

OPEN SALT COLLECTORS NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Issue #2

Spring 2002



Dare to Collect Salts!!!

Welcome to the #2 Issue of the National Newsletter for Open Salt Collectors. Thanks to all the members who have submitted articles! The response was so great that room wasn't available for all the content provided, so we already have a good head start on Issue #3. Special thanks also to Al and Sherry Diamond for volunteering to handle the copying and distribution of this newsletter. Without such volunteer effort, whether in providing content, being a club officer, or handling all the many other responsibilities of club life, such as newsletter publishing, we'd just be a bunch of lonely individuals and probably not-so-knowledgeable collectors! Thanks also to Sandra Yates, an Executive Assistant where I work, who has given generously of her time and talent and certainly made up for my many shortcomings as an editor. Lastly, I hope you enjoy the photos of some of my salts that I squeezed here and there in the newsletter. Enjoy!

Rod Elser (rcelser@aol.com)

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Club Information:

New England Society of Open Salt Collectors (NESOSC):

Dues: \$7/year, payable every April 1st.
Send to NESOSC, c/o Karen Wetmore, 4 Clear
Pond Drive, Walpole, MA, 02681.

Officers: Lesley Solkoske, President; Warren
Pilling, Vice President; Maria Martell, Secretary;
Karen Wetmore and Sue Brown, Co-Treasurers.

Future Meetings: April 20th, 2002, at Carter
Memorial U. M. Church, 800 Highland Avenue,
Needham Heights, MA. Program will feature Ed
Bowman talking on salts in current or recent
production. The meeting starts at 9:30 AM. For
further information about the meeting or the club,
contact Lesley Solkoske (lgsolkoske@snet.net,
phone #203-237-6817) or Mimi Waible
(MimiAHW@aol.com, phone #978-443-3613).

Open Salt Collectors of the Atlantic Region (OSCAR):

Dues: \$10/year (or \$17 total for family at same
address), due May 1st of each year. Send to
OSCAR, c/o Linda Kump, 71 Clearview Lane,
Biglerville, PA, 17307-9407.

Officers: Rod Elser, President; Al Diamond, Vice
President; Bob Bugel, Secretary; Linda Kump,
Treasurer.

Future Meetings: May 4th, Gettysburg, PA,
hosted by Mike and Linda Kump; August 17th,
Delta, PA, hosted by LeeAnne Wilson and Jim
Cole; October 25-26th, Corning, NY, combined
meeting with NESOSC. For further information
about the meetings or the club, contact Rod Elser
(rcelser@aol.com, phone #804-598-8771).

Midwest Open Salt Society (MOSS)

Dues: \$10/single, \$16/year for second family
member, payable January 1st.
Send to MOSS, c/o Ed Bowman, 2411 West 500
North, Hartford City, IN 47348.

Officers: Maris Jende, President; S. Keith
Tucker, Vice President; Sue Imhoff, Secretary; Ed
Bowman, Treasurer.

Future Meetings: May 18th, Troy, MI, hosted by
Debi Raitz. For further information about the club
or meetings, contact Ed Bowman at the address
above or edbowman@netusa1.net.

Chicago Area—Midwest Open Salt Society (C-MOSS)

This is a sub-group of MOSS; no dues, just
contributions to help with mailing information
about the meetings. Future meetings on March
23rd in Woodstock, IL; July 27th in Elburn, IL; and
November 9th in Morris, IL. For further
information about the group or meetings, contact
Keith Tucker, 10386 B Fox River Drive, Newark,
IL, 60541.

Open Salt Seekers of the West—Northern California (OSSOTW-NC)

Dues: \$10/year.

Future Meetings: April 6th, Palo Alto, CA,
hosted by Jim and Joan Wrenn; July, 2002 in
Martinez, CA, hosted by Linda Witt; October,
2002, in Campell, CA, hosted by Val Lea. For
further information about the meetings or the club,
contact Sarah Kawakami (hgsalts@earthlink.net,
phone #925-757-9603).

Open Salt Seekers of the West—Southern California (OSSOTW-SC)

Dues: \$5 per person, due January 1st of each year.

Officers: Chris Christensen, President; Holly
DiDomenico, Secretary; Janet Hudson, Treasurer.

Future Meetings: May 4th, Glendora, CA, hosted
by Chuck and Dolores Cruthrids; November 2nd,
site to be determined. For further information
about the meetings or the club, contact Chris
Christensen (candp@net999.com, phone #714-
540-1225).

Open Salt – Collectors South East (OSalt-CSE)

Started in 1999, this is the newest club, having 2
meetings per year.

Dues: \$10/year, payable to:

C. Bugel, c/o OSalt-CSE, P.O. Box 98267,
Atlanta, GA, 30359-1967.

Co-Leaders: K. Reissing, C. Bugel and B.
Herrman.

Future Meetings: October 19th, Marietta, GA,
hosted by Betty Herman. For more information
about the club or the meeting, contact Carolyn
Bugel at the above address
(BugelC@peoplepc.com).

***Note:** All this information—plus more—
about the clubs can be found on the web at
www.opensalts.info. Special thanks to Debi
Raitz for developing and hosting this site!

