

LOOKING GLASS

Winter 2013



ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM

During the last three months of 2012 there was much activity at the museum. The Gift Shop was cleaned thoroughly and reorganized to allow patrons better viewing of items and storage of multiple sets in bins. A fall parking lot sale was held to offer older items that hadn't sold. Items that were deemed unrelated to the purpose of the museum were removed and then sold to other shops or donated to other organizations. The inventory and offerings have been gradually upgraded. Linda Makar is Gift Shop manager and has had much help from board member Betty Thomas, Connie Wheeler and Jacque Rocha.

DONATIONS

A number of large donations have been received from patrons of the museum for its collection. Joann Tortarolo has led the painstaking identification and research of the items before placing them on display. Some items have been placed in our display cabinet at St. Bernadine's hospital. The board of directors has begun a process of cleaning display cabinets at the museum for attractive display of the collection. Accurate identification is a long process and will be carefully done over coming months.

BUILDING PUBLIC AWARENESS

Several tours have visited the museum and comments are always favorable and confirm that the

museum is one of the hidden treasures we need to promote to the public. Brochures are distributed at antique malls, hotels, restaurants and other venues where the general public will seek information. The museum has a website and Facebook page on the Internet to promote the museum and gain more public awareness. The museum receives a substantial increase in visitors every time a Huell Howser "California Gold" video is replayed on public television. President Bill Brakemeyer spoke about the museum to the Redlands Chamber of Commerce and Linda Makar has spoken to several organizations.

ENCOURAGING KNOWLEDGE OF GLASS

A visitor pamphlet was prepared especially for youth who tour the museum, guiding them to identify different items throughout the museum. Small bags of glass marbles are offered for sale to encourage youth to have an interest in glass. Adults have also enjoyed the identification pamphlet as they do the self-guided tour and find the pictured items.

STREET SIGNS

The project to place four street signs directing the public to the museum was tabled when we learned that the cost for placing each sign following the rules of the City of Redlands was ten times the amount approved by the board. Donors were sent letters advising them of the decision and given the option of having their donation returned or giving it to the museum.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership renewals have been updated and processed efficiently. The museum still operates totally on memberships, donations from members and suggested donations received from visitors. Our operating costs have increased and some maintenance projects have been postponed for the present to protect the financial assets of the museum. We established a Community Partnership with Provident Bank in 2012 to earn support by having individuals and businesses link their accounts to the museum at no cost. The foundation is able to accept monetary donations to support the museum and provide letters of appreciation to the generous donors.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE – Linda Makar

We ended 2012 with a flair on December 1st with our Holiday Open House at the Historical Glass Museum. A banner and balloons beckoned old and new friends to join us in celebration of our museum festivities. There was hot spiced cider, home-baked cookies, and striped peppermint candies waiting to cheer visitors as they entered our Victorian building from the brisk air outside. Christmas music was playing as guests were treated to a complimentary tour of our renowned Historical Glass Museum.



Melanie and Ron Hildreth

The museum and gift shop were decked out in holiday decor which inspired guests to do their Christmas shopping with us. For every \$25.00 spent, a gift-with-purchase was awarded to the customer. This year the gift was an authentic set of collectible stemware. Next year we expect to give an equally generous gift to our valued customers.



University of Redlands students

A raffle was in progress throughout the day, and lucky participants had fun choosing from twelve gift certificates which were awarded at 4 p.m.

These exciting prizes were generously donated by each member of the new Board of Directors. It was their hard work and planning that made our Holiday Open House such a memorable event.

FUTURE MUSEUM EVENTS

Upcoming events will include a dealers-only special sale day at the museum to offer donated inventory, a visit by the Glass Collector Club of Southern California, a presentation by Robert Goellner on his sand carving creations, and a book signing by Debbie Coe, author of numerous books on collecting. President Bill Brakemeyer will give a presentation on the museum to the Redlands Optimist Club. Another parking lot sale is planned for late spring when weather is favorable.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors is focused on its goals to keep the museum growing, educating the public about glass made in America, and upgrading the collection on display at the museum. Board meetings are open to all and continue to be held the first Thursday of each month at the museum beginning at ten o'clock. Foundation bylaws were updated and approved by the board. Responsibilities of docents, board members and committee chairpersons are under review. Job descriptions will reflect current practices and help the museum to be better organized and to meet the requirements of applications for grants that will help the museum and its purposes. Replacement of the air system and other maintenance needs will be taken care of judiciously to keep the facility in good condition to serve the public.

