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## PCA Convention, May 18-21, 2005: Our Journey to "Paperweight Mecca"

*by Stanley B. Kruger*

For those of mature years, doing something for the very first time is often quite pleasurable (if not too strenuous physically). When those of mature years are, like Toby and me, avid paperweight collectors, their first ever visit to the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum in Neenah, WI is more than pleasurable...it is a religious experience, a revelation, a journey to the mountaintop to view beyond the peak!

Once before, Toby and I had the opportunity, through June Morfe's August 1994 four day excursion from Baltimore to Chicago, to include Bill Volkman's

comprehensive collection of English paperweights, the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, the Rubloff Paperweight Collection at the Chicago Art Institute and the Lotton Art Glass Studio, to visit the Bergstrom-Mahler but we were then paperweight novices and would not have reveled in, or benefited from, the experience as we did during this PCA, Inc. Convention, eleven years later. Indeed, now that we have been shown the way, an annual "Pilgrimage to Mecca" may be contemplated!

With Registration scheduled from 10 AM to 7 PM on Wednesday, May 18, Convention, this year's theme "A Special Time for Friends and Paperweights", was to begin at 7 PM that evening with a four hour Dealer Fair, followed by an Artist Showcase from 8 to 9:30 PM, and the printed schedule in our handsome Convention loose-leaf notebooks urged attendees to "Visit the Museum" during that day. Anticipating this, our travel day



The Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, Neenah, Wisconsin.

was Tuesday, May 17, flying via US Airways Express from Philadelphia to Milwaukee, WI, then driving a rental car 110 miles north to Appleton's Radisson Paper Valley Hotel, at 333 West College Avenue, in the heart of downtown. Did you know that Lawrence University (the reason for "College Avenue"), only five blocks east of the Radisson, is the second oldest coeducational college in the U.S. and that Appleton is the third largest metropolitan area in the state? One learns these interesting bits of data by taking the time to read the promotional brochures included in Convention registration packets, which we collected at 10 AM on Wednesday. In doing so, we missed the complimentary 10:30 AM shuttle bus and drove over to the Museum on our own, arriving around 11:20.

Located on the western shore of Lake Winnebago at 165 North Park Drive in Neenah, WI, seven miles from Appleton in an area known as the Fox Cities, the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum began life as the John Nelson Bergstrom Art Center in 1954. Mrs. Evangeline Bergstrom bequeathed the paperweight collection but it was the decision of John Nelson, her husband, to bequeath their mansion along with Evangeline's collection to the City of Neenah. Another couple, Ernest and Carol Mahler, after John Nelson's death in 1951, were instrumental in the Museum's success when they both served, individually, as President and then donated their splendid Germanic glass collection and their name to the Museum. See the Museum website, <http://www.paperweightmuseum.com/>,

for more background information.

Not realizing that the Museum was conducting six Collector "Hands-On" Sessions, three on May 17 and three on May 18 (my error, as they were advertised), on Monday, May 16 I had sent out an email message to DVPCAers attending Convention that there would be an informal meeting at 4 PM on May 18 in the hotel lobby "to discuss strategy regarding the collaboration between DVPCA and Wheaton Village on WV's Paperweight Event 2006". So, our time at the Museum on Wednesday was regrettably short, returning us to the Radisson at 3:30 PM. But in the 3.5 hours we were in the Museum, we managed an overview of: Mrs. Bergstrom's original collection of 630 paperweights; some of the later-donated 1600 weights that enhance the original bequest; "Perthshire Paperweights 2002--The Final Chapter", examples of the Annual Editions, Limited and Unlimited Editions, Little Gems and Related Objects proposed for issue in 2002 but never made, as the factory closed its doors forever on January 26 of that year; "Immersion: The Glass Art of Rick Ayotte", a spectacular display of large bowls incorporating lampwork décor; and "Uncovering the Uncommon: The Perthshire Legacy", a magnificent exhibit of mostly very large unique weights made for special occasions and individuals and never offered in Perthshire's Annual Catalogs. The latter two exhibits were



(L-R) Anne Smith, CA, Gay Taylor, NJ, Sumner Reid, PA (back to camera), Denise Brown, TN, unidentified first-time Conventioneer, Leslie Smith, TX.

special, set up only for the week of Convention. Oh, yes, and we also made time, twice, for the Museum Shop, once upon entering and once just before leaving the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum that day.

Back at the Radisson, Toby and I led a one hour meeting on organizing Paperweight Fest 2006 at Wheaton Village with Nancy Alfano, Brian and Suzanne Landis, Bill Price and Pat Ackerman...even have notes from the meeting...and scheduled another meeting for 8 AM on Friday, to report on the response to “Save the Date” cards provided by Wheaton Village announcing the event.

At 7 PM, we were dressed (that is, Toby was) and back downstairs in the Conference Center of the hotel for the opening of Dealer Fair, across from the PCA’s Hospitality Suite. Thirteen dealers were set up: Gary McClanahan, R & S Treasures (Ron Roberts), Ray Metcalfe of Sweetbriar Gallery, Chester, England, Drew Ebelhare, Bob Banford, Harvey and Doris Robinson, Nancy Alfano of Portia Paperweights, Gem Antiques (Jack Feingold), Roger Jacobsen, Leo Kaplan, Ltd., Bill Pitt, Paul Dunlop and Dan and Therese McNamara. Also located in the Dealer Fair were two special exhibit cases, one for the items submitted by attendees for Saturday morning’s ID Clinic and another for The Gillinder Project, about which more later.

Our printed Convention schedule showed Dealer Fair open from 7 – 11 PM each evening and from 1-5 PM on Saturday, when it was open to the public. Larry Selman, the 14th dealer at Convention, had located his display in a separate room across from Dealer Fair and was open 7 to 11 PM, Thursday and Friday 11 AM – 11 PM and 11–5 PM on Saturday. The ten artists briefly showing their work that evening were located in the room

next to the Dealer Fair. Toby and I had examined most of the offerings in both Fairs by 10 PM and were back in our second floor room for the night by 10:30.

I must say a word about the Convention loose-leaf notebooks collected at Registration. Quite similar to the loose-leaf notebooks of the 2003 San Antonio Convention, this compilation of necessary information was extremely well organized and, best of all, contained summaries, with color photographs, of the major addresses throughout Convention. I believe these notebooks, with their permanent record of Convention presentations, were the valuable innovation of one man, William Drew Gaskill, PCA’s Education Director in 2003 and current PCA, Inc. President. Through them, Convention attendees have a permanent record of this Convention to which they can refer in future. And these loose-leaf notebooks were in addition to a bi-fold packet containing brochures about the local area, logistical matters relevant to Convention (invitation to Bergstrom-Mahler Reception on Thursday, details of “Dutch Treat Dinners” on Friday, description of two limited edition Convention Commemorative Weights commissioned by the Museum Shop at the Museum, etc.), maps of the Fox Cities of Wisconsin, plus a box of 70 2-ply white tissue from the Museum with enlargements of four classic era weights on its sides in the PCA-logged blue and white canvas carry bag, taken together an enormous achievement and indicative of excellent planning and coordination over the years leading up to this Convention.

Three full hot buffet breakfasts, two box lunches and the closing Banquet were included in the Convention fee of \$195. So, the next morning saw Toby and me at 8 AM breakfast at The Orchard, the breakfast/lunch dining area on the main lobby



Rosann Millius, President, Evangeline Bergstrom (Wisconsin) PCA



## PAPERWEIGHT COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

### Review of Events

*Spring Meeting, April 16, 2005*

Forty-eight DVPCA members and guests enrolled for today's meeting at Williamson Restaurant, Horsham, PA, our usual venue, and all showed up! The Paperweight Fair, at 10 AM, offered DVPCA T-shirts for sale, \$8, newsletters from other local PCAs, four tables of weights and weight-related items (books, jewelry, etc.) for sale or display by members, Today's Raffle Prizes, two Silent Auction items, Free-Take-One items, selections from the DVPCA Lending Library that could be borrowed and a sumptuous exhibit of paperweights by Guest Dealers Dan and Therese McNamara of Seal Harbor, MA. All these treats were perused while attendees enjoyed muffins, coffee and tea.

Our President called the meeting to order at 10:55 AM, a bit early due to the full program scheduled. As a lead-in to the morning program, President Stan Kruger noted that a recent newspaper article described three auction services that list items on eBay for you. He then introduced loyal member Martin Mikelberg who presented the morning program, Part IV of his series, "You, Your Collection and eBay". Marty noted that the auction services mentioned would take a 10-30% commission as their fee for services rendered so he advised listing the item (doing the research and taking the pictures) yourself. The FBI reports that fraud in Internet sales has increased 30% in the past year, and 70% of the Internet IS sales, so beware! However, Marty avers, eBay is here to stay and has no close competition. eBay works well for Marty, even cross-referencing, i.e., listing all other items he has

for sale and advising the potential buyer of them. He emphasized that the quality of the picture is paramount! Use a good camera, take a close-up of the item and show and describe any defects; otherwise a dissatisfied buyer will return it. You must have software installed on your computer that will enhance your photos as well as a high speed modem. There are shipping and handling issues to be considered and you can allow the buyer to select the mode, and therefore the cost, of shipping.

