



# Cambridge Crystal Ball

Published monthly by National Cambridge Collectors, Inc.  
to encourage and report the discovery of the elegant and boundless product of the  
Cambridge Glass Company of Cambridge, Ohio

Issue No. 304

August 1998

## Silver Anniversary Tarnished by Flood Waters



Arent

## Cambridge Crystal Ball

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**DUE TO THE RECENT FLOODING IN CAMBRIDGE, OHIO, THE NATIONAL CAMBRIDGE COLLECTORS' MUSEUM OF CAMBRIDGE GLASS AT 9931 EAST PIKE ROAD WILL NOT BE OPEN UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

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## President's Message



# *Where Do We Go From Here?*

In a week so beautifully designed to celebrate our past, we were forced to rapidly reappraise our future.

Our Silver Anniversary Convention was organized with great care and class by Mark Nye. We had by far the highest registrations ever - 272 members, and despite the challenges of the weather, everyone I talked to said it was the best Convention ever. The extreme levels of rain did not dampen spirits.

Many members left Sunday morning in good moods having enjoyed the fellowship of friends and fellow collectors without knowing what an extreme turn the weather would take that very day. Our annual meeting was cut short due to the weather and the difficult decision was made to cancel our show and final events so that the remaining people could get on the road and make it home safely as flood waters began to close major roads.

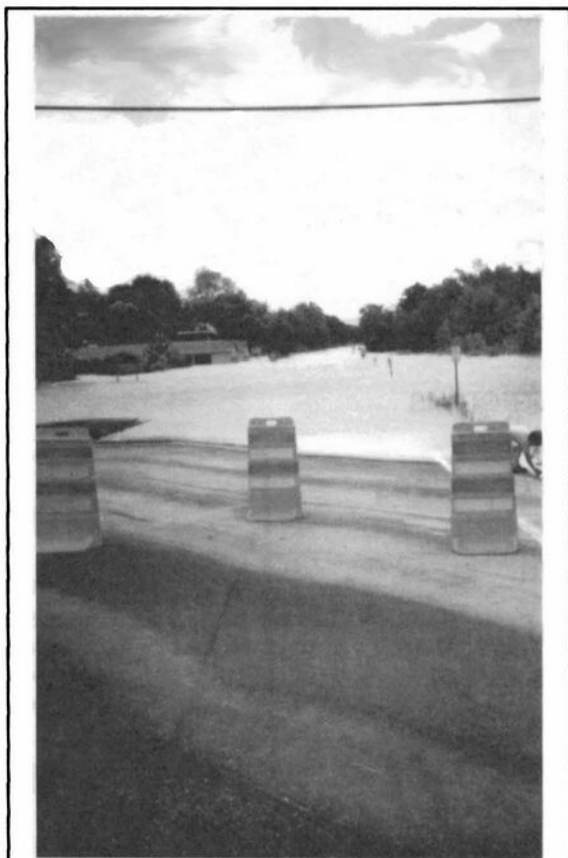
At 5:30 that night a call came to the Forum restaurant where many members were having dinner. Waters had begun to rise over Rt. 40 and headed to the Museum. The members made a hasty retreat to the museum. Their story is told eloquently elsewhere in this issue by Mark Nye, Tarzan Deel, and J.D. Hanes, but the membership needs to know just how heroic these people, and those others who assisted the first day we could reenter the museum, are. They prevented significantly greater damage.

A museum is a cornerstone to a collector's club. Those who don't have one, strive to build one. Those who do, see it as a pivotal part of who they are. A museum benefits club members who cannot ever make it there for a personal visit, simply because it is a linchpin in the preservation mission, helps increase our knowledge as collectors, and helps maintain the value of collections.

The NCC Museum of Cambridge Glass was built only through the huge personal efforts and contributions of many people. It must be very sad to see a natural disaster take such a toll on their fine work.

