

Fenton Finders of Greater Kansas City

February 2024

A Fond Farewell

But not totally....

By Dan Madura



Dan Madura addressing the Gala group in front of the Big Display.

My reign as president of the Fenton Finders of Greater Kansas City has come to an end. I feel blessed to have worked with so many wonderful and talented people over the last few years.

The high points for me were the Galas and the Christmas parties. The very dedicated and talented folks on the Gala committee always were a joy to work with, which made the Galas

successful year after year.

I will still be involved in the club as an officer on the board and continue to be on the Gala committee. My official title on the board will be President Emeritus and for the club and Gala, Technology Coordinator.

As I write this article, we are still amid an election for president, and I wish whoever my successor is all the best. Our club is healthy, and the Gala is more popular than ever. We have much to look forward to in the future.



Dan preparing materials for the annual Christmas party.

Gala Update

By Connie Duncan

Hope everyone had a great holiday, and received that piece of Fenton they had on their wish list!

I am excited to be your vice president and Gala Chair this year. I have asked Sarah Grunst to help me chair the Gala. You can reach out to either of us about the Gala. Our contact information is at the end of this article.

We had a fantastic Gala committee meeting. The

committee members are busy working on their parts, and will reach out to all of you for your help this year.

Sarah and I met with the Embassy Suites hotel and finalized the contract for the 2025 event. I am happy to report the hotel has started to make some improvements. They have a new parking lot! They will slowly be making changes to improve your stay.

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Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Fenton Finders of Greater Kansas City is February 10, 2024. Join us at Sterling Full Gospel Church, 3007 S. Sterg Ave., Independence, Mo. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

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Meet Your New Gala Co-Chair

By Sarah Grunst

Hey there! I'm Sarah Grunst, a self-proclaimed antique and design enthusiast, communications professional and all-around fun-loving individual. I've been diving headfirst into the world of the Fenton Gala Committee and am thrilled to be your Co-Chair alongside Connie!

As a recent boomerang to the Kansas City area, when I'm not busy antique hunting, you can usually find me cooking or walking my two dogs around Prairie Village. Whether it's exploring a new area of KC, sampling a new wine, or even working hard at the gym, I love to have fun. I'm thrilled to connect with fellow Fenton enthusiasts and share our experiences, swap funny stories, and maybe even collaborate on some exciting projects.

How did I get interested in glass? Mix equal parts family interest in collecting, the thrill of the hunt

and the ever-present desire to out-collect my mom (who has a stunning appreciation and collection of art glass too)! My taste is for the old and rare with stretch glass being my recent obsession.

First order of business as your Gala Committee Co-Chair, I'm excited to share with you a bit of information to help enhance your experience at the Gala and save you a little money (for more Fenton, duh)! As part of the hotel's ongoing improvement efforts, the WIFI has been expanded and bandwidth increased. To take advantage of this upgrade and to receive it at no cost, become a Hilton Honors Member, if you are not one already. Along with other benefits, joining the honors program is quick, easy and did I mention free? You can sign up now and not have to worry about it during check-in and registration. Join today by searching for "Hilton Honors" on Google where you will be directed to sign up. Remember to keep your rewards number handy when you check in for the Gala.

Gala Update

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Please check the club's website (<https://fentonfinderskc.net>) or our Facebook page for announcements. We will post when reservations can be made for Gala 2024, as well as make the announcement in the newsletter.

The Gala committee members are – Chair: Connie Duncan; Co-Chair: Sara Grunst; Treasurer: Janet Wilke; Hospitality: Jackie Ogelsby, Carol Rigsby; Webmaster/Advertising: Dan Madura; Glass Sales: Denise Adams; Big Display: Amanda Herman, Carol Rigsby; Display Set-up: Craig Ricklefs; Auction: Connie Duncan; Room Assignments: Connie Duncan; Individual Table Displays: Sara and Richard Speaight. If you are able to help any of these people and their committees, please contact them.

We had a room full of amazing individual table displays last year, and hope to in 2024. Now is the time to be thinking of what you can share with us!

Looking forward to a great 2024! If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please email me at Fenton123@aol.com, or Sarah Grunst at sarah.grunst@gmail.com.

Fetty Ornament on National Christmas Tree

By Anne Blackmore



Dave Fetty sharing the bird ornament he created for the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C.
- Photo courtesy of Mark Lupardus

With his characteristic boyish grin, Dave Fetty extends his hand and shows off the multi-color offhand glass songbird Christmas ornament he crafted for the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C.

Dave has been working glass at Henderson Hall, just west of Williamstown. When the call came for West Virginia artists to create ornaments for the 2023 National Christmas Tree, the Hall administrators asked Dave if he'd like to be part of the project.