You should check emails regularly, in order to answer queries promptly. A good feedback rating is very important; some potential buyers will not bid if you have no feedback rating, or negative feedback. Guest Dealer Dan McNamara recommended that you take at least three views of your item, front, side and back. Marty cautioned about a scam where a fraudulent seller uses photos from another website when listing an item. If you win this item, the seller does not have it to send to you and you will lose your money! Dale Murschell pointed out that a seller is obligated to list an item's defects because a buyer cannot actually inspect the piece. Too, there have been times when a buyer returned for refund a different, and defective, item from that sold. A potentially dangerous practice is "selling short", listing an item found in a store, hoping the winning bid will go above the store's retail price. If that happens, the seller buys the item and sells it at a profit to the winning bidder. Dale Murschell noted that PayPal guarantees refunds to customers dissatisfied due to non-receipt, taking the money from the seller's account, even without the seller's permission. Thus, some sellers will not use PayPal. Andy Dohan added that PayPal can freeze your account for six to 12

months to resolve problems, during which time you cannot access your money. Dale offered that eBay's rates have increased recently but although he researched he found no viable alternative to the auction site. And Marty doesn't recommend Kovel's site. Andy recommends a site that gives you a thirty day history (down from six months). Joe Freeze told of an incident where someone broke into a friend's on-line account, listed items for sale through that account, and the friend's checking



Spring Meeting, April 16, 2005: (L-R) Rosalyn Heith, Jill Bauersfeld, Jim Perna, Bill Bauersfeld, Jim Lefever.



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account was tied up for some time thereafter. Dale warned that he has had trouble with California buyers but President Stan insisted that all California paperweight buyers were “straight and true”! Marty agreed that California bottle people are, too. Joe Freeze advised to always ensure when mailing the item. Marty agreed and added that you should get tracking, too. Marty warned that geriatric buyers can be problematical, so learn the rules first! Andy recommended using BidPay, not PayPal because BidPay will not tie up your account and they mail a check rather than send funds electronically. Marty noted that in six years he has never had a personal check bounce and concluded at 11:35 AM to applause. President Stan then, as lunch was 25 minutes away, released the attendees, exhorting them to “buy, buy, buy”.

Lunch was the usual delicious choice of chicken or fish entrée. Today’s Raffle tickets were sold during dessert. At 1:05 PM, Stan called the meeting to order once again. Many announcements followed. Larry Selman’s Spring auction closes for initial bids on April 26 and Larry has another auction set



Enjoying a laugh: Delania Lefever, John Hawley, April 16, 2005.

for May 7, the Steven Lundberg Legacy Auction. At the Winter Meeting on January 29, ten members signed up for on-line newsletters. Stan received three responses regarding the Internet-transmitted March 2005 Newsletter, all positive and praising the color. Stan again urged members to sign up for on-line newsletters for the many obvious benefits: They save DVPCA time, effort and money and come to the member faster, more legible (larger type in the PDF), in full color and more easily stored on the computer’s hard drive. The Garden Party/Catered Cookout following our Summer Meeting on July 16 will be hosted by Andy and DeeDee Dohan at their lovely

home in Wayne, PA. BRING a folding chair for yourself! Our President recently met a descendant of the Dorflinger family. Christian Dorflinger established his first glass factory in Brooklyn, NY in 1852 and in 1861 relocated the Dorflinger Glassworks to White Mills, PA, making the finest cut glass crystal vessels into the 1920s. Most family members worked in the glass business, as did David, who was a cutter. On Sunday, July 17, our group will visit two glass museums in New Jersey, the Heritage

Glass Museum in Glassboro, NJ and the Museum of American Glass in Wheaton Village, Millville, NJ, as part of our 13th Anniversary Celebration Weekend.

The issue of past-due dues was raised since almost one-third of the membership had not paid yet for 2005. In future, we will issue the dues bill earlier, in September or October of the year before the dues are due. It was suggested that we post the names of non-paying members on the meeting room door, but Treasurer Don Formigli advised that all those attending today were paid up members. Many, though not all, unpaid members live at a distance and do not attend meetings regularly.

Recently we received a request from a lady in Utah for an appraisal of an inherited paperweight collection. Stan referred her to Ken Brown. Ken told her about his family's auction business and sometime later verbally appraised the collection brought East by her sister. It was small but excellent; a rare dated 1847 mini-Baccarat closepack was the first item unwrapped! The lady decided to leave the weights for auction by the Brown Brothers auction house in Buckingham, Bucks County, PA and Ken will let DVPCA know the date set for the auction. All this occurred because the lady found DVPCA's website and made the inquiry and because she did, the weights will be auctioned locally and may even stay local when sold!

On another matter, Toby Kruger handed out copies of a proposal from Wheaton Village that DVPCA and Wheaton partner to produce a Paperweight Event in May 2006. Paperweight Weekend, once Wheaton's top fund raiser, has been a losing proposition in recent years. Wheaton is asking for staff support in organizing, promoting, coordinating and



Guest Dealers Dan and Therese McNamara, with a small section of their display, April 16, 2005.



Another section of the McNamara display, April 16, 2005.

publicizing such Event in hopes of returning the Event to profitability; not for money. Last year's Small Glass Works Weekend was the worst attended and the biggest loser of all the Weekends and Wheaton's administration realizes it must take a different tack. They were hampered last year by reduced staff time, which continues, and a late marketing effort. Ideally, Wheaton would like DVPCA to provide a nucleus of attendees at the Event, perhaps by scheduling our Spring Meeting 2006 during

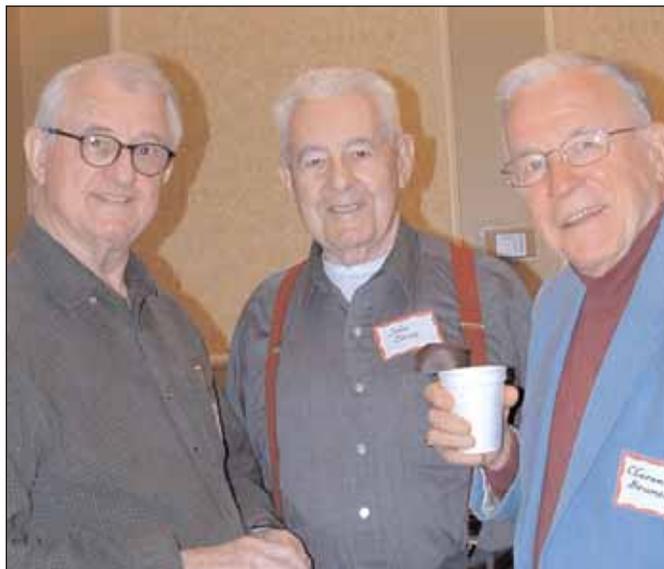
the Event. Andy Dohan suggested two reasons why attendance at Paperweight Weekend has declined since the mid-1990s: Conventions are no longer the only way new information is disseminated. There are more books available now and the Internet is another vast source of information. Also, Conventions and Weekends were the venues for shopping from dealers; now eBay provides that venue. Perhaps all arts institutions are experiencing the same decline; even this year's PCA Convention may suffer. However, Guest Speaker Don Friel, of Wheaton Village, noted that WV's Marble Weekend, only three years old, is burgeoning, growing by leaps and bounds, as marbles are cheaper than weights and attract a younger crowd.

Are enough of our members willing to volunteer labor and time to resuscitate a Paperweight Event at Wheaton Village in May 2006? WV has offered us 10% of any profit. Toby K. noted that 2006 will be the 200th anniversary of glassmaking in Millville, NJ and that might provide a great marketing hook and a cause for celebration. There will be a special exhibit at the Museum of American Glass next year on this subject. Stan asked for a show of hands from those who would volunteer ten hours to this project. Eighteen held up their hands

and later signed up. Boyd England asked how many would give 40 hours of their time. About ten held up their hands. No one responded to the negative question of who didn't want to partner with Wheaton Village for this project, so it was concluded that DVPCA will take it on.