For many years, we have discussed and evaluated expanding or relocating our museum. Now, this has become an immediate priority. The decision of what to do next will require careful deliberations and a lot of investigation by the NCC Board of Directors, our Museum Committee and all members willing to provide their input and hard work.

At this time, popular sentiment seems to be that the current building will never be used for glass display again. As such, we are then looking at a major capital campaign to erect and equip a new building. It should be something we can all be proud of and provide an even greater level of member benefit.



Even days later, as the flood waters began to recede, Rte. 40, looking east toward the NCC Museum, still remained water covered and impassable. Evidence of higher water can be seen on the pavement. (Weinman)

Here in early July, we have some immediate priorities. First is the reclamation of the current contents. This is a very time-consuming and meticulous process. We need to communicate not just to members but to the glass community at large what has happened and what we think we will need in terms of support.

As a club, we want to remain "open for business" and meet all the needs of the membership. It is fair to request patience in some member services as this tragedy has consumed and will occupy many people's time over the next several months.

This past weekend, I was fortunate to be invited to the National Depression Glass Association (NDGA) Convention in San Antonio. It was a good chance to quickly educate people on the events that

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(President's Message - Continued from page 3)*

occurred and our immediate needs for flood recovery. The support for NCC was overwhelming and many local clubs and shows, as well as the NDGA, quickly volunteered to help. We'll need all this support in order to rebuild from this tragic event.

The original goal of the San Antonio trip was to meet members and connect with persons who can't make it to Cambridge or Convention with any regularity. I thank Mark, Tarzan, and J.D., our Emergency Committee, for encouraging me to still make this trip in light of the tragedy. It is important to get the word out and our members and friends nationally were very sympathetic and concerned.

We encourage the membership to stay concerned, involved, and support the Club. It is a worthwhile cause and a real time of need. Please let me know if you have questions or if you'd like to know ways you can help further.

*Pete*



### 1998 Calendar Planning

Mark your calendars now with these important events during **NCC's 25th Anniversary Year**:

**August 22**

August Quarterly Meeting and Work Session  
Coney Island/Theo's Restaurant  
Cambridge, Ohio

**November 7**

November Quarterly Meeting and  
Education Program  
Cambridge Country Club (tentative)  
Cambridge, Ohio

**PLEASE NOTE THE  
CHANGE  
IN THE LOCATION  
OF THE  
AUGUST QUARTERLY  
MEETING**



Photographs in this issue were provided by:

- Michael Neilson
- Cindy and Mike Arent
- Lorraine Weinman


Many thanks to the numerous volunteers who tirelessly gave and are still giving countless hours of their time to help with the museum.

The photographs and other documentation of this event are only the "tip of the iceberg."

Many unnamed and unphotographed people were instrumental in this flood recovery.

**THANK YOU ALL !**

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# "A DEEP SUBJECT"

by Mark Nye, Tarzan Deel, and J.D. Hanes



(Neilson)

On NCC Convention Sunday, June 28, due to deteriorating weather conditions in Southeastern Ohio, including Cambridge, the Glass Show and Former Workers Reunion were canceled. Dealers began to pack around the time the show was scheduled to open that day. After the last dealers had finished packing and departed, a group proceeded to the Forum restaurant for the traditional "It's Over" dinner. As the food was delivered, a phone call came in informing us "the water is up to Rte. 40 at the Museum." Flooding in the Cambridge area was expected and the NCC Museum monitored all day with the last report at about 4:00 p.m. saying there didn't appear to be any danger of flooding in that area.

As soon as the phone call was received, people scrambled, almost forgetting to pay tabs. J.D. Hanes took a bite from his sandwich and made a beeline for the museum. Jeff Ross and Tarzan Deel headed to Deer Creek Motel to retrieve Tarzan's glass and then headed to the museum. Mark Nye and others also headed straight to the museum.

