

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #21

“Neil Driscoll”

by Frances Law

Neil Driscoll was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, in 1896, the year Heisey opened the factory. His family moved to Newark, Ohio when he was five years old and he attended school in Newark. His father went to work at Heisey in 1901.

Neil also went to work for Heisey when he was fourteen years old. He began his career as a “carry-in” boy. This seems to be-the-trend with young boys starting work at Heisey. As a “carry-in” boy he took the glass to the annealing oven where they warmed the glass to get it ready for the finisher. At seventeen he went to work in the hot metal department. This was to be his vocation until he retired. He gathered glass out of the furnace using a punty. A punty is a long rod with a head on one end and a larger piece welded on the other end to give a good grip on the rod.

The hot metal department had one large furnace with sixteen separate pots in one oven. Mr. Driscoll gathered the melted glass to pour into the molds. Seven pounds was the maximum gather at one time.

Neil stayed in this department until he went into the army in 1917. He was in the Light Artillery Corps and served in both France and Germany. After his discharge in 1919 he headed back to Heisey. However, at this date there were no openings, so he worked for one year at Holophane across the street. After this year he went back to Heisey, working again in the hot metal department. He obviously was very talented in this phase of glass making.

Oftentimes work slowed down at Heisey’s so he looked for a job with other companies. He found work once at Wheeling, with the Crystal Glass Co. Also he was employed by Fostoria in Moundsville, West Virginia. We asked him what caused the slow downs at Heisey’s. He said that at times there were slow orders; also if a glass company came up with a new pattern they would work full time. We think the same is true with Heisey; new patterns or new colors, business was full steam ahead. Neil said at times the furnaces had to be shut down for repairs and this, of course, slowed production.

In 1962 after the closing of the Newark plant in 1957, he went to work at Tiffin Glass Company. He soon retired as the driving back and forth was too much for a man of nearly seventy.

It is interesting to note that his father learned his trade as a finisher in Wheeling. He elected to come to Newark and work for Heisey. He was a night boss for Heisey at one time.

In order to work in the hot metal department one had to “gather” for a year, then he received a card to show apprenticeship as a gatherer. However, it took three more years at gathering before you could advance further in this area of glass making.

Mr. Driscoll does not remember making any red or black glass; and he was there long enough to know. This underscores our belief regarding these two colors.\* He did say A. H. Heisey was adventurous and tried everything. He must have been quite a guy according to our reports from employees.

The thing that is most impressive about Neil Driscoll is the pride he still feels about Heisey glass. There was a gleam in his eyes as he told us they made the best glass around, (just as we believe). He said that if you had been employed by Heisey, you could get a job with any other glass company. This is a pretty good recommendation, isn’t it?

Mr. Driscoll is married to a charming lady whose name is Margaret. He has one daughter living in Newark, who is a public health nurse. He also has three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He and his wife live at 834 Steel Avenue and I am sure he would be glad to visit with you about Heisey.

We asked him if he had any stories left over from plant work. He said there were many, but we better not get into that. I am sure if a person had more time to visit he could come up with some good ones.

We salute Neil Driscoll as a man who contributed much to our present hobby of collecting what he termed the best glass made. We couldn't agree with him more. One last thing; he was very impressed with our museum. He wants to go back and take his wife this time.

\* Experimental

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #22

“Harold Dunham”

by Frances Law

Since the salesmen were an integral part of the Heisey Company we decided it was time to find one to interview. So armed with pen and paper we found a very good prospect in Granville, Ohio and spent a very interesting afternoon with Harold Dunham.

Harold was born in Dayton where he attended Waseon school. He also went to school in Upper Sandusky and Oxford, Ohio and is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan with a major in journalism. He spent a few months with a newspaper in Toledo, then worked for the Hoover Company in North Canton, Ohio where he did work on publications for sales and employees. He spent part of the war years there. He left this position to go to work for Alcoa in Newark, Ohio during the war years of June 1943 to November 1945.

He moved onto the Heisey Company and remained there from November 1945 to January 1957. He left the Heisey plant about a year before they closed and went to Structurlite in Hebron, Ohio. He now works for the molded plastics division of Milacron in Cincinnati, and travels for them out of Granville. In an interim period he left this company for a year and a half to teach at Gahanna, Ohio. Finding this wasn't his cup of tea he went back to Milacron.

