

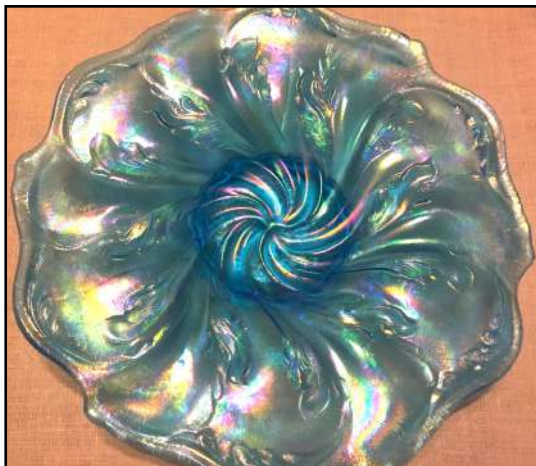


**STRETCH OUT DISCUSSION**

**DELUXE EDITION**

**Late Period Fenton Stretch Glass Made for Others**

Stretch Out Discussion Call on February 7, 2019



The speakers for our discussions are Kitty and Russell Umbraco and Dave Shetlar. They are all noted experts on stretch glass having done extensive research and cataloging of stretch glass in addition to publishing books on stretch glass. They are life members of The Stretch Glass Society and Dave is a past Co-President. Current SGS President, Cal Hackeman and Sarah Plummer also contribute to our discussions. Sarah is an expert who knows the Fenton catalogues by heart and is very familiar with their late period stretch glass. SGS Vice President, Bob Henkel, moderates the calls which are organized by SGS Director Mary Elda Arrington. SGS Secretary, Stephanie Bennett, selects and presents the photos of the stretch glass to be discussed. Members and guests of The Stretch Glass Society participate in the discussion.

We will be pleased to identify stretch glass for you if you send photos and dimensions of your stretch glass to us at [info@stretchglassociety.org](mailto:info@stretchglassociety.org). There is no charge for ID. You may also be interested in reading The SGS Quarterly featuring the most up-to-date information on recent discoveries of previously unreported stretch glass, informative in-depth articles about stretch glass and news of upcoming auctions and sales featuring stretch glass. This publication is provided to all members 4 times each year. Please consider supporting The Stretch Glass Society by becoming a member. Join us at [stretchglassociety.org](http://stretchglassociety.org) and tap into our extensive network of experts, photos and research. These Deluxe Edition Reviews of the discussions are available several weeks after the call and are also posted on our website.

The Stretch Glass Society is pleased to share the insights and knowledge of our experts and hope you find the following summary educational and encouraging as you enjoy, collect, buy and sell stretch glass.



### **Late Period Fenton Stretch Glass Made for Others**

Sarah Plummer began the discussion of late period Fenton stretch glass made for others by reviewing the other late period Fenton stretch glass which we have discussed in earlier discussions. She reminded us that we have talked over the last year and a half about Late Period, or what is sometimes referred to as Contemporary or New, Stretch Glass on several occasions. In previous discussions, we have covered pieces that were in the regular Fenton line offered by the company and through their distributors. We then discussed pieces of stretch glass made by Fenton for QVC in colors or treatments that were not in the Fenton line. Tonight's discussion will cover six other companies or organizations for which Fenton made stretch glass. The relationships with these six customers were profitable for both the Fenton Art Glass Company and the other companies and organizations, which typically resold the glass made for them at a price higher than they paid to Fenton. There was not a lot of other stretch glass, in terms of quantity or variety, made for other companies by Fenton.

The first company we will discuss was called **Levay Distribution**. They were in business under that name from roughly 1973 to the mid-1980's. They ceased business under that name after the Fenton Art Glass Company decided to make and market the glassware it had previously sold to Levay. Levay Glass Company was based out of South Central Illinois and was owned by Gary and Dodie Levi. Among all the glass that was made for Levay by Fenton, only one line of stretch was made. This line of stretch glass was in a color they called Purple Stretch. It's a very dark purple color. It comes very close to being black in some light. They made a series of ten pieces and we are fortunate to have a copy of their sales flier (#1).