*(Continued on page 6)*

**(A DEEP SUBJECT - Continued from page 5)**

When we arrived there, water was already in the parking lot and the area was under a tornado warning as tornados had touched down not far away. As the word of the flooding spread around town, many people risked injury or worse to come to the museum to help save its contents. Everyone there put personal safety aside to help save the museum contents. We were told what to do in case a tornado was sighted by our spotter standing in the vestibule, the location of the only windows in the building. We were also following the weather on the local radio station.

The plan was to move as much of the glass as possible to the higher shelves and tops of cabinets. Unable to locate Marybelle Teters and the keys to the showcases, we were initially forced to break locks to open the cases. Marybelle was finally contacted and had Larry and Janice Hughes get the keys from her house and bring them to the museum. Thank you Janice and Larry. (Marybelle was finally able to reach the museum not long after the keys arrived.) Some glass deemed replaceable was left on lower shelves simply because there wasn't enough space and to make room higher up for difficult or impossible to replace items.

All free-standing cases were emptied and the tall cases laid flat on the floor to prevent tipping over into wall cases. Cases laid on the floor were placed to allow water to quickly enter them so they would not float. In addition to the glass, old catalogs and other irreplaceable paper was moved to higher places.

We hurried as fast as we could, but time was running out as water started to seep into the building and began rising fast. Many of the people there were advised to get out before the water actually entered the building. Bill Hagerty and Mike Arent, our angels of mercy, began to evacuate people with their trucks. With the water steadily rising, Bill Hagerty had taken out Cindy Arent, Judy Momirov, Lorraine Weinman, and Mike Neilson and had returned for Shirley and Carl Beynon and Mark Nye. At the end, six people were left in the museum and as the water was rapidly rising inside, it was time to go. Jeff Ross grabbed the computer, J.D. Hanes, the Cambridge "Loving Cup," and with Marybelle and Ward Teters, Lynne Verbsky, and Tarzan Deel, ran for higher ground and the storage building through lightning and pouring rain. Bill Hagerty and Mike Arent then drove through the water to reach the six stranded at the storage building and after a harrowing trip, got them to safety on high ground west of the



Jeff Ross quickly surveys a full case of glass and begins to move pieces to higher shelves in hopes of getting it higher than the rising water. (Neilson)



Ward Teters and Bill Hagerty diligently work at moving glasses up to "safety." (Neilson)



Judy Momirov, Tarzan Deel, and Jeff Ross rush to move glass from the front island cases to higher shelves in the back room. (Neilson)

museum property. We were all safe and that was the most important thing.

Those at the museum on that fateful night were: J.D. Hanes, Tarzan Deel, Cindy Arent, Mike Arent, Bill Hagerty, Carl and Shirley Beynon, Lorraine Weinman, Lynne Verbsky, Mark Nye, Jeff Ross, Marybelle and Ward Teters, Judy Momirov, Larry and Janice Hughes, Don Conkle, and Mike Neilson. Unable to reach the museum because of flooded roads were Charlie Upton, Lynn Welker, Joy McFadden, and Priscilla Southworth. Thanks to all who helped in this crisis without thinking of their own safety, even though everyone was worried, and put the preservation of the museum contents above everything else.

TO THE RIGHT: With upper shelves filled to capacity. Lynne Verbsky studies a case still full of glass that must be moved since the case will float and probably fall over if left where it is. Room has to be made to put this glass at a safe level.

(Neilson)



TO THE LEFT: With water starting to seep under the museum walls and time running out. J.D. Hanes and Mark Nye remove shelves so that they can lay the cases on their sides so they will not fall into other glass cases. Cindy Arent, on her phone, keeps in touch with outside help and progress reports on the approaching tornado.

(Neilson)

TO THE RIGHT: In the front room of the museum the glass has been moved to the upper shelves, higher than anyone ever imagined that the water would rise. As you will see in later pictures, this would not be high enough for some of the glass.