During his last years at Heisey the Company was having problems. The industry was faced with the competition of imported glassware without enough tariff on it to compete with the hand made glass. The biggest problem was trying to get protection on these foreign imports. Harold also believes the trend toward more casual living and people buying machine made glass cheaper brought about the demise of makers of fine glass.

While employed at Heisey, Harold did many things in the area of advertising, promotion, and sales. He worked on advertising for trade shows and took many photographs for folders. He also worked with salesmen from all over the country. In the years 1951-1952 he took to the field as a traveling salesman and was the Southeast sales representative covering Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. This meant a great part of the time spent away from his family, so he was glad to be called back to the plant. Now he had gained experience on the road and in the plant.

Some of the most interesting phases of work were the trade shows and work at the sales office. A big sales show was held in hotels in Pittsburg in early January. This was the most important one, for this was the time new patterns were brought out. So, before January 1st everyone at the plant was involved in the intensive effort of making new patterns. It was a big job with many pieces of new lines. A mimeographed sheet (a sample) with the new price list and many photographs were made to show buyers. After the place was found to hold the show, the Companies reserved rooms and planned the display. To get there the Newark people left on the train at 4 a.m. There was a frantic time of unpacking the glass which had been sent ahead. It took all day to set up and display the glass as attractively as possible. This big show was just one of several during the year. When in the South, Harold helped out with the show in Atlanta.

The Heisey Company had permanent displays in Chicago, New York, Dallas, and some on the west coast. Resident salesmen took charge of these displays, changing them when needed, and also ran the area office. They had a permanent record of patterns and local salesmen could show the glassware to anyone desiring to buy for a store.

After the show in Pittsburg other Heisey offices throughout the country got the new patterns. A large gift show was held in Chicago and “open house” was held for salesmen all over the country. The Pittsburg show was not permanent as were the other areas mentioned. Usually ten to fifteen new patterns were introduced at the first show of the year. Many items were often discarded for better ones at this debut in Pittsburg. One of Mr. Dunham's jobs was to be in charge of this most important event, introducing new lines. Sometimes old and popular patterns were displayed again, and the show varied from year to year. After the show the first of the year it was easier to plan and put on other displays in other areas.

When creating a new pattern a bowl shape was usually made first. From this easy-to-form shape as many as six or seven different items could be made. These were salad bowls, sandwich and torte plates, gardenia bowls, and crimped edge bowls, etc. With the bowl shape on the end of the punty rod the finisher would roll the punty on a set of runners. While the punty was spinning the finisher could form the various articles by his adept use of tools and skillful manipulation of the hot glass.

Swung vases were made by the use of centrifugal force. In layman's terms the glass was swung from the end of the punty rod to make these varying heights of vases. (Another Heisey employee has told us that the very long swung vases, as much as five feet, were made by swinging the punty outside a window since there was not room inside).

New patterns required new molds which entailed a great deal of work and time. Molds were cast outside the plant. They were finished in the mold shop at the Heisey factory. The designer dreamed up the new patterns and then plaster of paris models were made to guide the mold makers who made pattern out of iron.

A great deal of work took place before the year's first show; ideas, models, and samples. Then the glass items had to be numbered and named. Harold said he spent a good deal of time just thinking up new or original names. Then the price list was made up. New catalogs were shown if possible. However, new catalogs were not made every year as they were very expensive to print.

The shows would draw salesmen from all over the country. They would be there to take care of their customers who, it was hoped, would place their orders at the show. In between shows salesmen were on the road calling on their customers; many orders were received directly at the plant.

There was a special set-up at the plant to take pictures of new items. Some national magazine ads were photographed and written by a professional advertising agency. These ads were submitted to the Company for approval. The trade magazines never had the time or money lavished them. The advertising agency often helped with the trade magazines, or photos were made by employees like Harold. The national magazine ads, many in color, were very beautiful and fancy as they were the ones which reached the consumer.

There was usually a space in the national magazine ads telling one to send for a free Heisey booklet (eat your heart out), showing Heisey glass uses for many occasions. One of the most popular such booklets was called Table Talk, and had a slot on the back cover with about ten different patterns illustrated. Some of these booklets have been found giving us additional information about our favorite glass. Harold helped to write copy, lay out patterns and take pictures. The advertising agency often would use some of the national magazine ads for these folders, but much of the work was done at the plant.

