls, salvers or footed nappies. However, many companies did designate items as comports, and we have never seen the term compote in their catalog pages! Therefore, I prefer to take the traditional word of comport to identify our glass items that may have been used as stemmed serving dishes.

Another issue is what shape should be designated as a “comport?” Most collectors today use the word comport for almost any glassware that has a stem or obvious foot and a bowl-like top. I see stretch glass cheese dishes, salts, nut dishes and even sherbets being identified as miniature comports, especially by eBay dealers! John Madeley and I made the mistake of identifying the square-footed “tree-of-life” pieces as comports in our book, when Northwood actually called these footed bowls! So, what IS a good definition of “comport?” Like all definitions, there have to be exceptions and some flexibility because there are so many glass items that were designed and produced!

I go back to the original definition – a comport is a footed vessel used to serve a compote. So, first, the vessel has to be large enough to hold several servings. This doesn’t mean that it has to be really big because some compotes were served as only a few spoonfuls or as a topping to other foods. Second, I feel that most will agree that the classic comport design was to have the bowl elevated by both a distinct foot and a raised stem. Finally, I can evoke the old cop-out! Comports are items

so designated by the manufacturers! LOL! But, seriously, we do have some good catalog pages for Fenton, Imperial, Northwood and U.S. Glass productions and they clearly have designated items as being comports*. However, this doesn’t help us with other glass companies of which we have no such historic records! So, for the sake of simplicity for our SGS Club Display, all items that have a stem, foot and a bowl large enough to hold several servings of a compote, will be considered to be comports.

Using *American Iridescent Stretch Glass (ASIG)* for examples, I consider the comports designated in the Diamond chapter as meeting this definition, as well as most all of those in the Fenton chapter.

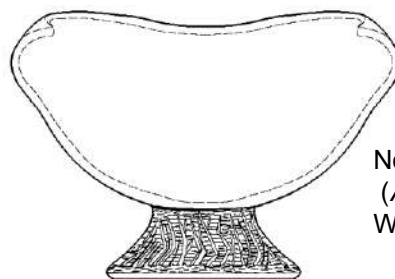


Fenton #712 comport
(A/SG plate 164)

bowl
stem
foot

However, I now consider Fenton plate 160 as actually being an oval sherbet and plate 161 as being an oval mayonnaise. Unfortunately, Imperial rarely used the term comport in their descriptions of high-footed bowls! But, I think it appropriate to use the term comport for these items, though plate 398 is not a comport, but a cheese dish of the cheese and cracker set.

I can live with the designations that we have under Lancaster, but the Northwood, square-footed items (plates 558 through 564) are all designated as footed bowls in the Northwood catalogs. The rest of the Northwood items are identified as comports in their catalog pages (though we don’t have catalog pages for the 8 and 12-sided tree-of-life pieces to see what these were called!).



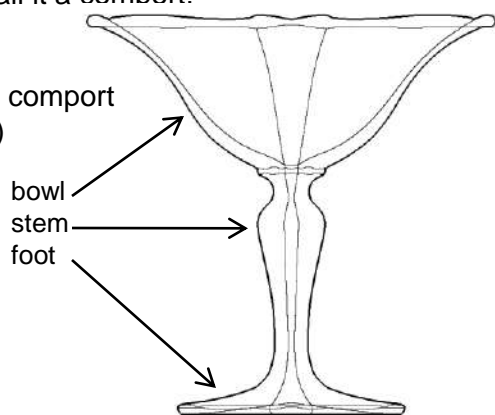
Northwood #807 “footed bowl”
(A/SG plate 562)
Where’s the stem?

(continued on next page)

* These records include the company’s iridescent and non-iridescent wares. A company may call an item within its non-iridized catalog pages a comport, and use a different designation for a similar piece in its iridized offerings!

