



THE STRETCH GLASS SOCIETY

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STRETCH OUT DISCUSSION

LANCASTER GLASS COMPANY

Stretch Out Discussion Call on November 9, 2017

On November 9, 2017, The Stretch Glass Society hosted an in-depth discussion of early period stretch glass made by Lancaster Glass Company of Lancaster, Ohio. Lancaster was one of nine glass companies which produced iridescent stretch glass during the early period (1916-1933). Their stretch glass is distinctive because of the colors and finishes in which it was produced. During the discussion we focused on these unique colors, the shapes in which Lancaster stretch glass was made and the relative availability of certain pieces of Lancaster stretch glass. We hope you enjoy this recap of our discussion of Lancaster Stretch Glass and find it both educational as well as entertaining. If you have a piece of Lancaster (or other) stretch glass about which you would like to know more information, please send photos and measurements to president@stretchglassociety.org. Now, please enjoy our discussion of early period Lancaster stretch glass.

Russell and Kitty Umbraco and Dave Shetlar were the experts for the evening. They discussed the general line of stretch glass made by Lancaster Glass Company, Lancaster, Ohio.

The vast majority of the Lancaster stretch glass is basically crystal glass, with a white or crystal iridescence applied to it. Many of the pieces have an overall enamel applied to the glass in addition to the iridescence. When Berry Wiggins was doing his research, he was only able to find one description of the color of the enamel in period advertisements and that was 'Ruby Lustre.' In John Madeley and Dave's book, *American Iridescent Stretch Glass*, Ruby Lustre is in capital letters. When John and Dave saw the green enameled Lancaster stretch glass, they decided to give it the name of green lustre. There were also pieces with overall white enamel and they called these white lustre. The green lustre and white lustre have gained favor among collectors but we do not have evidence that Lancaster Company actually used these color descriptions for these particular effects. They also made some crystal stretch glass with marigold iridescence and they apparently made two types of this. They made what is considered to be Aztec, which is a very bright golden marigold or very light marigold, and Rose Ice - a very dark marigold. They also had crystal glass without the enamel with a light iridescence on it. That was called Iris Ice as documented in trade magazines of the period. They also iridized some pink glass. No name is known for that color.

With all the iridescence and color effects we know which are fairly well documented for Lancaster Stretch Glass, we will start with the green lustre (#1,2). Basically, green lustre is a crystal glass with a light iridescence applied to it. In addition, there is an overall enamel decoration, running from a green to a very light cream color. They did this enamel coloring very well and consistently. They also painted a flower motif, usually between a pair of thin lines. These pieces were not all that easy to make. First they were pressed in a mold, iridized, stretched and then they were cooled by putting them through the lehr. Next they went to the decorating shop where first the flowers were applied and then two lines were painted onto the glass and then the over-all enamel was applied, and the glass was placed back into the lehr to bake it on. A great bit of processing was going on. These pieces are somewhat under appreciated by collectors, who really don't like the enamel paint which was applied.



You will notice that this bowl (#1) is on a Lancaster stand. Lancaster very rarely used ebony glass to make their stands. This is a crystal glass stand with overall black enamel applied to it. If it has four little rings and when you flip it over, it is obvious that it is crystal glass with black enamel on it, you can be pretty sure it is going to be a Lancaster stand.

Lancaster only made one candleholder shape (#2). This is occasionally confused with one of Fenton's candleholders. There is, however, no comparison when you see them side by side. This Lancaster candleholder is known with all the enamel decorations, and is known in the marigold iridescence or just with plain crystal iridescence, which would be Iris Ice.

There was a comment made by Kitty Umbraco from the West Coast. She said that in the 60's and 70's, collectors in her area didn't like the painted pieces. If the enamel had a little flake, they would try to remove all the enamel, but soon found that even when the enamel was removed, they would still see the impression of the flowers and lines. This confirms they were baked on. You will find some pieces that are a little worn. Enamel, while it does not come off easily, will come off with real scrubbing. Even if you use paint remover, there is going to be a shadow of the decoration remaining.