A PAIR OF BATTERSEA SALTS

C-1770-1780

By

Dick & Cackey Marsden

The authors both have a fondness for the Colonial Williamsburg area, including Yorktown and Jamestown, VA, and usually visit there about every two years. On a recent trip, while walking in the restored area of old Yorktown, we found an antique shop specializing in 17th and 18th Century wares. As we both are interested in items from this time period, we had to investigate. It didn't take us long to spot a pair of beautiful Battersea salts, which are now in Cackey's collection.

Although we did have some information on Battersea enamels, and were aware that they are quite scarce, it now became necessary to learn much more. Unfortunately, not a lot has been published on these beautiful English decorative art objects produced between 1750 and 1840. However, we have good friends in England who are also collectors and they were of help. Also, just recently a very informative article was published in "Living with Antiques" magazine, November 2001.

The art of enameling goes back to antiquity. During the Roman period in England, Celtic craftsmen enameled brooches and other small objects. In all of these early examples, the design was produced by the metalworker; it was only at the end of the 15th century that the technique of painting with enamel colors on a smooth ground of enamel was begun. This allowed the artist into the process, for the paintbrush could produce much finer designs. By the 18th century the technique had been well developed, and painted enamels are the finest examples of their art.

The earliest enamels in England were painted by hand. However, the most important contribution of the English to the art of enameling on copper was the process of transfer painting on enamel. This English development probably started in Birmingham and was then taken up in London by the "York House Factory" in Battersea in the early 1750's. Sir Stephen Theodore Janssen established the York House Factory in 1753 to produce trinkets and curiosities enameled on copper. Objects such as saltcellars, scent bottles, snuffboxes, candlesticks, baskets, inkstands, tea caddies, figural whimsies, etc. were made. His firm lasted for only three years until 1756. Yet, the items produced at Battersea were so beautiful, that the name "Battersea enamels" became a generic term for all English enamel on copper items to differentiate English enamel from Continental enamel items. The process was continued in other workshops in London, Bilston, Birmingham, Wednesbury, and Liverpool until about 1840. Our pair of Battersea salts most probably were made in Bilston, as most items were made at this location. The maker marked very little English enamel, and signed examples are extremely rare. The quality of the enamels produced in the 19th century

declined, and demand for these objects had dried up by the mid-to late 1830's. The last known 19th century enamellers in England stopped working in the 1840's.

Probably one thing that makes Battersea objects of enamel on copper so rare is the process of Japanned lacquer ware on metal, either on copper, brass, lead, or thin-sheet iron that was tinned. These Japanned objects were being produced at the same time as the Battersea enamels, but at much lower cost so this became the prevalent means of production for this type of ware.

As mentioned, the English enamel industry was finished by the 1840's, but after 130 years during which no enamels were produced, there was a revival of these replicas made in the 1970's. They are clearly marked in the enamel by their makers, so they can never be sold as authentic antique originals. They have, however, helped to stimulate an even wider interest in the originals.



The Passing of the Open Salt

by
Kay Reissing

When you set the table for dinner, does the table setting include an open salt? Probably not. The turn of the 21st century differs from the beginning of the 20th century in the United States with the almost exclusive use of saltshakers instead of open salts.

The open salt was a common table item for hundreds of years. What brought about this change in salt containers? This paper looks at what caused the passing of the glass open salt and why it's passing could be called – “elegant.”

On December 25, 1876, the Christmas Barrel Salt Shaker received its patent. A barrel-shaped shaker with a metal rotating grinder inside solved the problem of “de-lumping” the salt before shaking it from the container. The agitator, however, suffered from the corrosive nature of the salt, making this saltshaker short-lived. By the 1900's, however, numerous shakers were competing with the open salt in areas where humidity was not a problem.

The convenience of the shaker plus the Morton Salt Company's addition of a chemical additive to salt in 1907 hastened the conversion from the open salt to the shaker. By the 1920's the number of open salts being offered by manufacturers decreased substantially, a sign that the open salt was being replaced.

In my own family, my mother received no open salts when she married Dad in 1929 although both sets of their parents had received open salts as wedding gifts. Saltshakers were more popular, and while both grandmothers had open salts, they no longer used them.

Studies of the 1920's, 30's and 40s show that many glass companies were producing ever fewer open salts. Also, glass was separating into two kinds: depression glass and elegant glass. As far as I can find, no open salts were produced in what is now called Depression

glass. The only sources of glass open salts in America were companies that were producing what is now called “Elegant Glass.” Gene Florence, in his book Elegant Glass of the Depression Era, defines elegant glass as “handmade and acid-etched glassware that was sold in the department and jewelry stores as opposed to dime store and give-away glass that has become known today, as Depression glass.” Only those who could afford luxuries were still using glass open salts.

Open salts were being made in other mediums such as china, pottery and silver during this time. In pottery, small-multicolored plain round open salts were made by Harlequin, a contemporary of Fiesta pottery. Lenox, Bealeek and Austrian china “blanks” were being made and sold to eager home painters. Cheaper versions of cloisonné were also available. With only a few exceptions, the production of these items was done overseas.

Glass manufacturers making “Elegant Glass” during the period from 1920 to 1960 included: Cambridge, Heisey, Imperial, Fostoria, Westmoreland, Tiffin, U S Glass and Duncan & Miller.