The U.S. Glass pages are plainly incorrect in many places! U.S. Glass often designated footed bowls as comports (plates 669, 672, 673) and even designated the straight-sided #179 bowl (plate 660) as being a comport! What can be more confusing is the #179 bowl in plate 667 is identified as a “Frappe bowl” when raised up as in the book picture, but when flared out, they call it a “9-inch low footed comport”!! I don’t have good catalog pages for items in plates 666, 668, 670 and 671, but very similar items in U.S. Glass catalog pages are listed as comports! Fortunately, plates 674 through 688 were listed as comports in catalog pages. As a final item, plate 773 has been positively identified as being of Jeannette origin and I would definitely call it a comport!

U.S. Glass #310 comport
(A/SG plate 688)



In any case, I want to emphasize that our friendly band of collectors are generally not interested in fighting over definitions of comports and if you want to call a footed item a comport, that’s fine! And, don’t be afraid to bring things you consider comports as they are always appreciated and serve as great discussion items!



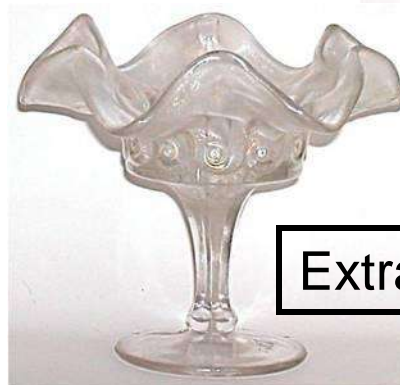
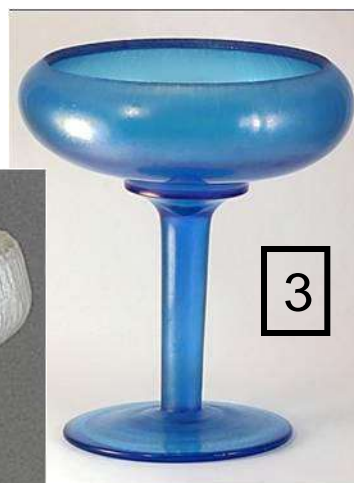
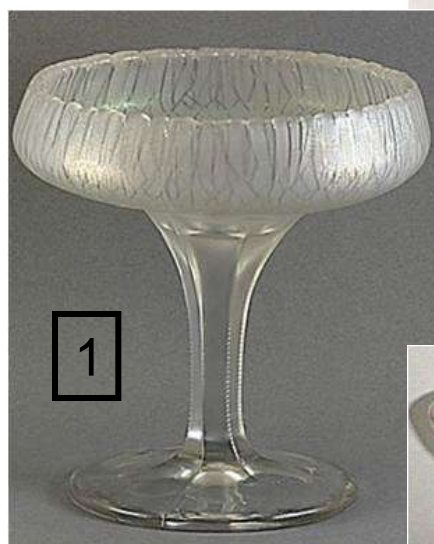
I.D. Fun Comport Identification Contest

Another identification contest, as promised! If you’ve read Dave’s article above, you already have your copy of *A/SG* open and are thinking about comports; if not, go back and read before you leap into detecting.

OK, ready? If you’re seeing this page in color, you see that all the comports to be identified are crystal/clear or blue – so not much color clue. Again, it’s the shape (“mould”) that is unique to, and identifies, the maker. But not all items from the same mould are finished into the same exact shape. And this time we’ve selected some comports finished into different shapes from those pictured in *A/SG* – just to make you look more closely. But keep your book open because the clues are all there for the first five comports. The last comport is made from a mould not pictured in *A/SG* and is for extra credit. Identifying it will give you extra bragging rights, but isn’t necessary to win the contest.

A prize will be given to the first person who correctly identifies the five contest comports in an email to Stephanie Bennett, [REDACTED]. A second prize will be reserved for the person who gets their newsletter via U.S. mail, and who sends the earliest postmarked note to Stephanie Bennett, [REDACTED]. Again, to be fair, the contest isn’t open to Executive Board members, “experts,” or their families. And the Board has decided that it’s also fair to include prior winners in the “expert” category, therefore not eligible to win again. (So both congratulations again, and sorry, to our latest expert, Rex Tatum.)