Among the sales activities were making up new catalogs and price lists which were needed for buyers to send in new orders. Just to reprice something was a very involved process. People with access to production would study base manufacturing costs of items and make up the new price list. The number of items per turn plus number of persons working on these items would help establish price. There were new price lists every year but not catalogs as we mentioned earlier.

The life of the salesmen was spent traveling, staying in hotels, and missing his family. The old timer would put up in a room in a hotel and arrange his samples. Then the customers were brought in to see the wares and place orders. In later years salesmen visited all kinds of stores and showed buyers catalogs and samples. In the big stores like Lazarus or Bloomfields there was one person in charge of Heisey. Heisey had good relations with many very large stores and these had Heisey sections, managed by one buyer. Many small stores in small towns also sold Heisey.

These involved extensive traveling showing samples and taking orders. Sometimes a salesman was gone on the job for three or four weeks at a time. Although it was often a lonely job it had some compensations. The salesman made many contacts and new friends at trade shows and on the road.

Harold Dunham enjoyed his years with the Heisey Company, made lots of Friends and enjoyed the good relationship between employer and employees. There was a good working atmosphere at the plant. Lots of people participated in creating this beautiful glass. Clarence Heisey was a good and creative boss, according to Harold.

During the war there was a great shortage of materials. The demand for glass was so great the sales were based on quotas to dealers.

Harold is the father of two boys and girls, all grown up and out of the nest. He is married to the former Eleanor Eschman whose father was an employee of Dennison University and well known in Granville.

We truly owe a vote of thanks to these men who travelled the roads and carried the Heisey banner to the far corners of our nation which gives everyone a chance to find himself a bit of this glass for his hobby.

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #23

**"Lillian Miller"**

by Frances Law

With all the agitation about woman's lib, we decided it was time to interview one of Heisey's many women employees. Our journey led us to the home of Lillian Miller.

Mrs. Miller was born in Newark, Ohio in 1909. She went to school in Newark, but at age fifteen she went to work for Heisey. This was the year 1924.

Lillian Miller was hired by Lou Adkins to work in the cutting shop. Here she wiped and wrapped glass. She quit work after two years, but went back in 1927. Now she worked in the tumbler room, under Mrs. Maude Lawn. Lillian wiped and wrapped tumblers. The usual number done was from 700 to 1000 per day depending on the type of tumbler. If it had ridges a brush run by a machine was used on it. She remained in this department for two years.

Lillian then moved into the stock room as an order clerk, where she assembled glass to fill orders, then the glass was put on a bench for the packer. After being packed in a barrel or keg it went to the shipping room. Mrs. Miller left the Heisey Company in July of 1948. She had worked a total of twenty four years for the company. That's filling a lot of orders.

The employees were busy all the time. Her boss in the stock room was Bud Hinger. There were three order girls and three packers. There was parcel post in the stock room operated by Jeanette Swartz and Thelma Forbes.

Mrs. Miller said the working conditions at Heisey were good. In fact she thinks it was the best place she ever worked, and she was employed by other companies later.

Her first pay check for a week was \$9. 25. She moved on to the stock room where one could get a bonus, too. Her salary was average for a woman at that time, but, alas, not equal to men's pay.

When Lillian first began work, she was considered Heisey's baby. She had to go home earlier than other workers, as she was not yet sixteen years old. When she reached her sixteenth birthday, she could work a full day.

Lou Adkins had charge of the cutting room, tumbler room, and blow shop. Mrs. Miller said she was a wonderful woman to work for.

She remarked that they were glad to see Paul Fairall every morning as he brought the orders to Bud Hinger, The orders were then parceled out to the girls.

Lillian left Heisey in 1948 to marry Clarence Miller, a deputy .sheriff. Later she went to work for Grants where she remained for nineteen years. The Millers are now retired and spend their winters in Texas.

Lillian lavished the usual praise on Heisey glassware. She said it was considered the best in the world. That is one opinion we don't dispute.

It was interesting to learn that when a Heisey employee got married they were given a barrel of glassware. There couldn't be a nicer gift, now could there?

Mrs. Miller has one daughter, one grandson and one great granddaughter. This lady is a very youthful looking and attractive to have a great grandchild. It was a delightful afternoon spent in the Millers attractive home listening to Lillian reminisce about her enjoyable years as a Heisey employee.

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #24

**“Ray Cobel”**

by Frances Law

Ray Cobel, a 42-year employee of the A. H. Heisey Company was born Sept. 17, 1883 in the tiny community of Chalfant, Ohio in Perry County. He had six brothers and sisters.