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Fenton Finders of Greater Kansas City Christmas Party

By Jackie Oglesby

We had a wonderful time at the Christmas party this year, with many delicious home-made desserts, as well as turkey and ham and all the fixings to be enjoyed before we got to the good stuff.

There were 28 members who attended the party. Unfortunately several people needed to cancel due to Covid. It seems like we will never get rid of that stuff.



Winners of Dirty Bingo, Back L-R: Teresa Lile (a non-member party guest), Jackie Oglesby, Caitlin Cox, Carol Rigsby. Front: Joe Bradshaw

think this was the first and only time I won a prize playing dirty bingo.

Joe Bradshaw also donated an extra five gifts to be given to winners after the party. Both Joe and his daughter Denise Adams, donate many of the door prizes we give out at the Gala each year and in the spirit of Christmas he wanted to give more prizes. Everyone won a door prize, some very nice pieces of Fenton and other small gifts.

Dan Madura provided five big surprise gifts for

the winners of dirty bingo instead of the usual three - a wonderful handmade mushroom, I believe made by John Fenton, a gorgeous Burmese vase, a lovely French Opalescent vase, a Black covered candy jar, and one very nice Pink iridized basket that was sadly

Almost everyone took home a small poinsettia, and five members took home beautiful large poinsettias to enjoy over the holiday season.

This will be the last party Dan Madura arranges for us as President of the club, and he did his usual outstanding job. Denise Adams worked with Dan arranging the party and she hunted down and brought in all the lovely poinsettias. Thank you both for arranging such a wonderful end-of-the-year party for the club.



Foreground: Denise Adams and Kiki Crouse admire the small poinsettias Denise brought. Background: Pam Schaffer and David Jacques talk with Charles Crouse.

in two pieces (a booby prize!), won by as you may be able to guess, myself. I may be wrong, but I



A line forms for all the super home-made desserts brought by members.

Fetty Christmas Ornament

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Talking directly with Dave in his living room, he told me "I was honored to be chosen. It felt great!" He was not sure how many other artists were chosen, but he said they were all supposed to be from West Virginia.

I asked Dave how he decided on making a bird. "I hadn't made just a bird before, so I thought it was time. I'd made a bird on top an egg, but not just a bird. Then I added the little loop on the top so they could hang it," he shared. "It took me about 15

minutes, and I did use my stamp on the bottom, and I did sign it too after it was cooled." He showed me a second bird he made in a red swirl pattern, and the cutest thing in my opinion was the way he made the eyes. They were white with little black pupils.

"The best part of being asked to make the ornament, was actually making it," Dave said laughingly. "It was my very favorite piece at the time." He said the folks at Henderson Hall shipped it to Washington, D.C. on his behalf. He was not certain what would happen to the ornaments after the Christmas season.

Is It Fenton or Is it Not?

Non-Fenton Items Advertised as Fenton On-Line

By Anne Blackmore

Milk Glass Daisy and Button Top Hat

This hat was found listed for sale on eBay, and it was identified by the seller as Fenton. While Fenton did indeed produce a lovely Daisy and Button pattern, it is easy to tell this hat is not Fenton by the very large “buttons” on the far right side of the photo.



According to *A Century of Indiana Glass*, by Craig Schenning, these hats were widely available from the mid-1960s into the early 1970s. It was mass-marketed through the florist trade as well as department stores of the times. The hat is known to have been produced in crystal, black, blue, pink, milk, olive green, and red.

Pair of Amber Hobnail, Crimped Top Vases



When a glass piece has hobnails and a pie-crimp top edge, it is easy to leap to the identification conclusion of Fenton before really examining the item closely.

These vases were also listed recently on eBay, and labeled as Fenton. Even though they have a familiar-looking crimp and hobnails, they were actually produced by L.E. Smith. As many collectors know, when one company had success with a design such as Fenton had with hobnails and crimps, other companies were bound to follow the lead and copy as closely as possible.

Researching these vases in *L.E. Smith Glass Company The First One Hundred Years* by Tom Felt, I learned they were made with a plain edge in the ear-

ly 2000s, but the earlier versions were made with the crimped top in the 1960s.

The vase has been produced in amber, green, cobalt, crystal, flame, milk glass, peridot, pink, and yellow.

Milk Glass Vase with Scalloped Top

Another milk glass piece, but this is a vase I've seen in many colors, including an opaque orange, with a slag effect.



This was found on eBay, list as Fenton, but it is an L.E. Smith product. Reading in Tom Felt's book, *L.E. Smith Glass Company The First One Hundred Years*, again, he shows this vase in several colors including black, milk glass, and pink.

Interestingly, Felt states the milk glass version of this appears to be a reproduction of a vase made by the Eagle Glass and Manufacturing Company, circa 1899.