Now have fun,
and good luck!





STRETCH in Depth

Stretch Glass Vases: The U.S. Glass/Tiffin Lines by Dave Shetlar

It is abundantly clear that the U.S. Glass factories that made iridescent stretch glass didn't make very many types of vases! When you see enough of these vases, it also seems that there were likely two factories that were involved. We have mentioned this before and in *American Iridescent Stretch Glass (A/SG)*, but I wanted to point this out again. I personally believe that it was one of the Pittsburgh area factories (Berry Wiggins felt that it was the King Glass Company that was located just south of Pittsburgh) that made the vast number of the blown-molded vases and likely made most of the opaque colors. Again, it may be some time before this is clarified as the Tiffin and King Glass sites are either covered or excluded from archeological digging at the current time. Such investigations often reveal the glass types produced by a factory.

In my color page of U.S. Glass vases, I've emphasized the blown-molded types. I believe that these have not been well covered in *A/SG* or previous technical articles. Remember that blown-molded pieces are ones that start out as a molten glob of glass gathered on the end of a blow rod. This "bubble" of glass is then expanded out within a two- to three-hinged mold and after being removed, must be broken off of the blow rod. To finish, the broken top can be ground down or the piece is snapped up or stuck up and the top is fire polished and possibly reshaped. It appears that the blown-molded vases of U.S. Glass were all stuck up as the bases show no evidence of being held in a snap (areas where the iridescent dope was excluded) and all have some grinding (needed to remove the rough place where they were broken off of the finishing rod). Simple vases with no mold patterns were often rotated within the mold which obliterates any mold seam lines, but most of the U.S. Glass vases show two mold seams. When I measure the size and shape of the blown-molded vases, it appears that there were at least eight mold sizes and shapes used. Such molds may not have been iron molds, but could have actually been "day" molds which were often wooden molds or wooden molds lined with clay. Such molds were much less expensive to make, but didn't last very long and had to be regularly replaced.

The smallest vases are 5 3/4 to 6 1/4-inches tall. The smallest base (2 3/8-inch diameter) pieces are usually expanded at the top with a delicate flair (Figs. 1-3). The next largest size, Fig. 4, has a cupped top and has a 2 5/8-inch base as does the cylinder-shaped vase

(Fig. 5). The most common of these have 2 3/4-inch wide bases and are gently tapered to the top and end in a distinct flair (Figs. 6-7). The corset-shaped vases (Figs. 8-9) are also fairly common and these have a distinctively different, rounded base which is 3-inches wide. The next vases are in the 8-inch tall range. These come in three distinctive shapes and two base sizes. The cylinders with flared tops (Figs. 11-12) have 3 1/8-inch wide bases as does the tapered in one (Fig. 13). The corset-shaped vases (Figs. 14-15) and cupped in ones (Figs. 16-17) have 3 1/4-inch bases. The next tier of vases is in the 9 3/4 to 10 1/4-inch height range. It appears that two or three molds were used as the tapered and flared ones (Fig. 18-19) have 3 3/4-inch basal widths while the cupped vases (Fig. 20) and corset-shaped vases (Fig. 21) have 3 7/8-inch bases. The relatively thick walled, cylinder vases with flared tops (Figs. 22-24) generally have 4-inch wide bases, but I have measured them between 3 7/8 and 4 1/8-inch! The largest of these blown-molded vases have 4 7/8-inch diameter bases and can be corset shaped (Figs. 26-27) and rarely cupped-in (Fig. 28). These vases are usually 11 1/2-inch tall or taller. The large corset and cupped-in ones occasionally have black enamel decoration (Fig. 28).

