



STRETCH GLASS REVIEW
Overall Enamel Decorated Pieces
Stretch Out Discussion Call on Nov. 10, 2022



The Stretch Glass Society's Stretch Out Discussion on November 10, 2022, focused on Early Period stretch glass which was decorated using enamel paint to achieve the color seen under the iridescence. While the color of most stretch glass is IN the glass, the color of the 'enamelized' stretch glass is ON the glass. This technique was utilized primarily by two companies producing stretch glass in the 1920s: Lancaster Glass Company in Lancaster, Ohio, and United States Glass Company which made stretch glass in two of its factories, Factory K in Pittsburgh, PA and Factory R in Tiffin, Ohio.

The enameling process was an added step, sometimes more than one step, which resulted in colorless glass taking on color(s). The process began with the making of molded, iridized colorless glass. When this stretch glass had cooled and was determined to be suitable for finishing, it was sent to the decorating department where the enamel color decoration was applied. A careful examination of a piece of this stretch glass will reveal the iridescence on one side of the glass, usually the top or outside, and the enamel color and decorations on the other side of the glass, usually the underside. While it may appear that the iridescence is on top of the enamel color, this is not the case. Furthermore, often there is more than just enamel color applied to the piece of glass. In the case of Lancaster, many of their items have hand-painted flowers which were then sprayed over with the overall enamel color decoration. The same is true for the US Glass "Pamona" items, which have a stenciled design visible through the glass which is then sprayed over by the overall enamel color decoration. Once the enamel decoration(s) are applied, the glass was heated again to adhere the decoration to the glass permanently. These aspects of the particular stretch glass will be discussed further when the individual items are presented and discussed later in this Review.

There are a lot of pieces of stretch glass which have painted decoration. The paint used was generally enamel paint. Decorations were applied primarily by two processes. The first is described in the previous paragraph and results in a decoration which is permanently on the glass. The other type of decorating was done by "hobbyists" who painted designs on their stretch glass after they had purchased it. The hobbyists did not generally reheat their glass and as such the decorations are less than permanent and often are missing areas of paint due to flaking which occurs when the items are used, washed, cleaned, etc. It was very common in some of the ladies' hobby magazines of the period to have designs with instructions as to what color paint to use to achieve a result similar to the image presented. People used those designs to decorate pieces of pottery or glassware, but because they did not 'fire' the glass after decorating it, the decorations come off somewhat easily. As discussed above, typically, when the companies applied painted decorations, they used enamels that actually needed to be put into a lehr or a kiln in order to fire them on.

Types of enamel decoration

There are a multitude of different ways that enamels can be used. One of the most common is to apply a band of 'gold' decoration. This was very common at the time stretch glass was being made and marketed. Some of the gold paint actually had some gold in the mixture. During the 1910's to the early 1930's, it might have been said the decoration was gold leaf or gold decoration, but most of it actually contained brass. Brass paint could be purchased that was from a very bright yellow gold to a very dark, almost amber gold color.

Here are two types of 'gold' band decorations - the one on the left is an acid etched design (#1). The etched design is in the glass as a result of using an acid solution on the glass. Before the acid is applied, certain areas of the glass are protected so that only the unprotected areas will be etched by the acid. Once this is completed, then the gold enamel is applied on top of the etched area. The problem with this gold enamel is

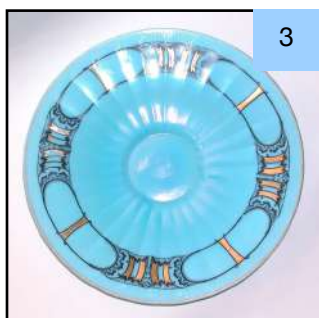


that it was not fired on, so it comes off fairly easy. Washing the pieces with this gold decoration has to be done very carefully and should not involve strong detergents or anything rough. Failure to be careful will result in the gold being rubbed off and only the acid etched design will remain.

