



**STRETCH OUT DISCUSSION**

**DELUXE EDITION**

**LATE PERIOD FENTON STRETCH GLASS, PART 3**

Stretch Out Discussion Call on February 8, 2018



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. Leading this discussion was Sarah Plummer. Sarah is an expert who knows the Fenton catalogues by heart and is very familiar with their late period stretch glass, gave an informative overview that included how we tell early period stretch glass from late period stretch glass.

Current SGS President, Cal Hackeman, also contributes to our discussions. 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.



### **Late Period Fenton Stretch Glass, Part 3**

On February 8, 2018, The Stretch Glass Society hosted its third in-depth discussion on the topic of late period stretch glass in-line pieces produced between 1980 and 2011. The first two calls, in May and October 2017, featured Velva Rose Stretch, Velva Blue Stretch, Stiegel Green Stretch, Sunset Stretch, Green Apple Stretch and Celeste Blue Stretch. Please enjoy the discussion on the last of these in-line colors of stretch glass, which were made between 2003 and 2007.

- Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch, a new color, introduced in 2005
- Aquamarine Opalescent Stretch, another new color, introduced in 2005
- Aubergine Stretch, also a new color, in 2007
- Red Stretch, originally called Ruby, was re-introduced in 2007
- Ruby Amberina Stretch, very similar to early Ruby and 2007 Red, was made every year from 2003 through 2006

The primary way we differentiate the stretch glass from the two periods is by their color and shape. Most of the late period stretch will also have one of the Fenton logo marks, but some are missing the marks and some seem to have lost the mark during the multiple reheating periods needed for their manufacture.

As a result, the absence of a Fenton logo is NOT a guarantee that the item is from the early period when none of the stretch glass was marked. A better way to determine the approximate age of your stretch glass is by the color and the item itself. While some molds from the early stretch period were re-used in the late period, many of the late period items were made in molds NOT used for stretch glass in the early period. And, for the most part, the late period stretch was made in different colors than that made in the early period

Fenton called their reintroduced ruby stretch, **Ruby Amberina Stretch** (first cataloged in 2003) and this continued until 2007 when Red Stretch was used on one of the catalog pages.



Ruby Amberina Stretch



Red Stretch

Sarah does not know why Fenton changed the name of the color, because from all appearances, exactly the same glass chemistry was used to make the selenium-based color. Red Stretch and Ruby Amberina show the same characteristics in most cases (most of the upper parts of the piece being a ruby red and the stem, foot or handles being yellow – amberina). Sarah knows of no other Fenton color that was called Ruby Amberina. Fenton had a tradition of creating unique color names, never just using red, blue, yellow or green, with the exception of the Green Translucent glass they produced in the early depression years.

Of all the colors of late period stretch glass produced by Fenton, they only re-used two original color names: Velva Rose and Celeste Blue. The new Velva Rose glass isn't the same as the original Velva rose color, but it's pretty close. Keep in mind that even in the early stretch period, Velva Rose varies in color, in some part due to the amount of reheating the piece endured. During the late period, Fenton was able to make a pink glass that didn't require "striking", as the original Velva Rose required. The Celeste Blue stretch glass in the late period is consistent with that of the early period, so one needs to look at other characteristics to differentiate between early and late period Celeste Blue stretch glass. All the other late period stretch glass colors had new names, but some of the colors are very close to early period colors. For instance, you will find Aquamarine Stretch in the early period. But in the later period it is Aquamarine Opalescent Stretch. Sometimes the opalescence isn't nearly as obvious as you might think it would be, and other times it's fairly noticeable. It's like opalescent glass treatments under any circumstances; sometimes the opalescent effect is very obvious and sometimes it's not.

**Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch** is nearly an opaque glass. The colors of the other late period stretch glass are all a little bit more on the translucent side or transparent. It is important to remember these last five colors were the last colors that Fenton produced in-line. In other words, that were shown in their catalogue. Fenton stopped producing their dealer catalogues at the end of 2007. They continued to produce printed folios or pamphlets after that, but 2007 was the last real catalogue that was produced before the doors were closed in 2011. In 2008, 2009, and 2010, we may find pamphlets that showed production of some very small batches of glass, but not really anything that would identify truly as completely different from other late period stretch glass. For example, you might find a couple more pieces of Ruby Amberina, because it was such a good seller for Fenton. Ruby Amberina is probably the most popular stretch color of any of the late period colors that Fenton produced. They used it not only for in-line pieces, but they also produced stretch glass for QVC in this color. You will find some of the same shapes and colors of glass being made for QVC and Fenton. With the Ruby Amberina you will find the same shapes with a decoration for QVC which is different than the decorations in the catalogue. Starting with the April stretch call, we'll discuss Stretch glass that Fenton produced for QVC.



Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch

Dave Shetlar shed some more light on the making of opalescent glass. Pressed and blown-molded opalescent glass has chemicals in it that become a milky opaque when cooled, then reheated. The milky color is most common along the rim, feet and raised areas that may have been impressed during the molding process. Depending on how long the finisher allows the piece to cool and the reheating time in the glory hole, more or less opalescence will occur. Iridized opalescent glass is well known. The Dugan-Diamond peach opalescent carnival glass is one such line. We often see a hint of opalescence on some of Fenton's Tangerine stretch pieces. There are some pieces of opalescent glass that are opalescent through and through and others that are just opalescent along the rim. The Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch and the Aquamarine Opalescent Stretch have a variation in the amount of opalescence visible in the final pieces of stretch glass.



One of the things we have to remember is that from roughly 2000 on, the quantity of Fenton's production declined. It appears that Fenton did not make very much of the Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch. The other thing one should remember is that pieces were pictured in the catalogue, but the skilled workmen producing the glass may have not produced the anticipated quantity of first quality pieces. This was particularly true of the signed numbered pieces (=signature pieces). A catalog might state there was an offering of 2000 pieces, but in many cases, there were never 2000 pieces made. You don't see Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch commonly in the market place, for it was not a big seller. The iridescence and stretch effects are difficult to see. Most pieces are almost opaque, so you don't get any light through it. This is stretch glass that we should be keeping our eye out for - maybe not because it's so beautiful, but to make sure that we have examples of it in our collections.

Fenton seems to have retooled or remade the tulip bowl mold (#1) The original ones have sharper points to the petals of the tulip. The more recent ones have rounded points on them. Knowing Frank Fenton, they did this deliberately to reduce the amount of chipping. When The Stretch Glass Society was working with Frank to have late period stretch glass made by Fenton, the workers at Fenton really liked to fire polish edges so that they had less rim chipping. And, of course the representatives of the Society said, "No, we want the rim as rough as possible!" We had to try to hit a happy medium on that.



The handkerchief vase (#2) is actually a swung vase. Finishers did the swinging in two different ways. They could just swing the piece and that elongates it. To make a handkerchief, they also twist it. They twist the snap rod that they are holding, and that flares the top out. Then when they stop swinging, the expanded top sort of folds together like a handkerchief.



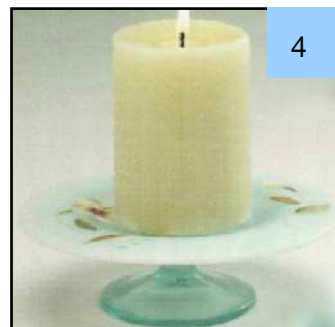
The dolphin handled server (#3) is similar to the amethyst stretch dolphin handled servers which were made for The Stretch Glass Society a few years earlier. Dave still remembers the day that Frank Fenton informed Jim Steinbach that Jim Measell had found the snaps for the dolphin handled servers. Frank knew that they had the molds for the dolphin handled servers, but they had a challenge finding the snaps. So, once the snaps were found, production of dolphin handled servers could be tried again! The Stretch Glass Society now owns several of those snaps. The snap is two-jawed with an elongated rectangle of metal. The inside of the jaws is hollowed out to fit exactly around the dolphin handle. Holding the dolphin handle is how this piece of glass is removed from the mold, carried to the spraying booth, returned to the glory hole and held while it is worked into the final shape. This means that you won't find any iridescence on the dolphin. You only see iridescence below the dolphin and on the tray itself.