At 2 PM, Today's Raffle winners were chosen and 13 happy winners selected from among many excellent prizes. Then, 35 minutes behind schedule, Stan introduced Donald W. Friel, a native of Philadelphia and currently Studio Manager and Head Gaffer at Wheaton Village's T.C. Wheaton Glass Studio. Don started at WV as a potter around 1977 but after two years gravitated toward glass. He now leads a team of permanent Studio workers (Joe Mattson, Jennifer Pagliarini, etc.) as well as numerous interns who sojourn at WV for three month terms. Today, Don, as requested by Stan, will narrate a videotape of himself on the subject "How to Make a Crimp Rose Paperweight" (and some time later will have copies of the videotape for sale). Don's detailed process follows:

To make leaves, Don picks up white glass and applies an overlay of green, using tools that are over 100 years old. He applies three to four coats of green glass chips with no layers of clear between the green. He adds veins to his leaves; old leaves lack this feature. The veins are created automatically by his crimp; the high points stay darker. He then pulls the overlaid glass into a long thin (1/4") strand and breaks it in half for manageability. He heats the leaf crimp to reduce stress on the glass, then squeezes the glass rod end with the crimp. He makes 50 or so leaves at a sitting, then matches sizes, as he uses four leaves per rose. (Don noted that Chinese roses are getting better; they are made with thin crimps.) The four leaves are placed on a hot plate to



Three experienced paperweight collectors: Ken Brown, John Zecca, Clarence Brunner, April 16, 2005.

keeps them warm and then he starts on the rose. Don has made rose weights for ten years, probably ten a year, four or five of which are good enough to sell. Don makes many other glass vessels and glass constructions at WV and today had brought rose weights and vases for display and sale, including the rose he made for the videotape. He has three rose crimps; one is made of metal sheet from a Contadina can set in plaster. Don found out, the hard way, that if he heats the glass too much it will fuse with the metal of the crimp. He uses a pad of wet newspaper in his hand to shape the molten glass. For the rose, Don gathers white glass on the punty rod and rolls it in ruby frit and then in coarse ruby powder, as fine as talcum powder. He preheats everything whenever possible to avoid chill marks on the glass. The hardest part is pushing the crimp into the clear glass, keeping it centered, since the slug of clear is not much bigger around than the crimp itself. The rose thus sits very near the edge of the clear glass at this point in the process.

(Stan interjected that the value of a rose paperweight is in the skill of the maker, not the cost of the glass. He asked Don who the best modern crimp rose maker was and Don answered Oscar "Skip" Woods. Skip Woods visited DVPCA in October 1996 and showed and described his weights. See pictures in DVPCA's Memories Photo Album, Volume 1.)



Guest Artist Don Friel, large Don Friel weight held by new owner Jill Bauersfeld, April 16, 2005.

Air left in the glass from the crimping process must be worked out, else it forms a balloon of air above the rose. Don shears off about half the volume of glass, melts the bottom and shapes it, picks up the four leaves and pulls them with an ice pick, trying to avoid air bubbles, then pulls each leaf into a point by inserting the

ice pick into the clear glass in front of the leaf, then pulling, a trick he learned from Ray Banford who had, in turn, learned it himself from old-timers. (Don said that early on glassworkers wouldn't share their skills and secrets so he learned over their shoulders. Later glassworkers shared more willingly.) The four leaves were then pulled together in the center below the rose. (Question: How many weights does he make in a day? Three to four. How did he learn to make them? By watching, then trial and error.



Diane Atkerson, Betsy Nitshe, Kay Reid (Betsy's mother), April 16, 2005.

Don notes that no one wants to learn from him, though he doesn't hide his process. He says new glass artists aren't taught to make paperweights in art school but may turn to weights when out of school in order to pay the bills!)

Don then shapes the weight with encased glass. He says there are steps he could eliminate but that would lower the quality of the product. About 60 to 70 minutes into the process, he attaches the foot and shapes it. At this time the punty rod is at the top of the weight. Don attaches a second punty to the bottom of the foot and breaks the weight off the top punty, in order to shape the top of the weight. His technique eliminates grinding the top, a job that takes a half hour.



Guest Artist Don Friel, Joe Freeze (bald head) Andrew V. Scott, April 16, 2005.

He also spends a good deal of time removing impurities from the top of the weight. Then he inspects the piece, fire polishes it (so his weights look like they've never been on a punty rod) and places it into the annealing oven for 18 hours. When it comes out of the annealing oven, if he likes it he signs it; if not, he destroys it.

At 2:50 PM Don Friel concluded to enthusiastic applause. Stan thanked him for a wonderful presentation and offered him a DVPCA

T-shirt as a memento of this happy occasion. Stan reminded everyone again about our 13th Anniversary Celebration Weekend on July 16 & 17, 2005 and about DVPCA's agreement to partner with Wheaton Village to promote a Paperweight Event there in May 2006. At 2:55 PM, the meeting ended formally but there was much interaction with Don Friel and Guest Dealers Dan and Therese McNamara before the room emptied almost an hour later.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sue Sutton,  
Secretary



1968 Baccarat Double Overlay Sulphide, with spiral cutting, of Will Rogers (1879-1935), cameo modeled by Albert David, Limited Edition of 389. 3 1/8" diameter, 2" tall.

floor of the Radisson. By the way, the hotel had been built by members of the Bergstrom family, a prolific, even ubiquitous clan, in 1982 as a hotel and conference center but had been under the Radisson banner for at least five years. In Conkey's bookstore at 218 East College, we later learned that there were about two dozen Bergstrom car dealerships in the Fox Cities of Appleton, Neenah and Menasha, though John Nelson's fortune stemmed from his involvement with the Kimberly-Clark paper company.

Convention began promptly at 9 AM on Thursday, May 19, with PCA President Gaskill and a 10 minute slide show. Afterwards Bill noted that a Convention is a tremendous amount of work and thanked Al Bates and the previous PCA administration for their efforts, since the year 2000, in selecting and planning for this site. He noted that this was the PCA's (and his) second visit to Neenah, the first in both cases was 1989, and that the major difference between the two visits was the economic reality of the Internet. Ninety percent of the books of value to collectors have been printed since 1989 so that information about collectibles, through books and/or an Internet search, is more available than ever before. PCA's annual full-color Bulletin is the crown jewel of the organization, a long term contribution to our knowledge of the hobby, and is now included in the fee for membership. Bill listed a few basic economic realities: There are roughly 3400 weights on the Internet auction site eBay every day listed under "Paperweights" (and many more not so listed); traditional venues for buying and selling have changed drastically so we must appreciate our collectors, our artists and our dealers; and all collecting groups are imploding, losing membership and arts funding. The most powerful collecting group

in America, including over a third of the members of Congress, is the American Numismatic Association, the ANA, with over 30,000 members, and it could not prevent the Smithsonian Institution from removing from display its entire coin collection. So we of the PCA, Inc. should be extremely grateful to the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum for keeping its unique paperweight collection on public display. Finally, the most important aspect of our tiny collecting niche is friendship, the relationships we develop with other collectors, artists and dealers, both near and now, through the Internet, far away.

Bill spent the rest of his hour on logistics, showing maps of the hotel and its Conference Center, introducing PCA's Board Members and describing their multiple duties, reviewing the remaining three day Convention schedule and announcing that he was 95% certain that the 2007 Convention would be in Toledo, Ohio. One schedule innovation Bill mentioned was "Box Lunch and Learn" sessions with the artists, five (Drew Ebelhare, Bob Banford, Peter McDougall, Gordon Smith and Jennifer Wilson) on Thursday and five more on Friday, each one hour session repeated between 12:30 and 2:30 PM (which arrangement was later viewed as a great success). Another was the distribution of door prizes directly from the PCA Hospitality Suite or from dealers' booths rather than at the Closing Banquet, at which there would be no formal program.

What a dynamic, enthusiastic, focused and humorous speaker Bill Gaskill is. PCA, Inc. is fortunate to have him as its advocate at this critical time.

Next on the program was Alex Vance, Executive Director of the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, who reports to the Museum's Board of Directors, led by Chairman Ken Melchert,



Super magnum 1973 Saint Louis piedouche, presented to Paul Jokelson at the 1973 Chicago PCA Convention, donated to the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum by Mr. Jokelson in 1974. 9-13/16" dia., 9 1/2" tall, with 607 multi-colored millefiori canes, signed, numbered and dated. Museum accession number: PW 74.166.1065.

and who has been with the Museum since December 1, 1978. Alex said he would talk about three aspects of the Bergstrom-Mahler, the original bequest by Mrs. Bergstrom, the additions to the collection since the original bequest and then the two together. (Here, Mr. Melchert spoke briefly, declaring that the Museum's paperweight collection is its most significant resource and its first priority; the Museum wants it and the paperweight collecting community to expand and grow.)

After introducing various Museum Board members and staff, Mr. Vance recounted the Museum's history: It began with incorporation in 1954 as the John Nelson Bergstrom Museum and Art Center and opened its doors in 1959. The Bergstroms had no children and their decision to bequeath their lavish home and their remarkable paperweight collection to the City of Neenah, even now a city of only 27, 000, led to an enormous amount of justifiable pride in a number of local civic leaders who worked mightily to establish the Museum on a firm footing. From the beginning there were two parts to the Museum, an art center and a museum, the difference being that an art center usually has no permanent collection whereas a museum does. Art centers put on exhibitions and educational programs; they don't divide their resources. Museums, on the other hand, have collections, which they care for, exhibit and work to make them grow.