The decoration on the green Central Glass bowl (#2) was made using what is referred to as a glue chip. Glue chip decoration is an interesting way to decorate a piece of glass. It is actually a way to etch glass. Remember what frost on a window looks like early in the morning - that is what this glue chip decoration produces. The way it is produced is that the decorator will take what they called fish glue (so named because it apparently had a stinky odor) and paint the glue on the glass. They would let it dry completely and then put the piece of glass with the fish glue into an oven; the glue apparently adhered to the glass so tightly that when the glue is heated, it shrunk and it literally peeled off some slivers of glass. After the slivers peeled off, the glass that remained looked like a frosted window. Then the area was decorated with gold enamel, which actually had brass in it.



These are actually not over-all enamel decoration. It's enamel decoration done over the top of an etching of some sort, whether it is the acid etching, like we see on the left, or whether it be the glue chip etching, that we see on the right.



The next two examples (#3,4), produced by H. Northwood & Company, are excellent examples of an overall design done with enamel paint. Most of these were fired in the factory. The design will not come off easily, except for the gold accents. The black enamel seems to stay on the glass better than the gold paint.



Other companies and other decorators also used enamels. In this particular case, there are three different kinds of enamel decorations. These are all Fenton pieces. The blue cologne (#5) on the left is a very interesting one. It is not known if this was done in the Fenton Decorating Dept or if it was done by a local artist, but the floral design is considerably raised. It is almost like the decorator used a palette and put dots of thick paint onto the surface. This type of decoration has been found on several pieces of stretch glass. Because of that heavy amount of paint, it is very easy to chip it off and requires care when it is being used or handled.

The design on the fan vase (#6) is known on more than a dozen decorated Fenton items. It is a classic design and appears to be an art deco style - orchid or floral decoration. It is an enamel decoration that was fired on. The problem with firing it on is that some of that enamel does chip or come off. A shadow will remain where the enamel was on the glass and the true iridescence will not remain on the glass in that area.



The vase (#7) is a popular style made by Fenton. However, this vase has thin rings of blue enamel. We know of a bowl, a tumble-up, several plates, several vases, and other items with this specific decoration. Fenton probably made a whole line of this. The blue enamel rings are always on Persian Pearl pieces. In connection with the sale of glass in the Fenton museum, a fan vase was sold with blue glass threading on it. According to George Fenton, President of Fenton Art Glass Company, the vase with the blue glass threading was an attempt by Fenton to make threaded glass similar to that which was made by other companies in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Fenton was not successful in making threaded glass and they decided instead to paint the 'thread' on their pieces as is shown on this vase. The decoration has a nice, elegant effect.

Overall - Lancaster Ruby Lustre

Overall enameled stretch glass made by Lancaster is featured in figures 8 to 13. There is documentation which indicates Lancaster referred to this overall orange to cream or slightly yellow color enamel, as Ruby Lustre. The glass itself is actually crystal/colorless glass with iris ice iridescence on it. Then they jazzed it up by doing this all-over enameling. Most of the Ruby Lustre stretch glass has blue flowers and green tendrils and blue concentric rings. Occasionally, pieces with yellow or other colored flowers are found. The pieces with any of the other than blue colored flowers are very rare pieces.



Pictured here are virtually all the items Lancaster made in this color - a flared bowl (#8), a high standard bon bon or covered candy jar (#9), a cone shape candy jar (#10) and then, what is referred to as a 45 degree angled bowl (#11). They also made a pair of candleholders (#12) and a low footed covered bonbon or candy jar (#13). Note that in the covered pieces and in the candleholders the colorless glass under the enamel decoration is shown in the undecorated finials and candle cups.

Overall - Lancaster - White Lustre

This is called White Lustre as opposed to the Ruby Lustre. In these pieces the overall enamel is a white enamel. Although, the short footed covered bon bon (#14) on the left hand side, has a little bit of a greenish cast. It is not known if that change in color was because the enamel got dirty or for another reason.



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Look at the decoration on the big comport (#15). There are no rings or bands with the flowers inside of it. In this kind of comport they just painted the flowers on it and then sprayed the white enamel over the entire piece.



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The three pieces below, the footed mayonnaise (#16) and the two bon bons (#17,18), have orange rings whereas the one at the bottom (#19) has blue rings on it. The decorator switched things around. Instead of having orange rings with blue flowers, there are blue rings with orange flowers. There can often be some subtle differences in these details.



