

Glass News

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF GLASS

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The recent AGM saw a number of changes. Rachel Russell stood down, after 8 years on the AHG board. During that time she was an active member of the board, and was part of the committee who planned and organised the very successful 16th AIHV congress in London in 2003, Rachel taking on the very dynamic and vital role of fundraising for the congress. Needless to say the congress was extremely well supported because of Rachel's hard work.

Juanita Navarro, co-editor and sometimes sole editor of Glass News, and board member for the last 7 years, also stood down at the AGM. Juanita has put a great deal of effort into the production of Glass News, particularly in seeking out contributions and then following them up. She brought many wonderful qualities to the role, including her sense of humour, patience and organisational skills. The board would like to thank her for all her hard work on GN. For the time being, Sarah will be editing GN solo; Juanita's shoes will be hard to fill.

Suzanne Higgott (née Gaynor) also stood down at the AGM, after serving on the board for 24 years. During her time on the board, Suzanne took on the very time consuming, and instrumental, role as Secretary of the Association from 1984–1990.

There were also some additions to the board and AHG would like to extend a warm welcome to Jim Smedley, who joined the board as Treasurer at the AGM, taking over the role from Andrew Shortland. Jim is based at the University of Sheffield and has a wealth of experience in the technology of both modern and ancient glasses, as well as the

practicalities of managing university resources.

There have also been some recent changes to the website, which we hope will make it easy to navigate. Please do visit the website at:

<<http://www.historyofglass.org.uk>> and let us know your thoughts – the website is there to serve you. Please send copy for the website to Caroline Jackson [c.m.jackson@sheffield.ac.uk] or Sandy Davison [sandbill@gotadsl.co.uk].

AHG Spring Study Day 2009

**Friday 20 March
The Wallace Collection, London**

**‘RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH INTO THE
MANUFACTURE OF GLASS - OF ALL PERIODS’**

The programme will comprise papers on recent excavations, and work on finds and residues. These will include coverage of work on finds from Roman sites in London, of excavations on glass-works sites in Birmingham, Bristol, Castleford and Manchester, and on finds from glass-works excavations in Dublin. There will be a contribution on the new programme of fieldwork on the glass-furnace sites of the Weald. Further contributions will be added, to ensure an up-to-the-minute coverage of current work.

If you would like to attend, please send your full contact details and a cheque for **£25.00** (non members), **£20** (AHG members), or **£10.00** (students - proof required) payable to *The Association for the History of Glass Ltd* to:

Sandra Davison (Hon. Sec) 68,
East Street,
Thame,
Oxon OX9 3JS.

Receipt sent by email or with an SAE. Participants who normally live outside the UK may pay upon arrival at the venue in UK sterling).

Email: [sandbill@gotadsl.co.uk]

AHG Autumn Study Day 2009

Announcement

**‘INTERPRETING FINDS FROM GLASSHOUSE
EXCAVATIONS’**

09:30 to 16:30 on Saturday 7 November 2009

The AHG Autumn study and AGM will be held at the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) based at Mortimer Wheeler House in Hackney. This study day will have a large practical component, with the opportunity to handle glassworking finds, ranging from Roman to 17th century in date, as well as introductory presentations on glassworking structures, materials, tools and practices for each period.

More details will follow in the next issue of Glass News.

Forum: Conservation and Restoration of Stained Glass Windows

**1-3 June 2009
New York**

The next Forum for the Conservation and Restoration of Stained-Glass Windows is being held under the auspices of the American Corpus Vitrearum and the International Committee of the Corpus Vitrearum for the Conservation of Stained Glass. The theme of the Forum will be "The Art of Collaboration: Stained Glass Conservation in the Twenty-First Century".

There will be two days of oral presentations and poster sessions at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The third day will be spent viewing stained glass in five Manhattan churches in the company of local experts. The conference will end with a reception at the National Arts Club, a landmark building which also contains significant installations of stained glass.

Papers may be offered in English, French or German and will be published in the original language. Simultaneous translation will be provided at the conference. A preliminary list of presentations and other information about the conference is available at

www.forum2009ny.org. This site will be updated as more information becomes available.

Texts of the oral presentations and summaries of the poster presentations will be published by Brepols Publishers in cooperation with the American Corpus Vitrearum. Preprints will be available at the Forum and afterwards will be sold by Brepols.

AIHV Triennial Meeting 18th International Congress

**21-25 September, 2009
Thessaloniki, Greece**

The 18th Congress of the Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre (AIHV) will take place in Thessaloniki, the largest city of Northern Greece. It will be organized by the Hellenic Committee of the AIHV and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture - Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki. Special attention will be given to Greek glass from prehistory through to the Byzantine period. All submissions approved by the Academic Committee will be included in the programme (either as oral contributions or as posters) and will eventually be published in the congress proceedings.

There will be a full program of lectures and two poster sessions (on the Tuesday and Thursday), plus opportunities to visit museums both in Thessaloniki and elsewhere in Northern Greece. The city visits will take place all day on Wednesday and there will be optional post-congress trips on Saturday and Sunday following the conference. During museum visits, material from reserve collections will be presented. The Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki is also planning to present a major exhibition, on the art and archaeology of glass in Northern Greece. The three one-day post-congress trips offered include important museums and sites that present particular interest to glass specialists. Participants may take part in more than one trip. More details can be found at the website: <<http://www.aihv.org/>>

Congress fees

Members of the AIHV are entitled to a reduced congress fee and to one copy of the proceedings. Information on how to become a member is available from <<http://www.aihv.org/>>

Participation fees are as follows:

AIHV member until June 1st 2009 €260, after June 1st 2009 €290

Non-member until June 1st 2009 €300, after June 1st 2009 €330

Non-members from low-wage countries until June 1st 2009 €130, after June 1st 2009 €150

Students until June 1st 2009 €130, after June 1st 2009 €150

Accompanying person until June 1st 2009 €130, after June 1st 2009 €150

Financial support

AIHV will consider the possibility of bursaries for members from low-wage countries, or students. If you wish to apply for financial support, please contact the Secretariat of AIHV before Feb 2009. The bursaries will be awarded, on the basis of need and merit, to *members* whose papers have been accepted, and who will attend and submit their papers for publication. [Please note grants are also available from AHG. For more information see opposite or the website www.historyofglass.org.uk]

Information

The main source of information about the congress will be our website <www.aghv.gr>, which is currently under construction.

All enquiries must be addressed to the official congress secretariat:

SYMVOLI Conference & Event Organizers,
[aihv18@symvoli.gr]

Enquiries concerning scientific issues must be addressed to:

Dr Despina Ignatiadou [dignatiadou@culture.gr], or

Dr Anastassios [Antonaras andonar@physics.auth.gr]

AHG Grants

Grants are also available from the Association for the History of Glass, for educational or research activities consistent with the Association's charitable aims.

These aims include, for example, attendance at a conference to present a lecture or poster, a study visit, fieldwork or publication of scholarly works. There are no restrictions on who may apply or on the topics of applications, which will be judged on merit. Multiple applications in different years will be considered with individual awards up to £500. See also the AGH website for details (www.historyofglass.org.uk).

Applications for a bursary application form should be

made to Sandy Davison, AHG Hon Secretary,
68 East Street, Thame, Oxfordshire OX9 3JS
Email: [sandbill@gotadsl.co.uk]

Society of Glass Technology

Annual Conference 2009

16-18 September 2009
University of Lancaster

Abstract submission is now open for the Society of Glass Technology's Annual Conference 2009. Friday the 18th September will be devoted to the History and Heritage of Glass. Glass Science sessions will be held on Wednesday 16th (pm) and all day Thursday 17th. Wednesday 16th will be dedicated to Glass Technology, with a works visit included. The New Research Forum will also be held on Wednesday 16th September.

