

# Glass News

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Once again we are in the enviable position of having received loads of interesting contributions, enabling us to produce another 16 page issue! Thank you to everyone who has sent us details of events, publications and research.

One of the roles of Glass News is to keep readers up to date with forthcoming meetings, study days and conferences. With this in mind, we aim to produce Issue 17 by early February, with the following issue in July. This should allow better synchronisation with the timetable of events throughout the year, giving organisers more time to finalise arrangements before submitting details to Glass News. However we would rather not cancel Christmas for the editors and so early contributions would be much appreciated in order that we can do most of the work beforehand!

In the mean time we hope that you enjoy this issue and don't forget to renew your subscription using the back page form.

Sarah and Juanita.

## Annual General Meeting

Please note that due to unforeseen circumstances the Annual General Meeting of the Association for the History of Glass will not take place at The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, as stated in Glass News No.15. Please see page 2 for details. Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

## SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER!

Your subscription is due for renewal  
– see subscription form on back

## Study Day

Glass and lighting from antiquity to  
the Medieval Period

A study day on glass and lighting from antiquity to the medieval period will be held on **Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> March** in the **London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC)**, Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1.

For further information, and to offer papers, please contact Professor Jennifer Price, University of Durham, Department of Archaeology, South Road, Durham, DH1 3LE. Telephone: 0191 334 1100  
E-mail: [jennifer.price@durham.ac.uk](mailto:jennifer.price@durham.ac.uk)

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## AHG AGM and Wallace Collection Study Day

New light on old glass: collections, analysis and archaeology

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2004, the Association for the History of Glass and the Wallace Collection will hold a Study Day at the Wallace Collection, Manchester Square, London W1, to coincide with the AGM of the Association for the History of Glass.

### Programme

10.15am Registration and Coffee

#### *Collections*

10.45am **Glass in the Wallace Collection** - Suzanne Higgott and Juanita Navarro

11.20am **Acquisitions of 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century European glass in the British Museum, 1980-2004** - Aileen Dawson

11.55am **Venetian and *façon de Venise* glass in the Ashmolean Museum** - Martine Newby

12.30pm **Lunch break** (lunch is not provided)

1.30pm **AGM for AHG members**

#### *Analysis and archaeology*

2.15pm **New work on Romano-British colourless glass** - Caroline Jackson

2.50pm **Continuity and change in Anglo-Saxon glass compositions, 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD** - Ian Freestone

3.25pm **Tea**

3.55pm **Excavation and analysis of a 17<sup>th</sup> century glass furnace at Shinrone, Co. Offaly, Ireland** - Sarah Paynter, Caimin O'Brien and Jean Farrelly

4.30pm **Discussion and closing remarks**

Attendance at the AGM is free and open to all AHG members. The cost of the study day will be £10 (cheques payable to the Association for the History of Glass Ltd). Please book and send cheques to: Meeting Secretary Martine Newby  
e-mail: [martine.newby@virgin.net](mailto:martine.newby@virgin.net)

## THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF GLASS

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## Lecture

### Glass: from genesis to revelation

By **Adrian C. Wright**  
7 pm Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November

Ditchburn Lecture Theatre, J.J. Thomson Physical Laboratory, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6AF.

The past, present and future of glass will be reviewed from the perspective of a glass scientist. The factors which led to an improvement in glass quality will be examined, with particular emphasis on the synergy between the development of glass and that of science.

The lecture is an updated version of a Presidential Address to the Society of Glass Technology and is suitable for both non-scientists and scientists alike, the only science included being of a pictorial nature (*i.e.* no equations!).

Attendance free - for more details, please e-mail: [AlanStephens@compuserve.com](mailto:AlanStephens@compuserve.com)  
Or visit the SGT website at <http://www.societyofglasstechnology.org.uk>

## Study Day Review

### History & Heritage Group (Society of Glass Technology) and AHG: Creativity in Glass History and Heritage



There is a value in bringing together people whose interest in glass reflects many different specialisms. Delegates and speakers at the **History & Heritage of Glass study day** last April spanned the

diversity of the glass community, creating an event which was appreciated by the sixty or so delegates who attended. This year's event, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April at the University of Liverpool Carnatic Conference Park, was organised as a collaboration between the History & Heritage Group of the Society of Glass Technology and the Association for the History of Glass. Travel bursaries made available by both organisations were most helpful and are gratefully acknowledged.

The first session tackled issues surrounding Venetian style glass, from three very different perspectives. **Ian Hankey** spoke with hands-on conviction about the experience of working with the glass composition used by the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Venetian glassmakers, for the first time making the link between the unique working characteristics of the glass and the nature of the characteristic Venetian style. He highlighted the importance of the craftsmanly skills in the evolution of glassmaking history and also in today's world. Glass composition was clearly important at this time, but how glassmakers controlled it, in the absence of today's chemical understanding, is not clear.

**Caroline Jackson** and her co-workers have taken forward our appreciation of this by showing experimentally how alkali derived from plant ash could vary widely, both in chemical composition and the melting characteristics of derived batches. Both the diligence and subtlety of the mediaeval glassmakers are to be applauded. The works of art which were the end product of this activity are very vulnerable to deterioration even in the best kept of today's museums. **Sarah Fearn**'s work on the details of how moisture attacks the glass surface is breaking new ground in the application of sophisticated analytical techniques capable of detecting the

chemical changes in the glass surface after exposure to water at room temperature for as little as ten hours. Such new knowledge will, it is hoped, lead to new strategies for conservation of these important artefacts.

Moving to the realm of architectural glass, the session after lunch began with **Dennis Hadley**'s account of the ingenuity of Victorian manufacturers of stained and painted glass for domestic and ecclesiastical applications. Scrap glass could be re-used rather than discarded; ground and sintered, it furnished an artistic medium well attuned to the tastes of the time. Destruction of a work of art is always to be regretted, but particularly so when it occupies a significant place in the life of a community. **Jonathan Cooke** described the recreation of an important Kempe window, faithfully following as far as possible the original techniques and style without compromising ethical integrity. Not a forgery but a window re-born. Such sensitive recreation was materially helped by the availability of glass made using the same time-honoured techniques the Victorians used. **Mike Tuffy** spoke of the trials, tribulations and triumphs of using crown and cylinder processes to make flat (well, flat-ish) glass with character.