Made for Levay Distribution Company in 1981  
 (Levay catalog pages found on eBay with threaded vase.)



## The Metropolitan Museum of Art

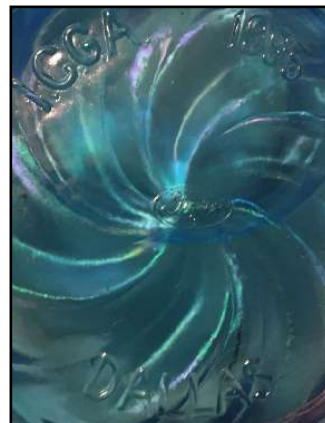
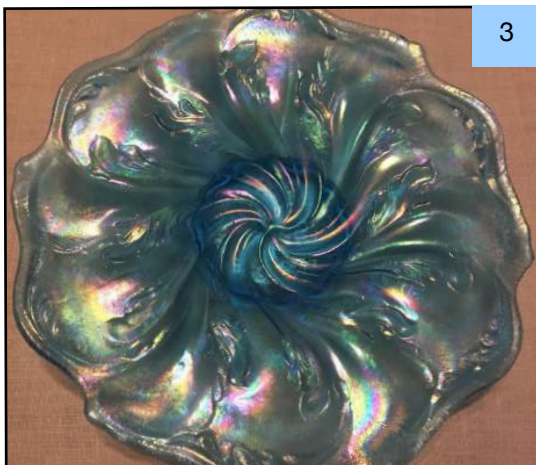
Fenton also made glass for The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. They made a Blue stretch glass fan vase (#2) for them in the 1980's. They also made a Velva Rose piece for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in exactly the same shape but not until 1990. Dave asked, "Did they call that Celeste Blue - because all of the examples that I've seen that are marked with the MMA for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, really appear to be a light cobalt Blue, not a true Celeste Blue?" Sarah clarified that Fenton made this ball-footed fan vase in a true Celeste Blue later, but the Metropolitan Museum pieces appear to be a light cobalt color.



There are three additional groups for which Fenton made stretch glass.

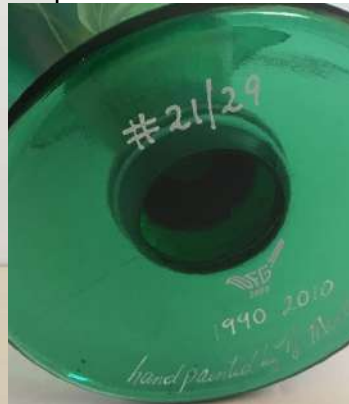
### International Congress of Carnival Glass (ICGA)

For the International Congress of Carnival Glass (ICGA), Fenton made a Celeste Blue Acanthus plate (#3).



## National Fenton Glass Society (NFGS)

Fenton made one piece for the National Fenton Glass Society (NFGS) in conjunction with the Stretch Glass Society as a joint run (#4). The piece didn't sell well with the Stretch Glass Society, so the NFGS bought all the pieces. NFGS split the production and had two different decorations painted on them.



## Fenton Art Glass Collectors of America (FAGCA)

The Fenton Art Glass Collectors of America (FAGCA) had some rabbit figurines (#5) made out of the ruby amberina stretch glass. There was an issue with the stretch finish on these in that, as we've learned, the stretch effect does not take well to figurines. While the FAGCA called it stretch glass, Sarah tends to believe that had more to do with Fenton calling the color Ruby Amberina Stretch, than the actual stretch treatment on the animals.





There was a peacock vase (#6) made that was sold through the Special Room. During summer conventions, the Fenton Art Glass Company would set up in the Bluegrass Room of Fenton's sales and museum building and sell samples, singles and whimsies of pieces that had been made for other groups. This room was only open to the members of the FAGCA. One of these vases turned up in the big peacock vase auction last week. The person who owns a whimsy of this vase, indicated there were less than a 100 of the vases made. Sarah does not believe the vases were actually made for the FAGCA; she suspects they were made for the Fenton Gift Shop and were likely whimsies that ended up in the Special Room. Finally, Fenton produced numerous souvenirs for The Stretch Glass Society. These souvenirs will not be discussed tonight but will be the topic of a future Stretch Out Discussion.