To find out more about this conference please visit the website at <http://www.lancaster2009.sgthome.co.uk/>

Annual Meeting 2009:

Association Francaise pour
l'Archeologie du Verre (FAFV)

The 24th annual meeting of the Association Française pour l'Archéologie du Verre (FAFV) will be held on 20-21 November 2009 at Frejus, Cote d'Azur.

For more information, see <www.afaverre.fr> or <www.arkaeos.fr>.

Verre et Histoire:

Forthcoming events

Verre et Histoire has the aim of facilitating exchanges and research involving specialists or amateurs studying different aspects of glass, in order to develop current understanding of glass and its past. The association organises conferences, debates, visits and demonstrations on various topics concerning the

history of glass. The association is organising several events for 2009. Further details can be found on their website at: <<http://www.verre-histoire.org/>>

January / February 2009: Pierre Chareau's *House of glass*, presented by Anne-Laure Carré

26-28 March 2009: 2nd International colloquium, *Glassworking Innovations*, Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts, organised by Corine Maitte

27 May 2009: *Blois*, visit to the Centre d'archives of the Cie de Saint-Gobain by Didier Bondue, and also stained glass in the city.

Autumn 2009: 3rd study day, *The glassworking families*, organised by Michel Philippe

Roman Glass

Exhibition and Experimental Archaeology

November 21 '08 until May 31 '09
Provinciaal Archeologisch Museum (PAM)
Velzeke, Belgium

The winter exhibition called "Fragile" will take place in the Provincial Archaeological Museum in Velzeke <<http://www.pam-velzeke.be/>> from November 21 '08 until May 31 '09.

The exhibition itself offers an insight in the art and production of Roman glass in Western Europe. It shows the different perspectives of Roman glass, such as raw materials and techniques, and the distribution on local, regional and international scale. The display of antique Roman objects, replicas and reconstructions includes wonderful objects from the museum collections in Belgium (Brussels, Tongeren, Tienen, Morlanwelz, and others) and abroad (Vienna - the cage cup from Daruvar-, Bonn, Bavay, Nijmegen, Leiden, Maastricht, and others). The diverse uses of glass are richly illustrated, going from tableware, window panes, burial contexts, recipients for cosmetics to jewellery. The impact of Roman glass is noticeable even today, as can be seen in the paintings of the Dutch artist Henk Helmantel.

The museum is also organising experimental archaeology by building and using a wood fired glass furnaces (a pot furnace and a lehr) on the premises of the museum. These furnaces are built from local materials as loam and clay and the pot furnace partially with original Roman tegulae fragments. Over the furnaces is built a wooden shelter reminiscent and based on the excavations in Hambach Germany. The pot furnace is based on the excavated example at Cesson-Sevigne (France). The furnaces are built by François van den Dries and Robert van Zijll de Jong, using techniques from Roman times. Mark Taylor and David Hill, "The Roman Glassmakers" <<http://www.romanglassmakers.co.uk/>>, will be blowing glass live during the opening and closing weekends of the exhibition (21-23 November 2008 and 30-31 May 2009).

Kathy Sas and Francois van den Dries



Reproduction glassworking furnace at PAM.

AHG Grants: News and Reports

Two reports on recent work supported by AHG grants have been received.

Nathaniel L. Erb-Satullo
University of Oxford

ISOTOPIC ANALYSIS OF LATE BRONZE AGE GLASS
FROM THE NEAR EAST

From June 11 to 18, I travelled to the University of Leuven in Belgium in order to learn about the practical and methodological aspects of glass isotope measurements with Dr. Patrick Degryse. This research visit formed part of a larger collaboration

between Oxford University, Cranfield University, and the University of Leuven, in order to better understand nature of glass production in the Late Bronze Age Near East. Previous work has demonstrated that isotopic analysis of glass can reveal information about the origin of the raw materials (Brill et al., 1999; Degryse and Schneider, 2008). These techniques have been successfully applied to the analysis of Near Eastern glass from later Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic periods (Freestone et al., 2003; Henderson et al., 2005; Leslie et al., 2006), but few isotope results have come from Late Bronze Age glasses. Previous chemical analysis has established that most Late Bronze Age glasses in the Near East used plant ash as a source of alkali flux, with the possible addition of lime as a separate component (Shortland and Eremin, 2006). Other work demonstrated that Egyptian glasses and Mesopotamian glasses are generally distinguishable based on their trace element compositions, with considerable overlap between sites in the same region (Shortland et al., 2007).

The isotope analysis undertaken in Belgium adds another layer to this discussion. Egyptian and Mesopotamian glasses have distinct strontium isotopic signatures, but share similar neodymium ratios. Furthermore, the neodymium isotope composition of the single Tell Brak sample differs dramatically from the signature of the Nuzi glass samples. Since neodymium isotopes have only recently been applied to archaeological glasses (Degryse and Schneider, 2008), these results demonstrate the usefulness of developing an additional isotopic system for further discriminating power. Identifying different glass isotope signatures within Mesopotamia also has important ramifications for the economic organization of the Mitanni Kingdom, which controlled much of Syria and Northern Mesopotamia during this period. An ongoing chemical and mineralogical study of Nuzi fineware ceramics, some of which mimic glass vessel hapes, will also contribute to our understanding of this less-studied Bronze Age regional power.

Funds from the AHG permitted me to visit the clean labs and MC-ICP-MS facilities used for the heavy isotope measurements, giving me a much greater understanding of the practical side of glass analysis. Outside of the lab, I had the opportunity to discuss the measurement process with Dr. Degryse, and he gave me access to unpublished resources not available at Oxford. Lastly, I had the opportunity to sit in on a PhD defense on ICP-MS measurements of archaeological materials. As a whole, the trip to

Belgium provided a valuable learning experience as well as helping to establish an important connection with one of the experts in the field of glass analysis. I am deeply appreciative of the financial assistance provided by the Association for the History of Glass for this trip.

References

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Henderson, J. et al. (2005). The use of oxygen strontium and lead isotopes to provenance ancient glasses in the Middle East. *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 32: 665-673.

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Shortland, A.J. et al. (2007). Trace element discriminants between Egyptian and Mesopotamian Late Bronze Age glasses. *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 34: 781-789.

The Roman Glassmakers

UPDATE ON ROMAN FURNACE PROJECT FILMS

Following the awards made to us by the AHG, Andante Travels and SE Validation Ltd., we have been able to devote two months to editing the large amount of DV footage and photographs taken during the wood-fired furnace projects of 2005 and 2006 (also see *Glass News* issues 18 and 20). We have found that non-linear editing is time-consuming, and we have undergone a steep learning curve, realising that we had underestimated the amount of time that we need to complete the films! We will put aside several more weeks for editing, which we hope to do in late 2008 and early 2009.

We have edited the footage of the 2005 project into seven short films, which chronicle building and running the furnaces, and glassblowing. These films still need a final edit, the addition of narration, and compilation into a DVD. The footage of the 2006 project has already undergone rough editing and division into a further eight short films. We hope that the final films will stand in their own right as a record of the projects, as well as illustrating the article by us (funded by English Heritage) and the related article by Sarah Paynter (of English Heritage), both in volume 50 (2008) of the *Journal of Glass Studies*.