The final session spanned the centuries, starting with Roman gambling proclivities and ending with Victorian entrepreneurship. **Harriet Foster** showed how speculations about Roman gaming pieces made from opaque opal glass could be informed and resolved using the kind of sophisticated analytical techniques now taken for granted in modern university chemistry departments. **Hugh Willmott** spoke of the archaeology of glassmaking in 17<sup>th</sup> century London. As usual, furnace superstructure was no longer extant so considerable interpretative work was being progressed. Analysis of crucible remains and finds of scrap glass were informing the debate. Moving forward to the 1840's, **John Hartley** spoke about the Percival Vickers factory in Victorian Manchester, where rescue archaeological excavations revealed enough of the furnace structures to allow a clear picture of technical evolution during the sixty years of operation to emerge, and to allow speculation

about how the furnace technology enabled Manchester pressed glass to access new markets.

The paper by **Jonathan and Ruth Cooke** was published in the June issue of the Journal of Glass Technology, **Ian Hankey**'s paper is in press and we hope that more of these excellent presentations will be published in due course. In the mean time, more information is available in the abstracts that follow and from the websites:

<http://www.historyofglass.org.uk>

<http://www.sgt.org>

<http://www.societyofglasstechnology.org.uk>

David Martlew

### Abstracts

#### *Working with Venetian Style Glass*

Ian Hankey, Teign Valley Glass, Bovey Tracey, Devon.

This paper gives a brief description of the working characteristics of different glass types, with a short explanation of the problems encountered in describing a tacit skill. The Venetian glass composition has a highly corrosive nature and amazing working characteristics. Possible reasons will be given for why the glass works so much better than modern glass types, leading to a discussion of 17<sup>th</sup> century reflective rationality versus 21<sup>st</sup> century technical rationality and the diminishing credibility of the glassmaker. On the subject of learning about glass, there is a gulf between art and science in education; I explore the importance of the collaboration between Dr Fearn's technical rationality and my own tacit reflective rationality, which resulted in my questioning the relevance of my art education specialising in glass and the basic philosophy of colleges that skill is restrictive and therefore needn't be taught. Finally, if time permits, the possibility of stress within a glass effecting or enhancing glass disease will be considered, including variables such as shape, inconsistency within the annealing process, breakdown of the composition within the furnace over time and the effect of re-melting cullet a number of times.

#### *Burning issues: glassmaking using plant ashes*

Caroline Jackson

A range of different plants can be used in the manufacture of glass. Some of these are readily available in Northern European woodlands and it is historically documented that these were exploited in the medieval and post-medieval periods. This paper will explore the use and glassmaking capabilities of

some commonly found plant materials and their relationship to glasses of this time.

#### *SIMS and Moisture Attack on Glass*

Sarah Fearn (s.fearn@imperial.ac.uk)<sup>1</sup>, David. S. McPhail<sup>1</sup>, Victoria Oakley<sup>2</sup>

1. Dept. of Materials. Imperial College, London, SW7 2AZ, UK.

2. Head Ceramics Conservator, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, SW7 2RL.

Glass is often regarded as a stable, durable material and the wide range of contemporary applications of glass reinforce this belief. However, there is nothing inherent in the glassy state that confers stability and the problem of glass corrosion has been well documented by many workers<sup>1,2</sup>. Glass corrosion still affects commercial float glass production and glasses used to contain high level nuclear waste, but one area in particular where glass corrosion is very common is in the museum. Display, and the safe storage of many antique glasses, is made very difficult as the composition of these glasses renders them very vulnerable to attack from atmospheric moisture<sup>3,4</sup>. In order, therefore, to conserve these artefacts it is essential to fully understand the composition of the corroded glass and the corrosion mechanism. This study examines the application of low-energy SIMS for the depth profiling of corroded glass.

To measure the corrosion of antique glass, replica material has been produced, aged in humidity chambers and then analysed, via SIMS depth profiling, to quantify the region of corrosion by following the major alkali ions that leach out of the glass<sup>5</sup>. Most importantly with this work, due to the recent advances in SIMS it is now possible to achieve depth profiles with nm resolution, by using very low beam energies. Replica glass that has been aged at room temperature and in real time can now, therefore, be usefully analysed, as very small changes can be resolved. Replica material has also been treated in order to try and prevent corrosion. After ageing in environmental chambers, low energy SIMS has again been used in order to assess the efficacy of these treatments and the amount of deterioration that has taken place.

### References

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5. Ryan, J.L., McPhail, D.S., Rogers, P.S., and Oakley, V.L., *Proceedings of ICOM 11<sup>th</sup> Triennial Meeting*, 2, 839-844, 1996.

*From Rees Mosaic to Opus Sectile: the development of opaque stained glass*

Dennis Hadley

Opus Sectile was produced by cutting designs from sheets of coloured opaque glass, adding details by painting and firing as for stained glass. The talk will concentrate on the development of the craft as a less expensive substitute for glass mosaic using recycled scrap glass.

*Resurgam: the story of a recreated window*

Jonathan Cooke

On a cold February morning in 2003, arsonists set fire to Christchurch in Jarrow. The intense heat of the fire that was started on the altar destroyed beyond repair the large lancet above, which formed the main East window. This illustrated talk sets out to explain how and why the window, originally made by the firm of Charles Eamer Kempe in 1893, was recreated. It will outline the processes by which the exceptional decision to remake the window was arrived at, and the stages of its reconstruction, examining some of the issues in conservation ethics raised by the project.