### Made for Levay Distribution Company in 1981

The twin dolphin comport (#7) is actually the bottom of the candy jar; it was also produced and formed into a fan vase (#8). Both of these items look black when they are sitting on a shelf. Fenton did make a Stretch Glass Society club piece in true ebony black glass at a later time.



If you hold the Levay pieces up to a bright light, you will see that the Levay pieces are a very dark purple. But when they are sitting on a shelf and reflecting the light, they will look black. That's one of the ways to tell The Stretch Glass Society club piece from the Levay pieces. The SGS piece is true black glass. Frank was very precise about the colors in both cases. When the Fenton Company made any specific piece for either themselves or for some entity, they wouldn't repeat that item again at a different time. Frank Fenton was very good about not repeating special items. Dave was recently re-cataloging some of his glass and he said, "Why do I have all these black stretch ones? When I held them up to the light - No, this is a dark purple one. This is a Levay one." That's one of the things to remember, Levay twin-dolphin pieces are dark purple stretch and Stretch Glass Society pieces are ebony stretch.

Notice the pitcher and tumbler set (#9). At one time this set was pretty easy to obtain. The pitcher is a very dark purple, but when its sitting there without a lot of light it can look black. An experienced collector can tell that it is purple. These show up at conventions periodically. What's interesting is that the tumblers are not press-molded, but they're blown-molded. When the bubble of glass was expanded in the mold, the seams are rubbed off. Some of these you can actually see the hint of a mold seam and in others the mold seam is missing. The other thing is that, when these were blown, you'll see there's a little rim at the bottom. Supposedly they were picked up by a snap, the bubble was broken off of the blow rod and the top was then fire-polished. Sarah has seen quite a few of these where the top rims of the tumblers have been ground down. She asked Frank about that one time. He got his little sheepish grin and said, "Well, quite a few of those tumblers when they came through thelehr were kind of uneven at the top and so Levay agreed that if we made two sets - we tried to match sets that weren't ground and then match up sets that were ground on the tops." If you do find them with a ground top, that's the way they came out of the factory. They were still considered to be 'firsts' by the factory. Sarah has seen sets of them with the fire polished rim and then she has seen sets with the ground rim. Also, in the picture, the pitcher has a crimped top. There is quite a bit of variation in that crimp. Sarah has a feeling that the Fenton workers were probably a bit unfamiliar with how to do these pitchers and so they had a little bit of trouble with some of the crimping and finishing. But, that's just the way the pitcher and tumbler set comes out. The original set was one pitcher and six tumblers. Sarah saw a set not too long ago that had eight tumblers, so she thinks some marriage occurred with that set. The production of that set was pretty limited.



Most of the pieces in that collection were readily available through Levay, but both the epergne (#10) and the tumbler set (#9 on page 7) and tankard pitcher (#11) were limited. It is believed that there were only 500 of the pitcher set and 1000 of the epergnes made.



Dave comments that while 500 sets or 1000 epergnes may sound like an awful lot to us, we need to keep in mind these sets were widely distributed across North America. If only a couple sets went to each state, they go pretty fast. Sarah added that both the epergne and the pitcher and tumbler set were not cheap to begin with. She doesn't remember exactly what the original price was, but she thinks the cheapest that she had seen of the pitcher and tumbler set is \$300-\$350 range. They were pretty close to that when they were sold originally. The epergne was also not an inexpensive set. When you think about it, the workers actually had to make five separate pieces for a set. There was quite a bit of shaping and molding work done on each one of horns and bowl.

