

2009 Convention Wrap Up

by Pam Steinbach, Convention Director

Fellow Members:

Before I even left my house, I knew this was going to be a big convention because I had to rent additional tables! We had a final count of 58 registrations including another eight new members. While other clubs are losing members and having fewer people turn out for events, the Stretch Glass Society is going strong.

Cal Hackeman put together a beautiful club display featuring both iridized and non-iridized dolphin pieces in many beautiful colors and shapes. There were so many examples that we had to use risers to display them all. What a sight! Jim Steinbach assembled some great silent auction pieces of vintage stretch including two beautiful red pieces, some past SGS whimsys, and new stretch pieces provided by the Fenton Art Glass Company. Members displayed many of their dolphin pieces in their personal displays, and we had thirty three round tables in the center of the room filled with stretch glass to be sold. The room was literally packed with glass! Our first day ended with another fun and tasty wine and cheese welcome party provided by Mike and Cyndi Getchius.

Thursday started with a "Special Surprise". Jim Measell had pulled together a large selection of vintage and contemporary stretch glass from the Fenton museum storage exclusively for our members to purchase. These pieces included stretch samples made in 1975 when Frank Fenton was trying out iridizing sprays and finishing techniques. Needless to say, the line up started way before the doors opened at 8 am. While we were selecting pieces we wanted to purchase, Jim stood in the back and gave a verbal history of the pieces to anyone who asked. We thank Jim and The Fenton Art Glass Company for this wonderful opportunity to purchase these pieces and gain some valuable historical insight.

Once back at the hotel we held the ever popular Sales Stampede and because we had so many members, the lineup stretched down the length of the hall. It seems like everyone got at least one piece they were hunting for, so that was a success. After our banquet, our panel of three experts (Dave Shetlar, Jim Measell and Roy Ash) sat down to ponder and identify the pieces of glass provided by our members. They picked up a piece, examined it, passed it back and forth and then gave their opinions. It was interesting to listen to them talk about why or why not a piece was probably made by a certain company. Being the experts they are, they ID'd most of the pieces, but we did manage to stump them on three pieces. It was a fun and educational session.

The highlight of the convention was Friday when George Fenton joined Jim Measell to discuss dolphin pieces. They discussed when they started producing the dolphin pieces, why it is so difficult to make these beautiful shapes, when and why colors were introduced and so much more. A video created by Renée and Dave Shetlar showed the actual making of our 1998 wisteria dolphin handled server. You could see Dave Fetty demonstrating and instructing the new young Fenton workers how to properly make the piece and all the while the late beloved eagle-eyed Frank Fenton was standing there making sure it all came out just right. Not only were our members engrossed with the informative seminar and the video, but a large number of NFGS members were also in attendance. Thanks so much to George and Jim for helping us better understand and appreciate these beautiful pieces.

After all business was concluded at the business meeting on Friday (see attached minutes), the club honored outgoing president Cal Hackeman with an engraved red double dolphin (but of course!!!) fan vase thanking him for his many years of service.

The Silent Auction ended with yet another flurry of last minute bidding. This seems to be an event that the members enjoy and happily creates revenue for the club (see Jim's report). The two raffle pieces were won by Stephanie Bennett and Augusta Keith. I might also mention that once again this year, we had two successful absentee bidders winning two silent auction pieces. It seems like every year we have at least one absentee winner. So, please, even if you can't attend the convention, feel free to leave bids because you can win.

On a personal note, it has been my privilege to serve as the convention director for the past four years. This job has at times been challenging, but most of all it's been great fun. Whatever success these conventions may have garnered was because so many people have helped. Members are constantly asking what they can do to help and then jumping in and getting it done. Thanks to the Board for their support and help, to past presidents for advice and encouragement, thanks to my husband for much behind the scenes work and compensating for my lack of computer skills, but most of all thanks to all of you. Thanks for coming to the convention, participating in the events, supporting the club and helping make these four years so much fun. Any club is only as good as its members, and we have the best!

The tentative dates for our 2010 convention are July 28, 29, 30 and will again be at the Comfort Inn in Marietta. See you next year.





Some of the Club Display, "A World of Dolphins"



Thelma Kesler and Gloria Smith enjoy Wine & Cheese Party prepared by Cyndi & Mike Getchius.

Bill Crowl shops at Fenton special sale.



Pam Steinbach helps Sharon Mizell draw her Sales Stampede line-up number while Roger Christensen, Cal Hackeman, Millie Coty, Wally McDaniel, Dave Rodgers and Tom McNamara look on.



"Stump the Experts" panel hard at work: Jim Measell, Roy Ash, and Dave Shetlar.



So much beautiful iridescent stretch glass for sale!