*Glass production in 17<sup>th</sup>-century London - a review of the archaeological evidence*

Hugh Willmott

Over the last two decades a number of sites related to the 17<sup>th</sup> century glass industry in London have been investigated. Several of these have revealed remains associated with historically identified glassmakers. For example, crucibles and working waste found in the backfill of the City ditch can be identified as having originated from Sir Robert Mansell's furnace at Broad Street, in use between 1617-42. Excavations at the site of Vauxhall Bridgefoot have brought to light the remains of a glass furnace known to have been operated by John Baker between 1681-1704. Furthermore, although not directly attributable to any known individuals, sites at Aldgate, Bankside and Crosswall Street have all produced deposits of crucibles, working waste and other production evidence dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This paper will provide a review of this archaeological data and outline how it informs us about the nature and scale of the early English industry.

*English antique glass – yesterday's glassmaking today*

Mike Tuffey

For many years English stained glass products were made in the North-East by Hartley Wood and Co., which ceased trading in 1997 and then for a short period, by Sunderland Glassworks, which went into liquidation at the end of 1999. The main manufacturing equipment was purchased from the liquidators of Sunderland Glassworks by Acorn Manufacturing Limited, trading as The English Antique Glass Company (EAG), and placed in storage until appropriate premises could be found to start production again. The equipment was eventually re-located in the midlands in December 2001 and January 2002.

EAG obtained the services of two Hartley Wood trained glassmakers from Sunderland and began production of flat glass, bullions, Norman slabs and other products in March 2002. The company is the only producer of hand made English antique style glass in the U.K. and Ireland. Flat glass is produced from mouth blown cylinders (known as muffs) which, after the ends have been opened out, are split longitudinally, re-heated and ironed flat with a block of wood on the end of a steel rod. Authentic spun bullions (Crown glass) are made up to 75cms in diameter and a variety of Norman or Prior slabs are available to order. All these items can be produced in clear or a selection of streaky, flashed or pot colours, with options of seedy, reamy and Venetian effects.

This paper will go into some detail about how antique glass is produced using substantially the traditional methods for today's markets. Glass recipes, colours and the finished condition of the glass are all significant factors in determining the suitability of the glass for use by stained glass artists and conservators today. Also the ability of the glass to take stain and colour well, and the ease with which flashes etch are also important. A sample box and some finished sheets will be available for the audience to view and handle the finished product.

*Compositional analysis and experimental replication of Roman opaque white glass*

Harriet Foster\* and Caroline Jackson

Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield.

Qualitative and quantitative analysis of ancient glass coupled with replicate experimentation can provide an insight into social and economic spheres and technological capabilities of past societies. This

approach was adopted to examine five opaque white glass gaming counters from Roman Wroxeter. Previous analytical studies have shown that opaque white Roman glass was initially opacified using calcium antimonate but later using tin oxide. This study has two objectives: 1) to use quantitative analysis to determine which chronological opacifier was used in the counters; 2) to carry out replicate experimentation to ascertain the ease of manufacturing such a product. Analytical results indicate that the composition of the counters is typically Roman, the opacifier being calcium antimonate. Experimental work suggests that their production was relatively easy and that this specific industry was less specialised than previously thought.

*A Manchester glassmaker in the nineteenth century*  
John Hartley

In the early 1600's the English glassmaker was forbidden from using wood to fire his furnaces and this led to the development of the coal fired furnace and the classical English Glasshouse. By the end of the eighteenth century they could be seen in all major glassmaking areas, not least in South Lancashire. Their conical shape created the vigorous draught necessary to generate the fierce heat required for the coal fired furnaces. During the early part of the nineteenth century modifications to the furnace design led to the replacement of these massive all enclosing cone buildings by much narrower conical chimneys incorporated into more compact rectangular buildings. At about the same time a social revolution was coming to fruition in Manchester. Hand blown glassware was replaced by pressed ware and for the first time fine, cheap affordable glass could be found on the tables of the ordinary working man. It was the entrepreneurial drive and technical skill of companies such as Percival Vickers that made this possible. In 1844 they bought a canal-side coal yard in Jersey Street, Manchester and began a glassmaking operation that was to last for over 60 years. Engravings from the time show us how the factory might have looked and their extensive catalogues show the variety of glass items that they manufactured.

Details of the furnaces and annealing kilns only came to light a few months ago when the site was excavated prior to development. This paper will describe briefly what has been found and give some early interpretation of the technical developments which kept the firm viable into the twentieth century.

## Review: The International Festival of Glass and Glass Biennale

The inaugural International Festival of Glass took place on the August Bank Holiday. The Festival was initiated by the Ruskin Mill Educational Trust, which provides education for people with learning difficulties, enhancing concentration and coordination through the cold-working of glass. The Festival was a vast event covering a number of venues from Stourbridge to Kingswinford, with something for everyone, from lectures and workshops to street entertainment and, for the more practically-minded, demonstrations of a wide spectrum of glass production and manipulation.

The lecture programme covered all three days and included a varied and diverse range of topics, such as: 5000 years of cast glass; dealing in glass; Dudley glassmakers; heroes of the wheel; glass in China; *millefiori* beadmaking; working with glass in Kenya and many more. The international cast of lecturers included Jiří Hrcuba, Fritz Dreisbach, Keith Cummings, Jeanette Hayhurst and Charles Hajdamach. However one drawback was that the lectures and panel discussions were held in several locations and transfers were not easy, especially as there was little, if any, parking at most venues.

The masterclasses allowed participants to work in small groups with some of the leading lights in the world of glass art. The subjects ranged from blown glass with Fritz Dreisbach, Will Shakespeare and Livio Serena, through cold working with Jiří Hrcuba and Zoltán Bohus, to lampworking with Shane Fero and beadmaking with Barbara Mason. Also on the menu were classes from Andrew Logan on sculpture using found objects, Cappy Thompson on painted glass and Richard Golding on furnace building – surely something to suit everybody! Also, to coincide with the Festival, the Guild of Glass Engravers held workshops at Wolverhampton University over the weekend.