Other work:

During 2008 we have been involved (in a small way) with core formed glass working and with late Roman gold glass vessels. In both cases, we have been concerned with production techniques, following the study of original vessels, and in trying to reproduce these vessels. In particular, this has led to a great deal of thought and experiment in the design of a suitable core forming furnace. In November, to mark the opening of an exhibition of Roman glass at the Provincial Archeologisch Museum (PAM), in Velzeke, Belgium, we spent several days blowing glass at a wood-fired furnace built at that museum to our design. We are booked to return at the end of May 2009, and hope that one or two other glassblowers will be persuaded to join us (see previous page). We hope to put information and photographs on our website before May.

Mark Taylor and David Hill

Byzantine Glass Mosaic Tesserae

Leverhulme International Network

Thanks to Bente Bjornholt for the following news from the Leverhulme International Network on the Composition of Byzantine Glass Mosaic Tesserae (directed by Prof Liz James and housed at the Centre for Byzantine Cultural History at the University of Sussex).

The Network had its second workshop in Venice and Ravenna 8-13 June 2008. The Network members were joined by several international and local mosaic experts to explore issues around the production

methods and techniques of mosaic glass tesserae:

In addition to meetings about the ongoing work on the outputs of the Network and future plans, workshop members presented papers on the workshop topic and latest discoveries and also visited important local sites. In Venice, Luca Chiesura from the Orsoni factory of mosaic glass gave us a very simulating tour of the factory. The Director of Restoration in San Marco, architect Ettore Vio, showed us very significant parts of the church. In Ravenna we were treated to two guided close-up sessions by the chief restorers: San Apollinare Nuovo by Cetty Muscolino and the Neonian Baptistery by Claudia Tedeschi.

The Network also held a Study Day at the British Museum in London on 5 June '08 on the topic of Byzantine mosaics. Papers were presented by Tony Eastmond (Courtauld); Cecily Hennessey (Christie's); Liz James (Sussex); Claire Nesbitt (Durham); Konstantinos Politis (HSNES); Will Wootton (KCL). The Study Day was very well attended with about 50 people and discussion extremely fruitful.

Network members presented at the 10th Conference of the International Committee for the Conservation of Mosaics (ICCM) in Palermo in Oct '08 and the Network will also present at the 18th Congress of the AIHV in Thessaloniki in Sep '09. The Network has its next meeting in Athens in June with a Study Day planned in London in the Spring. Marco Verità is speaking on the making of glass mosaics at the Study Day at the BM "Byzantine Art in the Making", on 27 Feb '09, which is part of the programme of events associated with the Byzantium 330-1453 exhibition at the Royal Academy.

Work on the outcomes of the Network is on-going: the creation of databases (on sites of mosaics; secondary technical literature; primary sources). A glossary of mosaic terms will be published online in Dec 08.

For more information about any of these activities see the Network's website:

<www.sussex.ac.uk/arhistory/ByzantineGlass>

or contact Bente Bjornholt, Network Facilitator,
[B.K.Bjornholt@sussex.ac.uk]

or Liz James, Network Director,
[e.james@sussex.ac.uk]

Review: BSMGP Conference

ASPECTS OF 20TH CENTURY STAINED GLASS

31 July-1 August 2008
Glaziers' Hall, London

This summer in London, the British Society of Master Glass Painters and the Worshipful Company of Glaziers of London organized a joint international conference on 20th-century stained glass, featuring speakers from the UK, Europe and the USA.



Figure 1: By Anthony Holloway, courtesy of the estate of Anthony Holloway.

Day 1 began with Julie Sloan discussing the Prairie School, a US architectural movement related to Arts & Crafts and Modernism. Its designs were characterized by horizontal-banded stained glass windows and, frequently, geometrical motifs or those based on organic forms. Dr Libby Horner followed with an account of Frank Brangwyn's designs, which highlighted his innate understanding of colour. His first, based on Japanese plant designs, were commissioned for a Paris gallery owner and made by Louis Comfort Tiffany. Further designs for Tiffany included stylized Art Nouveau subjects – typically female figures amongst trees and flowers. Church windows included Bucklebury (Berks), Northampton,

Manniton (Devon), Elveden (Suffolk), and St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. Michael Barker then described developments in French stained glass: from the 1900 Paris Exposition leading to Art Nouveau, through Bing's commissions from Nabis artists; the rebuilding programme after the Great War; Art Deco in the 1920s; to the collaboration of glassmakers such as Charles Marc and Paul Bony based at historic centres with renowned painters including Matisse at Vence, Chagall at Metz then Reims and surrealist Joan Miró at Senlis, as well as a host of other names. After lunch, Dr Iris Nestler spoke on 'The Influence of Modern Art on Glass in Germany', spanning the period between Bruno Taut's glasshouse at the 1914 Werkbund exposition in Cologne and Johan Thorn-Prikker, and Heinz Mack's architectonic utopia, connecting developments in glasspainting with parallel trends in modern art. Andrea McKay, speaking for Derix Studios, then described the practical role of their studio in achieving artists' visions and the techniques and approaches required to realize them. The evening Glaziers' Lecture, by artist Alexander Beleschenko, discussed the ideas that influenced his work, offering in-depth insights into the thought-processes and practices employed when working with glass in architecture.

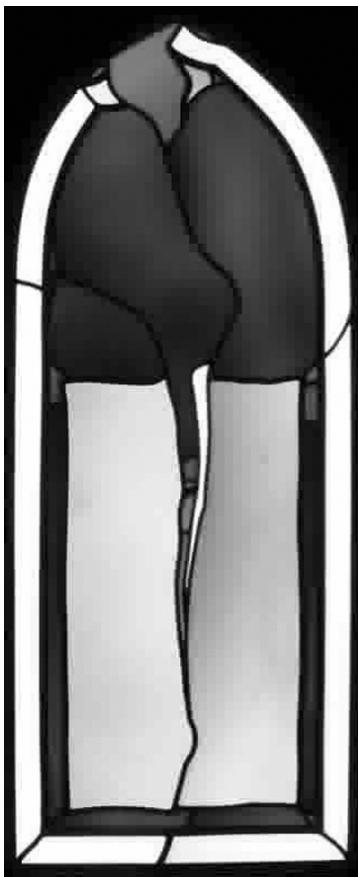


Figure 2: By Johannes Schreier, courtesy of the Ely Stained Glass Museum.

Day 2 began with artist Patrick Reyntiens comparing the activity of sensitively interpreting another's designs with that of realizing one's own, reminding us that the latter is often a result of compromises between one's own ideas and those of clients. He likened this activity to the Trinity: the relationship between the truth of the idea (Father), the other's methods (Son), and the process of opening to a personal spontaneous and creative artistic activity in glass (Holy Spirit). He then discussed the evolution of, and influences on, his style, starting from his early travels around France. Architect Dr Donald Buttress followed, discussing the art of placing new glass in old windows, and stressing the need to respect the setting of a window to achieve textural and tonal balance. He elaborated on the ability of Pugin, Comper and Kempe to produce designs that blended into the architectural environment, and to 'recycle' fragments. A number of examples were then shown to illustrate successful and unsuccessful windows in old settings. The speaker concluded with a number of pointers to practicing artists.

Julie Sloan then returned to discuss an ambitious project she is overseeing to restore a major scheme of stained glass made by James Powell & Sons for Saint Thomas's, New York – the largest restoration project of its type ever undertaken in the United States. She first described the condition of the windows, then particular problems – notably asbestos-containing sealant putty – necessitating cutting through the glass fillets to separate the body of the panels from the asbestos-containing borders.