His father, George, was a carpenter by trade and built several large barns in that area. He was also skilled in cabinet work and wood carving, and undoubtedly passed along many of these skills to his son. Ray, who in his early 20's came to Newark where he began his apprenticeship in the mould department at the American Bottle Company.

As a young man Ray loved the outdoor life and devoted much of his spare time to hunting, fishing, camping, ice skating on the canal, and cycling. (He owned one of the early “Indian” motorcycles in Newark.) He was musically inclined and played trumpet in a small orchestra known as the “Buckeye Band” at local lodge dances and social gatherings. Favorite recreational areas were Idlewilde Park, Buckeye Lake, and Cedar Point.

He married Mabel Buckingham August 15, 1905. There were two children -- Virginia and Carl (both now living in the Newark area). Ray's first wife, Mabel, passed away in 1923. He was remarried in 1926 to Ruth Van Atta, who was employed at the Heisey Company as bookkeeper. They remained married until his death in 1954.

Ray began work at the A. H. Heisey Company in 1912 as a “vice hand” in the mould shop (then under the capable supervision of John Sanford). A few years later he became an understudy to Mr. Sanford and was promoted to foreman of the mould shop at the time of Mr. Sanford's retirement.

His primary duty as foreman was to design foundry patterns and moulds for pressed and blown glassware. Shop drawings were done on 3-ply Strathmore board with 6H pencils which left unalterable graphite lines (almost engraved lines) on the Strathmore surface. The tracing cloth/blue print reproduction method was not used for mould drawings by the Heisey Company at that time.

Ray usually preceded a mould drawing with a model of wood or plaster -- usually a combination of wood lathe turning and hand carving. This model, at full scale, served many functions: to evaluate proportions, weight and capacity; to determine correct parting line location and degree of draft; and as a detailed guide for vice hand work. It also served as a means of judging aesthetic values. The item was usually approved (or disapproved) at this stage by Heisey management prior to any actual mould work.

Wood patterns for moulds were made by mould shop personnel specially skilled in this work (Pete Rehbeck was outstanding as a pattern maker). Local foundries including Simpson, Wise, Athanor, and Overmeyer would then make the rough iron castings from the Heisey patterns.

When the iron casting arrived from the foundry, the apprentice moldmaker would “finish” the bottom and face of the casting (now the mould) and would mill the lugs for mould hinges. The faces of mould sections would then be “smoked” to achieve perfect bearing. The mould sections would next go to the “lathe hand” for his work, followed by the “vice hand” who would execute his meticulous carving, chipping and filing. Then the mould would receive a final cleaning and polishing with stones in the mould cleaning room and was now ready for production use. Occasionally a new mould would encounter some sort of problem when first used and would immediately be recalled to the mould shop for corrective work.

In later years Ray's responsibilities were broadened to include “trouble shooting” in all areas of the Heisey plant -- an assignment which earned him the proud title of Master Mechanic. During his foremanship Ray was granted numerous design and mechanical patents which in turn were assigned to the A. H. Heisey Company.

According to his fellow workers Ray shared his “know-how” and knowledge of company activities with his mould shop personnel. He did not believe in keeping his men “in the dark” on these matters. He was considered a

perfectionist in his work and yet a practical man. The moldmakers, self-disciplined and proud of their individual skills, worked together in an atmosphere of harmony and relaxation.

Throughout his 42 years of service with the Heisey Company, Ray enjoyed a unique working relationship with the Heisey family based on loyalty and mutual respect. Clarence Heisey, always lavish with praise for a job well done, often expressed his appreciation to Ray with a crisp new bill or a brief trip to the big city. When Clarence himself returned from a trip to Chicago or New York, he would invariably present Ray with a costly bright silk tie from Marshall Fields or Sulkas.

Ray continued his work at the Heisey Company without interruption until May 1954, when at 71, he died unexpectedly following surgery at Newark Hospital. A fitting tribute by Harry Gebhart appeared in the May 1954 issue of American Flint Magazine which is quoted in part: “. . . he will be greatly missed here at Heisey's by his many, many friends in all departments who sought his help and advice through the many years of his advisory position. Many of the fine improvements and splendid working conditions of the moulds and various patents throughout the plant will long serve as a lasting monument to his many years of faithful service to the A. H. Heisey Company . . .”