Broadfield House was the venue for two exhibitions during the Festival. Many leading engravers were represented in 'Heroes of the Wheel', including Alison Kinnaird, Peter Dreiser, Ronald Pennell and Katharine Coleman; in addition there were historical pieces by Zach, Böhm and Fritsche. Katharine Coleman was to be seen demonstrating copper wheel

engraving in the entrance to the Museum, which made the finished pieces on show all the more impressive. Also set up in the exhibition spaces were Sandra Snaddon demonstrating drill engraving and Doug Burgess with his amazing stipple engraving, a wonderful opportunity to see work being done currently whilst surrounded by the history of the subject. The other exhibition was a centenary celebration of the work of Emile Gallé, a stunning display of the cameo and enamelled glass produced by this leader of the Art Nouveau movement. As if this were not enough, there was also a programme of hot glass working in the Museum's studio and a family art day on the Sunday including the fascinating prospect of cooking bacon and eggs on hot glass!

The stunning centrepiece of the Festival had to be the British Glass Biennale. A juried competition with a £5000 prize, it attracted some 225 artists to enter, out of which 81 were chosen for the exhibition. The exhibition was held in the former Webb Corbett / Royal Doulton glasshouse at the Ruskin Glass Centre, a cavernous space that provided an ideal setting. The first image seen by visitors was a chair by Jochen Holy; looking as if it is still in a liquid state, it appeared like frozen mercury and was an amazing example of the possibilities of lampworked glass. A vast display of 108 blown pieces by Yumi Noyaki needed the area available in the glasshouse. Max Jacquard's 'Albion #2' also needed the space – a patchwork of slumped glass formed into the shape of a medieval knight hanging from the rafters with the light shining through, it was an impressive sight. Alison Kinnaird's amazing panel 'Streetwise' combined her artistry in glass with colour generated through optical fibres, giving a new dimension to her work. The delicacy of Karen Lawrence's bowl, fused and slumped in lead crystal to give the appearance of ice, quite took your breath away. Tanwen Llewelyn's 'Figures in a bowl' used shadows created by wire figures set in the edge of a glass plate to create an impression far beyond the space it occupied. The Georgian light chandelier by Tim Waldegrave and Samantha Sweet gave a wonderful modern twist to a well-known form. No less stunning, though smaller in size than most of the other exhibits, were the quirky beads made by Diana East.

In all the Biennale was a wonderful showcase for the talented designers and craftsmen working in the UK today. The Festival was a feast for the eyes and ears of anyone interested in glass and I am already looking forward to 2006.

Jill Wilson

## Exhibition Review

### Beyond Venice: Glass in Venetian Style, 1500-1750

**20 May–recently extended to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2005**  
**The Corning Museum of Glass, New York**

'Beyond Venice: Glass in Venetian Style, 1500-1750', this year's major exhibition at The Corning Museum of Glass, is a compact and visually stunning show illustrating the development and characteristics of Venetian-style glass production in five regions – Austria, Spain, France, the Low Countries and England. At the exhibition entrance a huge, body-height reproduction of the feasting wedding guests from Veronese's 'The Marriage at Cana' of 1563 (Louvre, Paris) provides a foretaste of the visual delights ahead and intimated the degree of contemporary appreciation for Venetian glass. This close up, and in such detail, it was revealing to see the extent to which both artist and wedding guests were fascinated and delighted by the transparency of the Venetian wine glasses – suggesting that their presence was an indicator of the exclusivity of the occasion!

The exhibition itself is beautifully designed and lit. The plain, discreet colour scheme provides an excellent foil for the glasses, and exceptional pieces are highlighted in dedicated island cases hung with rich fabric in period style. In its detail, however, the exhibition gives the impression of having been installed rather hastily, particularly in the section dedicated to the Low Countries. On occasion, the number by a glass does not correspond to the number on its label and the labels, running in a continuous strip along the case fronts, are sometimes a long way from the pieces they describe or give incorrect cross-references. About 140 glasses from The Corning Museum of Glass, the J. Paul Getty Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and European collections are displayed in six themed sections, each housed in a self-contained and distinct area. The sections are introduced by brief text panels summarizing the development and characteristics of Venetian-style glassmaking in the region under consideration. The walls are hung with reproductions of paintings that either evoke the country under review - for example, Canaletto's Venetian views for Venice or 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch still lives for the Low Countries - or relate specifically to the glasses shown. Examples of the latter included Corning's medallion with a portrait of Louis XIV attributed to Orléans,

probably Bernard Perrot's glasshouse, c. 1675-85, displayed alongside Rigaud's portrait of Louis XIV and Israel Silvestre's view of Versailles (both in the Louvre, Paris) and Rembrandt's 'The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis' (on loan to the National Museum, Sweden, from the Swedish Royal Academy of Fine Arts), near to the inscribed tazza that may be depicted in the painting (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Within each section, glasses illustrating a particular technique, such as 16<sup>th</sup> century French enamelling or Austrian diamond-point engraving, might be exhibited as a distinct group, but their place within the broader context of the section can be readily appreciated, in part because the clear-sided cases provide a sense of physical continuity within a given section.

The exhibition opens with a robust introductory room illustrating late 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century Venetian glass. The 28 examples include some spectacular pieces, such as a glorious *vetro a filigrana* ewer from the museum's own collection. The themes covered here include luxury glass for foreign patrons, such as the Behaim beaker, c. 1495 (The Corning Museum of Glass), speciality and gilded glass. The visitor passes through arched entrances to the five sections dedicated to *façon de Venise* glass. The Spanish, Austrian and French sections are followed by a corridor display of Low Countries glass, leading to the room dedicated to Venetian-style glass production in England and English patronage of Venetian glass, presided over by a reproduction of Nicholas Hilliard's commanding portrait of Elizabeth I (Hatfield House, Hertfordshire). The great strengths of the exhibition include glass jewellery that may have been made in the court glasshouse in Innsbruck c. 1578 or c. 1590-91 (some pieces formerly in Archduke Ferdinand's collection in Ambras Castle; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna); a group of three Verzelini glasses in the English section (two from Corning and one from the Victoria and Albert Museum), and a large assemblage of 16<sup>th</sup> century French enamelled glasses that provide an opportunity for comparison unseen since 1989, when a more archaeologically based group of figurative examples was brought together in Rouen for the exhibition 'à travers LE VERRE du moyen âge à la renaissance'. Amongst the exhibition's show stoppers are two *tours de force* of diamond-point engraving, the Principe Doria Goblet, made in 1586, probably in Barcelona, and engraved by Iacobus Blanc de Vilasar (private collection) and the intriguing plate with the monogram of Gaston of Orléans, made in France or the Low Countries c. 1630-40 (The Corning Museum of Glass).