After lunch, Peter Cormack described how the Arts and Crafts Movement had transformed the teaching of stained glass, introducing workshop practice and apprenticeship into the education system alongside designing skills. He elaborated on the syllabus taught by Christopher Whall and his followers comprising: (1) cutting and glazing, (2) drawing from nature and glasspainting, and (3) ornament. Concluding, Martin Harrison in 'The Persistence of Gothic' argued that, although interest in English 20th-century stained glass tends to focus on the Arts and Crafts Movement or the avant-garde, until the 1960s most of the stained glass supplied to churches followed more conservative idioms rooted in the Late Victorian Gothic.

Chris Wyard

Review:
SGT Annual Conference 2008

10-12 September 2008
New Hall College, University of Cambridge



An audience of around 25 people attended this successful event; which was one of two parallel sessions on the same day, so some came and went as the day progressed. Malcolm Ingram set the scene with his inaugural lecture, presenting his vision of the history of glassmaking and glass artefacts, with comments on the formative impact glass has had on human society through the ages. History seen through the eyes of a Professor of Chemistry has somehow got a distinctive flavour! The science continued with Sarah Fearn's paper on the way in which moisture in the environment attacks glass surfaces. She spoke with authority about careful laboratory investigation of replica *façon de Venise* glass samples using leading edge SIMS (Secondary Ion beam Mass Spectrometry) to analyse the glass from the surface downwards, layer by layer. The penetration of water into the glass, and the leaching of alkali ions, could be measured with such sensitivity that they were able to study what happens to glass at room temperature on a timescale of a few weeks, with clear implications for conservation of ancient glass artefacts. By contrast, my paper on how glassmaking defects can provide information about historic glazings was very homespun - my tools were a ruler and a digital camera! Nevertheless, some insights into the making of crown glass are starting to emerge.

Conservation is close to the heart of all who are interested in ancient (and more modern!) glass. Ken Watt spoke of the collaboration between the Museum of London and West Dean College, where trainee

conservators learn that there is more to conservation than the assembly of three-dimensional jigsaw puzzles (see Figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1: A bowl before.....



Figure 2: ...and after conservation (Ken Watt)

Sandy Davison's thoughts on *Historic Mirrors in Architecture* touched on the history of how these impressive artefacts were made. Naturally her reflections were from a conservation viewpoint, exploring modes of deterioration in various contexts. Dunes Abbey at Koksijde, Belgium, provided the focus of Hilde Wouter's presentation. Shards of medieval glazing had been found during archaeological work at the Abbey, but in an extreme state of deterioration. Her task was to discover the secrets still locked up in these "fabulous shards" (Figure 3). The paper by António Pires de Matos concerned the history of the Royal glassmaking facility at Marinha Grande, near Lisbon. He gave us a privileged view of glassmaking recipe books and handwritten records of manufacture, again providing history seasoned with a dash of chemistry.



Figure 3: Fragments of medieval glazing (Hilde Wouter)

Art history was very much on the menu as Claire Daunton set about putting medieval stained glass windows on the map with her survey of Norfolk and survivals of fifteenth century Norwich School glass. Victorian stained glass was Ruth Cooke's subject and she provided a whistle stop tour of three prominent nineteenth century firms, showing how the iconography and details of the artwork can help the church visitor enhance his or her appreciation of the glazing on show. But for a really in depth appreciation of glass artefacts, choose a craftsman. Ian Hankey brought to his paper his wealth of experience designing and making works of art out of molten glass. He spoke passionately about the impact of the industrial revolution on glassmaking, and about the way in which machine manufacture and the associated philosophies had led to a devaluing of tacit skills by society. Tacit skills are those intangible qualities, which should be recognised as the essential ingredients of the true glass artist of the past - and equally of the true glass artist in the present day. A visit to Kings College Chapel on the following morning provided the icing on the cake, as Carola Hicks, author of the book *The King's Glass* (see GN 23), gave us an insightful tour of the building and its glazing - a totally stunning experience.

Details of the day's programme, together with abstracts of the papers, may be found at: < www.cambridge2008.sgthome.co.uk/pages/HandHPr og> All who attended took value from the event, commenting on the heady mix of the sciences and the humanities, which fostered an enhanced appreciation of our vitreous heritage.

David Martlew

Review:

AHG Autumn 2008 Study Day

GLASS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM:
CURRENT RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND
CONSERVATION

25 October 2008

A wide range of approaches to glass analysis were discussed at the AHG study day; these different approaches were applied to assemblages of varying sizes, from individual pieces to large collections, and from a range of different civilisations and time periods. There were a total of nine talks given over the day and a wonderful poster display, covering a variety of glass related subjects.

The morning began with Caroline Jackson, AHG president, giving an introduction to the day, followed by the first talk 'Roman cameo glass in the British Museum' by Paul Roberts. A brief introduction was given, for those not as familiar with cameo glass, and then a discussion of new ideas, including one that looked at the short duration of production and its implications. This was a very interesting and enjoyable talk to listen to and just a small taste of what was to come.

The second speaker was Jennifer Price, who had intended to talk about 'Some Romano-British vessel glass in the British Museum', but because of technical difficulties this was replaced by 'Early decorated mould-blown vessel glass found in London'. Jennifer ran through the different types of finds discovered; drinking vessels, ribbed small bowls and a single head cup. The glass vessels dated to the Flavian period or later and appear to come only from settlement deposits, apart from the head cup, which is thought to be from a burial deposit.

Daniel Howells gave a detailed discussion of gold glass titled 'Gold glass in late antiquity: the British Museum collection'. It covered the four different types of gold glass; the brushed technique, cut and incised gold leaf vessels, diminutive medallions and gold leaf plaques; the distribution and functions of the glass were also examined. It was very nice to see that Daniel had experimented with making some of the gold glass himself. 'The Lycurgus cup revisited' was a fascinating talk given by Nigel Meeks on the

research completed by Ian Freestone, Margaret Sax, Catherine Higgitt and Nigel. He discussed the dichroic nature of the glass used to make the cup and the types of tools used to create the cage around it. This was the last talk before Lunch, when we took the opportunity to look at the posters. Like the talks, a very wide variety of subjects was covered, for example 'Three glass fish from ancient Egypt?' (Stefan Roehrs and Marcel Maree) and 'Early medieval lead-rich glass in the British Isles' (Justine Bayley).

After Lunch, work by Ian Freestone, St John Simpson and Tami Ishida 'Beyond Rome: new light on composition and cutting techniques of Sasanian glass' was presented. The composition of Sasanian glass from different areas was covered and also the experimental work completed by Tami Ishida and how this to understand the techniques used and how long it took to create a finished product. Following very nicely on from the previous talk 'Analysing Sasanian and Islamic beads from a British Museum-supported research project at Kush in the Persian Gulf' was presented by Stefan Roehrs and St John Simpson and discussed the results from the analysis of the glass beads, using a SEM-EDX. Three main groups were apparent; high alumina glass, plant-ash soda-lime glass and potassium rich glass. Both of these talks were very interesting and showed the diversity of the objects covered in this study day.

Denise Ling gave a very useful and informative talk on 'Conservation of vessel glass in the British Museum'. This highlighted the work of British Museum conservators and described the processes that they work with; simple cleaning to complicated reconstruction methods were discussed as examples of the work completed.

The penultimate talk was by Dora Thornton on 'A documentary Renaissance tazza in the British Museum'. Dora discussed her work on a fascinating 16th century Venetian glass footed dish. This analysis showed how pieces of glasswork can be used to examine the society of the time. Aileen Dawson gave the final talk on 'Post-medieval French glass in the British Museum', in which some beautiful pieces were shown and described.