Mr. Vance proposed the rule of "inverse proportional appreciation", which he proves every time he travels, to New England, Texas or wherever. This rule translates into "The appreciation for our collection increases the farther away you get from the collection!" (Laughter!) "In fact, when you first enter the Museum, appreciation often declines and when you are in the Museum proper, sometimes **hatred** for the collection breaks out!" (Again, laughter!)

Since the Museum has a policy of free admission to everyone, how does it get the funds to operate? A valuable part of the original Bergstrom bequest in 1958 was an endowment of \$555,000 which then generated \$27,500 annually for operating expenses. By 1978 the endowment had grown

only to \$890,000 because it was necessary to completely remodel the Bergstrom home and then add an extensive addition in 1965. Mr. Vance came on board in 1978 and by 2000 the endowment had grown to over \$9 Million, but the global economic downturn since has reduced the endowment to \$7.5 Million currently. The Museum's second major source of income is its Museum Shop which produces an annual net income of over \$100,000. Other income derives from general contributions, memberships, funds from the City of Neenah, income from the annual Arts festival, etc., leading to the conclusion that the Museum is financially healthy. This is important because recent times have seen declining memberships in many arts organizations and many can now envision a scenario in which their institutions cease to exist. However, there is no combination of foreseeable circumstances that could cause the Museum's demise.

The Bergstrom-Mahler is incorporated as a 501.C.3 non-profit organization with education as its major mission. Since 1959 there have been no more than four employees, and sometimes only two. Last year George Kulles appraised the paperweight collection. Of the 632 objects in the original Evangeline Bergstrom bequest, the top 58 pieces had a total value of about \$1.3 Million and an average value of over \$22,000. In comparison, the top 33 pieces of those donated since the original 1958 bequest had a total value of close to two-thirds of a million dollars and an average value of almost \$20,000. The top weight in the original bequest was a Pantin lizard valued at [conservatively, I would say] \$120,000; the top of the later items was a Saint Louis upright bouquet at \$85,000. So it appears that the Museum has maintained the standard of paperweight excellence established by the Bergstrom bequest, but not everything in the collection is world class. In conclusion, the Bergstrom-Mahler is a fully functioning and accredited Museum with an operating budget of around \$800,000, four full-time staff members and a world-renowned collection. The Museum is free admission with between 22,000 and 30,000 visitors a year. The axiom in the museum field is that if you get 10% of your area population as visitors, you're doing fine; the Bergstrom-Mahler far exceeds that limited

percentage. Mr. Vance ended by passing out the Museum's last Annual Report, for July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004, which presented a snapshot of the Museum's recent activities.

Next on the program, at 10:45 AM, was Jami Severstad, Curator of the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum. A slim, young, attractive brunette, Jami had been described by Alex Vance as "the future of the Bergstrom-Mahler". During her 35 minute address, Jami made a number of interesting points about the Museum. She recognized, first off, that "We are in the middle of nowhere" and are not taking the greatest advantage of the Museum's incredible holdings. Much more public relations effort was called for; to that end, the Museum has resurrected its newsletter. Museum staff members have made substantial technical improvements in data collecting and inventory listing, and there is now a touch screen monitor on which one can identify every inventory item. Use of the Museum's holdings by various collectors and scholars has been expanded as has the communication between the Museum and these interested parties. Generally, Museum inventory is not sold off, as is sometimes the rumor in collecting circles, but the Museum may de-accession duplicate items in order to establish or enhance an endowment for the acquisition of new items. As part of its art center mission, the Museum organizes and/or displays many mini-exhibits of weights during the year; either tied in to a traveling exhibit from another institution or that reflect some timely theme that normally would not be on display. The Museum often loans out paperweights and display materials to other museums and institutions and has taken Museum holdings to local PCA groups (Evangeline Bergstrom PCA in Osh Kosh, WI and New England PCA) for those groups' inspection and enjoyment. The Museum is striving to expand its

educational component and recently began an internship program with Lawrence University (Jami's own Alma Mater). Finally, the Museum recognizes that we, the PCA, are its learned constituency and will do all that is necessary to facilitate our use and enjoyment of the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum.

Between 12 Noon and 2 PM, five paperweight artists made presentations during "Box Lunch and Learn" sessions in five different, much smaller meeting rooms, but Toby and I elected, instead, to attend a meeting of the regional PCA presidents organized by Jayne Gilbert of the Texas PCA. Later, we heard many positive comments about these sessions with the artists, except that the five break-out rooms were too small for the crowds that wanted to attend.

At 2 PM, we were back in the Main Ballroom Seminar for Jerry Gard speaking on "What Makes a Paperweight Special?" Jerry's first weight, given to him by his wife, Elizabeth, on October 25, 1973 was a Perthshire closepack. Although he has collected paperweights for some 32 years and is an acknowledged expert, having sat on the PCA's ID Clinic for nine straight Conventions, he is not certain that his experience can guide others on how to buy and collect paperweights. Still, he hoped that displaying some of the weights in his collection, and explaining why they were special to him would be of benefit to this audience.



Perthshire Paperweights PP12, signed/dated 1972, de-accessioned May 19, 2005 and won by the author.

During his talk, Jerry showed some 50 weights from his extensive collection, but this review can cover only a very few. The first is a rather nondescript New England Glass Company open concentric on poorly formed latticino with a central "1825" date cane. After much research of the literature and even a visit to Neenah to hold and photograph one of the best known examples of the "1825" cane, Jerry

finally proved that it is simply the other end of a cane that says “1852”, placed in the weight upside down and we are reading the wrong end of it! You can experience this for yourself. Write “1825” on a sheet of paper and read it backwards by holding it up to the light. You will have to turn it upside down, but when you do, it will read “1825”! So this weight has a special place in Jerry’s collection and this study greatly increased his interest in American weights.

This interest led to a number of special NEGC weights entering Jerry’s collection: a posy on a cranberry-filled latticinio dated 1852, another posy on a smoky aqua ground, a star garland on a fine upset muslin (only 15 NEGC weights are known on upset muslin), a garland of flowers around a central cane showing a definite St. Louis heritage (this from the Fisher collection), a rare, possibly unique pom-pom combined with millefiori, a two rose bouquet with bud and a double overlay upright bouquet about which Paul Hollister wrote :An extraordinary blending of skills within a unified concept” and “One of the great paperweights.” It is more difficult to find special Boston & Sandwich weights, they repeated so many flowers on clear or ordinary jasper grounds, but the striped-petaled poinsettia with a central “B” cane, no doubt a presentation piece and one of only three known, certainly qualifies. In the category of more modern American weights, a wonderful Millville crimped water lily, from the New York Historical Society collection, was described by Hollister in his Encyclopedia as “spectacular”, “the great waterlily, one of the boldest and most powerful presentations under glass.”

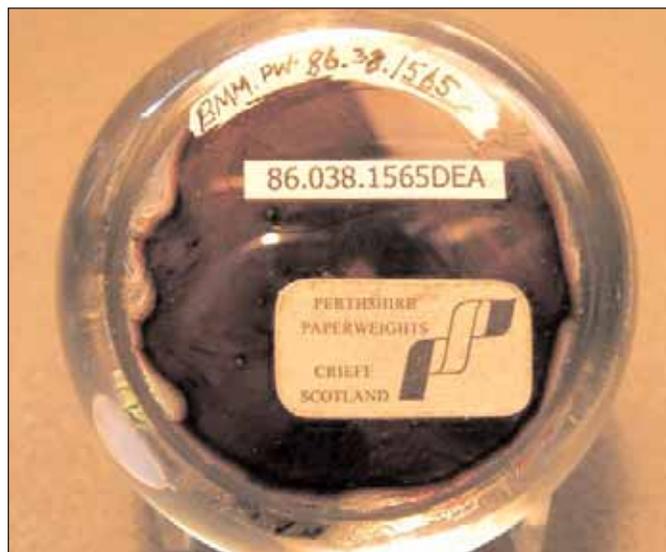
Jerry continued with a number of modern pieces by Stankard, Daniel Salazar, Grubb, Victor Trabucco, Stump and Steve Lundberg, a very few antique European weights, Baccarat and

Clichy, and ended with his magnificent Mount Washington rose which was the cover weight on the Sotheby’s catalog when it first reached the market in June, 1988, setting a record for Mount Washington weights, and was also the number One weight in Larry Selman’s traveling museum collection which went as far as Scotland to be exhibited [and which Toby and I saw at the Jones Museum of Glass & Ceramics in Sebago, Maine in August 1994]. Finally, Jerry hoped that all of us have as much joy from forming our collections as he did and that we are lucky enough to acquire many “special” weights along the way.