ANNUAL MEETING for 2013

The Annual Meeting of the Historical Glass Foundation will be held at 10:00 am Thursday, February 7, 2013 at the museum. A notice will be sent separately to advise and remind all members. Board members whose three-year terms are about to expire will have the opportunity to continue service for another three year term. New board members to fill vacancies will be voted upon and take their place on the board. Volunteers to be docents at the museum will be approved by the board and receive training from Linda Makar prior to working on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

GENTILE GLASS COMPANY – Joann Tortarolo

As the large American glass makers began to shut down after World War II, the glass industry took a new approach. Workers who had experience at the larger glass companies began to open their own smaller glass shops. Gentile Glass Company of Star City, West Virginia, is an example of the new breed of glass makers. The Historical Glass Museum is fortunate to have a selection of Gentile paperweights due to a generous recent donation of her late husband's paperweight collection by Mrs. Evelyn Klass.



Evelyn Klass

The founder of the company was Peter Gentile. Born in Italy where he learned his craft, he came to America before World War I and worked at American glass makers, finishing his career with twenty-five years at the Old Morgantown Glass Guild in West Virginia. While at Morgantown, Peter Gentile brought his sons in after work and they made paperweights using the skills that Peter had learned in Italy. These were very popular with the glass company staff and vendors.

In 1947, Gentile opened a small factory in Star City in the center of one of West Virginia's glass regions. Gentile Glass Company made many different items but is best known for its paperweights. Peter's son, John, came to the glass company when he returned from the war. In 1950, the company began making paperweights in earnest. Very few of the paperweights made prior to 1963 were signed when they began to sign weights with nearly all weights being signed after 1975.

The Gentile Glass Company had the distinction of making quality paperweights accessible to the middle class. Focusing on "production" items, their paperweights were sold to gift shops and antique dealers across the United States. The most common of its weights are the "motto" weights that reflected designs of yesteryear and were big sellers. Many of the motto molds had been used since the 1920s when the Gentiles began making paperweights. Along the same line as the motto weights were the weights ordered by organizations and companies to promote their companies as well as to commemorate events. For example, Coca Cola ordered weights made by Gentile and one is included in the recent donation. Gentile weights have been given to many important people, including the President of the United States, to commemorate events.



Let's start with the children's items. You will find sets of children's miniature glass dishes in the Depression style. These rare finds come in green, pink, and gold krystal. Another attraction is our colorful collection of bagged marbles in a variety of glass styles such as carnival glass, slag glass, and spotted glass varieties. Each net bag has instructions on how to play a game of marbles. These give youth interest in glass which can be transferred to appreciation in the collection at the museum and build interest for the future.

Beyond the "motto" weights, Gentile made nearly every style of paperweight. They were best known for the "flying goose" and butterfly paperweights as well as the "spiral" weights. The swirl paperweights were compared to the work done "by the old Pairpoint Glass Factory at New Bedford, Massachusetts."

John Gentile died in 2006 and the Gentile Glass Company closed shortly after his death.

Development of a revolving display of paperweights (Gentile and other American makers) from the Klass donation is underway for the Museum. "Like" us on Facebook to be notified when the display has been installed.



Museum Gift Shop "Redland's Hidden Secret for Gifts" – Linda Makar



For those who have an interest in contemporary styles, there is our CJK Blown Glass collection by artist Charles Keeling. There is also a selection of Scandinavian glass pieces and colorful mid-century modern vases and decanters. Those of you who prefer retro era decor will find an authentic variety of items in our shelf area titled: "Retro Memories".

Our Fenton Art Glass section has been an ongoing success for collectors and visitors seeking "that special gift that is sure to please." We are on an ongoing quest to bring "fresh finds" to keep our customers happy.

If elegance is your pleasure, you must see our polished silver, fine china, and crystal stemware. Recently, we became an official retailer for Mosser Glass of Ohio. Our popular Mosser collection represents the styles of yesteryear with items such as covered hen-on-nest dishes, hand-painted fairy lamps, and historically inspired tableware.

There is an exciting new look to the Historical Glass Museum Gift Shop with its array of fine collectibles and unique gifts for young and old.

Please visit our Historical Glass Museum Gift Shop and discover why we have become "Redland's Hidden Secret for Gifts".



Carved glass creations of Robert Goellner



Korfmacher auto vase collection



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Museum is open weekends noon to four pm.
Weekday group tours by appointment.

Board meetings held the first Thursday of each month
beginning at ten o'clock at the museum.

Visit the museum at its website and on its Facebook page.



Loetz vase