The final case is dedicated to a display of books and manuscripts that had disseminated knowledge about Venetian glassmaking techniques. These are all from the rich collections of Corning's Juliette K. and Leonard S. Rakow Research Library and included a first edition of Antonio Neri's *L'arte vetraria*, published in Florence in 1612, and a copy of Merrett's *The Art of Glass*, the first English translation of Neri, signed by the author and presented by him to John Evelyn. A fascinating letter to John Evelyn from Samuel Hartlib, dated 30 August 1660 and written in response to Evelyn's enquiries about recent advances in glassmaking and scientific instruments, underscores the importance of the Rakow Library as a source of primary material for students of historic glass.

The exhibition is closely associated with the publication by The Corning Museum of Glass of the magisterial, indispensable and lavishly illustrated book *Beyond Venice: Glass in Venetian Style 1500-1750*. The book has been written by Jutta-Annette Page with contributions by Ignasi Deménech ('Spanish *Façon de Venise* Glass'), Alexandra Gaba-Van Dongen ('Longing for Luxury: Some Social Routes of Venetian-Style Glassware in the Netherlands during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century'), Reino Liefkes ('*Façon de Venise* Glass in the Netherlands'), Marie-Laure de Rochebrune ('Venetian and *Façon de Venise* Glass in France'), Hugh Willmott ('Venetian and *Façon de Venise* Glass in England') and David Whitehouse (Preface and Foreword). The book's dust jacket informs the reader that 'This book was created to accompany' the exhibition, but regrettably the two were not conceived in a way that enabled exhibition visitors to cross-reference between them with ease. Many of the glasses in the book are not in the exhibition, including the lion-shaped ewer on the cover, while numerous glasses in the exhibition do not appear in the book. This was rather misleading for the visitor who had consulted the book before visiting the exhibition. The problem was compounded by the fact that each chapter of the book concludes with a section titled 'Objects', comprising a number of catalogue-style entries, giving the misleading impression that all these pieces would be in the exhibition. Where a glass is in the exhibition and is also discussed and/or illustrated in the book, there is no reference to its number within the exhibition, which bears no relation to any reference number it might have in the book. In addition, no indication is given in the book as to which pieces are in the exhibition. It would have been helpful for the serious exhibition visitor, attending book in hand, if a concordance between pieces in both the exhibition and the book had been provided; such

an aid would also have had long-term value in providing useful exhibition history for the serious scholar. Sometimes the lack of consistency between the book and the exhibition seemed especially unnecessary. For example, why illustrate one enamelled serving dish from Spain in the book (p. 118) but include a different one (no. 55) in the exhibition, when they are similar and both come from the Decorative Arts Museum in Barcelona? On occasion, the lack of a dedicated catalogue, combined with minimal text in the exhibition, is particularly unfortunate, given the problems of attribution associated with *façon de Venise* glass. For example, in the Low Countries section two labels stated that pieces had been found in Rotterdam (nos. 101 and 102), perhaps suggesting to the layman that because an object is excavated in a particular country it can be assumed that it was made there; in several cases one is left wondering how specialists could be sure that pieces had been made in the Low Countries (nos. 104, 105 and 106) – in the book (p. 232, Fig. 5), the attribution of exhibition number 105 is treated more cautiously.

In conclusion, then, and despite the problems enumerated above, the exhibition 'Beyond Venice' is an aesthetic delight, resplendent with some exceptionally beautiful glasses and assemblages of important glass groups. It provides visitors with an unprecedented opportunity to distinguish and compare glass made in Venice with Venetian-style glass made in Austria, Spain, France, the Low Countries and England. Those who regret that the exhibition itself was not given an extended shelf life, if only in the form of an exhibition guide or hand list, can find consolation in the fact that it was conceived alongside an invaluable and sumptuous sibling – *Beyond Venice*, the book!

Suzanne Higgott, September 2004

### Walk-in Workshops at The Studio

Also at the Corning Museum of Glass, the programme of Studio courses for autumn 2004 / winter 2005 is now available, including ten-week courses as well as weekend, one-day and family workshops. A huge variety of subjects are on offer, such as painting on glass, mosaics, beadmaking, engraving and printing from glass plates, enamelling, stained glass, flameworking, glassblowing and many more. Visit the website: [www.cmog.org](http://www.cmog.org), e-mail: [thestudio@cmog.org](mailto:thestudio@cmog.org) or contact the museum at One Museum Way, Corning, NY 14830-2253, USA, for details.

## Glass at the Museum of London

### Completion of new store and access project

The Museum of London's collection of 20,000 ceramic, and 5000 glass, artefacts is of national and international significance. A number of items are on display in the galleries, but most of the collection has been packed away since 2001 when the old store was cleared to make room for a temporary exhibition space.

In 2002 the museum was awarded a grant from the Designation Challenge Fund to create a new store for its core ceramics and glass collections at Mortimer Wheeler House. The same building houses the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC), which contains the glass and ceramics, as well as other finds, from more than thirty years of archaeological excavations in London.

The new glass and ceramics store has been designed with the aim of improving access to the objects, both visually and practically, and it is open to researchers and groups, by appointment. Last winter, a project team unpacked the 1500 crates and reorganised the collection on the new cupboard shelves. At the same time, over 1300 digital images were taken for the catalogue database, now available as part of the museum's overall website.

The glass collection includes over a thousand examples of Roman glass, and nearly two thousand from the pre-1700 period. The collection of medieval glass includes products of the early English glasshouses of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and a range of imported glassware from Germany, France, Italy and the Mediterranean region. The post-medieval glass collection reflects technological developments and changes in the taste of consumers, and is one of the largest in Europe.