George N. Kulles, author of three *Identifying Antique Paperweights* books, *Millefiori* (1985), *Lampwork* (1987) and *The Less Familiar* (2002) as well as the novel *The Curse of the Imperial Paperweight* (1995) is surely one of the most knowledgeable and adept speakers on paperweight matters known to man! His talk, from 3:35 to 4:25 PM, entitled “Made in France, Of Course”, was a scholarly rebuttal to the premise enunciated by European glass historian and scientist Sibylle Jargstorf at the 2001 PCA Convention in Corning, New York, that the classic era French factories did not make their own millefiori canes but bought them from other sources. Jargstorf repeated her premise in the 2003 PCA Bulletin, in an article entitled “ The Maltsov Vases: A Missing Link in the History of Millefiori Revival in the 19th Century”, to wit, “*in the middle third of the 19th*

*century, the maker of the millefiori canes was not necessarily or even hardly ever the maker of paperweights.”*

George began, as usual, with the audience on its feet, at his direction imitating his side to side waddle, hand gesture indicating the mouthing of words, mime of looking through binoculars and gesture of resignation, after which George pronounced his conclusory argument: “If



Base of PP12 with Museum accession number 86.038.1565DEA. DEA means de-accessioned.

it walks like a duck, talks like a duck and looks like a duck...it's a duck!" After almost forty years studying paperweights and 19th century millefiori canes, George disagrees with Jargstorf's theory. He planned to talk about the basis for her concept, the difficulties of transport during the mid-1800s, the quality and compatibility of glasses then, the fluorescence and density of glass and, finally, millefiori molds. George believes that Jargstorf may have been influenced by the misrepresentation of a Baccarat vase appearing on the cover of the 1990 PCA Bulletin, where it was incorrectly identified as Bohemian. This vase was uncovered by Dwight Lanmon, then Curator at the Corning Museum of Glass, in a museum in Petrograd. When he asked, Lanmon was told it was purchased in 1986 in Leningrad from a state run antique shop and the museum knew nothing about provenance because sales in Russian antique shops at that time were transacted anonymously. But museum staff did say they thought it might be Bohemian.

The claim by Jargstorf is that the vase was created in Russia but with imported Bohemian canes. She avers that Russia, as well as Baccarat, Saint Louis, Islington and others did not produce their own millefiori canes but instead imported them from Bohemia and Silesia; and that is the crux of her theory. Here George produced a painting made in Prague in 1843 that showed the type of horse-drawn wagon used for transporting goods and heavy materials throughout the continent of Europe in those days. During the summer months, these wagons were able to travel three miles an hour, their top speed, or 25 miles a day, and that was during the few months of summer



The "Maltsov" Vase on the cover of PCA, Inc.'s 1990 Bulletin.

when they didn't have to battle roads made muddy by spring and fall rains. In winter, travel conditions were much worse; imagine the trek to Russia from Prague over the mountains and through ice and snow. How far is it to Russia, Baccarat, Saint Louis and Islington from Bohemia? Today, you would fly 1100 miles to Leningrad, 1200 miles to Moscow, 850 miles to Birmingham, England and about 550 miles to Paris. But if you traveled by car, the distances would be even greater because roads don't go in straight lines. Too, travel conditions and roads on the Continent [and elsewhere] in the mid-1800s were not like they are today. It might take three months for one of these wagons to get to Moscow in the 1840s and similarly lengthy periods of time to arrive at the other glass making centers mentioned.

A twin of the vase pictured on the 1990 Bulletin was discovered, subsequently, in Berlin and some unknown source recently gave the two the name "Maltsov vases" "Maltsov" is the name of a Russian glass factory, one of at least 15 operating at this time, making high quality goods, but there is no basis for naming the two vases "Maltsov", and George urges that this appellation be dropped immediately and that the vases be known, simply, as Baccarat vases! Furthermore, it is understandable that these two antique Baccarat vases ended up in Berlin and in Russia. In the 19th century, the greatest export destination for Baccarat products was Russia; the Russian upper classes worshipped all things French and spoke French, the language of diplomacy and of culture

then, in the Russian Court. And if one of these two vases stopped on its way to Russia in Berlin, that is understandable, too, for similar reasons.

Next, George discussed the similarity of the vase's shape to that of some Russian pottery, which similarity may have influenced Jargstorf, but noting that this same shape appears in Chinese forms, known as "gu" and in the ceramic and bronze crafts of other countries as well. He then examined the particular millefiori canes studied by Jargstorf, fortress, trefoil, quatrefoil, honeycomb, etc., that led to her conclusions. His conclusion differs from hers because when he finds Baccarat canes in the two vases, as she does, it is because the vases were made by Baccarat, not somewhere else with imported Baccarat canes! So, then, if the far-flung glass factory centers mentioned above did not produce their own millefiori canes, who did? At first Jargstorf suggests Italian sources of the period, Franchini, Bigaglia and Buccolin, all of whom George rejects for various reasons [Buccolin **died** in 1842], then Bohemian sources. Eventually, the issue of cane origin comes down to a question about the poor cutting on the two vases, in that the cutting is so poor it could not possibly be the work of Baccarat or of Bohemian factories. George notes that Baccarat canes are often complex and their elements are close together. On the other hand, the elements in Bohemian canes usually sit far apart and contain more open spaces. George pointed out the differences between Bohemian star canes and Baccarat star canes, Bohemian arrow canes and Baccarat arrow canes, Bohemian and Baccarat dog silhouette canes, etc. He also noted that at the time of their manufacture, Bohemian glass was considered to be of lower quality than French glass, perhaps because of the crushed silica they used as the sand component.



Chinese Plaque Weight, circa 1930.

compatibility, differences in glasses revealed by fluorescence testing and density testing and chemical composition of glasses are valuable aids in determining origin. At the great paperweight show, Corning, 1978, "Flowers which clothe the Meadows", almost all 360 weights were tested for density, that is, how much heavier than water they were. Baccarat weights tested at 3 1/3 times heavier, Bohemian weights, at 2 1/2 times heavier than water. That is a substantial difference.

Finally, how much room would that supposed Bohemian/Silesian factory need to put all those hundreds and hundreds of molds, for all the canes used by all the receiving glass factories, on the floor? And what sort of furnace would they need? It would require hundreds of glass pots with different glass compositions and colors just for one of the receiving factories, and all without a computer to keep track of this inventory! If we had just one of the antique Baccarat molds, we would know that Baccarat made their own canes, but they are gone, presumably melted down during World War II for the war effort. In conclusion, George has tried to prove that the glass companies in England, France and Russia created the millefiori found in their respective paperweights; in addition, he stated categorically that the two vases, one in Berlin, the other in Saint Petersburg were made in France!

Thus ended the first full day of seminars at this year's PCA Convention, but not our involvement with paperweights, for we all were invited to a Reception at the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum beginning at 5:30 PM. Starting at 5:15 PM, the first of four large complimentary shuttle buses left the Radisson for the Museum, the others following quickly as they filled up and they would run all evening between the two sites until 10 PM. At the Reception, as advertised, we found the

usual cheese and veggie trays, wines and beer, and also more substantial and tasty catered hors d'oeuvres and desserts. In addition, there were more than 20 paperweights up for Silent Auction, mostly de-accessions by the Museum, three special paperweight exhibits already described, lampwork demonstrations in the new downstairs Glass Studio, the Gift Shop managed by Kathy Smits was open late hours, and we could again view the entire 2200+ item paperweight collection. Toby and I happily spent another 3.5 hours in the Bergstrom-Mahler, examining many of the galleries we had skimmed over the day before, eating our fill in lieu of dinner, and I won at Silent Auction a 1972 Perthshire PP12, described by Mahoney and McClanahan as “a large limited edition spaced millefiori weight, with translucent blue ground under white lace and with a date/signature cane in the setup”. As an unexpected bonus, on closer examination with a 10x magnifier, I found two silhouette canes among the spaced millefiori, but the most important feature, for me, is the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum accession number, 86.038.1565, printed and written on the base, along with the Perthshire paper label. Obviously a Perthshire Paperweight is not from the original Evangeline Bergstrom bequest but still is a nice keepsake and memento of this Convention.

We were back at the Radisson by 9:30 PM and hastened to the Dealer Fair which had re-opened at 9 (not at 7 PM as originally scheduled). There we met up with Marek and Agnieszka Kordasiewicz, our guides from the PCC (Paperweight Collectors Circle of the UK) tour of Bohemia in September, 2004. I collected from Drew Ebelhare the striking red ground weight he had produced in a limited edition of 25 commemorating the 250th anniversary of the establishment of Carlsthal, a Bohemian glass factory no longer in operation and

now known as Orle, the dedication ceremony for which Toby and I attended on Saturday, September 11, 2004 in the Polish mountains near the Iser River. Also, I had won, and collected from the McNamaras as a door prize, the “Plymouth Rock.1620” weight made by the Providence Inkstand Company to celebrate our Centennial year in 1876. As we toured the dealers I handed out to them the remaining “Save the Date” cards promoting Paperweight Fest 2006 at Wheaton Village next May (as Gay Taylor had done the night before with another group of dealers). At the same time I sounded out the dealers about whether they would set up at the Fest, and received positive responses from at least nine of them. It had been another long, activity-packed day so we were back in our room by 10:30 again that night.