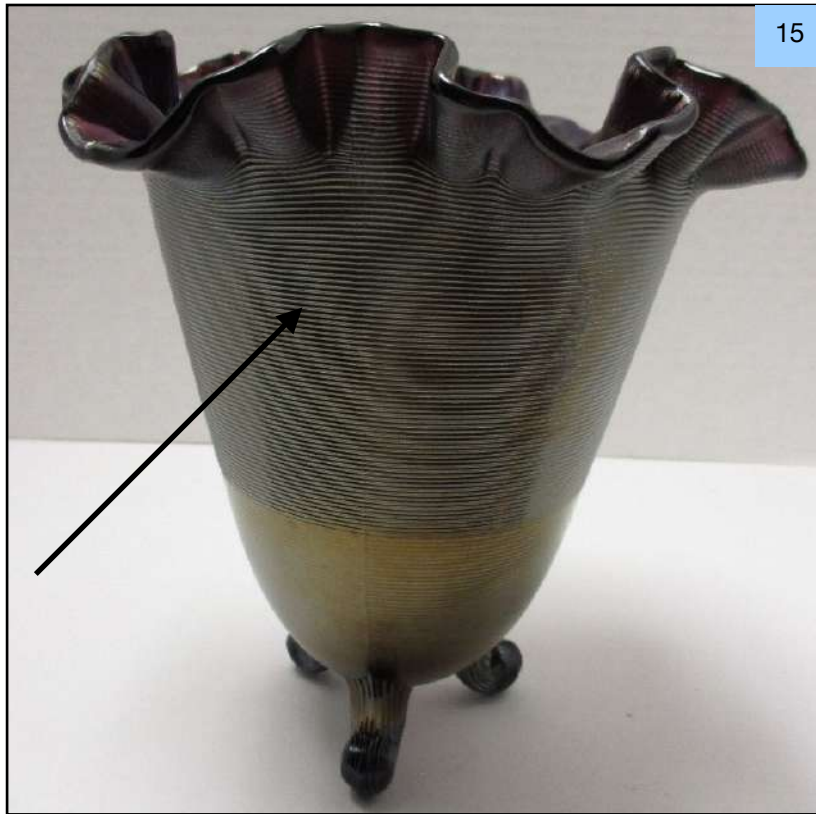




Some of the other interesting items are the little miniature baskets (#12). These are getting tougher and tougher to find. The toothpick (#13) is basically the bottom of the basket. Those items were not inexpensive. The little baskets have always been fairly expensive, and continue to be even today when you find them for sale. When you see these pieces posted for sale, it's way over a \$100 for a little tiny piece of glass. If you think about it, that little tiny piece of glass has the same amount of work done on it as a bigger basket. It was just a little bit smaller. The handler still had to go through the process of getting a second gather, pulling that gather out and forming the handle on that basket.



The little hand vase (#14) is kind of an interesting one, in that Fenton made it in purple for Levay, but a few years later made it in Celeste Blue. You can find both of those. The original Levay one was fairly limited and is generally much more expensive than the later Celeste Blue one.



The threaded vase (#15) used to be very common. Almost every shopping mall that had some stretch glass would quite often have an example of the threaded vase with the double crimp top that has sort of that pie crust and then a larger crimp. It was very nicely done. It had sort of a carnival crimping type of a pattern. They have become much less available now. Most of the ones I've seen have very good stretch, at least on the interior. They have a little bit more shine on the outside.

The bell (#16) used to be easily obtainable, but it's gotten less and less common. Most of the Fenton stretch glass bells that you see on eBay now are in Velva Rose, sometimes the Celeste Blue, and an aquamarine one that's fairly common. The original dark purple bells are tough to find. When it's just sitting on the shelf, it does look black, but if you pick it up and get light through it, you'll see that it's a purple.



In looking at the epergne (#17), we know that this is an early epergne in the late period. The ruffles around the bowl are not pointed. The early production of this epergne has just a wavy bottom, which was early in the production of these. Later on in the 1990's, they started to do sharp crimps around the bowl edge. So when you see the bowl in the wavy crimp, that's an early piece. If it's got sharp crimps, it will be a more recent piece. These are very elegant. Virtually every one that has been seen has excellent stretch marks in it. They did a really nice job on those. In the right light they will appear black, but if you get some light shining through it, you'll easily be able to see that it's a dark purple.