(Neilson)



TO THE RIGHT: Flood waters crested on Monday leaving the museum under approximately six feet of water. The only way to the museum was by canoe. (Arent)



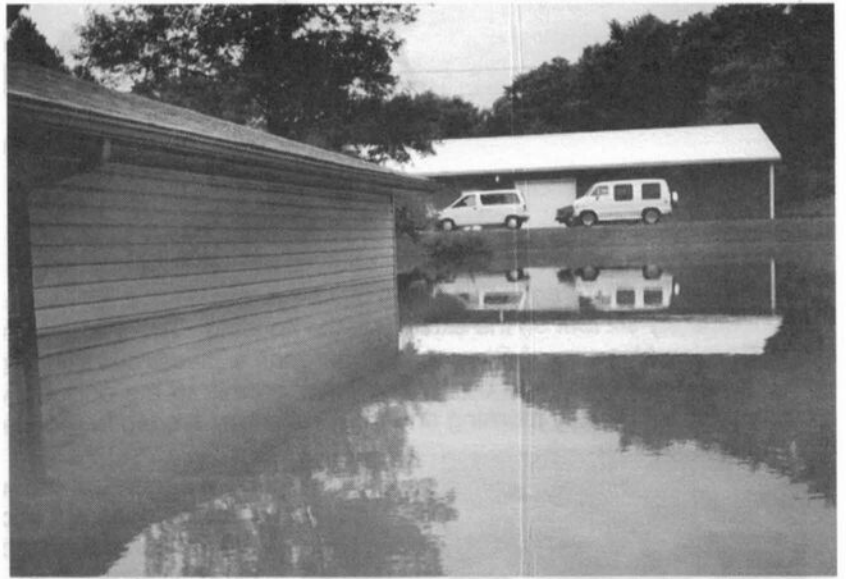
TO THE LEFT: With the 25th Convention poster still on the window, the vestibule filled with floating glass and other museum materials. (Arent)

TO THE RIGHT: Concerned members were able to investigate the extent of the flood damage from canoes. Some interior lights surprisingly remained on making it possible to see pieces of glass and the display table floating in the front room. (Arent)





TO THE RIGHT: The water rose so fast that several members' vehicles, hastily parked at the storage building, were trapped. At one point they were moved to even higher ground when it was feared that the water would even reach that "sanctuary." (Arent)



TO THE LEFT: This is the view that members keeping watch over the museum saw. The only access was by canoe or by a little-traveled path through the woods on the higher ground behind the museum. (Arent)

TO THE RIGHT: During the time the flood waters were in the museum, no one knew when they would recede. Members Mike Arent, Lynn Welker, Carl Beynon, Rich Bennett, Mike Neilson, Marybelle and Ward Teters, and Lorraine Weinman helped guard the museum at night. This canoe, next to Mike Arent, was used to transport members up to the storage building. (Arent)



# Afterwards

by Mark Nye, Tarzan Deel, and J.D. Hanes

Reaching the building by canoe and boat, several individuals (which included Mike Arent, Janice and Larry Hughes, and Carl Beynon) monitored the museum buildings and gave anxious members the bad news: Water had reached a level of approximately six feet on the exterior of the building. There was nothing to do but wait and plan for the recovery process. The Corning Museum of Glass had undergone a disastrous flooding in 1972 and they were contacted for guidance on how to begin the salvage operations once access to the building was possible. Floodwaters in the Cambridge area crested early Tuesday morning and later in the day started to recede.



As the waters receded they set things down where they had floated. This was the first view as the front door was opened. (Neilson)

By Wednesday, the water level was dropping fast and late Wednesday it became apparent access to the museum would happen the next day. To prevent unauthorized individuals from gaining access to the museum, Lynn Welker, Carl Beynon, Mike Arent, and Rich Bennett spent Wednesday evening at the storage building. By early Thursday morning both the museum property and the road were clear of water.