Interestingly, as the small open salts declined, manufacturers produced slightly larger dishes called Almond or Nut dishes. These dishes would hold 5 – 6 nuts or bon-bons and were served at the end of the meal. These nut dishes were made for only a short time, possibly because plastic and paper products replaced the candy and nut holders at birthday parties, and ash trays (some very collectible such as intaglios) became chic for the fashionable smokers at the close of the meal.

This paper suggests that “Elegant Glass” companies slowly phased out open salts. Novelty dishes such as swans, sleighs and shells were made by these companies and tended to be more expensive. They lasted for only a few more years and could be used in any way the consumer wished.

The final factor in the passing of the open glass salt is that by the 1980's all of the major “Elegant Glass” companies had closed – selling

their molds to companies who reproduced the patterns in cheaper glass – often using colors to hide the lesser quality crystal. Only Heisey glass patterns are not reproduced today (except by the Heisey Museum) because Heisey collectors bought all of the Heisey molds.

Reproductions are a subject for another paper, but most Americans will admit that the useful age of the open salt had passed with the closing of the “Elegant Glass” companies. Collectors have perpetuated the purchase of the reproductions for their collections, but very few use these salts for anything other than display.

Let’s look at the “Elegant Glass” companies and their final salts:

The Cambridge Company (1907-1960) was one of the active producers of open salts after the turn of the century. In 1920 Cambridge introduced a delicate crimped mold-blown pedestal salt (H&J 2993). Also during this period a delicate twin-sided salt with notched handles and spoon (H&J 2092) became available. Twin salts had the advantage of needing fewer individual salts on the table or of serving as both a salt and pepper container. An example of the change from small open salts to larger nut dishes is “Decadon” H&J 777 and H&J 2104). Novelties include the Swan in 1940 (H&J 936) and the Shell (H&J 1235) in the 1930-40’s. Finally, the nut dish Cambridge blank (H&J 2111) has been etched in such beautiful and popular patterns as “Elaine” and “Wildflower” and because of their rarity sell at elevated prices.



Heisey (1896 – 1957). From 1920-1930 “Ridgeleigh” (H&J 2741) and “Paneled Tub” (H&J 2845) and later in 1930 “Revere” (H&J

2851) (often engraved) were offered. Also in the 1920’s a nut dish called “Narrow Flute” and the novelty Swan nut dish in the 1930’s were introduced.



Imperial Glass Company (1904 – 1984). Two popular glass patterns were the life-blood of the Imperial Company: “Candlewick” (H&J 2642) in the 1930’s with 16 and 18 balls and “Cape Cod” (H&J 2948) a larger nut cup size in the 1940’s with a rare open salt and pepper shaker in 1947 (H&J 3828). Imperial also was able to buy some of the old Cambridge molds and reproduce them.



Fostoria (1887 – 1983). “American” was produced from 1915 until Fostoria closed its doors in 1983; this pattern had a salt (H&J 2574) and a nut dish. A salt called “Geometric Triangles” was introduced in 1942 (H&J 3249). I find it interesting that some of the success of the salts introduced by Fostoria could be attributed to the new forms they took. Novelties in the 1940’s included “Grape Leaf” (H&J 3351), “Chickadee” (H&J 3056) and the sleigh (H&J 3735). The sleigh was introduced as a Christmas candy dish. Two nut dishes were “Fairfax” (H&J 782) and “Colony” (H&J 2980).



Westmoreland (1890 – 1984) was a large producer of open salts in the 1920's, producing superior glass salts. "English Hobnail" was introduced in the 1930's. The introduction and success of milk glass, however, moved this company away from dining-room quality crystal into the kitchen china market and great success came to them with the production of the milk glass "Covered Hen" in the 1940's (H&J 964).



Tiffin Glass Company (1887 – 1962), although a large producer of "Elegant Glass," was not making open salts as far as I can find from my research. They did, however, produce nut cups such as "Flanders" to accompany their crystal patterns.

U.S. Glass, a large producer of open salts at the turn of the century, was not introducing salts during the 1920 – 1950 era although it did make "Elegant Glass" such as the popular pattern called "Deerwood." U.S. Glass closed in 1963.

Duncan & Miller (1900 – 1955) was another huge producer of open salts in 1900 and continued to make a few salts and nut cups during the 1920-30's. "Spiral Flutes" (H&J

3549) a nut dish was introduced in 1924; "Caribbean" was made in 1936.

Although my husband and I have traveled extensively in the U.S., we have never been served with open salts. In traveling abroad we have been served with a twin soapstone open salt in Bunratty Castle, Ireland; a wooden set of open salts with lids and matching spoons in the Four Seasons Hotel near Bali, Indonesia; and blue glass open salts in a rustic lodge in the rainforest of Australia. Thanksgiving dinner at our home traditionally is served with open salts.

So while the method of serving salt in the open dishes has largely disappeared, there remain a few delightful spots where open salts are still utilized. Perhaps you can add some other places where they are still being used.

Sources:

5,000 Open Salts, by William Heacock & Patricia Johnson; Richardson Printing Corporation, Marietta, OH, 45750; 1982.

Elegant Glassware of the Depression Era, 7th Edition, by Gene Florence; Collectors Books, P.O. Box 3009, Paducah, KY, 42002.