Next, we have the slightly flared twin-dolphin comport (#18). Some of these are not stretched all that well. Just that little flaring didn't always give them a really good stretch effect. You can find some with good stretch and some without. The fan vases (#19) are kind of like the fan vases they made for The Stretch Glass Society. The workers that made these in the '80s and '90s just didn't have the talent of really squeezing together the bottom of the bowl area. If you compare these fan vases with the original fan vases, the recent ones will have a bulge at the bottom of the bowl, while the original was flattened down quite a bit. Both the comport and fan vase used to be fairly easily found and

obtainable, but in the last 6-7 years they've pretty well disappeared off of the shelves. The one thing to remember about the Levay pieces is that Levay Distribution came out of Central Illinois. They sold a lot of their glass to shops in Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, and Indiana. So you find a lot of that glass in that area. The further out you get from that central location, the harder it is to find some of those pieces.

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Dave posed the question: “We don't have any pictures of a horse head plates and bowls that Levay distributed. Did Fenton make those horse head pieces or was that another company?” Sarah indicated Westmoreland made those for Levay. Dave added that Levi and his wife actually showed up at a lot of Carnival conventions with boxes of their glass and sold them more at Carnival conventions in the later days of their sales. There are a couple of those horse head reproduction pieces that do have stretch on them. Occasionally we'll find them out there. Sarah commented, Levay had glass made predominately from Fenton, but also from Westmoreland and a little bit from Imperial. So it could have been either one of those two companies that made glass items for them. Levay owned a lot of Westmoreland molds. They bought them when Westmoreland went out of business and they actually leased some of those molds to the Fenton Art Glass Company.

### **Metropolitan Museum of Art**

This light cobalt blue fan vase (#20) used to be really attainable, especially on eBay. It's now less and less commonly seen. In the last month or so Dave thinks he's only seen one or two of these show up. There's quite a range of the iridescent effect on these. You can almost see rings of rainbow on some of these. There are others that are more of a plain iridescence. We've seen that in the past when Fenton made us Club pieces. They range from really highly multi-colored iridescence to those that were more monochromatic. These vases should be marked on the bottom. Like all stretch glass, if the mark at the bottom was reheated a lot, sometimes those marks sunk back into the glass. It's been Dave's opinion every time that he's seen one of these, he was able to tell that there's some kind of a logo somewhere in the bottom. You can find one of two marks. Sometimes you find a Fenton logo, but they also marked it for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, so you also see an MMA logo on it. That does distinguish it from some of the later ones. There were pieces made later than this one, but they won't have the MMA on them.



# National Fenton Glass Society 20th Anniversary



The ball footed Emerald Green vase (#21) has that very distinctive little ball where the base meets the foot. This one is a nice Emerald Green. The Stretch Glass Society also had an emerald green piece made; it was a small candle holder with the melon rib design in it. Fenton's emerald green is an impressive color and it's a very elegant color; It takes the stretch iridescence very nicely. The vases were very elegantly painted by the Fenton decorators. The one on the right looks like a calla lily (#22). The one on the left looks like a day lily (#21). Because of the decorations on these, they were never inexpensive. The decorators usually signed these and numbered them. The day lily is only 21 out of only 29. There's obviously many more of these vases made but there were only 29 that had that particular decoration by that artist. Sarah indicated Fenton only made about 65-70 of those vases. Some of them were sold undecorated but they didn't seem to go over very well. They split the remainder in half. There were 59 left, and 29 were sold under one of the offerings in the Fenton Flyer newsletter. The other 30 were never sold at all. They were given as table vase decorations. Those were never on the market at all. The only way you could get them was to do a display table in that year. Those were marked on the bottom (#23) with the NFGS logo and 1990-2010 because they were produced in the 20th anniversary year of the NFGS.