Across from the College Street entrance to the low-rise Radisson, atop a group of stores, was a large flashing sign advertising local attractions and intermittently showing the time and temperature. Each morning, I found my way to the front of the hotel to view that sign. During Convention Week, early morning temps in Appleton were in the mid-50s, highs during the day were from 69-76, a bit warmer than anticipated. Believe it or not, it was warmer that week in far north Wisconsin than it was in Philadelphia, we learned on our return home. Anyway, at 7:50 AM on Friday, May 20, Toby and

I were at the 10-person breakfast table we had reserved previously for our 8 AM DVPCA organizational meeting around Paperweight Fest 2006. In addition to us, attending were Andy Dohan, Jim Lefever, Bill Price, Nancy Alfano, Brian and Suzanne Landis, Gay Taylor and Pat Ackerman. We chased the subject for an hour. Andy had a three page list of suggested topics for the event, with the condition that any topic not utilized



One of a kind Maxwell desk weight, with name, occupation and pertinent graphic.

would revert to his benefit. I handed out four assignments, claiming that my hands would be full simply overseeing the efforts of all the volunteers (but knowing that the entire project would demand a great deal of effort from all concerned, including myself). At 9 AM, we were through and wandered in the direction of the General Seminar room. But first, in the PCA Hospitality Suite, Toby and I had our pictures taken by Rosann Milius with our faces in the cut-out of the blown-up antique Saint Louis weight she and her PCA had constructed. And they're not bad photos!

From 9:30 – 11 AM, the Convention schedule listed Gary McClanahan and William Gaskill on the topic "Collections within a Collection". They spoke alternately but often commented humorously during the other's presentation. William started off, enumerating the eleven collection areas to be discussed: Rose is a rose is a rose; Mercury glass weights; Chinese weights; Railroad paperweights; Chequer weights; Remembrance paperweights: Wedding; Sodden snow weights; Remembrance paperweights: Memorial; Bohemian inclusions; Blown fruit weights; and American critter weights. A collector's personal taste forms the collection; if you like a particular form or style, you are likely to end up with many of that type. And you will find that if one of that type looks good, two look better and a collection of them together looks ever better. That doesn't mean that you must collect

**400 English green bottle glass dump weights** as Bill has done, but... Remember, collecting is a competitive sport and if you do not acquire that one great piece now, it will end up in someone else's trophy case!

Gary, to begin his discussion of rose weights, set the ground rules: What he has is "the good stuff"! What Bill (or someone else) has is "junk"! When Gary sells you something, he is selling you "the good

stuff"; when he buys it back from you, he is buying your "junk"! With that understood, Gary noted that probably no other flower is as well loved or as esteemed around the world as is the rose. The earliest paperweights in the classic period were rich in millefiori representations of roses, Clichy being the most prolific producer of the rose cane and even lending its name to the "Clichy rose". [I, myself, have a small collection of crimp rose weights, a completely different form from that being discussed here.]

Next, Bill: Mercury glass weights have a coating of silver-coloring on the inside of a hollow space which gives the appearance of silver. It is called mercury glass because in the early days the internal coating was mercury which proved unsuitable long term. Silver nitrate was also used. The hole on the bottom of the piece allowed access for pouring in the silver coating and was sealed with either a metal or glass disk to keep the silvered surface from tarnishing. This was patented in England in 1849 and in the US in 1855. The best English pieces are marked E. Varnish & Co.; the American pieces are often not marked but may have the New England Glass Company mark.

Gary, again: We are most familiar with Chinese weights of the 1920s and 1930s, which, while not antiques yet, are eminently collectible in their own right. Paperweights, aquarium decorations and

buttons were sold at Woolworth's, Kresge's and other five and dime stores of that era; they were also featured at the Chicago and New York World's Fairs in the 1930s.

Bill: Railroad weights were created to celebrate a promotion or retirement or mark a service anniversary. They usually contain the initials of the railroad line where the intended owner worked and often a title or job



Railroad Paperweight, a Sweetheart's Gift to John G. Doyle

description, the meaning of which may be lost. Cross-collectible with the 7000 Railroadiana collectors in the U.S., specific railroad line names in these weights may catapult prices into the stratosphere!

Gary: Chequers consist of orderly arrangements of canes separated by filigree cables. In the classic era, Clichy achieved the artistic zenith of this form. Modern makers include Baccarat, Perthshire, Peter McDougall and Parabelle Glass.

Bill: Remembrance weights, both American and European, were created to celebrate a wedding or the anniversary of a wedding and often reflect the literacy levels of the makers with reversed letters, misspellings and creative use of abbreviations. Typical wedding weights are text-based, symbol-based and photography-based.

Gary: According to Paul Hollister, in a sodden snow weight, “the canes are sunk into what first appears a solid ground of a peculiar opaque but fuzzy white-like dense fog... Closer inspection shows it not to be a ground at all but an arrangement of thick rings...like cotton wadding...” Sodden snow weights show a surprising richness in both antique and modern pieces.

Bill: Some Remembrance weights were memorials to a loved one who had passed on. They follow and reflect Victorian sensibilities about death and remembrance, are almost always folk genres, and, like wedding pieces, are text-, symbol- and photography-based.

Gary: Bohemian inclusions, which is a generic term, contain a variety of ceramic-like objects and are often decorated internally with colored glass. They were quite stylized and often faceted to increase their visual appeal. Animals and children are common subject matter. In the

largely Roman Catholic Bohemia, religious subject matter is also often found.

Bill: The best Blown fruit weights are amazingly lifelike but rare; supposedly Saint Louis made the best examples of this genre. In America, the New England Glass Company made blown fruit weights early in its history and produced a remarkable range, often placing them on a round “cookie”, while SL pieces were on a square “cookie” base.

Gary: American Critter weights: These contain ceramic figurines and are made primarily in the mid-West. Many are from West Virginia glass families, making them difficult to identify as to which family member was the author, unless they are bottom stamped. Somewhat “naïve” in style, these have a loyal following and prices that may surprise you.

Absent pertinent color images, the by-play between the speakers and the continuous laughter generated by Gary McClanahan and Bill Gaskill, this recounting of eleven possible “Collections within a Collection” appears dry, almost sterile, an impression as far from reality as can be imagined. In actuality, this 90 minute presentation by Gary and Bill was the most visual, entertaining and informative of the entire Convention.

Scheduled from 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM was Anne

Anderson, a long-time paperweight collector from the United Kingdom, speaking about Mrs. Applewhaite-Abbott (hereafter Mrs. A-A), an earlier English weight collector. But, alas, disaster struck. Someone had inadvertently turned upside down the carousel of slides accompanying her talk, leaving a pile of slides, out of any sequence, of course, so Anne valiantly proceeded without pictures. Not that it mattered where Mrs. A-



Clichy moss ground, 3 1/16" dia., acquired by Mrs. Bergstrom in 1937. PW 58.095.0095.

A was concerned because as far as Anne knew, there was no picture of the woman anywhere! Living in London, in the early years of the 20th century (1917-1931), Mrs. A-A acquired a fabulous paperweight collection when little was documented about weights. In addition to owning many “blockbuster” paperweights, she also had the most important collection ever of paperweight-related objects. Mrs. A-A died in 1938 at age 77. It was preparing for the auction of her collection in six parts in 1952-1953 that prompted Timothy H. Clark, an auctioneer hired by Sotheby’s London after World War II, to realize that paperweights were important on their own as an art form and to formulate the first glossary of terms necessary to describe weights consistently and accurately in auction catalogs.

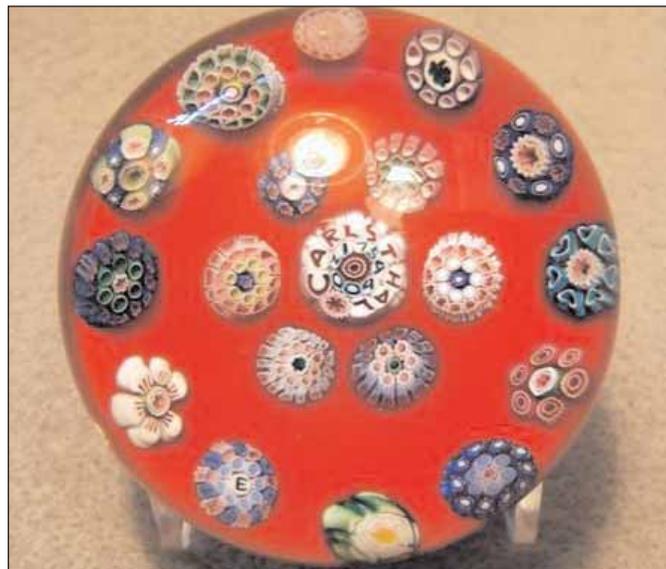
The auction of Mrs. A-A’s paperweight collection in 1952-53 was a turning point. At the time, it was the largest weight collection to come to auction and received enormous publicity, via the London Times, increasing public awareness about, and appreciation of, paperweights as an art form. But like most of us, Mrs. A-A did not know at the beginning what she was collecting. Her early ledger list of acquisitions simply stated “pink swirl” or “black and white” to describe an item. In time she met the dealers and the dealers helped in her education, so that later weight descriptions in her ledger are more detailed and descriptive. Prices at English weight auctions in the 1920s and 1930s were so low that they didn’t seem worth the effort but by 1928 Mrs. A-A owned 250 antique sulphides, just one “collection within a collection”. By the time she died, she had 450 weights in her extensive collection of almost 2000 items.