Reprinted from Heisey News, September, 1975

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #25  
"Clara McDonald" & "Fred McDonald"  
by Frances Law

The couple we are interviewing this month has devoted many years of faithful service to the Heisey Company. They live comfortably retired in an attractive home on Cedarcrest Ave. So, ladies first.

**CLARA McDONALD**

Clara was born in Lexington, Virginia in 1900. She also went to school there. Then she moved to Newark, Ohio and we forgot to ask the date.

Clara went to work for Heisey in 1919, in the etching department. She said she was extremely shy at this time and didn't look to right or left, just did her work. We would like to add that at some time she blossomed, for today she is a charming personality.

Ronald Wooles was in charge of the etching department at this time. A worker pressed prints on the glassware, and Clara's job was to apply the beeswax to glass before it was dipped in acid to make the design. The prints were made on steel plates, then they were put on pattern paper to apply to the glassware. One man in the department made the prints. Clara said she rang in in the morning and worked the full day. There was no time to view the other phases of glass making. She worked from the beginning of the year 1919 until the plant shut down in July for vacations.

She did not go back to the Heisey plant when it reopened, but went to work for Huber's bakery. She then started work after Hubers, for the W. H. Mazey's department store on the corner of East Main. She was employed there till 1922 when she married.

Clara did not work out again until 1936. On February 10th she talked to Lou Adkins about a job either part or full time. The depression was on then and not many were being hired by the plant. However, she talked to Lou on Tuesday and on Friday she was called to work, mostly on a full time basis.

She went to work in the grinding room. It was a big long room with fifteen machines in it. There was a set-up man to get the machines ready. Clara first worked at a table washing glass. They had a brush and rag to remove pumice left from the grinding. She also dried glass, applied the Heisey stamp on glass and wrapped it. Then the wagon girls picked up the glass to move it to the next stop. Clara also worked as a wagon girl.

Clara was gradually learning several phases of the work of preparing glass. She next worked in the blow shop. In fact, she was ready to answer the call to where ever they sent her. She always asked first if she was taking someone else's job for this she wouldn't do. In the blow shop she worked at the cutting off machine where she scored the item and cut it off. The glass was on a pin rotating all the time and then it went up to a little gas flame where the cracking-off of excess glass took place.

Clara also worked at the lehrs. The glass came through the lehrs which were heated to varying degrees. They were extremely hot to begin with and gradually went to cool. This is the place where the glass is tempered. She took the cooler glass off the Lehr, put paper between the pieces and put them in boxes. They were sorted later. Even if the glass was cooled, it was still hot enough to necessitate the wearing of gloves. If glass was not tempered correctly it cracked when removed from the Lehr. Thus there was some loss but none wasted. The broken glass was put in barrels and taken back to the mixing room. It was added to the batch and used again.

Clara worked at the plant for eleven years before she saw the process of making glass. Her hours always conflicted, as she couldn't leave her job. She had guests from Ireland who wanted to go through the plant so she took time off to show them through.

Clara was working as a wagon girl when she got hurt. She took two months off for surgery and went back to the wagons. Later, by request, she was moved to the cutting room. Here she worked as a marking up girl. She had her own table equipped with a flat board. Here she set paddles as a guide and with small brush followed lines of the

paddle with red paint. The lines were used as a guide by cutters. The cutter had a cut work pattern or could work out his own design. Clara worked in this department for about five years. Clara was the last woman working at Heisey when the plant closed. Before Christmas they started shutting down the plant, presumably for the Holidays, but it never opened up again. This was Christmas of 1957. She worked on till April of 1958 finishing up odds and ends. Some days she would work only two hours or perhaps a full day. She was prepared to do any job she was called on to do. She is retired unwillingly and would like to be at work again. She doesn't look her age (she fooled me) and is full of energy.

Clara has one son, James Cree, who lives in Houston, Texas. She has a granddaughter and two grandsons. She also has a great granddaughter who resides in California.

### **FRED McDONALD**

Fred McDonald was born in Newark, Ohio on Second Street on January 18, 1902. He attended the Newark schools. He worked first for the Werhle Stove Company, and later went to New Jersey for about one year.