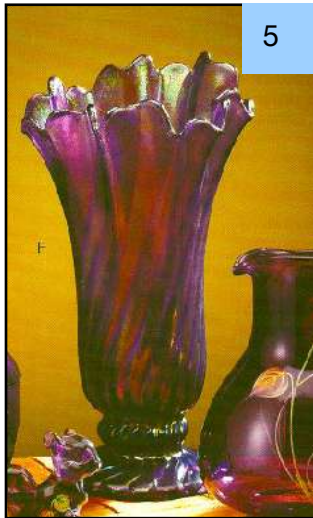
The 11" **Aquamarine Opalescent Stretch** tray (#3) is actually in the shape of the original that we would like to see as a finished product. This tray comes out of the mold as a giant bell with the dolphin being the handle of the bell. They had to flatten the sides of the bell to make the tray. When Fenton agreed to make this item for The Stretch Glass Society, they had a hard time with flattening the sides.

A lot of the Stretch Glass Society dolphin center handled servers came out looking a bit like a bowler hat with a dolphin on top. Many of these servers sit on the tray rim. There is actually a small ring molded into the base which is where the tray should actually sit. Most of the ones that were considered to be first quality, did not sit on that ring. Dave remembers going into the Fenton gift shop when they had some seconds for sale. I was looking at them and I asked, "Why are these seconds?" The answer was, "They got folded too far." They were sitting on that ring like they were supposed to! Needless to say I purchased some of these "seconds!"

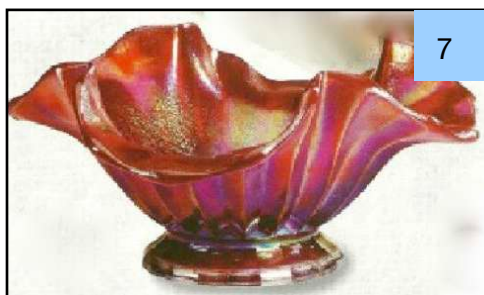
The 7-inch candleplate (#4) would have been called a card tray during the early production period. As was stated, there could be various painted designs in the catalogue. The one pictured has the Sand Petals decoration which was a floral design.



To a lot of people, this **Aubergine Stretch** looks like Wisteria, but if you put a piece of early period Wisteria stretch glass next to a piece of Aubergine stretch glass from the late period, you will realize this is a much richer color than the early Wisteria. When it came out, Dave really fell in love with the color. It took the stretch effect very well and they did a number of pieces in this Aubergine glass. These are indicated as swung vases, but do you notice that the one on the left has a twisted design on it? (#5) These also have handkerchief tops, though the 7-inch Diamond vase (#6) is swung pretty much straight.



Russell Umbraco discussed the difference between Amberina (#7) and Red (#8).



A solid red (or ruby) glass is a difficult thing to make. Selenium is most commonly used, often with some copper compounds added. The glass with selenium in the mix will appear yellow when a gather is pulled out of the

pot. This glass is allowed to cool slightly, then it is reheated in a reduction atmosphere (i.e., a glory hole that has the oxygen intakes reduced), the glass then turns a ruby red color. This is called striking. If workers try really hard, they may be able to get an entire piece of glass to strike a ruby red. However, if they only reheat the outer part of the glass, the parts that don't get reheated sufficiently remain a yellow color. This grading from ruby red to yellow is called Amberina. Dave added that when Frank Fenton was alive he stated that Fenton was primarily in competition with Imperial when it came to making ruby glass.





Fenton always prided themselves as achieving red through and through without any Amberina. If you get several Imperial Ruby Ice pieces and place them side by side with most of the older Fenton Ruby, you'll see that most of the Fenton may have just a little hint of Amberina at the bottom, but they really tried to strike the entire piece a deep red. Dave mentioned this could be a problem if you look at one of the original red punch bowls by Fenton because sometimes those can be so heavily struck that from a distance you're not sure exactly what color it is. Is it purple or is it red? You can't see through the glass because it is so dark and iridized. In contrast, you can see through most of the Imperial bowls because the red is not as deep. In the late period ruby/red stretch productions, they seem to have lightened the color up a little bit. Fenton didn't strike the pieces as deeply and you can actually see the red glass.