CHINESE EXPORT PEDESTAL TRENCHER SALT 1740-1750

by Cackey Marsden

This is an early round pedestal trencher salt in the "Famille Rose" pattern, circa 1740-1750, from the Chung-Lung Dynasty. The round-footed trenchers are much harder to find than the oblong type. In the center of this pedestal trencher bowl is the familiar "rose" or "peony" flower designating one of the four seasons.



MEXICAN SILVER SALTS

By Linda Drew

Dear Salt Collectors,

In writing this article, it seemed reasonable that a photo is worth a thousand words. The subject of Mexican silver is huge and there are an incredible amount of designers. I have included some of the silver salt creators that I felt were most noteworthy as well as a brief background of why Mexican silver has become so sought after.

Many of you may have salts that are not mentioned and it would be great to keep this subject alive with future submissions to our newsletter. Thank you so much to Phyllis Goddard (author of the Spratling website www.spratlingsilver.com) for allowing me to use the Spratling hallmark page from her site.

“Worthwhile Silver requires that it be identified with the name and reputation of its maker” – William Spratling

In approximately 1780, the silver era went bust and Taxco, Mexico became all but frozen in time. Though silver ore continued to trickle from the mines, the area was impoverished until 1926.

William Spratling came to Mexico to study architecture, art and write a book in 1926. He planned to stay for a short visit, fell in love with Taxco and settled down for the rest of his life. In 1931, he opened his own silversmith shop (Talle de las Delicias) with designers he brought from ‘home’. He trained the people of Taxco in the art of silver design, using Aztec and classical designs. The natives had preferred to work with gold, doing filigree, thinking that working in silver was beneath their dignity. But they learned that silver was a valuable commodity. They worked along side Spratling’s designers until they were established on their own. Spratling completely changed the focus and economic status of the town of Taxco. *“Perhaps no other artisan in history had more influence and impact on the art of an adopted country than William Spratling had on Mexico’s silver industry.”**

Other ‘talles’ (workshops) began to spring up in and around Taxco and prominent designers began to emerge.

**Spratling Silver* by Sandraline Cederwall and Hal Riney, Chronicle Books, 2000

Hector Aguilar and Antonio Castillo – They were protégés of Spratling and in 1939 started their own workshops, Talle Borda and Talle de Los Castillo. Spratling asked them not to copy his designs and so they didn’t. Castillo’s work was more influenced by Japan, with a minimalist nature, and Aguilar leaned more toward the heavier and more muscular designs like Spratling. Aguilar employed a number of silversmiths from Talle de Las Delicias (Spratling’s shop) so it was no surprise what he chose to make.

During the Second World War, Taxco became almost a boomtown producing identification bracelets, pillboxes, bombardier wings and dog tags for the United States Army. Retail stores looked to Mexico for silver objects and jewelry as well since it was unobtainable here or in Europe. Spratling, Aguilar and Los Castillo had a huge part in supplying quality silver during WWII.

Bernice Goodspeed, one of a handful of prominent woman designers, worked in textiles, canvas as well as silver. *Bernice’s designs for the salts (which I have pictured) are distinguished by the successful marriage of a Pre-Columbian design element with a European utilitarian object. The stepped and scrolled motif appears four times around the rim of the salt along the part of the bowl, which is convex. Between each of the convex stepped elements are concave ridges, resulting in an interplay of curved planes and an interesting silhouette for the entire bowl.***

*** Mexican Silver 20th Century Handwrought Jewelry & Metalwork*, 1994, by Penny Chittam Morrill and Carole A. Berk, Schiffer Books

Margot van Voorhies Carr (Margot de Taxco) – she was married to Los Castillo and is probably the best-known woman designer in Mexico. She perfected the technique of champleve (enamel on silver) and was the one who had influenced Los Castillo in the art of Japanese design. They were divorced in 10 years and she opened her own shop in 1948. What is truly amazing are the scores of well-known silversmiths who have worked for her, her ex-husband and Hector Aguilar.

Damaso Gallegos – was the one of the first silversmiths to produce and sell in quantity; creating thousands of pillboxes holding malaria pills, etc. during WWII. His shop was opened next to the Hotel Victoria so he often worked with the tourists.

Maciel Silver Factory; Alfredo Ortega, – Mexico City – These still are the great producers of Mexican silver in Mexico City. Most of their work is in the European or colonial style. In the early days, Mexicans purchased a great portion of their work.

Sanborns (Mexico City) - Fred Davis (very prominent silversmith) at Sanborns. He had a whimsical approach to folk art, which he put into his silver. Davis was able to find beauty in handcrafted objects created in the most primitive settings. He was able to employ hundreds of artisans and gave appreciation for their work. Fred Davis was considered the first to use obsidian with silver.

Valentin Vidaurreta – hallmark VV or Valentin – this is a name you may see, sold his work to Sanborns

The Eagle Mark – This is also known as the bell mark is the Mexican government assay mark. It was utilized from 1946 to 1979 and signified that the marked item was at least of .925 (92.5%) quality of pure silver. Of course, the mark was used irregularly but it is a good aid in dating a piece. In 1940, the government began a plan to have each designer stamp a number into the eagle mark to signify which silver manufacturer they were. This mark was discontinued in 1980 because of forgeries.