Fred went to work for the Heisey Company in 1936 and during his years there he worked all the time in the shipping department. The glass was brought down to shipping from the packers. It could be one barrel or fifteen consecutively numbered. The order numbers would be on the packages so the shipper would know where to send them. If, say, there was an order for Marshall Fields it was taken out by the shippers, after the packers sent it down. It was packed in barrels or tierces which were as big as two or three barrels. The cooper shop where the barrels were made was in a separate building but on Heisey ground. Heisey made a contract with someone to make the barrels, this agreement not being a part of the plant. On the grounds there was also a barn for the hay used to pack the glass in. The hay was brought into the plant in a cart using rails. The shipping department of the plant. The shipping department then sent the hay upstairs to the packers.

An order of glass stayed in the shipping office till it was completed. The shipping department had stencil boards with the names of large cities and every State in the Union. Sometimes an order of glassware might stay in the department for a month. It was held up until a certain order of glass was made, since different items were made at various times. A large city, say New York, had names of companies from A - Z. The name of the company was put on the barrel from the stencil board. The shippers had a brush and ink and painted the name from the stencil on the barrel. The names were cut on the stencils by machine. Paul Fairall was in charge of the shipping department all the time Fred worked there. After Fred left Heisey in 1952 he went to work for the State Highway Department until he retired in 1971. He was very interesting to visit with and brought out albums of pictures to show me. We certainly enjoyed looking at these as he named various individuals, some of whom we know.

Reprinted from Heisey News, December, 1975

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #26

**“Rodney C. Irwin”**

by Louise Ream

For me it was a short walk west on Main Street from my home and around the corner on 33rd. For Ruth Irwin, it was a nostalgic journey back through her memories of her 48 years with this remarkable man. Some of her thoughts were happy and some of their hard times together, especially through the dreary years of the depression. It was for her, perhaps, an ordeal but it was an exciting insight for me into some of the workings of the company and the life of a man so important in its history.

Rodney C. Irwin was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 16, 1890. He died in Newark, Ohio on February 26, 1970, and was taken back to Kansas City for his burial. His family had been involved in the china and glass business for two generations. His grandfather, L. E. Irwin, was president of Irwin and Eaton Crockery and his father Joseph R. Irwin, was a china and glass buyer for leading department stores for many years. Rod had a brother and sister, both deceased.

His first job was in an advertising agency. In 1914 he went to work as a salesman with A. H. Heisey and Co. When World War I came along he went with Company A of the 117th Ammunition Train, a unit of the 42<sup>nd</sup> (Rainbow) Division which was mobilized on August 5, 1917 and landed in France in November of the same year. When the war was over he returned to Kansas City having received only minor injuries. Since he was an artist he drew the frontispiece for a book of memoirs of Company A.

Upon returning home he resumed his work with the Heisey Co. In 1922 he married Ruth Irwin of the same city. They had two children, a son Joseph and daughter Rosemary. Joe now lives in Florida, has two college age children and is a manufacturers representative. Rosemary, now Mrs. Charles Weaver, and her family live in Atlanta, Ga. They have three girls and a boy who is named for his grandfather.

Rod traveled out of Kansas City through the middle west from Minnesota to Texas. He carried his sample glassware in huge trunks which Mrs. Irwin said were nearly as big as her sofa. When he left on a trip he would be gone for six weeks at a time. He sent notices ahead to the buyers of the date he would be in each city. This got very involved because he had to have the trunks loaded on the train and when he arrived in a city would have to arrange to have them delivered to his hotel. There he unpacked, polished and arranged the glass on shelves and tables in rooms which most hotels had available for this purpose and the buyers would come to place their orders. Then it was time to pack up and move on to the next city going through the entire process again. It must have taken a lot of stamina to be a glass salesman in those days. The factory usually closed down for the hot summer weather and then Rod would have more time at home.

He was the first salesman to travel by car (or “machine” as they said in those days). He removed the rear seat and upholstery and made racks to hold his cases, now reduced in size. He had to furnish his own car and was paid mileage for using it. Many salesmen came to see how he had adapted his car for carrying his samples and they would follow his example. Gus Heisey has mentioned to us that salesmen had as many as 40 cases.

About 1930 he was transferred to Chicago to assist Walter Redfield who was in charge of the office there. After the new showroom was opened in the Merchandise Mart Rod was made manager. He brought in Lee Beardshear and broke him into the business. When Lee returned to Newark, Conrad Woefel became Rod’s assistant. Business was poor in the early thirties and Rod’s salary was cut to \$200 a month and later to only \$175. It was difficult for them to live on such a small salary and the company also cut his car mileage from 7½¢ to 5¢ a mile.