The question was asked of Russell if the older glass contained gold and the new did not. Gold was used to make cranberry glass that strikes a pinkish color. Glass makers used selenium, for the most part, to get a rich red, but some of the chemists added copper compounds. There are three chemicals you can work with - gold, copper, and selenium. You get different colors of red from each chemical. The cranberry colored glass being from the mixture with gold. With copper, you get a lot of lighter shades of reds. Some believe that Imperial had more copper in their formulas. If you want a good rich pure ruby red, you have to use the right amount of selenium in the batch mixture. Kitty Umbraco added that a lot of the old Fenton ruby bowls only had the iridescence applied to the inside. That way they were able to better strike a dark ruby red. However, some of the ruby red almost looks black if no light is shining through it.



The **Ruby Amberina Stretch** flip vase (#9), produced in **2003**, has diamond optic interior that's not easily seen. The other point of interest is that Fenton remade the black bases. The new black bases typically will have a Fenton logo in the base. Another typical distinguishing feature of these black bases is that they have a cross-hatched design on the top, where piece of glass sits. By adding the cross-hatched design, the piece of glass on the stand is less prone to slide around on the base. The enamel decoration on the flip vase is a complex pattern - 'Wine Country



The 10 1/2" Cloverleaf Bowl (#10) has a beautiful stretch effect, like the 11" large bowl (#11)





In **2004** this unique **Ruby Amberina Stretch** plume vase (#12) was produced. That was a difficult mold to design and to produce. There was never anything like it in the early period stretch. It was a new mold, not even a retooled mold. When the vase came out of the mold, it was round. Then it was squeezed together like a fan vase. It is doubtful that there were any that didn't get squeezed together, however there is a possibility that they had some which went to the second shop. We will never know until one of them shows up in a collection or a sale. We could ask Dave Fetty if he remembers seeing any of these pieces in other than the fan vase. He's about the only living person who is familiar with all the techniques that went on in the Fenton factory.



Next, we have the famous **2005 & 2006 Ruby Amberina Stretch** Dolphin comport (#13) in a square shape. If you look at the foot of the dolphin comport, you'll notice that it has a very nice delicate thickness. The original ones actually had a thick rim around the outside edge of the foot. When they retooled the base of the mold for these twin dolphin pieces, they thinned the base out. That's one of those unusual cases where an item made in the late period is actually a bit more delicate than the original one made in the early period.



We are seeing a number of these late period twin-dolphin comports in red stretch glass show up without the Fenton logo inside the base of the foot. We don't know why there are so many of them without the logo. It's very confusing to collectors and dealers, because they see ones that they think have a thin base, so they immediately think, 'Oh this must be old!' Many are thinking in terms of everything newer is thicker and heavier. That rule doesn't work in this case. And then they flip the comport over and don't find the Fenton logo. This reinforces their belief that they've stumbled upon a great bargain! They think they're buying an early period dolphin stretch glass comport for the price of a late period one! We've had several of these show up at conventions requesting ID on them. Unfortunately, they have all turned out to be new, but without the logo. This is where being associated with the Stretch Glass Society, and being aware of these details, will save you from a relatively bad investment.

If you have a collection of early period dolphin handled stretch glass, including a Ruby one, you can do the comparison yourself. Pick up one piece that's the same size as your recent (or to be purchased) item and compare it. The old ones are also a little lighter red than you might expect. They're not a rich ruby red, but more of an orange-red. It is unusual to see new ones that have the strong Amberina color on the dolphins (as was illustrated in the catalog image). Most of the new ones are deep red through and through. If you would see a red one like the one pictured with the real yellow Amberina on the dolphins, it would be something to purchase.