All of these blown-molded vases are in the opaque colors with yellow and green being the most common. Several have shown up in the pink opaque color (Figs. 3, 8, 13) but many of these appear to have been overheated, which turned the color brownish tones (Figs. 19, 24). The Pearl Grey (multicolored gray to tan slag) vase showed up at the Ashmore auction last year (Fig. 22).

Some of the more confusing vases are the ones that U.S. Glass called "dahlia" and "lily" vases! The dahlia vases are always listed as #151 and appear to be made in three sizes – 6-inch (Fig. 10), 8-inch (Fig. 25) and 10-inch (Fig. 30). They can be flared or cupped, but all have a distinct squared-off base, just above the foot stem. The lily vases have a rounded bowl where the stem meets the top. There are also three sizes of these vases! Unfortunately, in the catalog pages, the 8-inch tall one is occasionally labeled as being " #329 lily vase" and when they are widely flared out, they are labeled as " #179 urn vase." The dahlia vases come in opaque colors, crystal, green, blue and occasionally pink. The lily vases come in the same colors as well as in the Pomona decorations (enamel stencil designs). The small dahlia vase (Fig. 10) has a 3-inch base and is near 6 1/2-inch tall unless wide flared or cupped; the mid-size vase (Fig. 25) has a 3 3/4-inch base and is 8 to 8 1/2-inch tall; the large version (Fig. 30) has a 4-inch base and is 10 to 10 1/2-inches tall. The lily vases have 3 1/8-inch bases (Fig. 32) for the

(continued on page 6)



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17



Fig. 18



Fig. 19



Fig. 20



Fig. 21



Fig. 22



Fig. 23



Fig. 24



Fig. 25



Fig. 26



Fig. 27



Fig. 28



Fig. 29



Fig. 30



Fig. 31



Fig. 32



Fig. 33



Fig. 34



Fig. 35



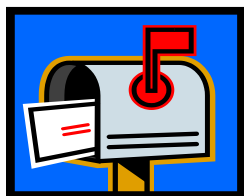
Fig. 36

Stretch Glass Vases, continued

small one and a 4-inch base (Fig. 29) for the large one.

U.S. Glass also made bowl-shaped vases which they called #179 pea vases (Figs. 33-34) and these come in two sizes, a 3 5/8-inch base and 4 1/2-inch base. These come in all the U.S. Glass transparent colors and several decoration, and a few rare ones come in the opaque colors (though most are not iridized). They also have the top flattened down into a hat shape, and more rarely, the top may be crimped.

In the #310 line, there are three vases – a tall one (Fig. 31), two pea vase shapes (Fig. 35) with the same foot sizes as the #179 pea vases, and the smaller open-work footed bowl pulled up into a round vase (Fig. 36) or flattened into a fan vase.



Q&A Letters & E-Mails from Renée & Dave Shetlar

Q: Hello, my name is Shelly Yergensen and I'm currently writing a

book on collectable glass sugars and creamers from the 20th century. My publisher is Old Line Publishing. I'm working on the Fenton chapter and some Internet research led me to your website. I was wondering if you could tell me about the mystery set in topaz on the third line down? I've seen this set before in *Great American Glass of the Roaring 20s and Depression Era* but no one seems to be able to ID the set definitively, or is that an incorrect assumption? Would you mind taking a minute and sharing with me what you know about this set and why folks attribute it to Fenton?

I look forward to hearing from you,
Shelly Yergensen



A: Shelly,

Interesting topic!

We'd love to see the book when you are finished. As far as I can tell, Frank Fenton stated that this set was of Fenton origin, but he couldn't put a number to it. It is not a common set and is known in Topaz and marigold (Grecian Gold), the most common color, though someone stated that they had seen it in Celeste Blue.

If you need some high resolution images of any of the stretch glass creamers and sugars, let me know and we'll see what we can do.

Probably the biggest mystery with creamers and sugars (at least in our minds), is the apparent rarity of the creamer or the sugar in certain pieces! In some Imperial stretch sets, the sugar shows up all the time but the

creamer is very rare. One would hypothesize that the creamer was physically used more and was likely dropped or chipped, but then there are other pieces where the creamer is pretty common and the sugar is hard to find!

