



PORTLAND'S *Rain* OF GLASS, INC.

A non-profit organization formed to stimulate interest in collectible glass and to provide educational resources and events for the members and the community at large.

JANUARY

WHERE: Friendship Masonic Center
5626 NE Alameda Street
Portland, Oregon 97213
N.E. 57th & Sandy

WHEN: Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2010,
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
(Library open at 6:00 p.m.)

GREETERS: Karen Young
and Delores Preas
(Come early to set up—6:00 p.m.)

SPEAKER: DAVE & LINDA SPRAU
on "Soda Pop and Ice Cream Glassware"

Dave and Linda will present a program highlighting the use of glass in Dave's family's soda pop and ice cream factory near Everett, Washington, circa 1910-1960, including a curious connection to Portland and the State of Oregon during these times. Pictured above and at top are three Sprau soda bottles and the Sprau neon sign

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY

- 3 – Polk Flea Market, Polk County Fairgrounds, Rickreall
- 8-10 – Tigard Flea Market, 14365 SW Pacific Hwy., Tigard
- 10 – Portland's Indoor/Outdoor Flea Market, 5400 N. Lombard, Portland
- 15-17 – Tigard Flea Market
- 16-17 – Palmer Wirfs at Clark Co., WA
- 17 – Portland's Indoor/Outdoor Flea Market
- 23-24 – Palmer Wirfs at Puyallup Showplex, WA
- 24 – Rose City Collectors Market, Airport Holiday Inn
- 24 – Salem Collector's Market, Salem Fairgrounds
- 30-31 – **NEW DATE!!!** PROG'S Glass Show date has changed. Join PROG members Jan. 30-31 for the annual Show & Sale at the Washington County Fairgrounds.

PATTERN OF THE MONTH: "WINCANTON BLUE"

**BY WOOD & SONS,
presented by
Mariam Morehead**

Pictured at left is a Wincanton Blue milk jug, circa 1917.

HOSPITALITY: January Committee listed on page 2

BOARD MEETING: Tuesday, January 12, 2010,
at the Friendship Masonic Center, 7:00 p.m.
ALL MEMBERS WELCOME

Visit the Portland's Rain of Glass Website for more interesting Club news:
www.rainofglass.com

Mailing Address:
Portland's Rain of Glass
C/O Friendship Masonic Center,
5626 N.E. Alameda Street,
Portland, OR, 97213

❖INSIDE ❖

Portland's Rain of Glass, Inc.

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- ◆Membership Information
- ◆Travel Log - Harvard's Glass Flowers
- ◆Anri Woodcarvings



Christmas Caroling
with Mariam Morehead on the piano
Photo courtesy of Neal Skibinski

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE:

Each month there are a group of volunteers who sign up to help make coffee and beverages, set up the food and clean-up so that we can all enjoy refreshments. This month those wonderful members are Sandra Martin, Barbara Dietz, Mary Ann Specht, Sandra Millius and Diana Jones.

We thank them very much for their willingness to help make our meeting delicious!

-Jewell Gowan, 503-510-9137

PROG NEEDS YOUR HELP!

There are still slots to be filled for the Show & Sale on January 30 & 31.

**Please sign up at the January meeting or contact Carole White
503-282-0608,
cbessw@aol.com**

if you are able to work a shift.

THANKS!!

Glass Factory, New Martinsville, W. Va.
30TH ANNUAL **DATE CHANGE**
Glass Antiques and Collectibles Show & Sale
Jan. 30-31, 2010
Washington County Fairgrounds
Hillsboro Oregon
PRESENTED BY:
PORTLAND'S RAIN OF GLASS
www.rainofglass.com

TRAVEL LOG - Dateline Boston:

HARVARD'S GLASS FLOWERS



Glass rhododendron

At the end of October I was fortunate enough to take a two week trip to Massachusetts. In addition to seeing the beautiful autumn foliage, I got to see two sites of interest to glass collectors. The first, the Glass Flowers of Harvard, I am writing about in this issue. The second, the Sandwich Glass Museum, will be reviewed in the next newsletter.

The glass flowers of Harvard are a collection of highly realistic glass models of 837 different botanical specimens. They are displayed at the Harvard University Museum of Natural History in Cambridge, Mass. They were first commissioned in 1893 to provide a teaching tool for students of botany. Formerly, students could only study blooming plants



Glass dahlia tuber with glass "dirt" clinging to outside skin

during the relatively brief bloom time of each plant. Between 1893 and 1936 more than 3000 models were constructed. The flowers were originally made by the father and son team of Leopold and Rudolph Blaschka in their studio near Dresden Germany. The elder Blaschka died in 1895, just two years into the extensive project. Rudolph the son took over and continued to produce glass flowers for Harvard until 1936, three years before his death at age 82.



