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## ***Dugan - Dahlia***

Raise your hands if you got the play on words with Dugan-Diamond. Good Tom, Pat, Brian (you cheated!) and Jackie!

Recently it occurred to me that I'm a closet Dugan collector.

I've always thought of myself as a Northwood guy. But my two all-time favorite pieces are both Dugan! They are the killer Heavy Iris water pitcher that came from Burney Talley and now resides in Tennessee, and the 'deep-ruffled' Farmyard bowl that I bought directly from an apple grower (I'm not kidding!) in New Zealand.





Since I had 2 Farmyards at the time of making my decisions regarding selling our collection, I chose to sell the one that I thought most people would prefer --- the one with Tiffany electric blues and bright yellow-golds (emphasis on the yellows.)



That one came back with me on the airplane from Kiwi-Land also. Those chickens are now scratching for feed in the Orient. The Chicken Bowl that still resides in Oregon has been described as having "electric **money**" iridescence by some guy from Freeport, IL. As I said, one of my all-time favorite pieces of carnival glass.

Another all-time favorite Dugan piece is a pastel marigold Petal & Fan large deep-ruffled bowl.

This didn't make it to the auction either as it was a gift from my favorite carnival glass lady, Helen Bell. Don and Connie Moore had this bowl for sale in their room at a long-ago Northern California convention. Helen was tempted to buy it but for some reason deferred. She walked out of Don & Connie's room and turned down the walkway. She saw me 'making the rounds' and so she quick-like-a-rabbit returned back to Don and said, "I'll take it." She and I have always loved pastel marigold pieces and she knew for a certainty that I would have bought this particular bowl. As you can see, it's loaded with my favorite yellows over the soft marigold finish. So yummy you almost want to take a great big bite out of it!



For years I admired this bowl. I used to visit Helen every week. We would talk for hours and believe it or not, not just about carnival! I love this lady. Years after her purchase, she told me the story about her 'about face.' We laughed and laughed and I always assured her, "Yes, I would have (bought the bowl)." Some number of years later, she just up

and gave me the bowl --- no strings attached. It's still my 'most prized' piece of all time. Every time I look at it, I think of Helen.

But I digress.

In my friend Carl O. Burns' excellent book originally published in 1999, *Dugan & Diamond Carnival Glass 1909 - 1932*, Carl, in the Introduction, provides a brief discussion on the progression of the glass factory in Indiana, Pennsylvania from 1892 to 1896 when it became the Northwood Company, then the Dugan Glass Company in 1904, then the Diamond Glass company in 1913, finally burning to the ground in 1931. For some reason I thought there was a single glass company called "Dugan-Diamond Company" at one point, when indeed there were two separate companies. Oh well, so much for my clever (now, not so clever) play-on-words title for this article of "Dugan-Dahlia."

So let's talk about the "Dahlia" pattern, or more specifically about white Dahlia pieces of carnival glass. Unfortunately, in 1977 L.G. Wright had Westmoreland make 'repros' of Dahlia water pitchers using original water pitcher molds in a variety of colors, including white. I say "unfortunately" because the 'old', original white pieces came with as many as 4 different versions using hand-decorated paint, or as some of us refer to (myself included) it as "staining" of the 'main' dahlias. I was, and remain, confused *enough* by all this!

There are at least 4 versions of 'old' white Dahlia pieces. I'm guessing, but I'll list them in ever increasing rarity. Don't get me wrong, it's my opinion that *all* 'old' white Dahlia pieces are either scarce or rare, some are just rarer than others. Okay, most frequently seen would be white pieces with no 'decoration' on the main flowers (Pop Quiz --- what flower species would that be?), next in line would be white pieces with the main flowers decorated in gold, then blue ('stain'), then red ('stain.')

While I currently don't own old white Dahlia pieces in any 'colors' other than blue-stained, (I once owned a complete white table set with only the edge gold paint) I *suspect* that all pieces came with hand-applied gold paint around the edges or the scroll-work and/or leaves and stems, in the case of the berry sets, and the table set pieces.

Because all CG was mass produced and therefore manufacturing 'runs' and bookkeeping were important considerations, I would guess that all old white pieces were originally made with this hand-applied gold paint around the edges or in the scroll-work. AND because it's often worn (or worn *off*) let me speculate that the pieces were not subjected to an additional 'firing' after being hand painted.

Probably the same goes for the pieces where the main flowers were/are decorated --- gold, blue or red. Usually these pieces have good solid 'coloration' on the Dahlias. Maybe that was done immediately after extracting the pieces from molds, in other words 'hot,' or maybe even a bit of additional heating *after* the flowers were *stained* gold, blue or red. Who knows? Who cares?