Milk Glass Dolphin-Stem Comport



Fenton made a large line of dolphin-handled items - bowls, comports, vases, and plates, but they did not make a dolphin-stemmed comport. When I saw this lovely milk glass comport listed on eBay as Fenton, I thought it was

worth talking about.

While Fenton did not make this, Westmoreland did. It is their line #1049 Dolphin Shell bowl, and it was produced in milk glass, black, crystal, blue, almond (a soft pale brown), and milk glass iridized, as well as most of these colors in a satinized version.

A Short History of Log Cabin on Custard Satin

By Ellen Stohler

Before discussing the Log Cabin scene on Custard Satin, which was produced by the Fenton decorating department, I felt the story of the early Decorating Department would be of interest to collectors.

The Fenton Art Glass Company was founded by brothers, Frank L. and John Fenton in 1905, as a decorating company. Glass was purchased from other companies to be decorated at the Fenton Martins Ferry, Ohio plant.

With the opening of the new factory in Williamstown, W.Va. in 1907, Fenton had the ability to make glass as well as decorate it. Several women decorators worked in the decorating department painting vibrant, detailed patterns on colored glass as well as on some carnival pitcher and tumbler sets. Frank Fenton, who had worked in the decorating departments of other glass companies since his graduation from high school, exhibited a keen interest in decorating. It is said he had a hand in creating some of the early patterns on the glass. The cutters who cut fine patterns in glass were also considered part of the decorating department.



This is the #7615 LC plate. I have chosen pieces in my collection signed by Louise Piper.



Fenton's #7300 LC Log Cabin fairy light.

Stretch glass which was beautiful iridized unpainted glass began to be made in 1916 and continued through the 1920s. It enjoyed such popularity the decorating department was gradually phased out because decorated glass was out of favor. A few rare pieces of Fenton glass painted in the 1930s have been attributed to Otto Goertler. Other than that, the

Fenton decorating department was non-existent.

In the late 1960s Frank M. Fenton, son of Frank L., felt the climate was right to once again establish

a Fenton decorating department. Louise Piper, who had enjoyed a long and extensive career working at the Jeanette and Westmoreland Companies in Pennsylvania, was hired. During the 20 years she spent at Fenton, Louise hired and trained decorators, as well as created beautiful, detailed patterns that are still loved today.



The lamp on the left is the #7201 16-inch Hammered Colonial lamp. The smaller lamp is the #7311 11-inch Hurricane lamp.

The much-loved pattern Log Cabin on Custard Satin created by Louise Piper was introduced in the Fenton line in 1976. The scene featured a rustic cabin nestled among tall trees with majestic mountains in the background. Included in this line were the 7437 LC basket, 7300 LC fairy light, 7252 LC seven-inch vase, and the 7412 LC student lamp. The Log Cabin scene was well received in the 7288 LC three-piece ginger jar and the 7201 LC 16-inch hand-hammered colonial lamp being added in 1978. The year 1979 brought the 7311 LC 11-inch hurricane lamp, the 7488 LC temple jar, and the 7362 LC bell. During the early 1980s an 8600 LC clock and 7615 LC plate were added. By 1989 the Log Cabin scene on Custard Satin was discontinued. The Log Cabin scene continued in the January 1990 line with the production of two Ivory Satin lamps.



This is the #7429 large opal satin comports painted by Louise. There are four cabin scenes on the bowl and two on the base.

A very special Louise piece I have added to my Log Cabin collection is a large 7429 LC comports on pedestal. This was not in the line. Louise had a reputation for painting everything she could get her

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What is the Story With A.A. Importing Company?

By S. Holmes

It is not at all uncommon when trying to obtain an ID for a glass piece to have A&A come up in the discussion. But what *is* A&A? This is planned to be the first in a series of articles exploring this company.

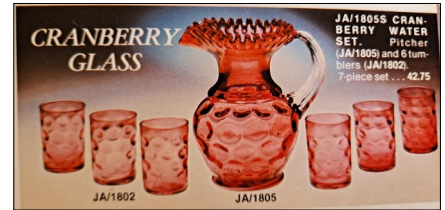
According to their corporate website, A.A. Importing Company, Inc. was founded in 1934 by A.A. Gralnick in St. Louis, Mo. It began as a distributor for kerosene lamp parts and accessories. Prior to and after World War II, A.A. Importing was involved in importing crystal, art glass, and porcelain from Europe. That was the beginning of A.A. Importing in the antique reproduction business. They are still in business, and still focused on selling antique reproductions.

According Carrie and Gerald Domitz in *Fenton Glass Made for Other Companies 1907-1980*, in the beginning, A.A. Importing was purchasing most of their glassware from American firms and their glass quality was "quite good." In fact, Fenton sold glass to A.A. during these early years, as did L.G.

Wright. In fact, the Domitzes also state "for the most part A & A Sales bought their glass from L.G. Wright and saw little reason to buy directly from Fenton. That decision was probably based on the joint ownership of some of Wright's moulds."

