

HANSEN
BY
SCOTT ACKERMAN

Hansen a glass company? No--A glass pattern? No--The cadillac of New Carnival Glass? Yes. What Millersburg is to Old Carnival Glass, Hansen is to New Carnival Glass. Many people like Old Carnival Glass, but don't like the new. They think new carnival is cheap imitated glass that will hurt the old. Those people have probably never seen the good New Carnival Glass, and I'm sure they've never seen Hansen Carnival Glass, for if they did I'm sure they would think a bit differently. The Hansen's work is hard to beat.

There are three Hansen brothers, whom I know of, Ronald, Robert and Richard, who have all worked with glass. Ronald has lived all his life in Mackinaw City, Michigan. Robert lived in Bridgeport, Michigan, near Saginaw and now lives in Corning, California. Richard, deceased, lived in New York and is the lesser known of the brothers. He did the least glass work and is not as well known for his glass work. I would say that most of his work was with paperweights or art glass. Iridized glass from Richard is not known, but if a piece were to be discovered it would surely be a very rare find. Richard is not the main concern in this story, so lets turn to the main brothers, Ronald and Robert.

Ronald is the one whom I visited and interviewed the summer of 1983 while on vacation, so this information is from Ronald, mostly on himself, Ronald and his wife, Dorothy, live in modest large house. When entering the house one sees glass all over the place. Much of it Ronald worked on

and many pieces he never finished because of poor health. Dorothy said that the health problems of both Ronald and Robert could be and probably are partly due to breathing in of the material that were sprayed on the glass, even though the fumes were vented outside. They don't really want to claim the spraying as the true fault. But no doubt it had some effect. Ronald is in poor health (and has now passed away) but still has a very good memory. The Ronald Hansens have a son and daughter of whom they talked. The son will be briefly discussed later.

Ronald was graduated from college with a major in chemistry. Robert's education never got as far, but what he knew was good for working with glass. Ronald's knowledge in chemistry is what gave him most of the ideas and formulas for the great iridescence which he achieved. Ronald and Dorothy started experimenting with iridescence in 1950, which was the start of New Carnival Glass. Ronald said he taught Robert how to iridized glass. Many people probably think that Robert was the main iridizer, but that is not true. Which one iridized more glass will probably never be known, but Ronald was the developer of their processes.

In 1960, Ronald started iridizing glass to sell, which is probably the true beginning of New Carnival Glass. Robert started about the same time. The two brothers never really worked together as many people think. Ronald's shop was in Machinaw City, Michigan and later worked in his garage workshop. Robert's shop was in Bridgeport, Michigan, but I can't say if he's done any glass work since moving to Corning, California. Surprisingly to me and probably to most readers, A & A Imports was the first buyer of Ronald's carnival glass shortly after 1960.

Carnival glass people may find it hard to believe, as I did, that Ronald is actually better know for his paperweights than his carnival glass. In fact, I didn't even have proof of any Hansen paperweights until I visited him. He really has some beautiful examples of them. He told me that he has at least one paperweight in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. Ronald's son, Robert (apparently named for his Uncle Robert), is as good or better with paperweights than his father. Robert's paperweights are really pretty and selling for over \$300.00 a piece. The people buying them are the ones with money. If anyone stumbles on to one of his pieces at a good price, I would say that it should be grabbed up for either its beauty, value or future profit that could be made on it.

While talking to Ronald, his wife got out the very first piece of glass that Ronald iridized. It was a compote from which he removed the stem and base and made it into a bowl. It was purple glass with a beautiful iridescence. It could be the very first piece of New Carnival Glass.

Many people have misconceptions about Hansen carnival glass. For instance, I have heard from some sources that the Hansens never iridized old glass, but that is not true. Ronald showed me one example of a Northwood Grape and Cable tumbler with an N on it that was old glass. Ronald iridized and signed it. There are other pieces of glass iridized by Hansens made from old glass, but most of the Hansen carnival is new glass. I would consider any old glass iridized by Hansens to be very good, because there probably isn't very much of it around. Another idea people have is that all Hansen carnival glass has a pontil mark on it, but that is not true either. Most of the Hansen glass does have a pontil mark,

but there will be a few that don't. Still another misconception is that all Hansen carnival glass is signed, but again that is not true. Some pieces slipped through without a signature, and an interesting note is that warped, cracked or marred pieces weren't signed on purpose. Unsigned pieces aren't worth as much and I would say that from what Ronald said, unsigned pieces should be about half the value of the same pieces that are signed.

