

SALTY COMMENTS #19

(Facts and Opinion on Open Salt Dish Collecting)

In recent issues we have discussed a number of firms who are currently making or have recently made open salts. This time we will conclude the subject, covering contemporary ones from here and there, including some that we have seen only at the retail level. Next issue we will get back to topics about the older dishes and other aspects of open salt collecting.

The salts covered in this letter have been available in quantity during the past 10 years or have been identified as relatively recent versions of older shapes. In some cases we know who made them. A few are questionable as to whether they are really open salts; they are included because they are in the books we all use. Although all have been made recently, it does not mean that they are in plentiful supply. The main thing is to know them so that someone does not sell you one as old.

1. BIRD WITH SEED - We already covered the Degenhart and Boyd birds. There is one other mold in existence, owned by the Kanawha Glass Co. Their birds have stickers and no marks, and were available from the factory 4 years ago. We don't know if they are still made. The principal distinguishing mark on this version is the eye, which is far to the rear, almost touching the back of the head.

(Shape Smith 44-5-1, H&J 933)

2. DIAMOND FACETED - Before Christmas 1985, the Viking Glass Co. used an old mold to make this shape in bright red and forest green. We bought one the following spring from a lady who had a number of them. We have seen one occasionally since then, but never more than one at a time. (Shape Smith 1-4-2, H&J 461)

3. DIAMOND BUTTRESS - This was a learning experience for us. We bought it first in 1983 at an "old salt" price. About 1 year ago we saw a box full for sale in the Viking Glass outlet store in Cambridge, Ohio for \$4.00 plus tax. They were exactly the same as our earlier purchase. (Shape Smith 271-4-1)

4. HEN ON NEST - This one has been made by many manufacturers over the years. The Westmoreland mold is now owned by Phil and Helen Rosso, wholesale glass dealers from Port Vue, PA, who use an R in a keystone as a mark. We have seen one with a "Made in Poland" sticker. Our latest buy has "Made in Taiwan" embossed on the bottom of the crosshatched nest. We have never tried to untangle who made which of these - there are too many sources and not enough information. You can be sure of marked ones - the rest may or may not be new. (Shape Smith 54-2-3, H&J 968)

5. STORK, HEN, GOOSE, SWAN with egg-cup like bowl. We see these at shows or flea markets, one or two at a time. Last January in St. Augustine, Florida we saw a table full of them for sale as egg cups. We couldn't determine who made them, but they must have come from the USA since they were unlabelled. We have stopped thinking of them as old. (Shape Smith 362-3-2, H&J 3743)

6. SWIRL BOWL PEDESTAL - This is a copy of one marked Portieux, but it has a thick and rather crude-looking stem. It is embossed "Made in Taiwan" on the bottom. We have only seen one, but it obviously can't be old. Look at the bottom before you buy any of this type. (Shape Smith 40-4-3, H&J 2981)

7. SHOE SKATE - This is a DAISY AND BUTTON pattern shoe with roller skate wheels. Rosso sold these wholesale in a light cobalt color in 1986. They resemble a crystal one that we bought earlier, except there is a faint S on the bottom (the mark of the L.E. Smith Glass Co.) and there are signs that the mold has been reworked. The real old shoe skate is somewhat smaller, and has a cross-hatched sole between the front wheels. The L.E. Smith version has the sole hollowed out in the same region. (Shape H&J 857)

8. WHEELBARROW - Joe St. Clair made a good copy of the Greentown Glass Co. basket-weave wheelbarrow in a variety of colors. We bought one of the last of them, caramel slag color, from his shop in 1984. It is an excellent reproduction, lacking only the star in a dotted diamond that the Greentown version carries. All of his have "Joe St.Clair" embossed in the bottom of the bowl, according to his response to our letter a few years ago. (Shape Smith 325-4-1, H&J 4670)