## Fenton Art Glass Collectors of America



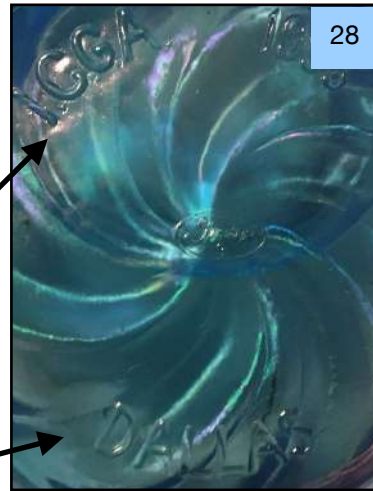
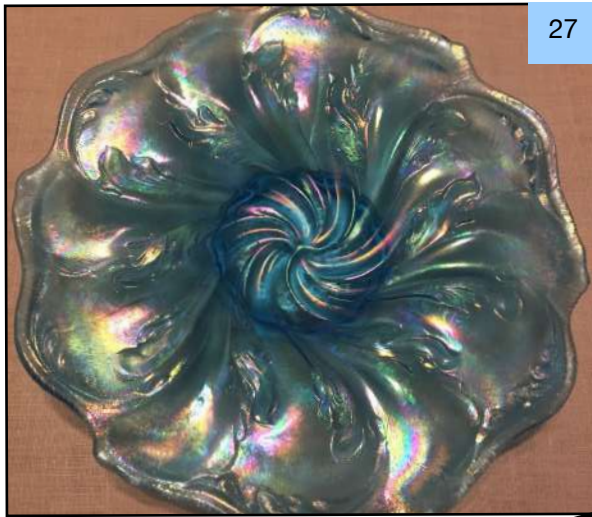
These are a couple of the ruby amberina pieces and the ruby stretch pieces. When you see most of these figurines (#24) that Fenton put in their stretch line, you wonder where the stretch is. They were iridized with the same dope at the same time as the others, but they weren't reheated. Without having any reheating of the piece, you're just not going to get the stretch marks in it. Frank was actually asked at one time, would they even stretch if you heated them. He said, probably not since they're basically fairly thick chunks of glass. The iridescence may actually just flash off of them and they would become even more shiny. The best you can get on some of those figurines is maybe a satiny iridescence, but getting a true stretch is not going to be easy to get.

Obviously the peacock vase (#25) is fairly heavy. They seem to have a fair amount of glass on the bottom of them. They usually didn't stretch these very well, except at the top. They reheated them and then crimped them. That crimping certainly made some good iridescent marks at the tops.



Dave doesn't know about the oval logo (#26). He's seen the logo in the Velva Rose and also a modern Celeste Blue. They used to be fairly obtainable. You'd see them quite commonly at the different Fenton conventions and the flea markets at the time when the conventions were going on. They're now getting difficult to find. I think the one that's on eBay this last week, looks like it's beginning to command some pretty good money. If you want to get some of these things, even the modern pieces, if there weren't many of them made, people know that and they're picking them up. Sarah added that one on eBay was priced around \$195 and there was one in an auction this past week that was a whimsy that sold at auction for \$185. Dave commented that he is pretty sure he saw these in the Fenton shop originally for about \$40.

### International Carnival Glass Association 1995



Our last item is a plate with an Acanthus pattern on it (#27). These are very elegantly done, however, in Dave's way of thinking, they are a fairly heavy chunk of glass. They are very nicely stretched, because he suspects that it was a bowl originally and when flattened down to the plate shape, it really popped the stretch iridescence. He believes that he has seen this one without any markings on the bottom other than the Fenton logo. The original ones were made for the ICGA when they had their convention in Dallas back in the mid '90s. But he knows he has picked up a couple of these and there were no marks other than the Fenton logo in the middle of it. His thinking is that the Fenton factory workers ran a few before they actually said, 'that's what we're going to do for the ICGA' and then they put the logos in it. I think there might be some pieces out there that don't have the ICGA mark on them. The vast majority that you'll find, do have it. Occasionally, if you go to the Carnival conventions, these will be on the tables. Sometimes you can even find one for sale out there. They weren't really cheap. Stephanie commented: "This one (#28) I found in the Fenton Gift Shop. It was probably in 1995. There were a bunch of them and they were marked ICGA."