There are various colors and to the right is a white lustre bowl. (#3) It has an overall of white, but actually is a cream to a white coloring. The bands very distinctly show as blue. They used different colors for the bands (usually black or blue) to contrast the enamel. While the green lustre typically has a black enamel band, this one has a blue one. Likewise they changed the color of the flowers. The most common flower



is this orange or blue color. When you get all these flowers together, it is clear that whoever was doing this decoration was pretty consistent with them. It's pretty much the same number of petals, and the leaf motif is very similar. Dave is assuming that the ladies in the factory did this. They probably had a standard they had to follow and they did pretty well with it.

The next photo is a little bowl. (#4) Dave sees this bowl all over the place. This is easily confused with some of the same bowls that Fenton made. It has a very distinctively different shoulder. At the base you can see that the shoulder is rounded where the snap base is. With the darker marigold, Dave would say this is Rose Ice, as opposed to the Aztec.



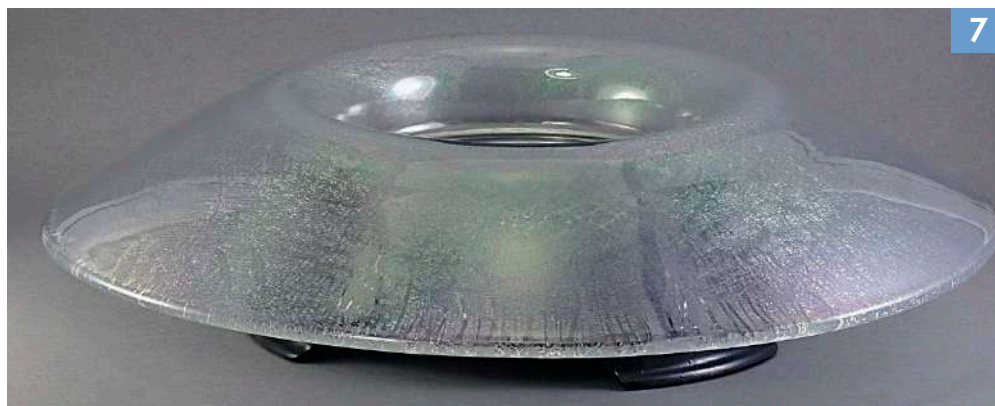
The next two bowls (#5, 6) with the panels appear to have a hint of stretch. The vast majority of these bowls do not really have a stretch effect. There is a whole line of these. There are several sizes of bowls, plates, and a sherbet and underplate. Berry Wiggins and Dave believe they were a separate line that Lancaster made. They obviously made it at the same time they were making the stretch glass. We don't have an exact name for this line. They are nicely done and usually have some very bright marigold iridescence with some deep colors.

Occasionally they will have a rivulet stretch effect from over-doping on them. These are fairly obtainable. There are a comport, several bowls, sherbets, etc. with this marigold treatment.

Kitty commented that the ones that are like the little bowl (#4) are the prettiest of all the marigold stretch of all the companies. They are very vibrant. You can see in this picture some nice purples and pinks.



The last bowl is a flip bowl. (#7) It is made out of the same mold as the marigold bowl (#6) above it. The marigold bowl (#6) obviously was made utilizing the optic plunger whereas this flip bowl (#7) was made with a plain plunger.



This bowl is so heavily rolled over, that if you don't have a stand, it sits on the rim, not on the base. It was made to go on the stand. Since it is not decorated, it has no enamel and is not marigold. This would be a prime example of the Iris Ice. They made some interesting effects on this one. If you look at it carefully over on the left hand side, you can begin to see a reflection of



the light over there. The surface of this has almost no iridescence. Virtually all the iridescence is put on the back. Jeanette also did this occasionally. They would put the stretch iridescence on just one side and let it show through. It produces a very interesting effect. This is a pretty unusual shape. Dave has only seen two of these.