9. DAISY AND BUTTON HAT - We bought one at the Fenton Glass showroom in 1983, where there were a quantity available. It is close to one we think is older. The most obvious difference is in the buttons on the bottom - on the Fenton hat they almost touch the outside edge, on the older one they are well inside it. Like hens on nests, this shape was made by many companies, and we have never found any good information about it. (Shape Smith 56-2-2, H&J 844)
10. WIDE-RIMMED HEART - This has been sold in the recent past by Rosso, and we believe it is their original design. It is marked with their R in a keystone. (Shape Smith 432-2-3)
11. BASKET WITH HANDLE - The bowl on this dish is a copy of Neal RD-26, except that the collar base is cross-hatched. The ones we have seen are pink, with a clear loop handle. We thought it might be old, but later saw an ad offering them in quantity. No clue as to who made them. (Shape Smith 326-5-1 plus handle)
12. SQUARE BASKET - Another basket we have seen fairly often. Recently we saw a group of them with "Made in Taiwan" stickers. (Shape Smith 294-3-1)
13. ENGLISH HOBNAIL, PEDESTAL - This is an old design, but L.E. Smith has recently made some in ruby carnival color. Rosso has been selling them. They have the Smith S in the bottom of the bowl, and the row of diamonds at the top does not have any cross-hatch. This may be from an old Smith mold or from one they acquired from Westmoreland. (Shape Smith 203-2-3, H&J 4458)
14. EIGHT-PANELLED PEDESTAL - Someone has bought individual-size cobalt blue pedestal salts and applied Heisey labels to them. We have seen them in at least 2 places, represented as Heisey, and at Heisey prices. The salts are made from an old Westmoreland mold, and are available for \$3.00 from Summit Art Glass. A packet of the labels costs \$1.00 at the Heisey museum. The labels are scuffed - probably a deliberate attempt to make the dish look old. We don't see many deliberate fakes, but this is one of them. If you want one, make it yourself and save a bundle. (Shape Smith 467-3-1, H&J 2957)
15. LACY SHELL SALT - A copy of a lacy Sandwich salt, made by Imperial for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Clearly marked MMA in the bottom of the bowl. We bought ours at the Imperial factory outlet in 1983. No more available from this source, but we don't know if the Metropolitan has sold the last of theirs yet. (Shape Smith 324-4-2, H&J 3504, Neal SL-14)
16. OVAL STRAWBERRY DIAMOND ON FOOTED BASE - Another museum reproduction of a lacy Sandwich design, this time by Fostoria for the Henry Ford Museum. Embossed HFM on the band just below the bowl. We don't know if the museum still sells them, but Fostoria doesn't. (Shape Smith 327-4-2, H&J 924, Neal OP-2)
17. ROUND STRAWBERRY DIAMOND ON FOOTED BASE - Reproduction of a the oval lacy Sandwich design in a round version for the Avon Company. We don't know when it was made, but it is occasionally offered as an original Sandwich dish. The Avon mark is hard to find, tucked into one corner of the bottom, but it's invariably there. It originally came with a crude spoon. (Shape Smith 85-5-2, H&J 3506)
18. BOAT SALT - Design similar to the LAFAYET boat made by Sandwich in the 1830's. This copy is made by Pairpoint for the Sandwich Museum, and is still sold in the Museum gift shop. It has SANDWICH on the paddle wheel, unlike the original, and has a P in a diamond on the bottom. (Similar to Smith 396-5-2, H&J 456, Neal BT-4)
19. ROUND CUT GLASS - An original design by Pepi Herrman, a glass artisan operating in New Hampshire. It is a round bowl with horizontal and vertical miters on the sides, and is signed "Pepi" and the year in tiny script just below the rim.
20. LENOX SWAN - Fine porcelain swan, made by Lenox for many years. It was available as a set of 2 at the factory outlet store in 1983. We don't know if it is still sold there. It is marked in gold with L in a wreath. Earlier marks were in green. (Shape Smith 44-6-2, H&J 1052)