First to enter the building were Carl Beynon and an electrician to make sure there were no electrical hazards. As soon as they ascertained that it was safe to be in the building, inspection of the damage began. Inside the building, water had reached a depth of 65 inches which meant it reached the bottom of the next to the top shelf in the wall cases. All the glass on the third shelf down from the top had been under water. Only a minimal number of pieces had been left on the bottom shelves. The good news was the top two shelves were dry. We were fortunate in that while there was silt, there was minimal accumulation on the floor, meaning there was no buried glass. Some items had floated off shelves and moved around the building, while others on the flooded shelves just tipped over or moved around in the cases. A goblet was found standing upright in the entranceway while a decanter lay perched precariously on the edge of a cabinet. Other pieces were found scattered around the building, deposited in a haphazard manner by the receding waters.

The first step was to remove all the glass from the floor. The next step was to retrieve any item in danger of falling off a shelf. It then became apparent that some of the shelf supports were in danger of giving way and a decision was made to empty all the cases as quickly as possible. Tables were brought into the building and the process begun. It soon became apparent that there was not room in the museum building itself, and glass was taken up the hill to the storage building. Time was of the essence and a call went out to local members to come to the museum to help in the removal process. The cleaning process began immediately with gold-decorated items, painted items, and those pieces decorated with decals first in line, as these were in the most immediate danger of harm from being under water and from the deposited wet silt.

The water reached a level much higher than expected and a significant portion of the museum's collection of Cambridge catalogs and other documents were submerged in the flood waters. These were retrieved and placed on tables awaiting the first restoration step, freezing, which stabilizes and prevents mold and bacteria growth.

By late Thursday evening, the shelves had been emptied and most of the decorated ware washed. Since the security system was inoperable, a

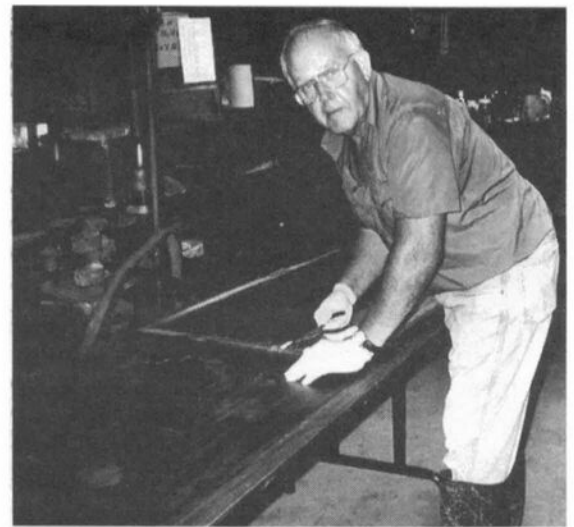


The cases had moved around a little but laying them down had been the right decision. Glass on the lower shelves had moved and some had floated off and even settled standing upright. (Neilson)



TO THE LEFT: Mike Arent and Marybelle Teters begin the tedious job of removing silt and muddy water from the glass. (Neilson)

TO THE RIGHT: Carl Beynon works on taking the back off of a water-soaked photograph from the museum. Most of the photographs can be saved. (Arent)



number of individuals took three-hour shifts in guarding the facility overnight.

Friday saw more individuals arrive to assist in the removal and cleaning process. A new alarm system was installed in the museum building and a complete system installed in the storage building. Throughout the day the washing process continued. Since storage space was limited, local individuals with glass on loan to the museum were contacted and asked to pick up their glass as soon as it was cleaned.

As the removal and cleaning process progressed, it became obvious that while some damage had occurred, it was minimal compared to what could have occurred had preparations not been taken on Sunday night. The full extent of the damage will not be known until the cleaning process is completed and all pieces checked.

A large chest freezer was purchased and the salvaged paper was placed in it Friday afternoon. Ron Hufford donated a small chest freezer and it too was filled.