Based on what is shown on A.A. Importing's current website, it is possible to see several pieces Fenton made for L.G. Wright in the past. These include the Pump & Trough set in six colors and the Swan on a nest in opaque pale blue.

Many of their glass items over the years appear to have been intentionally designed to mimic Fenton pieces, especially the cranberry pitcher and glasses. This mould will be explored further in the next segment of the A.A. Importing articles.



A.A. Importing cranberry glass pitcher and tumbler set. It is very often mistaken for Fenton. This was sold by A.A. as early as 1979.

Gala Auction

By Connie Duncan

The Gala Auction is still in need of pieces! Please submit your list to Connie Duncan at Fenton123@aol.com. Thank you!

2024 FFGKC Dates

Mark Your Calendar

February 10, 2024 (Meeting)

April 13, 2024 (Meeting)

June 8, 2024 (Meeting)

August 10, 2024 (Meeting)

September 12, 13, 14, 2024 (GALA)

October 12, 2024 (Meeting)

December 14, 2024 (Christmas Party)

Log Cabin

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hands on, and might have pulled the comport from the line to decorate. And decorate she did! Three hundred sixty degrees around the top of the comport Louise painted four complete cabin scenes. The base had two cabin scenes. I have never seen one like this. Could it be one of a kind? If others were decorated there couldn't be many of them out there. I acquired this comport at a Dexter City Auction. While others were furiously bidding on more elaborate Piper pieces and paying high prices I won this comport for a very reasonable price.

For the rest of the 1990s the interest in the Log Cabin scene seemed to wane. However, in the early two thousands, collectors began to show interest in the design once again. Animals and bridesmaid dolls were decorated with the scene. As collectors, we know with certain types of glass and patterns there are ups and downs in the market. Currently, interest in the Log Cabin pattern has waned again. There is always hope some day in the near future interest in this lovely pattern will be revived again.

Finds from the Road

A Truly Interesting Find to Melt Your Heart



By Anne Blackmore

It's not often Max and I shop rummage sales. We've just never been "get up early" people, and if you don't hit those sales early, you don't generally find the good stuff. But, it does happen. We were told of a rummage sale near us by family and were told it had a lot of glass; we really needed to get over there. So we gathered ourselves and made the trek out into the country to the sale location.

Upon our arrival, we found the sale being held in an out building on the property. And, oh my yes, did they ever have a lot of glass. The bulk of it was Fenton, but there was also a lot of vintage kitchen glass like Fire King, and some Depression Glass.

Max and I gently parted ways and started exploring. I asked the man at the front table if there was a place we could create a pile and he kindly pointed me toward some card tables behind him. We found a wide variety of great things, including Fenton animals, Dave Fetty and Kelsey Murphy pieces, Blue Burmese, items Fenton made for other companies, rare opalescent optics, a couple of nice lamps, an epergne, and even a neat 1960s piece from a line I just love. It is very possible in addition to this Finds story, there may be a couple more from this amazing rummage sale! My favorite find from this sale though, is a pair of Silver Rose heart relish dishes.



Fenton standard Silver Rose heart relish dish with the crystal on the top edge and the crystal handle.

Silver Rose was introduced by Fenton in January 1956 and was discontinued in January 1958, with only seven shapes being produced during this two-year period. Interestingly, the two heart dishes are not exactly the same. The first is the standard Silver Rose relish – opaque pink body, clear glass loop handle, and clear glass crest on the top edge.

The second has the opaque pink body, clear glass loop handle, but no clear glass crest on the top edge. Because it has the clear handle, it is still considered Silver Rose and "crested" because the body and the handle are different colors.

The second dish is also slightly different in color, being a slightly lighter pink. The only reason for



Fenton unusual Silver Rose heart relish dish with only the crystal glass handle, and no crystal on the top edge. It is also slightly more pale in color because it received less heat.

the color difference we can determine is that the crested dish goes back into the flames to adhere the crest after it is applied. The dish with no crest did not have the additional trip into the flames, so it is the same color as other

Rose Pastel items without true crests, such as the hobnail line. I had never thought about the Silver Rose being heat sensitive, but apparently, it is.

Of course, we bought both of the Silver Rose relishes and they look great displayed together. Please stay tuned for additional stories of pieces from this great rummage sale!

Happy Hunting, dear friends!

The Glass-ary: *Glass Terms Explained*

Ductility – The elasticity of glass allows it to be pressed, blown, twisted, knotted, spun into filaments, and even woven into cloth.

Silica – Sand, the main ingredient in the glassmaking process, giving hardness, strength, a metallic nature, uniformity of manipulation, and brilliant transparency. Most sand is quarried or mined today, while early glass was made from river or sea sources.