21. CHINA HEN ON NEST - A bisque china figure with brown nest, applied flower and leaves on the side of the hen. We first bought one of these in 1982, and were impressed because there was still a little salt caked in the bottom of the nest. The dealer implied it might be Staffordshire. In 1986 we saw a flock of these hens for sale in the Quechee, Vermont gift shop, marked "Copyright Shackman, Mad in Taiwan". There was also a similar version with a rabbit. When we brought one home, we couldn't honestly say it was different from our "Staffordshire" one, except that it lacked salt in the bottom. (Shape Smith 376-2-1)
22. IRISH BELLEEK, SHELL-SIDED - The classic fine porcelain dish with shell-like sides and a shamrock painted on the sides is still being sold in Ireland. A friend brought us one from a shop in Killarney in 1985. The current version lacks the coral embossed around the base, has 4 shells instead of 6 for the sides, and has a mark the color of butterscotch pudding. (Shape H&J 4553)
23. ONEIDA ZOO - In the early 1980's, Oneida issued a set of 8 silver-plated animals with plastic liners and matching spoons. These include a swan, duck, hen, fox, lamb, turtle, snail and owl. They have "Made in Japan" stickers on the bottoms and were advertised as salt cellars in a display prepared by Oneida. We bought ours at a local jewelry store in 1984. We have never seen them available at retail since, although we see one at a show or flea market occasionally. We also have an apple whose design is so similar that it must be Oneida's. (Turtle is Smith 376-6-2)

In addition to the above salts produced in quantity, there are the art glass ones made by Terry Crider. These are hand-crafted, so that there are not many of any one design, and there are often little differences from dish to dish. We have 10 different ones, and don't pretend to have every kind. They are very colorful, and are sold by dealers like Peggy Bonzi (21969 S. Burwood, Escalon, CA 95320). Ruth Darmstadt, a fellow collector, inspired the Vitrix Co. in Corning, NY to make some beautiful ruby hearts signed Vitrix 1987. Lorene Allen of Eureka, California had some nice salts made from redwood burls by a local woodworking company. We acquired a few of these, and have been using them as gifts. Our youngest son made an oak one for his mother as a Christmas present one year, using the wood lathe he had just acquired. We're sure that there are many other impromptu salts around that we haven't heard of - it would be impossible to document them all.

In closing, we must mention the Commemorative salts issued by the New England and California clubs at anniversary time. New England commissioned a pewter salt for their 5th anniversary (Smith 416-5-2). This is no longer available, of course. Their 10th anniversary salt is a cobalt blue glass replica of their logo, and is still available. The California salts are porcelain, decorated by a Fran Vernatti Peterson, a local artist, and have been issued in a different shape each year. All club dishes are conspicuously labelled, so there is no problem with identification.

This concludes our series on contemporary salts, but it will not end their manufacture. New ones appear regularly. Each of us will have to be aware of this and keep up with them as best we can. The penalty for not doing so is what we call "Buying An Education", an adventure that none of us can completely avoid.

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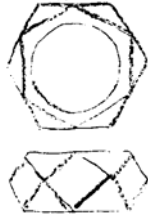
June 1988

References: Ten books "Open Salts Illustrated" by Helen and Alan Smith
"5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson
"Pressed Glass Salt Dishes of the Lacy Period" by L.W. & D.B. Neal

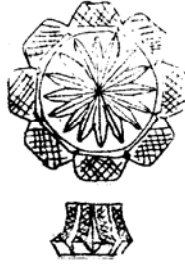
SOME CONTEMPORARY SALTS



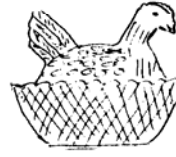
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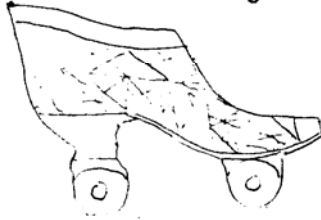
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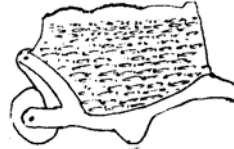
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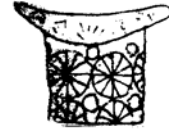
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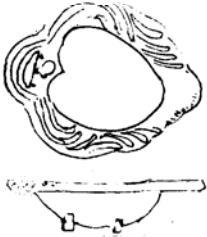
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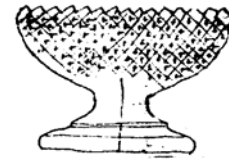
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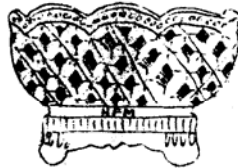
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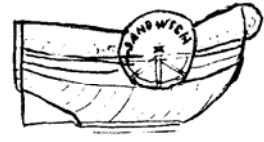
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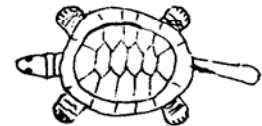
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Rosso Mark



L.E. Smith Co. Mark