The Hansens bought most of the glass that they iridized, which created a slight problem. They had to iridize the glass when it was heated near the melting point. Many items melted before they finished, which Dorothy said was part of the business risk.

What is it that makes the Hansen carnival glass so beautiful? There are three main processes for the beautiful glass. One thing that the Hansens did was to use rare and different metals than what the main carnival companies used. Some of the metals that they used included, Selenium, Molybdenum, Iron Chloride, Stannic Chloride, and Gold Chloride. Some of the gold that they used came from dental gold fillings. Another thing that Ronald said they did was they fired and refired some of the pieces several times to make the iridescence more permanent. Ronald said that the iridescence on some of the pieces would last longer than most monuments. The third thing that the Hansens did to get beautiful looking glass was to use a process known as soaking the glass. In this process they would turn a piece of glass in the glory hole when it was very hot. This would burn off the skin of the glass making it velvety smooth.

Some of the pieces of iridescent glass may look finished to most people, but Ronald

said while we were looking at one piece on the table we were sitting at "this piece was never finished". He meant that it didn't get enough spray, to most people it would be beautiful and finished looking. Some pieces such as Stippled Stars salt dip have a very light spray. Dorothy thought that they were only sprayed with tin.

When I showed Ron a vase that I own he told me a story of two art glass pieces. When Ronalds wife was in the hospital, he made a vase and iridized it for her. When brother Robert saw the vase he wanted to duplicate it, and what he came up with was from the Blenko Glass Company. Ronald's vase is bulbous at the bottom, skinny in the neck, and the top is flared and crimped. It isn't too tall and is rather delicate looking. Robert's items aren't at all a duplicate, but they are nice. The vase that I showed Ron is heavier, shorter and more spittoon-like shaped with a ribbon of glass running around the neck. There are other sizes all similar in shape.

As stated earlier, the Hansens bought most of the glass they iridized. The known companies they bought from include Blenko, Deganhart, Fenton, Guernsy, Imperial, L.G. Wright, Mosser, Rainbow, Smith, St. Clair, Viking, Westomoreland, and Taiwan. There are probably other companies, but those are the proven ones.

When Imperial started working with carnival glass, they picked a time when they would go into production. But, after finding out about the Hansen's work with carnival glass, Lucile J. Kennedy told Ronald they were forced to go into full production a bit earlier than planned. There must have been people around at the time who really wanted carnival glass produced again.

Robert Hansen never reached more than 300 on any one item, and Ronald didn't say if it was the same for him, but it probably was. That is one reason that so many of their pieces sell and value well over \$300.00 a piece. I would say the Hansen carnival glass is much like the Millersburg carnival glass of old. Both are rare, both are sought after, both have cheaper pieces that people want anyway, and both are beautiful.

The Hansen carnival glass is glass that I feel will live in people's hearts forever, once they see a piece. The true beauty of a Hansen piece is to own one. Everything that I have said in this article can't compare to actually seeing what a piece can do.

(Editor's note)

This article is a little lengthy, but I wanted you to read it in it's entirety. It is a very good article Scott has written. I have learned a lot about Hansen glass from reading this article and seeing Scott's collection. I trust this article has been of help to you and if you don't own a piece of Hansen you are truly missing some beautiful glass for your collection. The Hansen's certainly had the secret of iridizing glass none has compared to it and probably never will.

HANSEN INTRODUCTION
BY
SCOTT ACKERMAN

I think it is definite that Hansen Carnival glass is tops in new carnival glass, but don't get carried away. I see many Hansen items at auctions going for too much money. Hansen carnival glass is rare, but learn what items are on the common side and don't get stuck paying high prices for items that are findable. People should feel lucky if they own any Hansen carnival glass for it is beautiful and should be a good investment. The prices of the Hansen pieces on the following pages are definitely guide prices. Please try using this guide in that way.

There are three columns in the price guide which are described below. The first column is the color column. The second column is the manufacture of the glass whom the Hansens bought from. At this time Fenton and Smith are speculative. The third column is the Hansen that iridized the piece.