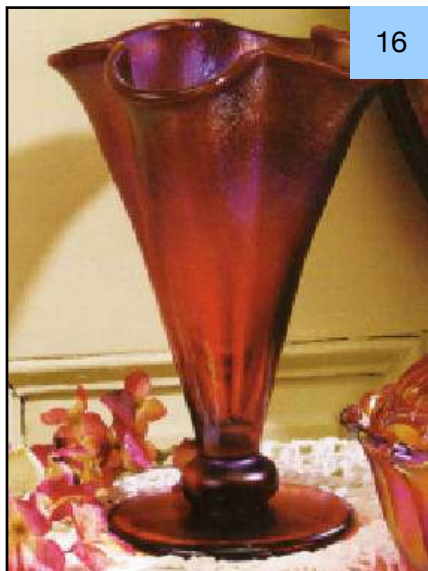
The 5" Rose Bowl (#14) doesn't have much of a stretch effect. The vast majority are shiny. They're not common, but also not rare.



An item which we see frequently is the 12" Ribbed Bowl (#15). It is really quite a heavy chunk of glass usually with excellent stretch effect.

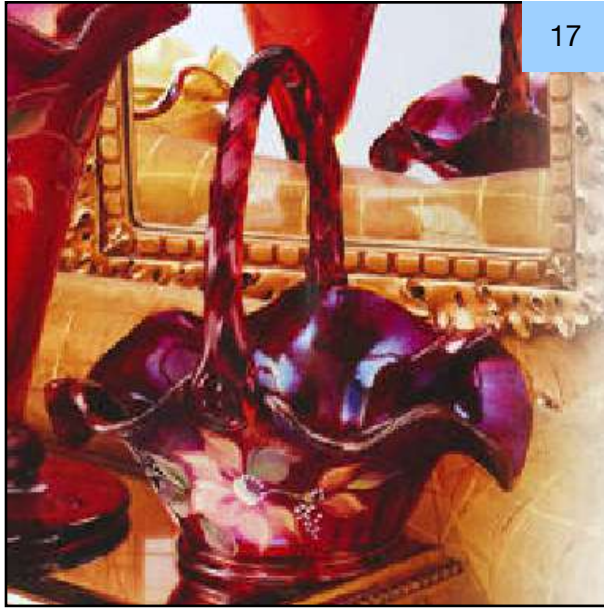


Fenton made a number of the 8 ½-inch Cloverleaf vases. (#16). Dave Shetlar and John Madely called them "ball-footed" vases in their book, American Iridescent Stretch Glass. Fenton made this vase in a number of different colors with the 4-crimped ones being called cloverleaf. This last summer Dave picked up a vase that had an 8-crimped top at one of the flea markets. There are some other top treatments out there, probably more in the whimsey category (i.e., not being in the regular line). Using that same mold, Russell



said that Fenton made one in Celeste Blue for MMA (Metropolitan Museum of Art). They also made it in a light cobalt blue and another in a dark cobalt. It looks like the late period ones were made from the same mold as the early period ones. If you look at the foot of the vase, the foot of the one pictured seems to be a little thicker than the early period one. The feeling is that Fenton had to scour out the mold, which made the foot a little bit thicker. We don't find these vases from the early period with the clover top, but we do find them with a number of different top shapes. We also find the same mold being used to make fan vases in the early period. We usually do not find fan vases being made from this mold in the late period, except for the MMA piece. Most of the late period production ball-footed vases are trumpet shaped or they have the clover top. Sometimes they have a rolled rim. Bob Henkel, a retired florist in addition to being the moderator of our