Not me! I'm just here to babble on about these special pieces. I may be having yet *another* senior moment, but I can't offhand remember another CG pattern/color that was subjected to hand painting/staining for the *entire* production run. Sure, Dugan, who really was the only outfit that made entire production runs of peach opal, also hand decorated some few pieces of PO and some marigold pieces, with flowers and the like, but NOT *entire production runs*, apparently. Score one for white Dahlia uniqueness!

Back to Dahlia as a pattern. I've not seen many 'old' purple Dahlia pieces that I've been particularly attracted to because of their iridescence (although I've seen some 'killer' purple 'repro' water pitchers) although I must admit that I wish I would have bought some old marigold pieces when I saw them. It's a great pattern in marigold and you *know* they're all 'old' pieces.

All Dahlia pieces rest on four 'scroll-shaped' feet, except the tumblers. This seems to me to make them very vulnerable to chipping. Magically enough, all my pieces are perfect in every way.

The 'new' tumblers have 3 Dahlias, whilst the 'old' tumblers have 4 Dahlias. But because the 'old' mold was used for the L.G. Wright 'repro' water pitchers, the white pitchers can be confusing. Two things --- go for hand-applied gold

paint to the top edge and/or the scroll-feet pattern, **or**, go for gold, blue or red stained Dahlias to be sure you are getting a "Vintage" (I prefer "old") white water pitcher. As for the purple ones, 'be a collector' --- that should give you the 'smarts' to tell 'old' from 'new.' There are some who feel that another way to tell old from new is by looking at the base of the pitchers. I find that a bit too subjective for my tastes.



A year or two ago, I 'made a deal' with a non-collector, eBay seller for a 'batch' of white/blue old Dahlia pieces. The 'batch' included a master berry bowl, 5 perfect small 'berries' and one berry that was cracked, PLUS a butter base, a covered sugar and a creamer --- all, as I said *all* with blue stain. When the glass arrived the "cracked" individual berry, not surprisingly, was broken into a zillion pieces. So much for owning a perfect seven pc. set --- six will do quite nicely, thank you very much!

Backing up chronologically, I already owned a complete (6 tumblers) blue-stained white water set which, I had been lucky enough to have bought at Jim Wroda's 2006 *Customer Appreciation Weekend* auction. (The Wroda weekends are SO much fun!)

This set is unique in that it is the *only* piece that my lovely bride, Jan (who is NOT a collector,) really, really wanted.....ever! We are SO happy to own it.



It was purchased by Richard Cinclair from Dr. Jones of Arkansas years ago. Dr. Jones was one of the old-time, prominent CG collectors in the 60s and 70s and specialized in water sets. I managed to run down Dr. Jones' phone number and his caregiver put him on the phone. Even though I had never met the man, he immediately was 'back in the carnival world' when I mentioned that I had just purchased the set, and I was interested in finding out, if he remembered, the circumstances of his buying it. *Of course*, he remembered!

While it was a bit convoluted, the story is that John Woody had 'found' it somewhere up in Minnesota but couldn't 'git 'er bought." He called Dr. Jones to ask if he (Dr. J) had ever heard of one. Dr. J had not, and told John that "if and when" --- (when always was the case with John Woody --- a very persuasive man!) John got the set he (Dr. J) was *most interested* in it.

According to Dr. Jones, John finally managed to get the owner to part with the set and re-contacted Dr. J. Here the story gets a bit fuzzy, but to make a long story short, Dr. J ended up with the set without it ever being offered by auction.

After Dr. Jones filled me in with the story, he asked, "How much did you give for it?" When I told him, he laughed and said "Cinclair gave me lots more than *that* for it!" I could hear the delight in his voice from 'talking carnival.' That's one of the un-sung, *delicious* benefits of our hobby, isn't it ? *Memooooorieees!* (Hum right along!)

My research indicates that 2 white-blue sets were sold at auction --- a set with 5 tumblers in 1999 for \$3,250 and a

full set in 2000 for \$4,250. I have no idea whether that is the same set in both those cases or even if it is the set I'm now looking at. Really doesn't matter does it? All the same, if any of you reading this has any more facts about this/these set(s), I'd love to hear them.

Like I said, I *suspect* that red-stained pieces are even more scarce than blue-stained ones. I asked for input through the Woodland website and received responses from two nice ladies who had owned red individual berry bowls. I also heard from another collector that she still owns a red-stained covered sugar and a creamer. Another collector sent in a picture of a gorgeous red-stained Dahlia pitcher (you could see the afore-specified gold edge trim) along with a red-stain tumbler.



Yet another collector told me she owns a red-stained Pitcher and two tumblers. They DO exist! Another collector had once seen a 'complete' blue stained "suite" --- complete water set, complete table set and a complete berry set. I'm *almost* there --- just one meager small berry bowl to go!

But for now I'm quite content to label myself as *The King of White, Blue-Stain* old Dahlia pieces. **It's good to be King!**