Although personal information about Mrs. A-A is not easily come by, despite her apparently heroic efforts to uncover remnants of the Applewhaite family and their homestead, Anne Anderson kept us

entertained until 12:25 PM, just in time for the day’s Box Lunch and Learn sessions. Again, Toby and I elected to attend the local PCA Presidents luncheon in the Hickory Room, near hotel registration and cashier desks. However, we were there only until 1:20 PM, when we left for another appointment.

Back in the General Seminar Room at 2:30 PM, Jami Severstad, Curator of the Bergstrom-Mahler, was on the printed schedule for the topic “Your Collection to a Museum?” Jami first noted that all museums follow a set of standard rules and practices and she intended to explain those Museum procedures that we collectors could use for our own collections. She explained the Museum’s numbering system and showed how accession numbers are marked on the Museum’s weights. Even for small collections, it is important to have an accurate inventory list as well as an up-to-date appraisal with pictures of the individual items. And the collection must be insured for its correct value. The Bergstrom-Mahler uses a museum inventory system known as PastPerfect, which could be adapted for use with larger collections not in museums. [By the way, there are currently **two** examples of the Plymouth Rock weight I won from the McNamaras in the Bergstrom-Mahler collection!]

Jami noted that Mrs. Bergstrom used two sets of index cards as her inventory control method and that all records of the Evan Pancake weight collection were left to the Museum. At some point, she suggested, a collector might question whether he/she has too many weights, thereby bringing up the issue of de-accession. There are several ways to dispose of a collection. One way to de-accession is to donate the collection to a museum [preferably the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, of course]. However, if the collector wishes to donate or bequeath a collection to a



Ebelhare open concentric commemorating 250 years of the Carlsthal (now Orle) Glassworks in Bohemia.

museum, she urged that the donation be unrestricted. She told the story of a collector who wanted to leave his weights to the Museum along with an elaborate dollhouse, but with the condition that the dollhouse must remain in the Museum in perpetuity. The Museum accepted the collection but is now, in effect, stuck with an elaborate item, the dollhouse, that simply doesn't fit in with the Museum's holdings. There are, too, tax benefits derived from a gift to a museum and those must be examined carefully to avoid any extra payments to the IRS. After a brief Question and Answer period, Jami ended her presentation at 3:35 PM.

William C. Price, Jr., Esq., the 4 PM speaker, supplied a bit of humor by miming how coal and natural gas were discovered and mined amongst the hills and valleys of Pittsburgh in the 19th Century, three volunteers representing the Monongahela, Alleghany and Ohio Rivers, and Bill Gaskill representing Mount Washington on the Southside of the city. This show produced an extended round of applause! And with all the rivers for transport and natural gas and coal locally available, Pittsburgh was a glass making center for most of the 19th Century. At one point, there were at least two dozen glass factories within a very narrow space of 2/10ths of a mile.

Bill's topic, William H. Maxwell and his 'Eureka' Paperweights, dealt with Maxwell's September 5, 1882 patent for printing a name, monogram, photograph or design on a thin plate of white glass and then encasing that image in a paperweight. Weights signed "William H. Maxwell" are uncommon because twice in 3.5 years his glass factories were lost to destructive fires, in June 1879 and January 1883, after being in operation only very short times. Bill's interest in this subject derives from his life-long proximity to Rochester, PA, where Maxwell lived and worked.



1930s Chinese Imitation of Antique Saint Louis Nosegay, private collection.

He roughly divides Maxwell's output into three different groups: portrait paperweights, described in Bill's article in the *2000 Bulletin*; advertising paperweights, described in the *2002 Bulletin*; and one-of-a-kind weights made for certain individuals' desks. The latter were completely hand decorated and typically contained the name of the intended owner and often his occupation or place of employment. Bill illustrated his humorous discourse with a number of these unique personalized weights and ended at 4:40 PM to enthusiastic applause.

Have you ever tried to photograph a pinchbesk weight? Marshall Deitsch, from 4:45 – 5:15 PM, expounded on this unusual paperweight form, named after Christopher Pinchbeck (1670-1732), a London watch and musical clock maker, who invented, in the early 1700s, an alloy composed of 83% copper and 17% zinc, calling it "Pinchbeck Metal". This alloy looked exactly like gold but cost far less and was a sensation in the jewelry world of the time. Unfortunately, some unscrupulous jewelers passed off this alloy as real gold and soon after Pinchbeck's death his name came to mean a cheap imitation or a counterfeit copy of something much better. A hundred years later, in the early 1840s, skilled craftsmen created intaglio molds of popular subjects or paintings, over which they pressed a thin foil of Pinchbeck's alloy. These foils were hand tooled to bring out the delicate detail, then installed under a protective, magnifying glass dome and supported by a base of pewter, marble or alabaster that was screwed or cemented to the dome. These "Pinchbeck Paperweights" were very popular in France and England during the 1840a and 1850s. Those with marble or alabaster bases are thought to be French while those with metal bases are generally attributed to England; sometimes the scene depicted can aid in

attribution. And, to answer the original question, they are extremely difficult to photograph, shooting the foil scene or design through its magnifying lens. These rare and desirable pieces pre-date the classic era French weights by a few years; yet, at prices ranging from \$800-\$2500 they are easily within the reach of serious collectors of French antiques. Without apology for the quality of his photography, Marshall showed a number of Pinchbeck weights and close-ups during his presentation, to appreciative attention, and ending on schedule.

It was Friday evening, May 20, and time for our “Dutch Treat Dinner”. About 40 of us had signed up for “J” A Restaurant, 501 West Water Street, located in the historic 1909 former Vulcan Hydroelectric Plant on the shores of the Fox River, the only restaurant of four not within walking distance of the hotel. Randall Stadtmueller was our caravan leader and toured us through the Paper Discovery Center, the Paper Industry International Hall of Fame and the very large paper crafts shop, in the building he owned next door, before taking us in to dinner. The confluence of an area of the country rich in paper making history and industry and our own passion for paperweights prompted some amusing comments.

Back at the Radisson by 9:30, we toured the Dealer Fair for the third time. By then Toby and I had accumulated nine paperweights and knew of two more coming, Peter McDougall minis as favors at the Closing Banquet, so we did not anticipate any more acquisitions. And there were none that evening.

This Convention’s ID Clinic panel, scheduled from 9 – 10:30 AM on Saturday, May 21, consisted of Anne Anderson, Jerry Gard, Gary McClanahan and Patty Mowatt. Fifty-eight items, the greatest number ever, had been submitted

for “examination and diagnosis”. As usual, there was not 100% agreement on a number of pieces, as the panel members alternated the weights upon which they would make the consensus comment. One memorable moment occurred when the stumped panel called upon Marek Kordasiewicz, the Bohemian expert, to come forward and express an opinion on one weight. After long and careful study, Marek said: “I haven’t the faintest idea”, thereby bringing down the house. At the conclusion of the Clinic, there was much excited perusal of the pieces before they were gathered up for return to their owners.

From 11-11:40 AM, President Gaskill presided over the mandated Biennial Meeting of PCA’s membership, a quorum constituting 90 members. After taking a count and confirming that a quorum was present, Bill advised the membership of a clause in the By-laws requiring that any item of New Business must be presented to the Board of Directors at least 60 days prior to Convention. There having been no such items presented, there will be no New Business at this meeting. Minutes of the 2003 Business Meeting were read by Secretary Patty Mowatt. Bill noted that speakers received compensation via waived registration fees and that PCA’s Fiscal Year is now October 1-September 30. Also, the organization is changing from a cash flow model to a Profit and Loss model. The By-laws were changed to reflect that the PCA’s main mission is education and that the

Bulletin is our primary instrument for that mission. Next, Bill announced that the current slate of officers remains in place without formal elections because there were no others nominated for the positions. One change was wrought when Region I Director Pat Vandersall retired from that position and was replaced by Tad McKeon, again without formal elections, being the only nominee for Region I Director. Other Directors’



Signed Peter McDougall mini-concentric receiver as favor at the Closing Banquet, May 21, 2005

reports followed. Finally, Bill explained why Toledo, Ohio is a good choice for the 2007 Convention.