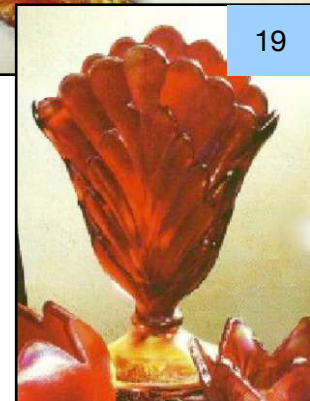
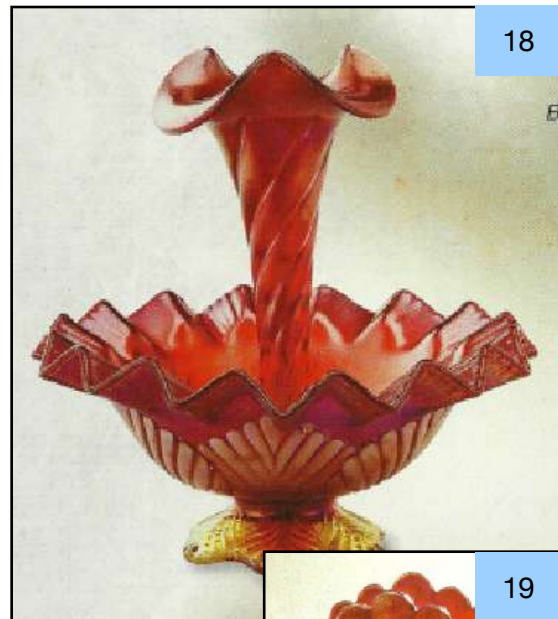
call, mentioned that the cloverleaf vase is very user-friendly when it comes to using it for flowers because of the fact that it has the clover top. This is much better than the old ones in the trumpet shape which required some work to get flowers to stay in place.



The 7-inch basket (#17) was made using a bowl that had used an optic-rib plunger. If you look on the inside of the basket you will see it has optic ribs. The handle is applied, not molded. You could potentially find different handles on these. All of them were individually applied. Most of them that have been seen have the twist. Occasionally you can find a smooth handle that has small crimps in it. The handlers had some leeway when it came to what type of a handle they applied. It's amazing how they twist the handle! The glass for the handle was gathered on a rod, pushed into a little vase-shaped, square mold which made the glob of glass square. The handler's assistant

would do this while the handler was getting a bowl ready to accept the handle. When the handler attaches the square piece of glass to one side of the bowl, he pulls it out, spins the basket around and that makes the twist design. Then he attaches the stretched out glass handle to the other side.

If you look on the outside of the swirl epergne, (#18) you see that it has the same scallop shape as the fan vase we were talking about earlier (#19). Fenton called this two-piece set, a Swirl Epergne, because the horn has a swirl pattern in it. They made the very pronounced scallops on the bowl by putting the base into a crimper - a double metal crimper. They flared the bowl out a little bit, set it on this crimper, stepped on a pedal and the crimper came down and made those sharp jagged edges to it. The horn, on the other hand is done by hand. The person finishing that would flare the top out, pull three sides up, and then they would fold the in-between spaces down. There weren't a lot of these one-horn epergnes around as Fenton had a hard time fitting the horn into the bases. Sarah actually had one of the horns that she bought without the bowl and she had to get a metal bracket to hold it, similar to having a holder for a car vase. Russell added that if your horn is too fat and doesn't fit down in the bowl, you can take that horn to a scientific glass blower. They have the tools that are needed to grind it to fit. They can also polish it. If the hole is too big they can slip a plastic cap over the end of it, so it will fit securely in the hole.







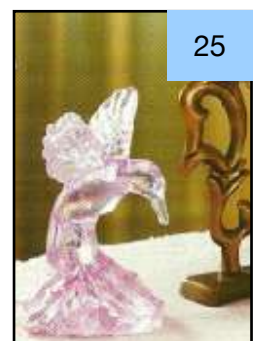
Fenton made the 10-inch Handkerchief Vase (#20) in several colors during this period. Most of these are very heavy. The Aubergine and the Ruby Stretch ones have very good stretch effect at the top, but shinier iridescence at the bottom of them. Kitty indicated that they had trouble with those embossed flames on the bottom. Russell and Kitty were given one of the first ones by Frank Fenton. Even though it's a thick piece, they had to be really careful in the ovens, because the flames would burn the glass. They had quite a hard time not burning and perfecting them.