Renée collects Imperial Reeded and I collect the U.S. Glass satin Sunset (the yellow to orange pieces) and we both have started to accumulate Westmoreland Thousand Eye. We have creamers and sugars in all these types of glass, and I can provide high-res images if you can use them. Dave

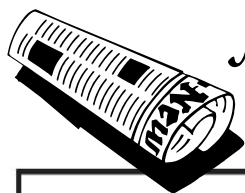
Q: Dave, as you are the "bees knees" on stretch glass, I wondered if you could help me out. I bought this piece approx 16 years ago when I first started collecting Carnival glass. I knew it wasn't carnival but was taken by how beautiful it was. It's an old piece with no markings and is in near perfect condition. I have seen a similar item in the Fenton Catalogue (First 25 Years) and wondered if this is the same piece. I have never seen another since the day I bought it and watching Fenton auctions have only ever seen the base. I wondered whether this is in fact the early Fenton Candy Jar in Ruby. If it is do you know whether they are readily available and what sort of prices they might bring? Any help appreciated. Ellen in UK



A: WOW! I would have never thought that one of these made it across the pond! Do you know if this is the #8 (half pound, 3-inch base & 7 3/4-inch tall) or #9 (3/4 pound, 3.5-inch base & 9-inch tall) candy jars? I know of about five of the 3/4 pound jars and only two of the half pound jars. We have the larger one, but not the smaller one. From your image, I'd guess that your jar is the smaller one!

Concerning your question about cost, this brings up the issue of rarity and desirability. In the case of these jars, both factors are in play though hard-core carnival/stretch glass collectors like to see RED and these jars are usually so dark that it's hard to tell what color they really are unless you pick up the lid or the jar and hold them to the light! I have the #9 in my book listed at \$240 and I would expect an auction price today somewhere between \$200 and \$500, depending on who is at the auction. The smaller jar is actually more difficult to find and should bring a better price, but you know collectors!! LOL! Dave





News from the Glass World

(Looking back to March 1973)

STRETCH GLASS IN COLOR

by Berry Wiggins

This is the first book on Iridescent Stretch Glass for immediate mailing. Who made Stretch and how to identify Stretch Glass are answered in this book. Articles on Fenton, Imperial and Northwood taken from original catalogues and old magazines.

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Berry Wiggins' Book Ad Found in Antique Magazine
by Millie Coty

Stretch Glass in Color by Berry Wiggins was the book (and Berry was the man) that got many of us interested in collecting iridescent stretch glass back in the 1970s (and later!). The above advertisement was recently discovered in the March 1973 issue of the *Spinning Wheel*. The *Spinning Wheel* was a monthly national magazine about antiques. This magazine was published from the 1950s thru most of the 1970s and contained a wealth of knowledge that never seemed to become outdated. The publication reached a wide range of collector's and, therefore, it is understandable why Berry advertised his book in this venue.



(And looking ahead to March 2011)

2011 Glass Sale & Show

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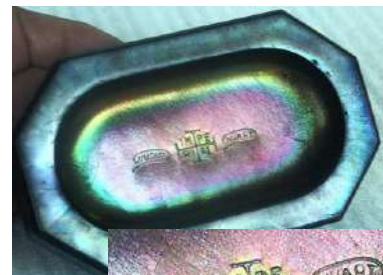
Recent selling prices from Renée Shetlar



Fenton 8" Florentine Green & black candlesticks, \$406.99



Fenton Persian Pearl Banana Boat flattened to 2 in. tall, \$12.50



Imperial paperweight (marked with Iron Cross and NUCUT, NUART), \$817.77



Fenton Florentine Green perfume with enameled pink roses, 429.99

Fenton Tangerine cream & sugar set, \$182.45





The American Iridescent Stretch Glass Experience

by Stephanie Bennett

In the May 2008 *SGS Quarterly* I wrote a column on the 'greenness' of collecting antiques, inspired by (well, not entirely plagiarized from) Editor John Fiske's "In My Opinion" column in the *New England Antiques Journal*. His December 2010 column titled "Things-with-experience" struck another chord. This time I've asked Mr. Fiske for his permission to share his thoughts along with mine.