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The white flared bowl (#20) on the left has a blue ring with orange flowers. The pea vase (#21) on the right has an orange ring with blue flowers. It would take a sizable collection to capture all of the pieces with all of the variations of the flower and the ring colors.

In case it is difficult to tell, the flowers and the rings were applied to the glass first, then dried. Then the whole piece was sprayed with the white enamel. The flowers and the ring are under the overall white enamel.

Overall - Lancaster-Green Lustre

Some of the Green Lustre pieces are readily obtainable. Instead of an orangish red enamel graded into the cream color enamel, this color is a green enamel that grades into the cream color enamel. Virtually all of these items - the 45 degree bowl (#22), the covered candy jar or covered bon box (#23), the footed candy jar (#24) and the other footed comport (#25) - all have blue rings and orange flowers.





Fig. 26 is a mayonnaise with the original ladle. Unfortunately, the ladle isn't iridized, but it is decorated with the green enamel graded into the cream color at the end of the handle.

The candleholders (#27) have the green overall enamel going into the cream color, with the blue rings and the orange enameled flowers on them and again show the colorless glass where they are not decorated.



Overall - U.S. Glass Pomona (yellow)

U.S. Glass is the other company that made most of what is considered the overall enameled pieces. In the catalogues, they only define this as Pomona, but we do know that there are two colors of Pomona, yellow with blue and purple/wine with blue.

The yellow Pomona on this page and the following page, used the same stencil design. It was not the same stencil on each piece, but it was the same stencil design that was adjusted to fit the shape of the item. The stencil is a stylized leaf pattern. We believe the stencil was attached to the glass and blue enamel paint is sprayed on it. After that dried, they sprayed a yellow enamel over the underside of the entire item.

The smaller footed comport (#28) on the right has an interesting application of the blue enamel. At the bottom of the comport, midway, there seems to be a line, which has a little bit of the blue enamel. Whoever was spraying the blue paint on the stencil missed the bottom of the stencil and actually got some overspray of the blue paint. They sprayed the yellow enamel over the entire piece, but the blue overspray is still visible.





The same thing happened on the candleholders (#29). Some of the blue enamel got onto the stem of the candleholder. The workers probably applied the stencil, sprayed it as fast as they could, and in this case there was some overspray that went past where the stencil was.



The plate (#30) and large bowl (#31) have that same stencil design. After the blue enamel was applied they sprayed the yellow enamel over the entire underside. The plate pictured, fits perfectly under the mayonnaise comport (#32). Documentation does not yet exist as to whether the plate and the mayonnaise comport were offered as a set or if they just happen to fit together.

At no time was the blue or the yellow enamel sprayed on the surface where the iridescence had been sprayed during the initial molding and shaping of the item. All of the color is on the surface opposite the iridescence.



Overall - U.S. Glass Pomona (purple)

US Glass decorators appear to have used the same blue enamel in the leaf stencil of the Purple Pomona. They sprayed the whole piece on the outside with a bluish to pinkish purple enamel and then fired that on. Here are examples of this color combination on the high standard comport (#33), a mayonnaise (#34), the hat shaped vase (#35) and the plates (#36,37). There are three different sizes of these plates: 7 1/2", 10" and about 13" in diameter.



As has been discussed previously, all of this painting is done on one side of the glass. The other side of the glass is where the iridescence is found. The piece of glass was iridized when it was clear. When you look at it quickly it looks like the painting is under the iridescence. Technically, it is under the iridescence, except there is a layer of clear glass in between. It would have been physically impossible to put the paint on and put the stenciling on while the glass was hot, which is required if you are going to get the iridescence to stretch. So, they had to iridize the piece while the glass was hot, re-shape it, if that was necessary, let it cool, and then put the stencil on. After the stencil design dried, then the overall paint was applied on the back.

Overall - U.S. Glass Cumula

Cumula is another U.S. overall enamel. The word “cumula” does not appear in the dictionary, but it is similar to cumulus, a type of cloud. With some imagination, one can imagine that the white enamel shows through in a kind of wispy cloud shape. In between or around the white enamel is a green enamel. One wonders why they did not use blue enamel, if it was the sky and the clouds which influenced the creation of the design. Unfortunately, no original documentation as to the origin of “Cumula” has been found.