Here are two examples of the footed comport with the cut stars: looking straight down (#9) and viewed from the side (#10). It is flared out almost to a cake plate. Dave has no evidence that the cutting was actually made at the Lancaster factory, but there are a large number of shiny marigold Lancaster pieces with cuttings on them that appear to be factory cuttings. It does appear that during the time this stretch glass was made, they did have a cutting shop at the factory. So Dave would say they probably did this, although he hasn't seen many cuttings on their stretch glass. It's very well done. It has the cut flower motifs separated by sets of ray-like line cuttings. Cal thought that it appeared to have a hole or opening in the center but it really doesn't have a hole in the middle. What you are seeing is the clear glass of the stem. You can see the stem in the second example (#10). This is another one that is more heavily doped on the outside. The cuttings are on the backside, through the iridescence and show through the glass. (This item is also shown in picture #16)

The little 5 1/2' crystal plate with blue flowers (#8) is a souvenir piece. It is unusual to have writing on stretch glass. (Watkins Glen, N.Y.)

The pink cake plate (#11) is made out of the same mold as the cut piece (#10). This one, however, is flattened down as flat as you can get. The shocker is the nice clear pink color. When you see the painted rings and the light yellowish-orange flowers on it, you know it definitely came through the Lancaster decorating shop. It is pink glass, not overall enamel. It is transparent - you can see through it.





12

The iridescence and stretch effect are outstanding on the center handled server (#12). It is marigold or amber iridescence on clear glass with a clear handle.

Comport (#13) looks very goldish when you look through it at the reflection. But if you look down below, you can see the iridescence is almost a brown color. That would be more typical of the Rose Ice iridescence as opposed to the Aztec. This comport is a fairly small piece. It was probably something

like a mayonnaise or some other type of small serving dish.

Panel piece (#14) actually matches the bowls (#5,6) we talked about earlier. This is in that same line. Again, these very rarely have any true stretch effect on them. They are usually a very bright marigold and well iridized. The iridescence usually sticks pretty well. Some of the Imperial marigolds and some of the other marigolds rub off pretty easily. These Lancaster ones seem to be well fired on.



13



14

This comport is a smaller one (#15) that has been flared out. This would be another bright golden marigold, probably more like Aztec.



15

Finally, (#16) we see the same cutting piece from page 3 (#9,10), but another view from the side. You can see it is truly a comport.

Comports #17,18,19 are all made from the same mold, but are different colors and shapes. The high footed Ruby Lustre comport (#17) at the top comes in three basic shapes: 1) '45 degree' edge, 2) top flared as in the green lustre, and 3) rolled rim top. Most of the rolled rim ones



are in the marigold without enamel painting. Perhaps it was hard for decorators to put flowers on a rolled rim! A fourth shape of this comport (#16) is flattened down into the cake plate on the bottom of page 4. It is the same bowl, but not flared out. The pink cake plate (#11) is also the same mold, but flattened completely down on the top.



The mayo is a different mold (#19). This white lustre with white enamel is actually half the size of the two comports (#17,18). It almost always has this very straight side to it and almost always is flattened down at the top. There are some very rare examples of this where it just comes up without being flared out. Dave also knows of a piece of this made from this mold which has a rolled rim. Someone asked if there should be an underplate if it was a mayo. Dave pointed out that there does not necessarily have to be an underplate with a mayo and he is not aware of one to go with this mayo comport.



There is an enameled but not iridized ladle that goes with this.

These photos (#17,18,19) include the more common colors of comports, as in the Ruby Lustre, green lustre and white lustre. The green comport (#18) is a more unusual shape to find.



With the different distinctive shapes of candy jars (20,21,22,23), you know they are Lancaster. You may see #20 often labeled Fenton, but the flat lid gives it away as truly Lancaster.

The mayo or candy jar (#22) in Ruby Lustre is the same uncovered mayo (#19). When Dave purchased #22, he thought somebody had taken the candy jar lid and stuck it on the mayo. He took that lid and put it on the candy jar and it would not fit. It



was too widely flared. So, the lid stays on the mayo making it a candy jar. All of these lids came out of the same mold and were just shaped and flared differently. Perhaps they were changed during the reheating and iridizing so that a couple of the lids got a little wider than others. If they didn't fit on a candy jar, they tried it on another item and sold it that way!