Currently there is a Mexican National Silver Fair in Taxco. It is held the last Saturday in November through the first Sunday in December. Spratling started the fair in 1937 as an appreciation party for the artisans.

There are a few reference books that are invaluable if you are collecting Mexican silver salts. The ones I have found the most useful are:

The Little Book of Mexican Silver Trade and Hallmarks by Billie Hougart, 2001, published by TBR International Inc. You can virtually look up ANY Mexican Hallmark you have and find it. BRAND NEW and currently on EBAY.

The other books/sites I have referred to earlier -

Mexican Silver

Spratling Silver

The Spratling Web Site (www.spratling.com)



Left - William Spratling salts, sterling, one with rosewood feet
Right - Victoria de Taxco in sterling and copper



Left - Spratling salts
Rosewood bases on two and the third has a jade type liner
Right - Bernice Goodspeed



Left - Spratling in sterling, the one on the left has applied balls
Right - Los Castillo



Left - Spratling salt spoons
Right - Hector Aguilar



Left - Alfredo Ortega
Right - Maciel Silver Factory in Mexico City



Left - Damaso Gallegos
Right - Mark Feisa of Casa Prieto





Salty Observations

No. 1

Spring 2002

In October, the New England club held its meeting at the Frank Chiarenza Museum of Glass in Meriden, CT. Frank is a glass collector who has collected enough interesting material to put it on display to the public. The Museum is well worth visiting if you are in Meriden, especially if you like seeing a wide variety of old glass. Frank is a very interesting guy to talk salts with. He told us a new (to us) way to tell the difference between the old Flying Fish salt and the L.G. Wright repro.


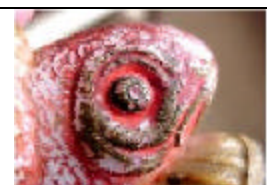

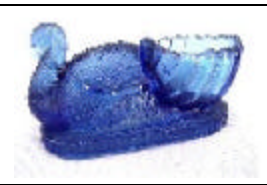

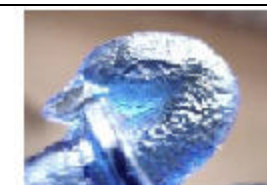

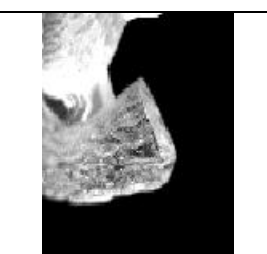
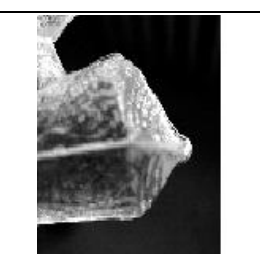
The original of these salts was made by an unknown company. We have seen only a milk glass version, sometimes painted. Whether the unpainted versions were originally sold that way or just lost their paint over the years, we don't know. Around 1950, L.G. Wright had a new mold made which copied the original almost exactly. We have been telling the difference between new and old by looking at the base – the old one touches the table at 4 points while the new one sits flat. Frank pointed out that there is an easier way, The old one has an eyeball – a dot in the middle of the eye. We looked, and the difference is easily seen. Live and learn – there is often a better way to do things than we first believe.

This idea started us looking at bird eyes. We examined the Swan Boat, where the Joe St. Clair version is very close to the original. There may be a little difference, but it's too small to be a good identifier. For the present, we'll keep on using the other signs. The St. Clair one has grooves in the reins and the old one doesn't. The old comes only in clear, blue, amber and maybe vaseline color as far as we can determine, so other colors are newer. We worry about the grooves identifier, though – if the glass is too cold they might not show up in a new one.

We also looked at the bird on branch salt, which Mosser has made for years. Here again the eyes are a little different, but the stub end of the branch is much easier to use as a sign. The old one has upper and lower flat surfaces on the end, while the Mosser one comes to a point and has wood grain.

We hope you have both old and new versions of these salts to compare for yourselves. If you remember these clues, you can tell the old from the new when you are in the dark and dusty back room of an antique shop and see one for sale at a ridiculously low price.

Ed Berg

	
Flying Fish Salt	
	
Old Fish	Wright Fish
	
Swan Boat	Bird on Branch
	
Old Mosaic Glass	New St. Clair
	
Old Branch End	New Mosser

8th National Open Salt Convention

493 DAYS AND COUNTING !!!

It's not like we OSCAR members are *EXCITED* or anything!!!

But in just 493 days from the day I'm writing this, we will once again gather together to share salts and good times at the **8th NOSC (National Open Salt Convention)**! Registration Thursday, June 26, 2003 thru Saturday, June 28, 2003.

AND, BOY, DO WE HAVE A PROGRAM FOR YOU!!

Our committee is already packing as much fun, socializing, learning and programs as the clock will permit us in the few days we will have together. We suggest that you check your calendars and reserve the dates above to come to beautiful Southern New Jersey. The following Friday is the Fourth of July – why not spend it on the East Coast just a two hours from Washington, New York, and the Pocono Mountains; and less than an hour from the Jersey Shore (and Atlantic City)?