It appears that this design was made by putting on a stencil resist. Wherever the stencil resist has been applied, the paint does not adhere to the glass. Once the resist was in place, the green enamel was sprayed. When the resist was removed, the entire item was sprayed all over with the white enamel. This results in the white ‘clouds’ surrounded by green.

None of these pieces is common. There have been some very interesting pieces found in Cumula. Pictured is a large low footed bowl (#38).



The sherbet and the under plate (#39) have the Cumula design on them. They are one set of 8 which were all found at one time.



As with the Lancaster all over enameled examples, the center handle of the server shows that the server (#40) is made of colorless glass. While there are hundreds of US Glass center handled servers known, very few of them have any of the overall enameled decoration.



As can be seen, the Cumula design varies significantly depending on the particular shape of glass. Not pictured is a Cumula mayonnaise comport with a matching ladle.



Overall - U.S. Glass Unidentified/Experimental

The items pictured here are all attributed to US Glass and they have all-over enameling but, unlike the previous items, these are believed to be experimental pieces because only one of each is known at this time. It is possible factory workers were experimenting with different overall enamel colors to see what they would look like. Apparently these items were not selected for production but made their way out of the factory and are in stretch glass collections today.



The comport (#41) on the left side has a pale blue enamel at the top, grades down to crystal and then blue enamel again in the foot of it.

The comport (#42) on the right is kind of a red-orange, and grades down in the foot to a kind of yellow-orange color. It is an overall enamel on the outside. There is no decoration underneath it. This appears to be an attempt to replicate Amberina which is typically red glass shading to yellow, depending on how much the piece is worked in the glory hole. Red glass is actually yellow when it comes out of the pot and into the mold; it is turned red by a process once it is out of the mold; if it is only partially turned red, it is known as Amberina glass. Keep in mind this comport is colorless glass and the color is being created by applying enamel to it.



The white bowl (#43) is a very interesting example of stretch glass. It is believed to have been made by US Glass; it has ribs that are on the inside which are different than those found on the US Glass #314 line and the #310 line. There is a single rib that comes up on the inside of the bowl; when the rib meets the edge of the bowl there is a little indentation. The design has not been seen on any other stretch glass bowls, but it is believed to have been made by US Glass. It has an overall bright pink enamel on the outside of it. That pink color is not in the glass, it is crystal glass, but it has the pink enamel on the outside of it. The glass is colorless and the iridescence is on the inside of the bowl.



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The final two examples of stretch glass with all-over enameling are mysteries. The makers are unknown at this time. The diameter of the bowl (#44) is 11.” It has shiny iridescence on the inside and also a black enamel ring with a floral stencil decoration. On the outside of the bowl there is a kind of brownish iridescence sprayed on the whole outside.

The outside has sort of a dull amber brown color. A similar bowl has been seen with a 7” diameter and it has the identical decoration. They may have been made by Lancaster or Jeanette, but no documentation is known at this time.

On the right is a mayonnaise or large sherbet (#45) with an overall amber-ish color on the outside of it. It is crystal glass with iridescence on the inside. Again, the maker is unknown at this time.



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It has been well documented that many of the glass companies, as they approached what is today known as ‘the depression era,’ were trying to save money. In terms of cost, the expense associated with the ingredients to make colored glass was greater than the labor costs to make the glass. Therefore, it would have been less expensive to make clear glass and apply enamel colors to it than it would have been to make colored glass. Making colored glass also required having recipes of the various ingredients and these were tightly guarded trade secrets. US Glass and Lancaster made colorless glass and painted it to look like the colored glassware their competitors were producing. However, given the limited supply of enameled stretch glass found today, it does not appear that their products were as successful in the market as the stretch glass which was made of colored glass. We will really never know the true dynamics of colorless, enameled stretch glass versus colored stretch glass because most of the records of the companies which produced stretch glass do not exist today. But we do know that enameled stretch glass is available today in significantly smaller quantities than colored stretch glass.