A-AMBER	1-BLENKO	1-RONALD
AM-AMETHYST	2-DEGANHART	2-ROBERT
B-BLUE	3-FENTON	3-BOTH
BO-BLUE OPAL	4-GUERNSEY	
CB-COBALT BLUE	5-IMPERIAL	
CR-CRANBERRY	6-L. G. WRIGHT	
G-GREEN	7-MOSSER	
IB-ICE BLUE	8-PILGRIM	
LB-LIGHT BLUE	9-RAINBOW	
LP-LIGHT PURPLE	10-SMITH	
M-MARIGOLD	11-ST. CLAIR	
P-PURPLE	12-TAIWAN	
PA-PASTEL AMETHYST	13-VIKING	
PK-PINK	14-WESTMORELAND	
R-RED	15-WHEATON	
W-WHITE		

HANSEN PRICES

ACANTHUS LEAF & DRAPE - Toothpick	CB	2	95.00
ASH TRAY - Dish Shape	B	13 1	200.00
BIG THUMBPRINT - Dish	LB	13 1	215.00
BIRD - Toothpick	P	2 2	75.00
BIRD - Vase	G	4 2	106.00
BIRD - Vase	LB	4 2	98.00
BIRD - Vase	P	4 2	93.00
BIRD WITH SEED - Master Salt Dip	R	2 2	80.00
BIRD WITH SEED - Salt Dip	P	2 2	55.00
BIRD WITH SEED - Salt Dip	R	2 2	50.00
BLENKO - Art Glass Vase, Large	LB	1 2	182.00
BLENKO - Art Glass Vase, Small, Sm Opening	LB	1 2	95.00
BLENKO - Cruet	B	1 2	180.00
BOXED STAR - Toothpick	R	6 1	68.00
CAMBRIDGE FLUTE - Toothpick	A	7 1	85.00
CAMBRIDGE FLUTE - Toothpick	G	7	90.00
CAMBRIDGE FLUTE - Toothpick	LP	7	78.00
CANE - Toothpick	LP	7 2	65.00
CANE - Toothpick	R	7 2	67.00
CAPE COD - Cruet	A	5 1	160.00
CAPE COD - Cruet	G	5 1	188.00
CAT - Bottle, Amber Bottom, Green Head	A, G		240.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Basket	LP	6 2	256.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Bowl 4 3/4"	CB	6 2	78.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Canoe	R	10 2	165.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Cruet	AM	2	190.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Rose Bowl	CB	6 2	60.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Rose Bowl	IB	6 2	75.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Rose Bowl	R	6 2	95.00
DAISY & BUTTON - Shoe	CB	6 1	82.00
DIAMOND & PINEAPPLE - Toothpick	P	12 1	62.00
EAGLE - Goblet	B	10 1	155.00
ELEPHANT - Toothpick	CB	2 2	90.00
ELEPHANT - Toothpick	P	2 2	103.00
EYEWINKER - Fairy Lamp	R	6 2	285.00
EYEWINKER - Spooner, Ftd	R	6 2	88.00
EYEWINKER - Tumbler	R	6 2	90.00
FIDDLE - Vase	B	5 2	110.00
FIDDLE - Vase	CB	5 2	120.00
FIDDLE - Vase	G	5 2	140.00
FIDDLE - Vase	M	5 2	115.00
FINE SWIRL - Vase	CR	8 2	88.00
FOR-GET-ME-NOT BAND - Toothpick	CB	2 2	70.00
FROG - Paperweight	B	2	75.00