It was time for Lunch on our Own, so...Toby and I drove three miles west to the Fox River Antique Center. There we ran into Anne Anderson and Margaret Preston, who had taxied over. Though we didn't find any worthwhile weights, we did acquire three pieces of glass and one painting-decorated plate and spent a pleasant two hours doing so. Afterwards we stopped at a nearby McDonald's for a snack to tide us over to dinner.

We had missed completely Colin Mahoney's Workshop on Ultra Violet Light testing of weights from 2 – 3 PM but were in time to catch the last formal program, John Hawley's Workshop on Specific Gravity, at 3. Density testing can be useful in suggesting what factory might or might not have produced a weight. The density of a material is defined as its mass per unit volume and is expressed in metric units of grams per cubic centimeter (g/cc). Density and specific gravity are not interchangeable terms. To measure density one needs a triple beam balance and its accompanying attachment weight set, a wire sling, a two quart container and distilled water. One weighs the weight in air and then suspended under water in the sling. Baccarat average density is 3.368 g/cc while Saint Louis weights have average density of 3.307 g/cc. Bohemian weights show average density of 2.51 g/cc because of the lime-potash mix used instead of the lead glass preferred by the French. Finally, density testing is a valuable tool but not an ultimate answer to paperweight identification. John will expand on this talk and on the results of his density testing of the 23 Gillinder weights that had been accumulated for that purpose in an article on "The Gillinder Project" in the 2006 *Bulletin*. Watch for it then.



Whitefriars "Three American Flags" paperweight, signed/dated 1977, acquired by the author May 21, 2005.

Since John ended early, Toby and I took the opportunity for one last round of the Dealer Fair which was to close at 4, rather than as the schedule had it, at 5 PM. Just at 4 o'clock, we were in front of Ray Metcalfe of Sweetbriar Gallery and there purchased our tenth weight. I believe that the glory decade of modern Whitefriars weights was the 1970s and the factory outdid itself with the pieces it produced celebrating our Bi-centennial. One of my personal favorites is the "Three American Flags" weight. I had owned it once before but sold it off and now Ray had another one. Here it is, at home in the Kruger abode!

We retired to our room, to rest and shower before dinner. At about 6:30, we were in the anteroom to the downstairs Ballroom for the Cash Bar. Toby drinks only straight Coke but I indulged in two quick mixed drinks, enjoying the interaction and, because I had deliberately skipped lunch in anticipation of a big heavy meal, eating more than my fill of the butlered hors d'oeuvres. I bumped into Andrew Byers of New Zealand and he offered me greetings from John and Shirley Miles, head of the New Zealand PCA. John and I exchange our newsletters but I haven't been able to persuade him, yet, to make the trip over here. It is at least a 24 hour journey each way and perhaps the exchange rate is not favorable enough between our two dollars, but I will keep trying (as will he, in reverse, no doubt).

Dinner was at 7:30 and the tables seated ten. Dinner was an enjoyable, often hilarious three hours, almost, with Toby and me, Harvey and Doris Robinson, Bonnie and Gary Geiger, Elliott and Rosalyn Heith and Kirk and Glenda Grunder of Bettendorf, Iowa, now one of the farther reaches of the Delaware Valley Paperweight Collectors Association! We hope to see the newlywed Grunders at Wheaton



From Rick Ayotte's Immersions: The Glass Art of Rick Ayotte Marsh Friends, 1999.



From Uncovering the Uncommon: The Perthshire Legacy Perthshire Paperweights, Ltd.

### Village next May for Paperweight Fest 2006!

There was no formal program at this Banquet, but Bill Gaskill was called upon to say a few words. Was it primarily his vision that produced this most satisfying of the four PCA Conventions Toby and I have attended, Chicago in 1999, Corning in 2001, San Antonio in 2003 and now Appleton, WI?. Of course, nowhere else in the world can we find an equal to the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum; that element alone sets this Convention far above the other three. Then, our accommodations at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel and Conference Center were excellent and the food, outstanding, especially the filet mignon

that was my Closing Banquet choice. The quite decent turnout, about 250, was also a factor, plus the report from almost all dealers that they had a good show. One more factor adding to our enjoyment, not related at all to paperweights, is that on Sunday morning, May 22, on our way to the Milwaukee Airport, we made time to visit the fabulous Milwaukee Art Museum. Ask me to tell you about it sometime! See you at Wheaton Village in 2006 and Toledo in '07! Tell a friend. Better yet, BRING a friend! Wheaton Village, May 2006! Toledo, May 2007! See you there! 



Clara and Rick Ayotte



Suzanne and Brian Landis

# 13th Anniversary Celebration Weekend

July 16 & 17, 2005

## Saturday, July 16, 2005

**10 AM:** Delaware Valley's 13th Anniversary Summer Meeting at Williamson Restaurant, 500 Blair Mill Road, Horsham, PA, two traffic lights north of PA Turnpike Exit 343 (Old Exit 27), begins with a Paperweight Fair featuring Paul Dunlop and The Dunlop Collection, Statesville, North Carolina.

**11 AM:** Guest Artist **Drew Ebelhare** returns for a short review of his most current work. **Drew** last appeared before DVPCA at our Fall Meeting on October 11, 2003, less than two years ago, and it is astonishing how many new designs and how much forward movement can be seen in his new weights. NTBM

**11:30 AM: "Acquired at Convention"** will be a display and "show and tell" of all the pieces DVPCAers collected, via various means and from various sources, while attending this year's PCA Convention in Wisconsin. If you were one of the lucky ones at Appleton, please bring in your newly acquired weights and related objects for this lively session.

**2:00 PM: William Drew Gaskill**, 56, currently President of PCA, Inc., has collected weights for over 25 years. He is a Product Line Manager for Cisco Systems, Inc. and spends 50% of his time on the road. He collects American and English paperweights and has gained a reputation for specialized research in primitive and folk glass weights. Contrary to rumor, he owns a number of French antiques and even some contemporary ones. His extremely large collection supports his research efforts. Bill also collects numismatic objects that appear in paperweights and dining car china from the Art Deco period. A trained tenor, he participates in Sacred Harp singings and conventions around the country. His topic today is "American Folk Art Paperweights and Their Audience".

**3:00 PM: "Stump the Dummies"** is Delaware Valley's version of an ID Clinic where mystery weights are brought in for examination and diagnosis by an ad hoc panel of experts. So please

## DVPCA 13TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WEEKEND JULY 16 & 17, 2005

### Luncheon Reservations July 16th

Choices @ \$16.00 each:

\_\_\_\_\_ Boneless Breast of Chicken Maryland, Bacon

\_\_\_\_\_ Broiled Fresh Scrod, Tartar Sauce

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ Luncheon total

### Garden Party/Catered Cookout Reservations July 16th

\_\_\_\_\_ Number @ \$12.00 each

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ Cookout total

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ Check amount enclosed

Please mail this slip with ALL your selections and check to:

DVPCA, c/o Don Formigli, Treasurer  
455 Stonybrook Drive, Levittown, PA 19055

**NO LATER THAN JULY 2, 2004!!!**

**For out-of-towners**, we suggest either the Willow Grove Hampton Inn, 1500 Easton Road, 1/4 mile south of Turnpike Exit 343, Toll-Free 1-800-426-7866, or the Courtyard by Marriott/Willow Grove, 2350 Easton Road, at the Turnpike Exit, 1-215-830-0550 directly.

bring in those mystery weights you have accumulated over the past year. You may be surprised at what you have, and even more surprised if the experts **agree** on what you have!

**4:00 PM:** The group will caravan to the lovely Wayne, PA home of Andy and DeeDee Dohan for our annual **Garden Party/Catered Cookout**. Maps to their home and for guidance on Sunday will be available.

## Sunday, July 17, 2005

**10:00 AM:** Our group will convene at the **Heritage Glass Museum**, Corner of High and Center Streets, Glassboro, NJ 08028, Phone: 856.881.7468, for a guided tour of the Museum's holdings, perpetuating the heritage of the glass industries of the region, paperweights included. Free Admission.

**11-11:45 AM:** Our group caravans to **Wheaton Village**, Millville, NJ, for the second full day of Glass Weekend 2005 with at least three paperweight dealers. Don't miss the special exhibit in the Museum of American Glass, "Particle Theories: International Pate de Verre and Other Cast Glass Constructions". Free to Friends of Wheaton Village. Otherwise, there is an admission charge to the Village.



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ISSUE CONTENTS:**

- Lead Article: **“PCA Convention, May 18-21, 2005: Our Journey to ‘Paperweight Mecca’”**
- Review of Events: **Spring Meeting, April 16, 2005**
- Announcement: **13th Anniversary Celebration Weekend, July 16 & 17, 2005**
- Dated Reservations Tear-Off Slip

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