The period of Britain's supremacy in glassmaking is represented in the Museum of London's outstanding holdings of glass from the eighteenth century. This is formed principally from the English table glass collected privately by Sir Richard Garton in the early 1900s, which was donated to the museum after his death. Amongst the 437 glasses in the Garton collection is the 'Chesterfield' flute, one of very few survivals of English glass made before Ravenscroft's

invention of lead glass in 1676. This is currently on display in the Museum. Although the main body of excavated material is contained in LAARC, the core collections also include examples of later glasses excavated in London.

Glass made at Whitefriars, the last glasshouse in the City, forms another major group of national importance. When the Whitefriars glassworks finally closed in 1980, the Museum of London was able to acquire the company's archive of business papers, designs, photographs and glasshouse equipment, together with samples of glass made by the factory. Much of the distinctive table glass made at Whitefriars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century can be seen on display at the Museum, but other examples of the popular vases and sets of drinking glasses dating from the 1930s to the 1970s can be seen in the new store at Mortimer Wheeler House. The glass collection also includes an interesting group of wine bottles, medicine bottles, and glass produced to contain food and drink.

Since the project was completed in April 2004, groups have enjoyed tours of the store, and individual visitors have once again been able to use the collection for research into the production of glass in the capital. For information about access to the glass and ceramics collection at the Museum of London, email [ceramics@museumoflondon.org.uk](mailto:ceramics@museumoflondon.org.uk). Also see [www.museumoflondon.org.uk](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk).

Jenny Lister

## The Wallace Collection

### A glass trail



#### Introduction

Most of the glass in the Wallace Collection was made in Venice or in the Venetian style (*façon de Venise*) in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, a mid 14<sup>th</sup>-century mosque lamp from Cairo and several 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century glasses from central Europe extend the range of the collection. Almost without exception, the glass was acquired by Sir Richard Wallace (1818-1890) in the early 1870's. It epitomises the taste at this period for medieval and Renaissance decorative arts and Wallace's appreciation of fine and intricate, small-scale works of art.

Wallace was the illegitimate son of Richard Seymour-Conway, 4th Marquess of Hertford, and inherited his legendary collection in 1870. Although born in England, Wallace had spent the greater part of his life in Paris. It was here, in 1871, that he extended dramatically the breadth of the collection by acquiring the very large and wide-ranging collection of medieval and Renaissance works of art, arms and armour formed by Alfred Émilien, comte de Nieuwerkerke (1811-1892) between about 1865 and 1870. In 1871 Wallace also moved to London, where he continued to acquire works of art.

The Wallace Collection is a closed collection. Lady Wallace (1819-1897) bequeathed the works of art on the ground and first floors of Hertford House to the nation, and all the works of art within it were acquired before Sir Richard Wallace's death in 1890. Most of the works of art can be identified in the inventory of Hertford House taken at that time, when much of the glass was displayed in the Modern Gallery on the first floor. Most of the known earlier provenance history for the glass concerns pieces formerly in the Nieuwerkerke collection, because when Nieuwerkerke sold his collection to Wallace, he also passed on to him the dealers' receipted bills for his purchases. These are now in the Wallace Collection archives and a number of pieces can be identified from them.

#### Location of the glass

Most of the glass is in the Sixteenth-Century Gallery on the ground floor. On entering the Entrance Hall of the Wallace Collection, turn immediately to your right and walk across the Front State Room to enter the Sixteenth-Century Gallery. The glass is displayed in case C, at the far end of the gallery. The glass in case C is numbered according to its position in the case, but its Wallace Collection work of art number is given at the end of the label text.

A silver-gilt travelling toilet, breakfast and writing service made in Augsburg c. 1771-73 contains two toilet-water bottles and a covered goblet. It is displayed on the first floor, in the corridor between the Boudoir and Sir Richard Wallace's Study. To see it, mount the Grand Staircase in the Entrance Hall, and, on reaching the Landing, turn right into the Boudoir and right again into the short corridor leading to the Study.

A set of four wheel-engraved scent bottles, probably made in Bohemia c. 1780-90, are in the Decorative Arts, Arms and Armour vault in the Reserve Gallery

on the Lower Ground Floor (this gallery is not open at present).

### Highlights of the glass collection

These are all in the Sixteenth-Century Gallery, case C, numbered as follows:

1. Mosque lamp with enamelled and gilt decoration, made in Cairo c. 1350-55. The lamp bears the blazon of a cupbearer in the form used by the Great Emir Shaykhu (d. 1357), who built a mosque, fountain, cloister and mausoleum in Cairo between 1349 and 1355. Since the lamp is not inscribed with Shaykhu's name, it was probably not commissioned for this complex; perhaps it was made for someone in Shaykhu's service. The lamp is inscribed around the neck in *thuluth* script with the first part of the Verse of Light from the Koran (24:35), which translates as, 'Allah is the light of the Heavens and the Earth. The similitude of this light is as a niche wherein is a lamp'.
3. Drinking vessel (*Humpen*), probably made in Bohemia; dated 1609. The enamelled and gilt glass is decorated with scenes of outdoor merrymaking. The inscription translates:  
'Lift me up, drink me up, set me down; fill me again and bring me a good brother again. Drink me quite up and thus a full brother will come of me. I will be filled full so that one shall bring me a brother who will know me. I am called a good welcome and called very merry'.
4. *Calcedonio* glass goblet made in Venice c. 1500. The goblet imitates chalcedony on the outside and jade on the inside.
6. 'Pilgrim bottle'-shaped flask with enamelled and gilt decoration, made in Venice c. 1523-26. The coats of arms are for Christof Philipp, first Count Lichtenstein (d. 1547), as borne from 16 August 1523 until 1526, and for Wilhelm von Rappolstein. The flask was probably commissioned to commemorate von Lichtenstein's marriage, in 1516, to von Rappolstein's daughter, Margaretha.
7. Chalice-shaped goblet with enamelled and gilt decoration, including the Crucifixion with the inscription '*SINE ME NICHIL*'. Made in France, perhaps in a glasshouse established by Venetians, 1540's-50's.

Compiled by Suzanne Higgott, Curator of Glass, Limoges Painted Enamels and Earthenwares at the Wallace Collection.