He first presents the conclusion of a recent psychological study: that experiences, not things, make us happy. He then offers his favorite definition of experience: "Active participation in events or activities leading to the accumulation of knowledge or skill." Combining these, he proposes that antiques are things with experience, and that the experience of learning about them adds to the pleasure of owning them.

Mr. Fiske and his wife are dealers who specialize in 17th and early 18th century English furniture. Comparing the 'experience' of their 400-year-old, hand-crafted furniture with that of our younger, partially machine-made glass, might seem a bit of a (sorry) stretch.

But the example Mr. Fiske uses in this article is a machine-molded Delft charger. He describes the experience the charger shares with one willing to learn: the decorator's official mark on the bottom, a blue smudge made by mistake, three unglazed spots where the charger rested on a wire rack in the kiln, and wear marks on the bottom where it rested on a shelf.

Sound familiar? If you've come to a SGS convention you've probably experienced the making of glass by touring the Fenton factory, or seeing the video of a piece of new stretch glass being made. You may have learned from the experts to recognize straw marks and bubbles, not considered damage because they happen 'in the making' of the glass. And you've most likely attended one of Dave Shetlar's identification seminars, where you learned to recognize form and color, measure bases, and count mold marks, to identify the maker of your (most often unmarked) glass.



Even if you haven't yet experienced a convention, you accumulate knowledge each time you read one of Dave's articles. This picture of a Fenton worker reshaping an iridized vase to create the stretch effect is from the first of Dave's 2-part series titled "What IS Stretch Glass?" presented in the Nov 2009 and Feb 2010 issues of *The Stretch Glass Society Quarterly*.

If you joined SGS in the past dozen or so years, your new member packet contained a list of books featuring stretch glass. The earliest two, both written by SGS charter members in 1972, provide some insight into the history of stretch glass and the early years of collecting. Like Millie Coty (see her article on the prior page), I too was first 'hooked on stretch' by Berry Wiggins, whose passion for our glass and its history shines from the pages of his little book, *Stretch Glass in Color*. And from Kitty & Russell Umbraco's book, *Iridescent Stretch Glass*, I learned that stretch glass, being partially machine-made, was an affordable version of the newly popular hand-blown iridescent art glass which "served to brighten the homes of the early nineteen hundreds, which were often dark and gloomy." I remembered, re-read and compared their comment to Mr. Fiske's explanation that pottery, like his Delft charger, was the only affordable decorative art for the common home of the time, that "its main purpose was to bring some visual beauty to its owner's room and to reflect the weak light of his candles."

Yesterday, to while away a snowy mid-winter day, I pulled out several of the later books about the companies that produced stretch glass. Each time I read them and see the pictures of those early glass factories, workers, and advertisements, I'm transported backward to experience the times and tastes of those pre-Depression years, and the rich history of this (sadly) vanishing American industry.



RAINBOW

The very name is suggestive. The radiance and colorings of this Ware are among the most beautiful ever achieved by skilled artists in the decorative glassworker's craft.

Rainbow Ware is subject to imitation from many sources, yet its beauty of shape and design, and its originality of colors remain unequalled. Its appeal is instant and universal to those who appreciate beautiful glassware, and wish to use it in decorating and beautifying the home.

This 1924 promotional brochure was produced by the Northwood Company in Wheeling, WV, and is pictured in *Harry Northwood The Wheeling Years 1901-1925*, by Heacock, Measell, and Wiggins.

STRETCH GLASS SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Stephanie Bennett

Of course, no discussion of glass books is complete without mentioning *American Iridescent Stretch Glass* by John Madeley and Dave Shetlar, the most recent and comprehensive identification and value guide.