The high and low footed bon bons (#21,23) are two distinctive pieces. The one in marigold (#21) can also be found painted. The short green lustre (#23) one is very commonly found without the lid and looks like a small cupped low footed comport. Most should have a lid.

Continuing with three more candy jars, (#24,25,26) the Iris Ice three footed one (#24) is pretty common. A lid fits perfectly and this indicates it was made as a covered jar and all originally came with lids. If it is ever found without a lid, it is simply missing the lid. Dave has not found this one painted.



Lancaster made only one blown-molded vase (#27, 28); it has a rib optic interior and various top treatments. The sweet pea vase (#27) is a fairly shiny marigold. It matches the shiny marigold paneled pieces (#5,6) we saw earlier. It is the same mold as the white lustre pea vase (#28). The bases of both vases (#27,28) are the same, with the marigold one just pinched in more. Both have the same number of rays. You can just barely see the rays or little optic panels on the inside of the white lustre one (#28). The same one can be found in marigold with the beautiful stretch effect on it. This is why Berry and Dave thought these were probably two different lines. The shiny marigold treatment was used on this vase, and obviously the one with the true stretch was in their true stretch line.



The shiny marigold candy jar (#26) has feet that are a bit different than #24. The knobs on the top of the lids are also different, so it almost looks like they had two different molds to make these three footed pieces.



The sweet pea vase (#28) with the white lustre, blue flowers and orange rings is a real knock out! It has everything going for it - flared out, rolled up around the edge and a saw-tooth edge stretch! Stephanie had one in Ruby Lustre with black or darker rings and blue flowers. It would knock your eyes out, not only with the iridescence, but with the stretch. It was awesome, but she sold it! Wonder if anyone out there has it?



This green lustre mayo (#29) is flattened down at the top like the white lustre mayo (#19) mentioned earlier. The green lustre mayo has the matching enamel ladle, but it is not iridized. These ladles are a little different than the Fenton and U.S. ladles. These have a little round cup that doesn't have straight sides to it.



Look carefully at the little bowl and plate (#30). The plate is like the little 5 1/2" plate (#8) that has the little rays. Jim and Pam Steinbach showed up with a little bowl that was sitting on this plate with the Lancaster flowers. So it is a Lancaster piece without a doubt.



#31 has another plain plate with no rays. It has a Lancaster cheese dish sitting in it. The cheese dish and plate are similarly decorated. They came out of the factory that way. There is a true bigger cheese plate and dish. There's also the smaller one that used the same cheese dish, but a different plate.



Notice the panels in the deep rich marigold sherbet/plate set (#32)

#33 is a Lancaster stretch cheese dish and plate with the ring on the inside. The cheese dish can especially be confused with some of the Imperial ones. Dave indicates how you can differentiate these in his Stretch Glass book by the measurements and whether or not they have rings under the dish. He has never seen one of these cheese dishes with the flower paintings or overall enamel.

#34 is a cheese and cracker with the gold decoration on it. If you see the plate by itself, you don't really think this is a cracker plate on which a cheese dish is going to fit. It looks like a plate because it doesn't have a ring. It does have an indentation, however. When you get the right cheese dish, it fits very nicely and secure.

As you can see, there is much to know about Lancaster stretch glass and a wide variety of examples to collect, many of which are quite practical and useful on your table. While Lancaster was not as prolific as the larger companies which made early period stretch glass, they did offer an adequate variety of items to enable collectors today to build a substantial collection, especially if one attempted to acquire each shape in each of the enameled and non-enameled finishes. For more photographs of Lancaster stretch glass please visit shetlarglass.com. Additional information on Lancaster stretch glass may be found in past issues of The Stretch Glass Society Quarterly, available on the Members Only pages of this website. Lancaster has been featured in The Stretch Glass Society Quarterly on several occasions during the past 40+ years.



32



33



34

Thank you for your interest in Lancaster stretch glass and for visiting The Stretch Glass Society. We look forward to welcoming you back to our website in the future and to a future Stretch Out Discussion Call.