## **Additional comments by Sarah and Dave**

Fenton also made a second fan vase for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Velva Rose. That one may or may not be marked, so you need to watch out for that. It's exactly the same shape and dimension as the one they made for the Metropolitan Art Museum. Dave added, "Let me also point out that I've seen that second Velva Rose fan vase where it also struck a little bit with opalescence. Occasionally you'll find a couple of those where the top rim does have some opalescence in it. I don't know if they were deliberately trying to get opalescence or it just happened to be the batch of glass."

A second thing is that there is one more grouping of two pieces of glass that was made for Fenton Collectibles, which would be for Ann and John Fenton, out of Republic, Missouri. These were fan vases using the Dance of the Veils mold. One was in an Aubergine and the other in Ruby Amberina or Red. Some of them are very very good. Some of them are not so great, but again, there were only about a hundred of each one of them made. Dave added: "The Aubergine ones I've seen, just because of the nature of the Aubergine, don't seem to strike all that well. Actually there was one on eBay last month in the ruby amberina that had struck very well with stretch marks on it. They had some nice close ups of the sort of satiny stretch. That particular jar had the lid on it. It wasn't the fan vase. It had the lid on it and it was a pretty striking piece."

The Fenton Art Glass Company had several habits. One of them was that after they made a batch for another entity - either The Stretch Glass Society or NFGS or Fenton Collectibles or whoever, they would often run some extras as whimseys. We've discovered that the hard way in some cases with some of our pieces. What Sarah discovered in many cases is that the whimseys were all offered to the collector clubs, but in other situations they were not. They were held back and then were sold out of the Gift Shop and Gift Shop Exclusives. At other times, these whimseys were sold out of the Special Rooms for the summer conventions, so that they had something special to offer the collector clubs. Do not be surprised to see a piece that you might think, well that's a particular club piece, and then you take a good look at it, and realize that the top is not right on that. They don't mark them in any way other than you will occasionally see them marked as a sample. Other than that, there are no markings on these whimseys. You can tell that they're different than the piece that was offered in the line or to the group. Beware of that and know that they sold a ton of glass out of the Fenton Gift Shop and the Gift Shop Exclusive. It was not unusual for them to send seconds out to the tent sale in the summers. The seconds were usually marked, but not always. You need to be very careful that way as well. There are some seconds out there that, for all purposes, may be just fine. They just had an irregular top on them or something else that made, whoever they were ordered by, reject them. So that's out there too. They also, in some cases with some of the QVC pieces, if they were undecorated pieces and QVC returned them to Fenton, Fenton decorated those pieces for the Gift Shop or for the tent sale. So you may find a piece you thought was done plain for QVC, but this is a decorated piece. You wonder who was that made for? Well, Fenton made it for themselves and sold them out of the Gift Shop and numbered them in some cases - 15 or 20 pieces with one design. That was all the number of pieces they did. That's something to be aware.



There was another thing that Sarah discovered this week, inadvertently, when she was semi-consulting on the National Fenton Art Glass consignment auction that's coming up this summer with the convention. We were working on some of the pieces of glass that are to go into the convention and there were some Dave Fetty pieces. In one case, there's a Dave Fetty piece in the auction that's a footed donut vase, which is a narrow neck round vase with a hole in the middle of it. The outside of that vase is treated as if it were stretch glass. Be aware that those kinds of things may occur. Just keep your eye out for them.

### **April Call Preview**

In April the discussion will be on the 11th - Early Period Cut and Etched Stretch Glass. The examples that Stephanie Bennett was able to pull out are close ups and exquisite examples of the etching from Central, Diamond, Fenton, Imperial, Lancaster and Northwood. So that's what we have in store for April.