HANSEN PRICES

FROG - Paperweight	G	2	85.00
GEORGIAN - Tumbler	CB	3 2	105.00
GEORGIAN - Tumbler	R	3 2	120.00
GRAPE MEDALLION - Goblet	G	1	160.00
GYPSY KETTLE - Toothpick	CB	2	65.00
GYPSY KETTLE - Toothpick	R		65.00
HEN ON NEST - Small	B	10 2	52.00
HEN ON NEST - Small	R	10 2	52.00
HOBNAIL - Pump & Trough (Pair)	G	6 2	284.00
HOBNAIL - Pump, Round Top	G	6 2	172.00
HOBNAIL - Rose Bowl, Ftd	B	1	172.00
HOBNAIL - Vase, Mini, Ftd	A	1	57.00
HONEYCOMB - Juice Tumbler	R	5 1	48.00
HONEYCOMB - Tumbler	CB	2	68.00
IMPERIAL LACE - Cruet	G	5 2	255.00
IMPERIAL LACE - Cruet	M	5 2	205.00
INTERIOR PANELS - Vase, Ftd	BO	13 1	205.00
INVERTED FAN & FEATHER - Sugar Bottom	W	11 1	128.00
INVERTED STRAWBERRY - Basket	B	4 2	150.00
INVERTED STRAWBERRY - Basket	P	4 2	170.00
INVERTED STRAWBERRY - Hat	B	4	95.00
INVERTED STRAWBERRY - Toothpick	R	4	82.00
INVERTED STRAWBERRY - Tumbler	B	4 B	80.00
INVERTED STRAWBERRY - Tumbler	P	4 B	96.00
INVERTED TEARDROPS - Creamer, Mini	CB	2 2	70.00
KINGS CROWN - Toothpick	CB	2	88.00
MAPLE LEAF - Tumbler	CB	6 2	104.00
MARY GREGORY - Cruet, Boy	CB	14 2	230.00
MARY GREGORY - Cruet, Girl	CB	14 2	230.00
MICHIGAN - Toothpick	CB	2 B	62.00
MICHIGAN - Toothpick	LP	2	71.00
MICHIGAN - Toothpick	PK	2 2	88.00
MICHIGAN - Toothpick	R	2 1	75.00
MOON & STAR - Candle Holder (Each)	CB	10 2	62.00
MOON & STAR - Candle Holder (Each)	R	10 2	50.00
MOON & STAR - Creamer	CB	6 2	88.00
MOON & STAR - Creamer	R	6 2	84.00
MOON & STAR - Epergne, Small	B	10 2	122.00
MOON & STAR - Epergne, Small	R	10 2	150.00
MOON & STAR - Spooner	R	6 2	85.00
MOON & STAR - Sugar Shaker	R	6 2	80.00
MOON & STAR - Whimsey Vase, Small	G	2	70.00
OWL - Large, 5"	LB	14 2	96.00
OWL - Bottle	B	14 2	110.00

HANSEN PRICES

OWL - Bottle	R 14	155.00
OWL - Paperweight	AM 2 2	58.00
OWL - Paperweight	CB 2 2	50.00
OWL - Paperweight	IB 2 2	70.00
OWL - Paperweight	M 2 2	82.00
OWL - Paperweight	R 2 2	66.00
OWL - Toothpick	B 14 2	65.00
OWL - Toothpick	M 14 2	74.00
OWL - Vase	B 14 2	118.00
OWL - Vase	R 14 2	158.00
PIG - Ash Tray Bottle	B 2	395.00
POINTED PILLARS - Dish	B 2	78.00
PRISCILLA - Bowl 4"	R 6 2	92.00
PRISCILLA - Rose Bowl	R 6 2	80.00
PRISCILLA - Rose Bowl, Squat	R 6 2	88.00
RABBIT - Toothpick	B 14	62.00
RABBIT - Toothpick	LP 14	64.00
RABBIT - Toothpick	R 14	74.00
RAINBOW - Art Glass Vase, Sm, Lg Opening	LB 9 2	90.00
RAINBOW - Art Glass Vase, Sm, Lg Opening, R	LB 9 2	90.00
S-REPEAT - Cruet	R 2	178.00
S-REPEAT - Toothpick	R	70.00
SINGING BIRDS - Mug	LP 7 B	94.00
SINGING BIRDS - Mug	PA 7 B	89.00
SLEEPING SWAN - Dish	B 14 2	74.00
STIPPLED STARS - Salt Dip	LP 2 1	50.00
STIPPLED STARS - Salt Dip	R 2 1	52.00
STORK & PEACOCK - Childs Mug	CB 2 2	116.00
STORK & PEACOCK - Childs Mug	LP 2 2	133.00
SWAN - Master Salt	B 2	80.00
TREE TRUNK - Toothpick	PA 6 B	56.00
TREE TRUNK - Toothpick	R 6 B	66.00
TURKEY - Toothpick	PA 2 2	60.00
TURKEY - Toothpick	R 2 2	66.00
TURTLE - Paperweight	B 2	112.00
UNION - Bottle	B 15 2	96.00
UNION - Bottle	G 15 2	118.00
WREATH OF ROSES - Vase	R 6 2	200.00
WREATHED CHERRY - Spooner	R 6 2	82.00
WREATHED CHERRY - Toothpick	R 11 2	66.00
ZIPPER & BULLSEYE - Toothpick	R 6 2	94.00
ZIPPER & THUMBPRINT - Toothpick	AM 7 1	102.00