The work continued on Saturday and as the week drew to a close, a large portion of the glass that had been under water had been given its initial cleaning. The process will continue until all of the museum building contents have been removed, cleaned, inventory lists checked, and ownership of each piece determined.

All people who have loaned glass to the museum will be contacted regarding disposition of their glass. Be patient if you have not already been contacted. Do not come to Cambridge to get your glass unless prior arrangements are made. For the immediate future, at least, damaged items must remain at the museum. At a future date, all owners of flood-damaged glass will be paid the fair market value of their glass at the time of the flood.

The most important thing in all this is that no lives were lost, and second, no serious injuries were incurred. National Cambridge Collectors will reopen a museum in Cambridge; the only questions being where and when. There will be much discussion about this in the coming weeks.



BEFORE AND AFTER: Glass was moved to higher shelves hoping to keep it out of flood waters. Once the waters receded, Lynn Welker surveys the shelves, carefully removing the pieces of glass that floated around when the waters got higher than had been expected. (Neilson)

TO THE RIGHT: Tables were set up throughout the museum and storage building. Many volunteers made trip after trip putting glass safely on the tables until they could be washed and sorted. (Weinman)



TO THE LEFT: Cindy Arent stands among some of the tables in the storage building sorting glass. (Arent)

TO THE RIGHT: Frank Wollenhaupt couldn't resist writing "Wash Me" in the mud on this handled relish. (Arent)







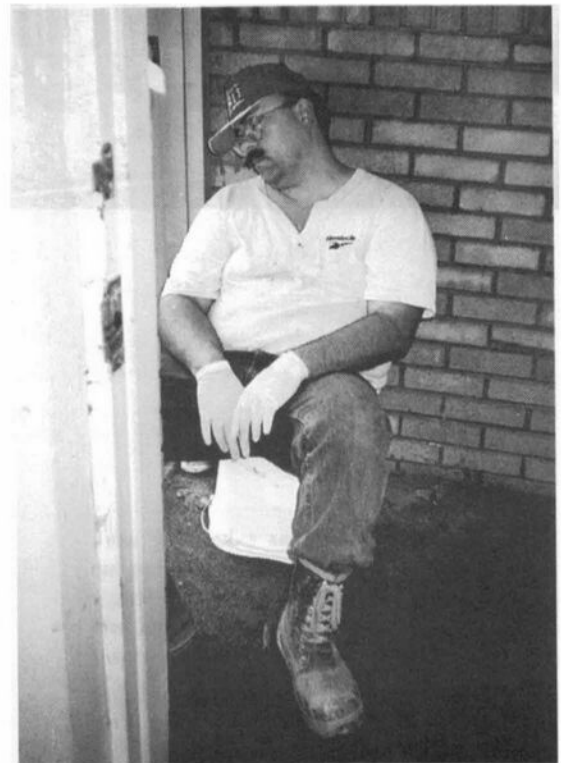
Once the door was opened, the cleanup began. Here Lynn Welker and Carl Beynon are the first on the scene and begin the process. (Neilson)



Here is the original wooden sample room shelf used for a book sales table in the museum. It was seen earlier in the week floating around inside when members viewed the museum from the canoe. (Neilson)



Janice Hughes helps empty the museum shelves. Shelves began pulling away from the wall and some were sagging. It was important to get the glass safely removed. (Arent)



Lack of sleep, emotional and physical stress finally take their toll. Rich Bennett finds a quiet corner and sits down for just a moment ... 1-1-1-1-1. (Arent)

TO THE RIGHT: Carl Beynon, Mike Arent, and Mark Nye begin moving glass in the front room. (Neilson)