Hints of things to come:

- **We're all going to decorate a salt that we will be taking home as a "unique" souvenir!
- **We're designing a special "Salt Tour" of Winterthur, the Dupont Mansion and Museum, as a part of a daylong excursion to this fascinating historical site. You'd be surprised what we turned up in Winterthur's collection that will be brought out on display **JUST FOR US!**
- **We are planning a "Special" Convention Raffle for a very special salt that most of us would not have the opportunity to acquire under normal circumstances.
- **A lucky attendee will enjoy a "Buying Spree" while at the Convention.
- **All this and speakers, too! Our committee is lining up an array of speakers to provide a content-rich program throughout the Convention.
- **Displays Galore
- **A Reverse Auction (if you haven't been to one, this will be an exciting **EXPERIENCE**) –
- **A Trading Bazaar

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE! Please plan to attend. We will provide more information to you as the days continue to tick down.

Al & Sherry Diamond, Coordinators



Bow Tie Pattern Master Salt—3 1/4" Diameter



Acanthus Scroll Pattern Master Salt—3" square

Salts by Alphonse LaPaglia

By Lesley Solkoske

I bought this salt recently on eBay. I had been looking for it for quite a while, as it is one for my “Meriden Collection”. After I bought mine, the seller listed three or four others, one after another. I emailed him with information on the salt but he chose not to add it to his write-up. In case the other buyers are club members, here is the rest of the story: The salt was designed by a silversmith named Alphonse LaPaglia.



In 1952, The International Silver Co. noted that “there has been a regrettable lack of appreciation for really fine sterling hollowware.” They felt the trend of all the companies, including International, had been moving “away from the outstanding and the distinctive in design and more and more toward the commercial.” There had been a vast improvement in the standard of living and a great increase in purchasing power compared with the prior decade. They felt public taste had also improved and that people were ready to invest in finely designed silver articles. Thus “International Sterling Craft Associates” was formed.

Alphonse LaPaglia was born in Italy. Very little is known of him but he must have arrived in this country prior to WW2 as he served as an undercover agent for the US government during the war. Where he learned his trade is unknown but his designs had a very distinctive Danish influence. He had been described as one of the most outstanding designer-craftsmen in this country at that time. His designs are poetic: “the base represents the earth and growing from its spherical and tubular forms are symbolized flower bulbs and roots. From them spring graceful stems which hold aloft flowers ripe with seeds, ready to drop to earth and begin again the cycle of life.”

Much of his work during WW2 was for George Jensen USA. In 1952, he made arrangements with International Silver Co. to move to Meriden and develop a line of handcrafted sterling jewelry and hollowware items. A small studio was set up in the rear of his home and LaPaglia was in put in charge of the designing. He supervised a handful of silversmiths in the manufacture of his line. While he worked for International, his pieces were trademarked “International Sterling-LaPaglia Designed.” His career with International was very short lived for he died suddenly and tragically following a fall from a ladder in Nov. 1953. Shortly after his death, International bought the business from his widow and moved it back into the main factory. After a few short years, “International Sterling Craft Associates” ceased to exist.

Among the relatively small collection of hollowware that is LaPaglia Designed are three open salts; a second one is pictured below. The one I have is marked only 925. It cost \$14.50 with the spoon in 1955!

References:

- 1) Rainwater and Redfield Encyclopedia of American Silver Manufacturers“
- 2) Rainwater “Alphonse La Paglia: Silversmith and Designer”, SILVER magazine, May – June 1995.
- 3) Correspondence from the archives of the Meriden Historical Society



On the Salt Trail

Ed Bowman

Well it is time for another adventure on the Salt Trail. I know that all of you out there have had an adventure on the salt trail, and you should share it with the rest of us. Since the National Newsletter is new and we want to get it started, I will provide my most recent trips on the salt trail and then you can get yours in.

I had not made any trips on the salt trail, since the May MOSS Meeting and the National Open Salt Convention in San Francisco which was a great time, and all of you should start making plans now to attend the next **National Convention June 27 – 28, 2003 in Cherry Hill, New Jersey**. It is a great time and all should try to attend. It is a salt lovers dream come true. I put a lot of pictures of the 2001 Convention in MOSS MEMO 17, and if you are interested we can send you a copy for \$3.00 postage included.

I had been working all summer, since the convention on the hail damage to my house in the spring. That baseball size hail sure can cause a lot of damage. (New roof on house and barn, new gutters, replace windows and screens, repair air conditioner, replace siding, repair deck). Since I had to repair the deck, I decided that I would redo it the way I had wanted to for some time. Also removed 7 large trees and roots next to my drive and made the drive wider. So deciding that I had

worked hard enough to take a little extra time on the way to the MOSS meeting Oct 6, 2001 in Highland Park, IL and to also attend the OSCAR meeting Nov 3, 2001 in Powhatan, VA.

I decided that I would take an extra day on the way to the MOSS meeting and instead of heading up thru Chicago; I would go around and come in from the North. So planned out my trip and departed early Friday. I headed west across Indiana to El Paso, IL, which is about a 4-hour drive and arrived just after the Antique Mall there opened. I noticed several open salts, which I had and most prices were at the high end. I did however pick up a couple nice clear ones.