The AHG study day was wonderfully put together by St John Simpson of the British Museum. As an undergraduate student studying archaeological sciences this provided a very useful and wide introduction to the study of glass. My personal highlights were the talks given on the Lycurgus cup,

Roman cameo glass, and gold glass in antiquity.

Carlotta Gardner

ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF GLASS

– 30 years on

2008 marks the 30th Anniversary of the incorporation of the Association for the History of Glass. Surviving records from the early years are incomplete but served to compile this account of the Association's history and development.

On October 11, 1973, a meeting was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum to discuss the formation of a British National Committee of L'Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre (AIHV) to plan, organise and run the 8th AIHV congress to be held in London and Liverpool in 1979. British delegates to previous AIHV congresses were invited to the meeting at which a committee of glass scholars from varying disciplines having a common interest in the history of glass was formed under the Presidency of Hugh Tait (British Museum). On 19th January 1978 the British National Committee of AIHV was incorporated as an educational charity called 'The Association for the History of Glass Ltd', registering with Companies House as a Company Limited by Guarantee and with the Charities Commission. The initial signatories were Hugh Tait, Mike Tite (British Museum), Robert Charleston, John Mallett and Barbara Morris (Victoria and Albert Museum), Donald Harden (retired, former Director of the London Museum), Ian Burgoyne (Pilkington Glass Museum), Gerald Taylor (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), George Boon (National Museum of Wales), Revel Oddy (The Royal Scottish Museum), Dorothy Charlesworth (Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings), Keith Davey (Dept of the Environment), Roy Newton (retired, Hon Visiting Professor, University of York), Harold Rawson (University of Sheffield) Cyril Weedon (Glass Manufacturers' Federation), and Ada Polak (Deputy Curator in Britain of Arts and Crafts Museums of Norway).

Membership was initially restricted by the maximum number (16) cited in the formal Memorandum and Articles of Association, and the Membership and Board were identical. However in the 1990s the Board decided to reinvigorate the Association, the first

visible signs being the founding of *Glass News* in 1996. Its success, and that of the more regular series of study days, encouraged the Board to consider ways of expanding the membership. In 2000 agreement was reached with Companies House and the Charity Commissioners to amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association, including an increase in the maximum number of members to 300. In 2001 individual subscribers to *Glass News* were invited to become members of the Association, to nominate Board members and officers and to vote at AGMs subject to the legal undertaking to pay a sum of up to £5 to meet any debts should the Association, as a Company Limited by Guarantee, be wound up.

To date the Association has had four Presidents: Hugh Tait (1978-1996), Jennifer Price (1996-2003), Ian Freestone (2003-7) and Caroline Jackson (2007-), under whose guidance the Association has steadily increased its charitable activities. Other serving officers include Secretaries: Dorothy Charlesworth (1979-1981), Donald Harden (1981-3), Charles Truman (1983-5), Suzanne Gaynor [Higgott] (1985-1990), Paddy Baker (1990-1996), Justine Bayley (1996-2006) and Sandra Davison (2006-), as well as Treasurers: Keith Davey (1979-1996), David Crossley (1996-2005), Andrew Shortland (2005-8) and Jim Smedley (2008-) and Membership Secretaries: John Clark (1996-2008) and Jim Smedley (2008-).

The relationship between the AIHV and AHG has remained close. Hugh Tait (1977-9) and Jennifer Price (1998-2003) were also Presidents of AIHV; AHG Board member Reino Liefkes was the Treasurer of AIHV (1991-5) and AHG Board member Hilary Cool (1999-2003) was Secretary General of AIHV (2000-4). In 2003 the Association organized and ran its second AIHV Congress, the 16th, held in London.

The principal aim of the Association remains 'The advancement of public education in the archaeological, historical, aesthetic and technological study of glass, for all periods of history and all parts of the world, together with the problems of conservation and presentation'. Since 1979 the Association has continued to hold meetings relating to aspects of glass history, initially at irregular intervals, but from 2003 biannual study days have been held each Spring and Autumn generally, but not exclusively, in London:

- 2000** 'Lead crystal glass in the C17th and C18th'.
- 2001** 'Two Thousand Years of Window Glass and Glazing'.
- 2002** 'Glass Supply & Use in London from c.1400 –

1900'.

2003 'Glass in the Islamic world: New Discoveries, New Ideas', and AIHV 16th Congress, and 'Shape & Substance: Replicating Early Glass Making Technologies'.

2004 'The Archaeology of the Post-Medieval Urban Glass Industry', and 'Creativity in Glass History and Heritage', and 'New Light on Old Glass: Collections, Analysis and Archaeology'.

2005 'Glass and Lighting in Antiquity and the Medieval World', and 'Glass in Cambridge Museums'.

2006 'Glass of the Roman Empire and Elsewhere', and 'Experimental and Ethnographic Studies relating to Ancient Glass'.

2007 'The Glass Industry: Constraints and Controls from the Medieval World to the C20th', and 'Glass in Architecture'.

2008 'Buying and Selling Glass in Britain 1600 – 1950', and 'Glass at The British Museum: Current Research, Science and Conservation'.

One of the early meetings held in 1992 'Medieval Glass from British Sites' led to AHG publishing a small booklet: Tyson, R and Clark, J *Bibliography of Medieval Glass Vessels from British Sites AD 1200-1500* (1994). More recent study days also have given rise to publications: J. Price (ed.). *Glass in Britain and Ireland, AD 350-1100*. British Museum Occasional Paper No. 12, and the forthcoming volume, *Glass of the Roman Empire* (eds. I. Freestone, J. Bayley and C. Jackson) [in honour of Jennifer Price]. The *Annales du 16^e Congrès de l'Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre 2003* (ed. H. Cool) was published in 2005.

In early 1996 the AHG published its first newsletter, *Glass News*, to publicise research, events and meetings related to glass. To assess interest in a newsletter, over a thousand free copies were mailed to a wide ranging of individuals and institutions, inviting recipients to subscribe for a further three issues over the next two years. The first few issues of *Glass News*, edited by John Shepherd, were published irregularly, but subsequent issues edited by Juanita Navarro and Sarah Paynter, have appeared twice yearly, around January and July. The newsletter aims to continue providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and information in this diverse field. Initially a subscription to *Glass News* had been for four issues at a time, whenever they appeared. In 2007 this confusing practice was replaced by a simple annual subscription, and now the majority of *Glass News* subscribers are full members of AHG (currently 137 out of 163). Most members and subscribers are UK-

based but Europe and the USA are well represented. About half have been subscribing regularly ever since *Glass News* first appeared in 1996.

In 2001 Hilary Cool (AIHV General Secretary and AHG Board member) created an AHG website: <www.historyofglass.org.uk>. It was used to publicise the 2003 AIHV Congress and has since been developed as an introduction to the Association for members and non-members alike and to complement the information carried in *Glass News*: details of AHG activities, board, membership, funding and links to glass-related sites. Board member David Martlew subsequently undertook a great deal of work on the website; Mike Cooper of Sheffield University is the current webmaster.

To increase the charitable activities of the committee and to further education in the study of glass, since 2006 the AHG has offered bursaries and grants towards the funding of glass education, research and publication. Three awards were made in 2006, two in 2007 and four in 2008. These grants have been put towards a wide range of uses, including travel (for example see *GN* 23 and this issue pages 4-5), experimental archaeology (see *GN*'s 18, 20 and this issue), purchasing archives (see *GN* 23) and publications.