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## Dalles de Verre

The technique of *dalles de verre*<sup>1</sup>, which originated in France in the late 1920s, is a modern method of making stained glass windows. In the traditional method, pieces of glass, generally 2-4 mm thick, are joined together using pieces of lead. *Dalles de verre* uses pieces of cast glass approximately 25 mm thick, called '*dalles*' by the French and 'slab glass' or 'faceted glass' by the British and Americans, which are set into a concrete or epoxy resin matrix of similar thickness.

Historian John Gilbert Lloyd contends that the development of the technique of *dalles de verre* likely stemmed from the ancient mosaic-like window designs of the early Byzantines, who set thick, coloured glass into their window openings.<sup>2</sup> It also bears some similarity to translucent cement, a technique that appeared in France around 1875, in which white glass paving made in standard moulds was inserted into reinforced concrete.<sup>3</sup> *Dalles de verre* windows, especially those set in concrete, possess a rugged, monumental quality. They are suitable for use in old or new buildings and can enhance the walls of a building when viewed from the outside. Although *dalles de verre* can be placed in regular window openings, a more dramatic effect is achieved when the architect incorporates it in his design from the start, using it like a prefabricated element of the wall.

*Dalles de verre* is not conducive to the same level of delicacy or detail that can be achieved with traditional stained glass techniques. Surface decoration, as provided by traditional glass paint, is generally not used in *dalles de verre* windows, although it is possible to do so. The negative areas that separate the pieces of glass are typically more prominent and varied in *dalles de verre* windows, whereas in traditional stained glass windows they usually consist of thin lines having a more uniform width (figs 1 and 2). While artists may choose to use several widths of lead lines in one window, the most common widths used range from only 5-12 mm wide. A minimum width of 25 mm should be allowed between *dalles* set in concrete to ensure the window is structurally sound, but if the *dalles* are set in resin, this width can be reduced to 6 mm. The maximum width between *dalles* is purely a design decision; negative areas of 175 mm were measured by the author in one concrete panel.

In the traditional method of manufacturing sheet glass for stained glass windows, molten glass is gathered on the end of a blowpipe and blown into a cylindrical shape before being split down its length and flattened into a sheet, whereas *dalles* are cast in open moulds. Although the glass batch used to make *dalles* is effectively the same as that used to make sheet glass, a different type of furnace is required in order to reach the appropriate temperature and maintain heat control. The molten glass is ladled from crucibles in the furnace and poured into open moulds. These moulds are then placed in an annealing oven, which controls the rate at which the glass is cooled. The mould leaves a dull, textured surface on the bottom of the *dalle* while the top of the *dalle*, which is exposed to the air, is smooth and shiny.



Figure 1 (left): *Dalles de verre* window from the Church of Our Lady & St. Petrock, Ashburton, Devon. Designed and made by Father Charles Norris, 1993.

Figure 2 (right): Traditional stained glass window from the Chapel of the Holy Blood, Bruges, 15<sup>th</sup> C. (Mus. No. C.442-1918). Reproduced with permission of V&A Images/Victoria & Albert Museum.

The standard size of *dalles* manufactured in both the United States and Europe is 200 mm x 300 mm x 25 mm, although customised shapes and sizes can be produced. Compared to the thinner antique glass that is used in traditional stained glass windows, *dalles* are approximately eight times heavier, weighing on average 4 kg each. *Dalles* are not currently manufactured in the U.K. but larger stained glass

retailers sell *dalles* produced by Saint Gobain (Verrerie de Saint-Just) in France. English stained glass artist Father Charles Norris always used Saint Gobain's *dalles*, while Whitefriars Studios manufactured *dalles* at their glassworks for the windows they produced.

Several factors played a role in the development of the technique of *dalles de verre* in France following World War I. Numerous construction projects were initiated in French cities in order to rebuild the many churches and cathedrals that had been destroyed during the war. Reinforced concrete, a relatively new building material, was widely used because buildings constructed from it were quick to build, fireproof and relatively inexpensive. Around the same time, an artistic movement was underway to modernize sacred arts in France through the creative use of simple materials such as cement and iron. Groups of artists, craftsmen and architects collaborated on projects in order "to create unity and harmony between the architecture and the decorative ensemble."<sup>4</sup> An early example of this cooperation is the church of Notre-Dame du Raincy, built in 1922-23. This reinforced concrete church, regarded as the first 'modern' church in France, was a joint venture between architect Auguste Perret, painter Maurice Denis and stained glass designer Marguerite Huré. The church's walls are filled with leaded stained glass panels set in armatures of reinforced concrete (*béton armé*).

The earliest known *dalles de verre* window, made by Jean Gaudin and A. Le Breton, was exhibited at the Salon des Artistes et Décorateurs in Paris in 1929. Jean Gaudin (1879-1954) and his son Pierre made stained glass windows, mosaics, mural paintings and other decorative items at their studio in Paris. It is likely that the mosaic technique led Jean Gaudin to develop the technique of *dalles de verre*, which he referred to as "transparent mosaics" or "luminous mosaics". Gaudin collaborated with glazier Jules Albertini, who made *pâte de verre* for mosaics,<sup>5</sup> to produce thick, translucent *dalles* that were coloured in the pot. Gaudin's method was to cut the *dalles* into small uniform pieces and use them with the same regular forms found in mosaics. The *dalles*, which were not faceted or painted, were then set in a reinforced concrete matrix.

Two other master glaziers were making *dalles de verre* windows before 1940: Auguste Labouret (1871-1964) and Charles Lorin (1874-1940). Labouret's first known window, produced with collaborator Pierre Chaudière, was exhibited at the Salon des Artistes et Décorateurs in Paris in 1932. Furthering the method

used by Gaudin, Labouret cut his *dalles* into pieces of various shapes and sizes and then faceted the inside edges and face of the glass, producing a sparkling effect. Where details such as facial features, drapery folds or inscriptions were needed, Labouret carved lines into the face of the glass and filled them with cement, a technique which he patented in 1933<sup>6</sup>. Another method that he used to add detail was to plate clear *dalles* with thin pieces of coloured glass that had been painted with traditional glass paint. All of Labouret's windows were set in a reinforced concrete matrix<sup>7</sup>.