A nice cut and a small shell that I have not seen before, as it is only 1 7/8" x 2", smaller than H&J 299 and has a log like bar foot. Then I saw the one that I had to have, a lacy double (My first one) Neal DI 5,



so my stop here was a good one, as the last 2 times thru I had found nothing, but that was not the end. In the last case I looked in I found a nice oval emerald green enameled toothpick, at least that is what they had it marked.



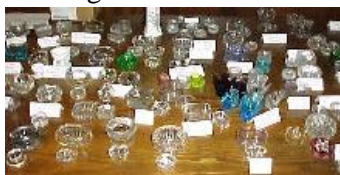
It is 2 3/4" long, 1 3/4" wide and 1 5/8" high. If any of you know anything about this one let me know. Well on up the road to the newer mall at Peru, IL. Only my second time here and no luck the first time, but after looking around for a while, I found another one marked toothpick. A nice Millefiori 2 1/4" diameter and 1 1/2" high. So I guess that people in this area must collect more toothpicks than open salts, so they just call them toothpicks.



So this stop was worth my time today, so headed on down to Sherwood Mall in Princeton, IL, but today this was a dry run both there and the other shops downtown. So on to Rockford where I was going to spend the night and the 2 State Street Malls are open late, however like the last couple of times, this was also a dry run, but lots of good conversation with the people working there. So off to eat, then the Motel and wait for the morning to go to the meeting at the Bernfields. Since I had plenty of time before the meeting, I took the scenic route across the back roads thru the area North of Chicago. Upon my arrival I was greeted by the Bernfields and given the cooks tour of their collection, and what a collection. I am putting the pictures of a few in to give an example of her fantastic collection, so if you are ever in their area, be sure and call them and go see their collection.



Sandy had set up a salt treasure hunt, and had each of her many cases lettered and you were to indicate on the list which case the listed salt was in, which made looking at her fantastic collection even more fun. We had a great meeting, fantastic meal, and good fellowship. Keith Tucker gave a presentation on matching Pattern Glass



Masters, Individuals and Celery's, which he has promised to compile for putting in the Newsletter. Of course during Show and Tell I had to show off my finds on the way to the meeting. Also during the meeting we discussed the Carol VanNorman Memorial Fund and I was appointed to check on the possibility of obtaining the rights to 5000 Open Salts and having it reprinted, which I will talk about later. After the meeting a few of the

members enjoyed the Bernfields great indoor pool. Well time to head back down the road to home and since I was driving all the way Saturday evening, I went thru Chicago on the interstate, which was not so good as construction areas and accidents held me up so it was a late arrival home, but it was still a great trip on the first half of this adventure, and I had added some very nice salts to my collection. So back to taking care of my leaves and planning my trip to OSCAR.

Well November 1st finally arrived and since I was going to travel the same route both ways, I scheduled my time of day on the route at different times of the day so that I could stop at more shops. Some going and some on the return, also I can drive after the shops close.

My first stop just off I-70 was Webb's Antique Mall at Centerville, IN, which is one of the first Mall's in Indiana and they also have one in Florida (Never been there, Yet!). Since it is a large mall it took some time to cover and with no luck today, so on down the road to Springfield, OH to the Heart of Ohio (3 Nice Malls here on I-70, but I will catch the other 2 on the way home). If you come across Ohio on I-70, make sure you stop as they are all nice and they also have a large Flea Market here, each month, and an extravaganza a couple times a year, so if you hit the right weekend, you could spend a couple of days here. Well on to looking, there was a lot of Cambridge and Heisey items available, but the prices were top of the line, since you are in glass country here, but if you do not have it, they are

within reason in most cases. But since I had them, I kept on looking for something I did not have. I found a green L.G. Wright Frog (H&J 3752), a nice china leaf shaped salt and a couple of clear old individuals that I have not yet researched. Then I found my second Lacy Double adventure. Looked for years and then find 2 within a month, you never know!



This one was Neal DI 4, which is very similar to the other one. However this was not the end, next I found one of my best buy's ever, as I usually pay more than what I should, but this one was great. H&J 3528 Lily of the Valley Salt with cover for \$16.50,



and only a couple tiny flakes so every now and then, even a blind pig finds an acorn. This also tells us that there are still some great bargains out there, if we just keep looking. Then I found a Cobalt French Lacy Neal OP 6,



and another clear Lacy Neal OL 33,



so this was a Lacy trip. So I decided to head on to Charleston, WV, where I was going to spend the night.

The next morning I headed down thru the Mountains on the Interstate towards Richmond, VA, enjoying the trip, as this was the first time to travel by car thru this area. Stopped at a few little shops along the way, but most had nothing, but I did find a nice set of 3, Blue, Amber and Clear, H&J 241 Intaglio's at one of the stops.



As a note, when looking at this one in H&J, I had always just thought that the extra detail in the picture, was some type of holder it was in, but that is not the case it is a ¾" thick very detailed, intaglio. In fact except for those in holders, it is probably the nicest one I have. Also found a very nice Amethyst, which may be a Nut Cup,



but it is very good glass and much nicer than the Fostoria Nut Cups it resembles. If any of you know anything about this please let me know. Also looking for any and all kinds of references on open salts. I did not do as much stopping as yesterday, as I wanted to get to the Motel early, so that I could visit with the other salters that I knew were going to be there. Arrived in Richmond in good shape, got my things in the room, and then went down to the lobby

to chat with a few friends before dinner and our evening get together. I then went next door for dinner and had just ordered, when some more salters came in to eat, seeing me they had the waitress move me over to the large table with them where we continued to talk about salts of course. (Salters always make you feel at home and are the best). We then went back to the Motel for our evening get together, where Rod Elser had set up a display of a few of his Master Salts.