The files of historic papers held by past and present AHG officers are currently being amalgamated to form an archive for the Association. This will comprise a full set of *Glass News*, minutes of meetings of the Board of Management and annual general meetings, details of study days and AIHV congresses, bursaries and grants awarded, copies of the Annual Returns to Companies House and the Charities Commissioners and miscellaneous correspondence. It has yet to be decided where the archive will be housed.

New Acquisition: Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

The glass collection at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery contains more than 600 items. At present it is in storage, though all of it is accessible, and can be viewed by appointment on any weekday. This autumn, a new gallery is due to open, entitled *The Arts of Living*. This will showcase the decorative arts

collections from the 15th century to the present day, allowing some of the best pieces to go on display. The collection consists mainly of English wares. Most of these are 18th century drinking glasses, and include fine representative examples, the earliest dating from the 1720s. In addition there are a few 19th century wares, a few continental Art Nouveau and Art Deco vases, and a few examples of high quality late 20th century British studio glass, including works by Steve Newell, David Reekie, Alison Kinnaird and Colin Reid. Specialities of particular significance to the county include two rare 18th century decanters probably decorated in Norwich, a good collection of the so-called 'Lynn glass', and some fine pieces decorated by William Absolon of Yarmouth.

Important recent acquisitions include a green glass rummer decorated in gilt and black enamel by Absolon (see Figure 1). It bears the coat of arms of Baron Nelson of the Nile. Nelson landed in Yarmouth in 1800 after the Battle of the Nile and, according to a contemporary source: *A Perlustration of Yarmouth* (CJ Palmer, Vol. 1 p. 227) 'Mr Absolon presented the hero with two glasses of local manufacture'.

This glass is considered to be one of that pair. The form of the crest confirms this likelihood. Nelson was created a Baron in 1798, but did not become a Viscount until 1801. The glasses were made between the conferring of his first honour and the second. It is relatively unusual for black to be used on one of Absolon's gold enamelled glasses, but this rummer bears close stylistic resemblance to a signed glass in the Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Services collections at Yarmouth, confirming the attribution beyond doubt.

The style is also similar to our most recent glass acquisitions, which are of equally great historical interest. We have acquired a group of 11 dark green glasses in three different shapes and sizes. There are seven small and three larger wine glasses and one square-footed rummer. One has a complete signature in gilt under the foot comprising the words 'Absolon Yarm', in his characteristic script. There are traces of gilded signatures under 3 other glasses. All are decorated in gilt and black enamel with a coronet motif and the inscription 'Joy and Health to Cornwallis Where Ever he Goes'.

Charles Cornwallis (1738-1805) was from Brome Hall, at Eye on the Norfolk/Suffolk border. He was famous both as a military commander and a colonial governor. In 1789 he was appointed Governor-General of India. In 1792 he achieved his most

notable victory against Tipu Sultan, the powerful sultan of Mysore, when he captured his capital Seringapatam. This paved the way towards British dominance in Southern India. He was made a marquess as reward for this victory. The coronet and the inscription on these glasses make it most likely that they were commissioned by or for the Cornwallis family to celebrate his marquissate, and/or his return to England following the Indian victory. This gives them a most likely date of 1792-3.



Figure 1: the green glass rummer, courtesy of Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

The odd numbers indicate there were more in the set originally. However, it is very rare to find such a large number surviving. A matching set of Absolon's glasses consisting of more than a pair is not known to exist anywhere else, making this an important find. They complement our existing holdings, especially as they are obviously individually commissioned pieces, as opposed to stock commemorative items. The glasses have come down through descent via branches of the Cornwallis family. They have remained in the Eye area of Suffolk, and never been sold until now. The fact that he was commissioned by, or for, such a

prominent family, indicates the esteem in which Absolon was held by his contemporaries. This adds to our knowledge of Absolon, concerning whom scholarship is not extensive. It is also of great interest that if, as seems likely, these glasses can be dated to c. 1792-3, they are very early examples of signed works decorated with gilding as opposed to engraving. According to David Stuart, whose research is the most detailed so far (*Glass in Norfolk*, 1997, p. 13) no datable gilded glass is known prior to 1800.

Dr Francesca Vanke
[francesca.vanke@norfolk.gov.uk]

Roman Glassmakers

Glassblowing lessons and demonstrations

If you have ever fancied trying your hand at glassblowing, the Roman Glassmakers are now offering glassblowing lessons for beginners. These will begin in February 2009, but may be pre-booked from November 2008. The lessons will cover basic techniques, utilising the glassblower's chair and working with a modern hand-working glass, and will be for one or two persons at a time, during weekdays or at weekends. They are also offering glassblowing demonstrations for groups of up to 25 people, as well as more in-depth sessions for small groups of students.

In addition, Mark and David's furnaces reach up to 1400°C, so contact them if you need help with high temperature experimental work. For more information, or to book demonstrations or lessons, telephone 01264 889688, e-mail: [vitrearii@romanglassmakers.co.uk] or visit the website for further information, including prices. <www.romanglassmakers.co.uk>.

Patricia Lesley Baker

(1942-2008)

Dr Patricia Lesley Baker, known everywhere as Paddy, died from cancer on 26th August this year. She lectured on glass at the College of Art and Design at Farnham for some time and for many years was involved in various organisations with interests in

glass studies such as the Glass Circle and the Glass Association, as well as the Association for the History of Glass. She joined the board in 1990, immediately becoming honorary secretary, and after stepping down from this office in 1996, continued to be an active board member until she resigned in 2006.



Paddy Baker at the Antiquaries on 17 March 2008 (Juanita Navarro)

Paddy organised and contributed to AHG activities over three decades, and the diversity of these events demonstrates some of the range of her glass interests. In the 1980s, before joining AHG, she organised, with Ray Flavell, a practically-based study weekend on Glass of the Renaissance at Farnham. As honorary secretary she played an important part in arranging a very successful, though slightly chaotic, study weekend at the Edinburgh College of Art in 1992. There, Ray Flavell was joined by Bill Gudenrath to demonstrate a wide range of glassworking techniques used over 5000 years, the practical sessions being complemented by lectures on aspects of archaeological, historical and scientific evidence. She was also involved in a meeting on Islamic Gilded and Enamelled Glass which was held in the British Museum in 1995. More recently, she organised further AHG study days, on Glass in the Islamic World in 2003, and on Constraints and Controls in the Glass Industry from the Medieval World to the 20th century in 2007.

Since her death, it has become apparent that Paddy was an extremely private person who was deeply involved in numerous projects and was admired and respected by friends and colleagues in many

disciplines. Her principal research interests were centred in the world of Islamic art, and she wrote and edited several books in this field. She was also widely known in Asia, from Syria to China, where she travelled for many years as a researcher, leader of cultural tours and writer of travel guides. As a rule, her different worlds seem to have overlapped very little, though she sometimes demonstrated a remarkable depth of knowledge on an obscure topic, as happened when she knew precisely how to negotiate the Foreign Office procedures to enable an Uzbekistani glass scholar to obtain a visa to attend the international glass congress organised by AHG in London in 2003. Paddy was a slight and distinctly impressive person with an air of elegance and energy. She had a rather cynical view of the world, a wealth of good ideas, a certain stubbornness and forthright opinions on all sorts of issues. She was good company and good-humoured, though some of us will remember with amusement her complete exasperation when the enthusiasm of the experimenters at the 1992 meeting in Edinburgh caused the practical glassworking sessions to over-run, with the result that there was no time for her to present her own paper! She will not be readily forgotten.