In 1935, Charles Lorin's studio produced *dalles de verre* windows designed by Gabriel Loire for the chapel of what is now the Lycée et Collège Sainte-Jeanne d'Arc-Notre-Dame, La Flèche. The *dalles* were cut into a variety of shapes and sizes and were all faceted. In the lower panels, the traditional leaded technique was used in conjunction with the modern *dalles de verre* technique. Small painted and stained leaded panels depicting coats of arms were set into the reinforced concrete matrix<sup>8</sup>. This combined approach was probably chosen because the level of detail displayed in the coats of arms would have been extremely difficult to produce on the required scale using *dalles de verre*.

Following World War II, the numerous construction programmes that were initiated in Europe and the United States provided a favourable environment in which the technique of *dalles de verre* could flourish. A new generation of architects emerged who were eager to take advantage of recent advances in building technology and engineering to produce innovative designs that included imaginative features such as walls made of glass. Furthermore, *dalles de verre* was faster and less expensive to fabricate than traditional stained glass windows, even though the cost of the glass was much higher, because of the elimination of the stages of painting, firing and glazing.

French stained glass artist Gabriel Loire (1904-1996) has been attributed with the earliest use of *dalles de verre* on a large scale. In 1958, he and his son Jacques designed and fabricated the dramatic walls of faceted *dalles de verre* in the First Presbyterian Church in Stamford, Connecticut. This successful design pushed the boundaries of architectural stained glass and inspired many more installations of *dalles de verre* in buildings in both the United States and Europe in subsequent years.

English artist and Benedictine monk Father Charles Norris OSB MBE (1909-2004), was the UK's most

prolific maker of *dalles de verre* windows. He worked exclusively in this medium from 1959 to 2003, designing and fabricating windows for over 250 localities. Father Norris entered Buckfast Abbey in Devon in 1930 and set up his workshop at the Abbey in 1932. He taught himself the craft of stained glass by visiting other studios to get tips on specific points and by using Whall's seminal textbook *Stained Glass Work*<sup>9</sup> as his guide, especially when learning about glass painting. His interest in the technique of *dalles de verre* developed after reading a chapter in Armitage's book *Stained Glass*<sup>10</sup>, published in 1959, which gave an outline of the materials and techniques used by Whitefriars Studios. Father Norris gained further information by visiting Gabriel Loire's studio near Chartres and Whitefriars Studios in London, where designer Pierre Fourmaitreaux showed him the process of casting the *dalles* as well as the various stages involved in the production of *dalles de verre* windows<sup>11</sup>. Father Norris' first *dalles de verre* windows were for Our Lady of Fatima & St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Harlow, Essex in 1960. This Grade II listed church, designed by renowned post-war architect Gerard Goalen in 1954, was built between 1958 and 1960. Goalen allocated over 60% of this building's wall space to the glazing scheme. Assisted by two monks from the Abbey, Paulinus Angold and Jerome Gladman, Father Norris produced the 488 *dalles de verre* panels set in concrete that were required to complete the scheme, making this the first English approximation on a large-scale.

The future of Father Norris' workshop at the Abbey is under consideration. Among its contents are the materials, tools and equipment he used to make *dalles de verre* windows, including stocks of *dalles* left over from many of his early windows, as well as his documentation, cartoons and cutline drawings for the numerous commissions.

Sherrie Eatman  
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Victoria & Albert Museum  
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1. *Dalle* (pl. *dalles*): French for paving stone or slab. The finished work is referred to as *dalles de verre*.
2. Kebrle, J. 'Historical Background,' *SGAA Reference & Technical Manual: A Comprehensive Guide to Stained Glass*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Maddy, D.L., Krueger B.E. and Hoover, R.L., eds. (Lee's Summit: The Stained Glass Association of America, 1992) p195.
3. Loire, N. 'Faceted Glass Windows in France, From Their Origins to 1940,' *SGAA Reference & Technical Manual: A Comprehensive Guide to Stained Glass*,

2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Maddy, D.L., Krueger B.E. and Hoover, R.L., eds. (Lee's Summit: The Stained Glass Association of America, 1992) p205.

4. Loire (1992) p211.

5. *Pâte de verre* is a casting technique where molten glass is poured into a shaped mould. This term is also used to describe a technique where a mould is filled with ground glass and subsequently heated in a kiln until the grains begin to fuse but not so long that they form a homogeneous mass.

6. Loire (1992) p206.

7. Loire (1992) p206.

8. Loire (1992) p209.

9. Whall, C.W. *Stained Glass Work: A text book for students and workers in glass*. London: J. Hogg, 1905.

10. Armitage, E. Lidall. *Stained Glass*. London: Leonard Hill Books Ltd., 1959.

11. Father Charles Norris, interviewed by the author, 28 Nov. 2003.

## Information Sought

Anne Bjørke is an objects conservator at the Norwegian Institute of Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU) in Oslo, Norway. Recently she has worked mainly on glass, especially chandeliers and other objects from Nøstetangen, Norway's first glassworks (1741-1777). The aims of her current research are to distinguish original parts from later copies. This has proved difficult, as copies were made at different times, some quite early. At a later stage, analysis will be carried out by Dr. Isabelle Biron at the Louvre, Paris, and Dr. Heike Stege at the Doerner-Institute, Germany.

There are several differences between components made at different times, any of which can help in determining which are original. Decorative elements added to a part while hot, and cut with straight shears/cutters, have a straight line running across the surface of the element. On the other hand, diamond shears/cutters leave an uneven gathering of cooling glass at the centre of the cut. Anne would like to find out when diamond shears were invented and when they came into common use in the glassblowing processes. She would also be interested in contacting anyone who has looked in depth at glass produced at the Nøstetangen Glassworks. If you can help, please contact Anne, tel: + 47 23 35 50 42, e-mail: [anne.bjorke@niku.no](mailto:anne.bjorke@niku.no)

## Books

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