Glass tuber showing intricate roots

The glass flowers of Harvard are truly one of the wonders of the glass world. It would be difficult to imagine such artistic precision being produced with TODAY'S technology, let alone that of 100 years ago. Most of the early specimens were surface-fired with color but most of the later pieces were made with colored glass -- or a combination of the two. Some are blown glass while others are hand-shaped. Some are supported by wire inside. Others are not. All show an almost unbelievable attention to detail. Consider the intricate root system of the plant shown in the photograph here. Yes, all those roots are really glass. Also, notice the photo of the dirt-stained dahlia tubers. As anyone who has ever dug up dahlias in the fall knows, some dirt always remains on the surface of the tubers. The glass representation here looks exactly like dirty tubers that have been recently dug up in the back yard. How on earth does one make realistic glass dirt??? Very impressive!

The botanical faculty at Harvard were confident in awarding the original glass flowers contract to the Blaschkas because they had seen how well the father-and-son team had produced the “glass invertebrates” for the Biology Department a few years before. Some of the glass invertebrates (jelly-fish, squid, etc) are on display at the Harvard Museum along with the glass flowers. While the glass flowers were produced only for Harvard, the glass invertebrates were produced for a number of teaching institutions. The largest collection today remains with Cornell University and is displayed at the nearby Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, New York.

It has not been until recent years that Harvard has considered their glass botanical specimens to be “art” as well as a teaching tool. I was so amazed by what I saw at the exhibit that I couldn’t believe it’s not better publicized and well known. I first became aware of the glass flowers when Josh Kehrby made his excellent 2006 Rally presentation on stained glass. I was so impressed then, that I made a mental note of putting it on my lifetime not-to-be-missed list. This is an exhibit that would thrill even the most jaded glass lover.

Travel Log and Photos by Jack Bookwalter



Glass Japanese maple leaves



Glass tropical pitcher plant vine



More Anri figures displayed by Elmer Heffner
Photos courtesy of Neal Skibinski



Holiday Potluck Fun - PROG member Santa Claus left presents under the tree for every member!
Photos courtesy of Neal Skibinski

ANRI WOODCARVINGS

with Elmer Heffner



What could be more Christmas-like than woodcarvings of elves? Elmer Heffner brought samples of Anri Woodcarving figural pieces from his extensive collection to our December potluck meeting.

Vintage Anri pieces are elf or gnome-like figurals. The legend is that a Groden Valley shepherd was looking for a lost lamb and encountered a cave of dwarfs carving wonderful wooden figures. He asked the dwarf king what magic they possessed to make such fine carvings, and the king said that it was not magic at all but rather practice and skill. The king taught the shepherd to carve, and he returned home to teach the families of the Groden Valley.

The Groden Valley in the Tyrolean region of Austria was home to hundreds of wood carvers. Alois Riffeser was born in St. Christina in the Groden Valley in 1854. He sold woodcarvings made by various St. Christina



artists. His son, Anton Riffeser, served in World War I and was incarcerated in a Russian prison camp. He spent his time in captivity planning a new company, and in 1926 he founded the House of Anri, using the first two letters of his first and last names. (St. Christina became part of Italy after World War I.)

Anri was truly a cottage industry. Early Anri pieces were made entirely of wood, hand carved and hand painted by more than 100 families, and this is why no two pieces are exactly alike. A master carver made the original model, and when it was approved, many different carvers copied it.



Vintage collectible Anri pieces include desk accessories; smoking items; kitchen and home décor such as art plaques; wall racks and hooks for keys; nutcrackers; bar items such as bottle stoppers, pourers, openers and corkscrews and bar sets; figurines; music boxes; chess sets and much more. About 2/3 of all the pieces made are mechanical with moving parts.

Anri is not the only woodcarving company, so there are pieces from other companies to be found. They all have their charms, but you don't want to pay an Anri price for a non-Anri product.

Anri still produces woodcarvings under the management of Thomas Riffeser. Their website is www.anri.com. A good reference book for Anri pictures and prices is *Anri Wood Carvings* by Philly Rains and Donald Bull.

Written by Carole Bess White

Photos by Neal Skibinski