We all joined in salt talk and asked and answered questions about salts, and of course I showed off my finds on the way down. I also got some of my Master Salts I brought along identified. Some of us from OSCAR, NESOSC and MOSS got together to discuss the National Newsletter and the possibility that we might be able to get the rights to 5000 Open Salts and have it reprinted. As I had been appointed by MOSS to look into it since we had been informed that the publisher was closing their doors and would not be reprinting it. In checking with them, I found that this was correct and had started working on an updated price list, along with a few other collectors, and was going to stop at the publishers on my way home and complete the deal and pick up

the plates for printing. (More later).

The evening ended all too early as is always does when you are enjoying good fellowship and talking about your favorite subject. So headed to my room and called it a night.

The next morning was up and had breakfast next door with a few other salters, and then headed down the road to Powhatan for the meeting. On arrival name badges were handed out and more visiting and looking at the salt displays prior to the meeting. Just had to put one of them in here, so I just selected the one I had the best picture of and put it in,



but they were all great, with a lot of thought and effort put into each one of them. We had a great lunch and of course, more salt talk. Rod Elser was our speaker and gave a very informative presentation on the History of Salt. We then had Buy and Sell, with lots of goodies available. I got a nice cut glass tub salt along with a couple of other glass ones, as well as sold a few in between looking at all the rest. What a great meeting, but was time to go out to the Elser's for an open house. They have a fantastic Historical House with 11' ceilings, and Rod has such a superb collection of Master Salts, that just seeing the house and his collection was worth the trip. I am sorry I do not have any pictures to share with you, but some how,

I lost the disk with them on it. But that just gives me an excuse to go back again. Well as with all good things, it was time to head up the road toward home. So traveled a little way and then stopped for the night. Sunday I got up, had a nice breakfast and then started up the road. Stopped at a few places along the way, and since I was only going to Marietta, OH I had lots of time and took some side trips to a couple of Flea Markets and road side sales, until the other shops opened. Nothing of note found today as I made my way up to Parkersburg, WV area, where I visited the Fenton Glass Shop and spent the night. Monday morning got up, had breakfast and then on to Antique Publications in Marietta, OH, to make the deal on 5000 Open Salts. Upon arrival was shown up to the offices, where we started to work on the deal, when it was discovered that we would have to pay more than just the purchase price for the printing rights and plates, which put a halt to our transaction. However, since Antique Publications was unable to complete the sale of its remaining stock it was going to stay in business for now. In our conversation I told them that some of us had been working on an update to the price list, and told them if they would put it back in publication, that we would give them this updated information. They said that 5000 Open Salts was a good seller, and that with a current price guide, they might have it reprinted. To make a long story short, with the help of several other collectors, we provided this information to them, and as of this writing January 9, it is being printed

and should be available for dealer distribution in late January, so it should be available by the time you read this. (I hope). So with that I headed on up the road to home as I was going to be home tonight. Stopped at one of the Glass Houses in Cambridge to check on some information and then back on I-70 toward home. Stopped at Springfield Antique Center and AAA I-70 Antique Mall in Springfield (The 2 that I skipped on the way down). Not as much luck here as on the way down, but I did find a small French Faience double,



it is only 4 1/8" long, 2" wide and 2 3/8" high., as well as a very nice red, cut-to-clear master.



I also picked up a couple of toothpick holders here. So I guess that it is time to head the old van up towards home and call it a day. Arrived home in great shape, with a lot of memories and several great salts. Just an added note: These two trips have been unusual in the amount and unique salts I found, but it just goes to show you that there are still a lot of them out there. You just have to hunt for them, and be willing to pay the price when you find them, but as I noted, there are still some bargains out there.

Also I am working on an article on Yellow Ware and an update to the Sandwich Museum Acorn Boat, so if you have any input on these items, please send to me at:

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Viking Boats

Also would like to thank Jan Schmidt for providing us some information on our article on Viking Boats. She wrote that Danmark is the Danish spelling and could the ones spelled Denmark be for export.

****An Alert From Lesley Solkoske****

A couple of years ago, I came across a salt like this at a flea market. Because of the price (\$65) I decided to walk around and think about it. Further along I found a little basket in a light pink color exactly like the salt I had just seen except that it had a handle. The handle was applied and could easily be scored and broken off, leaving only a little "rim roughness" which is not uncommon on lacy salts. The price was only \$3 so I bought it to do a little further research. At a quick glance, it appears to be Neal's RD27 or 28. The bottom, however, is very different. **The salt has a gridlike bottom.** This salt was brought to the last OSCAR meeting and Ed Bowman later found the salt pictured in an old AA Import catalog. To date, it has been found in clear, light pink, blue and more recently, red. Be careful before paying "lacy" prices for an AA Import!