Jenny Price and Justine Bayley

Ralph Pinder-Wilson

(1919-2008)

Ralph Pinder-Wilson was an expert in many aspects of early Islamic art, including glass. His accomplishments included 27 years as an assistant and deputy keeper at the British Museum, the directorship of the British Institute of Afghan Studies (BIAS), and an impressive list of publications. Born in Wimbledon, Ralph (pronounced Rafe) was elected Westminster Scholar at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1937. On the outbreak of World War II, he was posted to India, where he learned Urdu – the first of several Oriental languages he mastered. After India, he served in several Mediterranean countries, ending the war with the rank of captain.

Ralph returned to Oxford to study Arabic and Persian. He graduated in 1949 and joined the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum. He remained at the BM until 1976. During these years he published extensively in fields as diverse as the history of Islamic painting, ceramics and metalwork.

He also took part in excavations at Harran, Siraf and Fustat (Old Cairo) and was appointed to a fellowship at All Souls. In 1976 Ralph became director of BIAS. His successes in Kabul included the restoration of the Buddhist stupa at Guldara and studies of Ghaznavid and Ghurid architecture. Ralph's tenure, however, ended unhappily. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the institute was closed and Ralph was imprisoned temporarily on a trumped-up charge. After his release, Ralph returned to enjoy a busy "retirement" in the UK, including joining the AHG board from 1990 to 1997. His friends and colleagues remember him as a generous, gentle man, who was devoted equally to the art of the Islamic world and the welfare of those around him. Ralph's contribution to our knowledge of early Islamic glass included the definitive catalogue of glass found during excavations at Fustat (Old Cairo) between 1964 and 1980, co-authored with the director of the dig, George T. Scanlon, and published in 2001. This and Ralph's other publications on glass are listed below.

David Whitehouse

- 1960 "A Hedwig Glass for the Museum," *British Museum Quarterly*, v. 22, nos. 1-2, pp. 43-45.
 1962 "A Glass Huqqa Bowl," *British Museum Quarterly*, v. 25, pp. 91-94.
 1963 "Cut-Glass Vessels from Persia and Mesopotamia," *British Museum Quarterly*, v. 27, nos. 1-2, pp. 33-39.
 1964 "Syrian Glass. Mediaeval Period," *Bulletin des Journées Internationales du Verre*, no. 3, pp. 24-29.
 1968 "Pre-Islamic Persian and Mesopotamian, Islamic and Chinese," in D. B. Harden, K. S. Painter, R. H. Pinder-Wilson, and Hugh Tait, *Masterpieces of Glass*, London: The Trustees of the British Museum, pp. 98-126.
 1970 "Glass in China during the T'ang Period," *Pottery and Metalwork in T'ang China*, Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia, no. 1, William Watson, ed., London: University of London, pp. 62-71.
 1973 (With George T. Scanlon) "Glass Finds from Fustat: 1964-1971," *Journal of Glass Studies*, v. 15, pp. 12-30.
 1975 "Glass" and (with Waffiya Ezzy) catalog entries 117-144, in Dalu Jones and George Michell, ed., *The Arts of Islam*, London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, pp. 131-146.
 1987 (with George T. Scanlon) "Glass Finds from Fustat: 1972-1980," *Journal of Glass Studies*, v. 29, pp. 60-71.
 1991 "The Islamic Lands and China," *Five Thousand Years of Glass*, Hugh Tait, ed., London: British Museum Press, pp. 112-143.

1998 "Polychrome Decoration on Glass from Khurasan," *Gilded and Enamelled Glass from the Middle East*, Rachel Ward, ed., London: British Museum Press, pp. 12-14.

2001 (with George T. Scanlon) *Fustat Glass of the Early Islamic Period: Finds Excavated by The American Research Center in Egypt, 1964-1980*, London: Altajir World of Islam Trust.

Books and Publications

Glass of the Alchemists

Dedo von Kerssenbrock-Krosigk and contributing authors

The introduction of the book may be viewed at: http://www.cmog.org/usr/media/glass_of_the_alchemists_intro_contents.pdf

The Corning Museum of Glass
 357 pages, 236 colour, 16 b/w illus., 2008.
 ISBN: 978-0-87290-169-8
 Available from <http://glassmarket.cmog.org>, US \$59.95 plus postage.

This book was written to accompany the exhibition 'Glass of the Alchemists: Lead Crystal – Gold Ruby, 1650-1750' at The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York (exhibition closes on 4 January 2009).

The author begins the Introduction by asking 'What is Glass?' as we embark on a (mostly) European journey into the world of the alchemists: secret recipes, fabulous claims by misleading charlatans who pretended they could transform metals into gold, people like Johann Kunckel who exposed them and the exciting developments of glass technology, such as gold ruby glass. Many of the glass discoveries we take for granted today happened thanks to the alchemists' experiments.

The first part of the book consists of eight fully illustrated essays: 'Alchemy as the Imitation of Nature', Pamela H. Smith; 'What Alchemists Knew: Early Modern Chymistry', William R. Newman; 'Depicting Alchemy: Illustrations from Antonio Neri's 1599 Manuscript', Paul Engle; 'Itineraries of Glass Innovation: Johann Rudolph Glauber and his Followers', Werner Loibl; 'Late 17th-Century

Changes in Bohemian Glassmaking', Olga Drahotová; 'Johann Joachim Becher and the Beginnings of Baroque Glassmaking in Central Europe', Martin Mádl; 'Vitrum Saturni: Lead Glass in Britain', Colin Brain and 'Gold Ruby Glass', Dedo von Kerssenbrock-Krosigk.

The second and largest section of the book comprises the exhibition catalogue. A few alchemists' glass 'tools' set the scene, such as an alembic, retorts, a mortar and pestle. Travelling via the medicinal albarelli and others, we are taken swiftly on to the core of the exhibition, the more luxurious examples reflecting the technological achievements. Not surprisingly, the exhibition comprises a large selection of goblets, beakers and other vessel glass including over 30 gold ruby glass items, many of which are exquisitely engraved. Each object has been photographed in colour with astonishing sharpness, and sometimes includes a view from another side or close-up views. After the basic information and description there is generally a comment, which includes useful references to other similar or relevant objects as well as the condition of the object with references to glass instability (e.g. the presence or absence of crizzling). Except for common terms in very current use, original terms or techniques are generally written in their original language and accompanied with a very useful, and educational, English translation.

The final short section 'The "Alchemy" of Glass Today' contains seven short texts by eminent scientists from Corning and elsewhere (Robert H. Brill, Mary J. Edwards, Adam J. Ellison, Carol M. Jantzen, Suresh T. Gulati, L. David Pye and Adrian C. Wright). Nowadays glass technology serves the needs of our modern world: telescope mirrors, safe storage of nuclear waste, nanotechnology, lead crystal displays. What would the original alchemists have thought of the three eight-meter diameter mirror blanks for ground-based telescopes made by Corning at their Canton plant (New York)? The book comes full circle as it returns to the initial 'What is Glass?' question. As more is required of the material, glass continues to become more complex and a suitable definition continues to elude our current alchemists; Prof. Adrian C. Wright explains why. There is a generous 20-page bibliography spanning several centuries. The book closes with a useful concordance page (accession number: catalogue number), brief author's bibliographies and the index.

This book takes us on an intense glass-based journey through time and technological advances. Yes, it is luxurious and beautiful to look at. Yes, it is absorbing to study large images. However, on a practical level I would like to make a general plea for smaller exhibition catalogues. This tome is unnecessarily large and very heavy; there is a lot of blank space. It is not only important to use resources efficiently, but the book would be easier to handle and it would not take up so much space in bookshelves, or indeed in your suitcase, if you were lucky enough to buy it after visiting the exhibition.