The stand that goes under the Rose Bowl (#21) is not a stand that Fenton made, but one that they did sell. They put a couple different bowls on it instead of using a black base. It was sold in the Gift Shop at the time they were selling the bowls that went in it. In the final years of the



Gift Shop, they would have a whole stack of just their brass stands or some of the other brass pieces. They had over-ordered on the brass pieces and not used them, or not shipped them with the actual bowls. They had them for sale as odd pieces. There is a possibility that you would see a bunch of these bases without any bowls at a flea market. The other thing to remember is that if a bowl was a second, they often did not sell it with the accessory pieces.

The little bird, ring mold, and covered candy jar (#22, 23, 24) will generally have just a shiny or a little satin iridescence, since they weren't reshaped and reheated. Remember, the reheating gives the iridescence the stretch affect. They are considered late period stretch glass because they were in the stretch glass line.



Sometimes, on the little hummingbird, (#25) there will be a little bit of stretch effect on the wings, but that's about it.



Dave does not remember seeing any of the old gas lamps.  
Few of the shades ever had stretch on the top. (#26)



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Nearly every color of glass made by Fenton was sold with a decoration and without a decoration. If they brought the same piece of glass back for a second year, they often sold it with a second decoration. The typical decorations and the late period stretch on which they were painted are:

- Rosemilk Opalescent Stretch 2005 and 2006-Tulip Delight; (#26)
- Aquamarine Opalescent Stretch 2006-Sand Petals; (#27)
- Aubergine Stretch 2007-Vision; (#28)
- Ruby Amberina Stretch 2003-Wine Country (#29), 2004-Trailing Wisteria (#30), 2005-Tuscan Charm (#31); and
- Red Stretch 2007-Golden Pods (#32)
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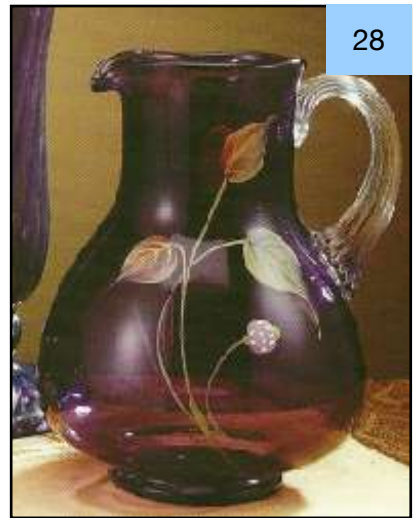
You'll see a 4th pattern on the Ruby Amberina that they did exclusively for QVC.



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When Fenton was in operation, they had a book which had all the decorations in it. We believe that most of those books are now in the Fenton company records at the Corning Museum of Glass. They are currently being catalogued and are not available to the public at this time.

Harry Goldman wrote two books called Fenton Made for Other Companies. In those books a number of the larger contractors along with some of the independents are named. This provides a record of some of the decorating done at Fenton. There really isn't a record of the custom decorating that was done for individuals who had items decorated through the Fenton gift shop.

Fenton made some turn of the century style reproductions in Ruby Amberina Stretch and Aubergine Stretch toward the end of their production. In this line they included a metal basket-shaped frame to hold a brides's bowl. They did a cruet set and a cream and sugar set, both of which had metal holders. The cruet set didn't have much stretch on it, but the brides' bowl did and the cream & sugar did as well. They produced them in three colors.

What's coming up on the next Stretch Out Discussion?

The next call is going to be in exactly one month - on March the 8th. We're going to jump back almost a century to talk about U.S. Glass that was made in the early stretch glass period. U.S. Glass made some very interesting and intricate pieces with two distinct styles of "open work" which was created in the mold. Once the pieces were out of the mold, iridized and reheated, they were reshaped – amazingly the open work designs remained intact! U.S. Glass produced several lines of stretch glass within their overall stretch glass line. We will be taking a look at these as well as the wide array of vases and other items offered by U.S. Glass.

Some of the photographs for the March 8, 2018, Stretch Out Discussion are already on The Stretch Glass Society's web site at [www.stretchglassociety.org](http://www.stretchglassociety.org). You won't want to miss this call! We will learn a lot and there's a lot of very interesting glass for us to talk about. We look forward to you joining us next month.



U. S.Glass