Museums offer another way to learn. Mr. Fiske mentions some that are enhancing their experiential value with exhibits that demonstrate how objects were made and used. Two museums featured in recent newsletters sound like they do just that: the Museum of American Glass in Weston, WV, and the Historical Glass Museum in Redlands, CA. And the National Imperial Glass Museum in Bellaire, OH, displays production equipment and molds (where the SGS contributed a display case in memory of Berry Wiggins).

It's probably a safe assumption that most of us collect stretch glass because we find it not only beautiful to look at, but also because we enjoy the experience of learning about it, whether at club events and museums, or by reading books and articles by experts. (There's also the thrill of the hunt, but that's another kind of experience, with its own psychological studies.)

Since I bought this console set, I've learned that it was made by the Diamond Glass-Ware Company of Indiana, PA, and that the once worrisome bubble and straw mark happened 'in the making.' From the Umbracos' book, I see that it was sold by Montgomery Ward through their 1925-1926 *Winter Catalogue* for \$1.98. I paid more – inflation. To Mr. Fiske's point: the experience of learning about my console set makes it

more pleasurable and precious to me (regardless of monetary value – not going there) than any item available today from Williams-Sonoma or Ikea (to use Mr. Fisk's favorite examples) – or from good old 'Monkey Ward' (as Dad used to call them).



You'll be able to read all of John Fiske's "In My Opinion" column, once the December 2010 issue of the *New England Antiques Journal* is posted to the Archives:

<http://www.antiquesjournal.com/pastissues.html>

Find all of Dave Shetlar's articles in prior newsletters, on our website, <http://stretchglassociety.org>. (Login is [redacted], password is [redacted].) Our list of books is there too. They're all out of print, but obtainable now and then wherever you hunt for stretch glass.



Marietta -- Glass Collectors' Heaven in 2011!

July 27, 28, and 29, 2011

37th Annual SGS Convention, Show and Sale

Comfort Inn

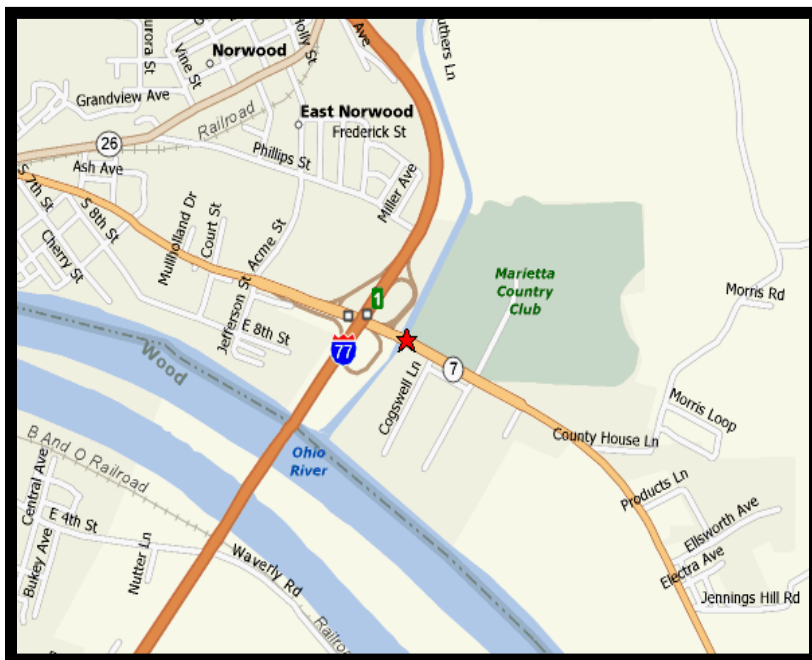
700 Pike Street
Marietta, OH

1-800-424-6423 or 740-374-8190

Standard Guest Room Rate:
\$70 (Plus Taxes)

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