Juanita Navarro

Maintaining Traditional Plain Glass and Glazing

Historic Scotland 'Inform' Guides

These free leaflets are available from:
Historic Scotland Technical Conservation
Research and Education Group
Conservation Bureau and Technical Enquiry Service
Longmore House, Salisbury Place
Edinburgh EH9 1SH
Tel 0131 668 8668
Email: [hs.conservation.bureau@scotland.gsi.gov.uk]

Alternatively PDF files may be downloaded from
<www.historic-scotland.gov.uk> →
Free Publications →
Conservation, repair and maintenance →
Inform guides.

Historic Scotland has produced several 'Inform' leaflets covering various aspects of 'Information for historic building owners'. Some have been updated. The leaflets are clearly written and only 8 pages each, hence concise. Readers may be interested in the following:

DOMESTIC DECORATIVE GLASS

'... 19th and 20th Century domestic glass. The purpose is to illustrate the types of domestic decorative glass that are likely to be found, and highlight other repair and maintenance issues.'
Published: July 2007.

MAINTAINING SASH AND CASE WINDOWS

‘... window evolution, how sash and case windows work, assessing condition, common problems, maintenance and repairs, energy efficiency...’
Published: July 2007.

MAINTAINING TRADITIONAL PLAIN GLASS AND GLAZING

‘... outline the types of traditional plain glass and glazing systems most commonly encountered by building owners, and to give general guidance on their maintenance and repair.’ Published: November 2007.

Juanita Navarro

Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Glass in the British Museum

Vera I Evison

Edited by Sonia Marzinzik, with contributions from IC Freestone, MJ Hughes, CP Stapleton and DR Hook

British Museum Research Publication No. 167 (2008)
184 pages, colour and B/W illustrations

ISBN 0978 0 86159 167 1.
ISSN 1747-3640.

Price £35

It is very good to see this book in print. It is a landmark publication, both as an important addition to our knowledge of the subject and as a record of the perseverance of the principal author who began her acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon glass in the British Museum in 1947 and has studied it in detail over many years since then.

In the work, 229 pieces attributed to Anglo-Saxon contexts dating from c. AD 400-1100 have been examined. These are predominantly vessels and fragments of vessels, with some beads, pendants, other objects and window glass. In fact, virtually all of the material belongs to the fifth-seventh centuries, the exceptions being vessel fragments and objects from Whitby Abbey in North Yorkshire dating from

the 8th-9th century, a ribbed and trailed bowl perhaps from London tentatively dated to the 12th century and glass objects in ninth-century hoards from Gravesend and Trewiddle in Cornwall. The majority of the vessels and objects were found in graves, though a few came from settlements such as Mucking in Essex and Whitby Abbey, or hoards.

The three main parts to the book are the discussion and catalogue, with a section on the composition and production of early Anglo-Saxon glass. There are also four appendices, plus the bibliography, maps, line drawings, and half-tone and colour plates. The introductory sections of the discussion cover chronology, techniques of manufacture and decoration, provenance, chemical analysis and glass production in Anglo-Saxon England, followed by the detailed investigation by type and period of the vessels and objects in the collection, setting them in their north west European context. The catalogue is also detailed, well laid out and easy to use.

The contribution by Freestone *et al* on composition and production complements the work of the principal author and expands the scope of the volume by using the results of analyses to create a model to explain the limited numbers and range of forms, and the high status, of glass vessels in Anglo-Saxon England. It summarises scientific research into the raw materials and technology of Roman and later glass as a preface to interpreting the analyses of 29 fifth-early sixth century (Period 1) and late sixth-seventh century (Period 2) vessels which show differences in composition between the two periods. In Period 1, a natron glass comparable with contemporary vessels elsewhere in Europe as well as with glass from the Levant was used, suggesting that the glass was made in the south-east Mediterranean region and traded widely in Europe as raw material for production, as had also been the case in the late Roman period. By contrast, the majority of period 2 vessels contained ash-rich material as well as natron, and as comparable material has not been identified elsewhere in Europe, this is interpreted as indicating that disruption to trading networks prevented the raw glass made in the eastern Mediterranean from reaching north western Europe in sufficient quantity, so local adulteration became necessary. The discussion of later Anglo-Saxon glass, based on analyses of glass not in the British Museum, argues that more emphasis on recycling Roman glass is visible in the eighth-ninth centuries and that by the ninth-tenth centuries the change from natron- to ash-based glass was under way in Britain.

The cultural affiliations of glass vessels in circulation at the end of the Roman period in Britain and also in Anglo-Saxon England are sometimes ambiguous, and a few vessels in this volume, despite being found in Anglo-Saxon contexts, may have been produced in the late fourth century, as they have cracked-off rims and decorative details characteristic of late Roman glass. For example, nos 1, 2 and particularly 4 are forms widely known in late Roman contexts, and the rim fragment (no 3) from hut 15 at Mucking is likely to be a curated fragment of a late Roman beaker, perhaps similar in form to conical beakers nos 19 and 20. The claw beaker (no 57) from an early sixth-century burial, Grave 843, at Mucking may also belong to this group, as it has a cracked off rim, trailed decoration characteristic of the late fourth century below the rim and between the claws on the body, and a separately blown foot with a cracked off edge not noted on other claw beakers.

The vessel glass discussion covers some of the same ground as an earlier essay on glass vessels in Anglo-Saxon England which is mentioned several times in the text (Evison 2000b), but the research for this volume has moved a long way beyond that work, concentrating on the material in the British Museum, setting it in context, and presenting it in an accessible and scholarly format. The volume itself is attractively produced, and all those involved in bringing it to publication deserve congratulation.

Jennifer Price

Website:
Rivet Spectacles

A new webpage on rivet spectacles has been added to 'The On-Line Museum and Encyclopedia of Vision Aids.' Following their introduction at the end of the 13th century, the first simple eyeglasses were then used into the early 16th century. This is the first time that information and images of every known example (mostly fragments) have been assembled and explained to an interested public. Five years of international collaborative research has resulted in Rivet Spectacles - the Earliest Style
<http://www.antiquespectacles.com/rivet_spectacles/rivets.htm>.

This webpage, with nearly three hundred images in all, has been constructed with the kind assistance of many educators and institutions worldwide. Recent additions to the website include:

- The Edward Scarlett Trade Card
- <http://www.antiquespectacles.com/trade_cards/scarlett/scarlett.htm> (This significant discovery potentially moves the invention of hinged sidearms for glasses back about 15 years).
- Baleen Spectacles
- <http://www.antiquespectacles.com/slide_shows/baleen/baleen.htm>
- Objects Made of Horn
- <http://www.antiquespectacles.com/slide_shows/horn/horn.htm>
- Optisches Museum, Jena
- <<http://www.antiquespectacles.com/topics/jena/jena.htm>>

Our ongoing research project has resulted in an educational website with more than 260 webpages and over 4600 images.

Additional topics, such as "Early Telescopes and their Development" and others, will be added over the next 3-5 years. Thank you for your interest and support.

Dr. David Fleishman

Bibliographical database
Byzantine and Islamic Glass

The first version of the bilingual (French/English) bibliographical database on Byzantine and Islamic Glass is now available at:
<<http://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/verre>>

This database is part of the "Objets d'Égypte" scientific program realized by the French Institute of the Oriental Studies in Cairo (IFAO). It systematically reviews all relevant publications. The information available includes technical issues dealing with glass as well as production and consumer centres; it allows cross-referencing and will be annually updated.

Please send your contributions

for

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by

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