The 2023 Stretch Out Discussion Series will cover a number of topics not previously discussed. The dates of the Discussions and the topics are as follows:

January 12 - Wisteria, purple & amethyst stretch glass

March 9 - Show and Tell - Swung vases

May 11 - Centered handled servers

Sept. 14 - Show and Tell - Beverage sets and drinking vessels.

Nov. 9 - Fenton 'late production' stretch glass pieces in the pinks

We invite you to join us for these Stretch Out Discussions to learn more about stretch glass and to network with other collectors and stretch glass enthusiasts. Information on both Discussions will be available on stretchglassociety.org.



Thank you for your interest in this [Stretch Glass Review](#) prepared from our recent Stretch Out Discussion. This [Review](#) captured the comments by several stretch glass experts and the participants during our Stretch Out Discussion. For those who participated in the live discussion, this was a refresher of what we discussed with some additional information. If you were not able to join us for the live discussion, this [Review](#) allowed you to experience the discussion and enhance your understanding of the stretch glass we discussed. [Stretch Glass Reviews](#) from many of our discussions are available at stretchglassociety.org and are a valuable source of information about stretch glass.

Stretch Out Discussions provide an opportunity for anyone interested in stretch glass to increase their knowledge and appreciation of stretch glass as well as to share their stretch glass with others. The Discussions are generally organized around a central theme – a color, a company, a shape, etc. Some Discussions are led by our team of experts and others are a “Show & Tell” format during which participants take the lead by sharing stretch glass from their collections consistent with the announced theme. In both cases, the organizers provide an album of relevant stretch glass photos in advance of the Discussion. The Discussions take place via Zoom, making it possible for us to see and hear each other almost as if we were in an in-person setting.



Stretch Out Discussions were conceived by Past President Tim Cantrell as a means of continuing the robust exchanges about stretch glass which occur during our Annual Conventions. Tim felt we should share discoveries, information and help each other learn about stretch glass more often than once a year. The first Stretch Out Discussion was held in February, 2014.



Stretch Out Discussions are organized by Mary Elda Arrington, a member of the Board of Directors of The Stretch Glass Society. Stephanie Bennett, a past Officer and Director, selects and presents the photos of the stretch glass to be discussed. The Discussions are often moderated by Robert Henkel, a past Officer and current Director. Cal Hackeman, past President, and Mary Elda Arrington prepare the Stretch Glass Reviews.

Our team of stretch glass experts consists of

- Dave Shetlar, co-author of American Iridescent Stretch Glass, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Stretch Glass Society, is a frequent speaker and writer on stretch glass. He and his wife, Renée, began collecting stretch glass in the 1980s and continue to have an avid interest in research, new discoveries and documenting stretch glass. They are past Co-Presidents and Life Members of The Stretch Glass Society.
- Russell & Kitty Umbraco, are the authors of Iridescent Stretch Glass. They have been long-time collectors of stretch glass and have been active researchers and promoters of stretch glass as a unique American glass type. They are Life Members of The Stretch Glass Society.
- Sarah Plummer, formerly an authorized Fenton dealer, is a recognized authority on Late Period (1980-2010) stretch glass. Sarah is a former member of the Board of Directors of the National Fenton Glass Society and The Stretch Glass Society.
- Cal Hackeman is a collector and reseller of stretch glass for over 30 years. He is a frequent speaker on stretch glass and is a past President and current officer of The Stretch Glass Society.

You may contact any of our experts via info@stretchglassociety.org. We will be pleased to provide complimentary identification of your stretch glass if you send photos and measurements to us at info@stretchglassociety.org.

The Stretch Glass Society operates as a 501(c)(3) charity. Annual Memberships are available to support our on-going efforts to promote and preserve stretch glass as a unique American type of glassware. Please visit www.stretchglassociety.org to join or contribute to The Society. You will also find us on Facebook where we invite you to 'like' our page or join the Stretch Glass Society Facebook group. Please join us and share your interest in stretch glass.

We hope you found this Stretch Glass Review educational and encouraging as you enjoy, collect, research, buy and sell stretch glass. We look forward to you joining us live for a future Stretch Out Discussion.