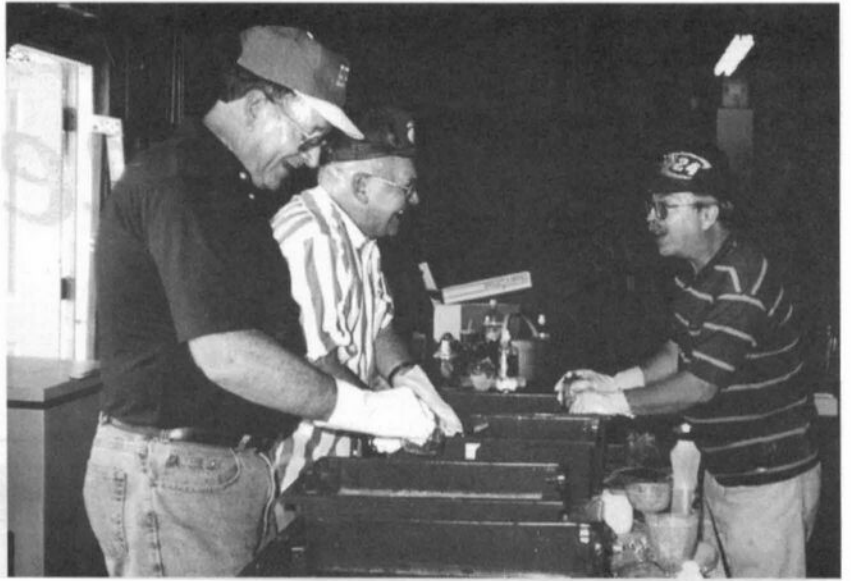


TO THE LEFT: Rich Bennett and Lynn Welker begin the long job of sorting the glass that has been cleaned. (Arent)

TO THE RIGHT: It was exhausting work carrying the glassware from the museum up the hill (two pieces at a time) to the storage building. Here Margene Osterberg and new member Dave Mitchell take their turn. (Arent)

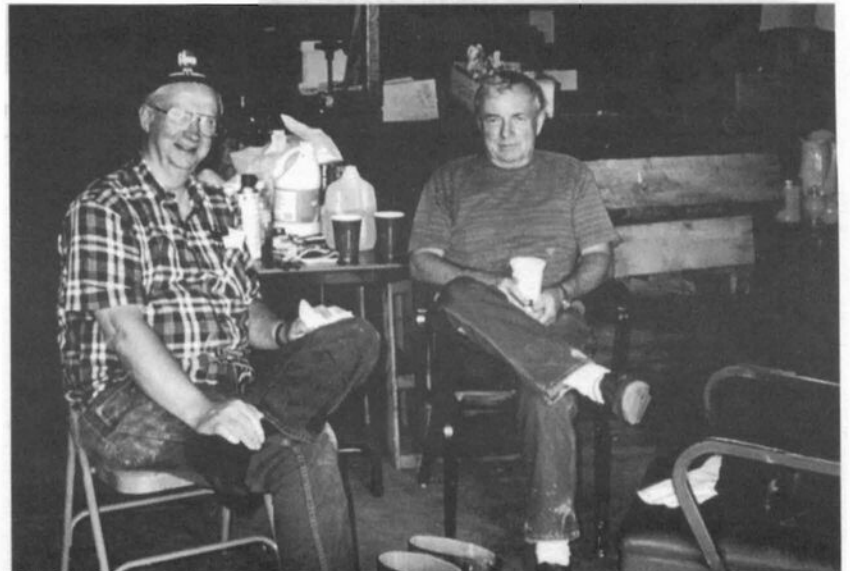


TO THE RIGHT: Ron Hufford, Ken Rhoads, and George Stamper set up a washing station in the storage building. (Arent)



TO THE LEFT: Georgia Otten, Vicki Wollenhaupt, and Judy Rhoads find a shady spot where they can wash glassware. (Arent)

TO THE RIGHT: Charles Upton and Willard Kolb take a break in the storage building. (Arent)



# *The End of*



The NCC Museum of Cambridge Glass Located on Rte. 40 East of Cambridge

(Arent)

# *Where Do We*



# *Two Eras...*



**Mary Martha  
Mitchell**

**1908 - 1998**

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(See the September Issue)

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