On August 7, 1933 he received a telegram from Clarence Heisey asking him to come to Newark the next day. This was in the days of quick travel by train. When he arrived he was offered the position of Sales Manager, which he accepted after the company agreed to a list of conditions under which he would take the job. Some of these included the complete authority and supervision over all salesmen and sales offices, power to appoint new salesmen and to make changes in personnel for the best interests of the company, authority to make revisions in some territories which were unbalanced or overlapped, consultation and approval of all forms of advertising, his approval and

consultation in making all new patterns, lines or articles and deciding when such new merchandise should be presented to the trade, supervision of all salesman's samples since in the past hundreds of useless samples had been sent out which were unnecessary and impossible to carry. There were several other conditions in the agreement with recommendations of improvements or changes. One of these was to place girls in large stores to work under orders of the stores but to have charge of the Heisey stock and be responsible for display and selling. The factory would train such girls and pay their salary if the store bought enough merchandise so that the salaries did not exceed 5% of the stores purchases. This was put into effect and was a great success. Mr. Irwin apparently was the first sales manager the company had.

Judging from the many letters we read, Mr. Irwin was enthusiastically received by the salesmen, advertising companies and the trade. There is more to be written about his twenty years as sales manager but that will be another story. He was allowed to remain in Chicago and pursue his duties as manager from there.

During this time the Irwins lived in Evanston, Indiana, a Chicago suburb. Here he had the good fortune to meet the designer, Royal Hickman. Their next door neighbor was an artist who knew Hickman and she introduced them. Hickman had been a designer for Kosta Glasbruk in Sweden and had done a marvelous bear for them. It was through this meeting that most of the Heisey animals came about. Rod introduced Hickman to Clarence Heisey and the result was the animal line so famous today. The horsehead bookend was already in the line but it is believed that all other items but the tiger paperweight were designed by Hickman. He also designed at least part of the figural stems including the Dancer Leg cocktail recently pictured in Heisey News.

Whenever Rod was traveling he was on the lookout for anything which could be used as a design for glassware. He went to museums and art galleries and made sketches and he often brought back pieces of glass of other companies which might suggest a new line. Then, as now, companies closely watched their competition for ideas.

The Irwins finally moved to Newark in 1944 two years after Wilson Heisey's death when Clarence had replaced him as president. They first lived at the corner of Seventh and Church Streets just three doors west of the present location of our museum. Mrs. Irwin said she recalls watching the Davidson House, our neighbor to the south which is the museum of the Licking County Historical Society, being moved and restored. They later moved to 33rd Street where she lives today with her miniature poodle, Pierre Poupee', Pete for short. Pete was a gift to Mr. Irwin thirteen years ago from his son, Joe who thought he needed company.

I realized while talking to his widow what a great person Rod had been. The papers and letters which she allowed me to read told me how well thought of he was. He was a stickler for detail and was a person whose job was his life. His record keeping was meticulous and had his records not been burned in anticipation of a move to Florida just prior to his death we would probably have a very valuable collection since he had kept all sales records for all those years.

He was responsible for many new lines, the designer of the round crest for Fred Harvey, the #1508 card box, the New Era line, and suggested, at least, the figural stems. He was responsible for the sandblasting or carving and purchased the first equipment for doing these. Carvings are designs on glass done by sandblasting and Chevy Chase, Swan Dive, Bacchus and others are examples of these. It was his idea to call in Macy's buyer from New York to buy all the old glass stored in the bins which included a lot of moongleam and flamingo. He bought it all and Macy's were able to dispose of it quickly at bargain prices and the bins were freed for new production. Horace King has often spoken about things which Rod had suggested. Other people have also told us what an important part he played during his years there as sales manager. Mrs. Irwin told me that one day Clarence Heisey wanted to give a friend an elephant and knew that a turn had just been made that day. However, when he went to get one he found that they were all gone. Employees had taken them all and it was learned that some had even been thrown out the window to friends. She said that it was well known that A. H. Heisey had said that "the first turn belongs to the men". In later years there was more security including searching of lunch boxes which did not set well with employees.

In the early fifties hard times befell the industry and efficiency experts were called in with much shifting of personnel. In the fall of 1952 Rod resigned from the company. He returned to the field traveling for Duncan Miller, U.S. Glass and for a firm in Germany and one in Sweden. He finally retired in 1967 because of his ill health and he

died three years later at the age of 80, having spent nearly his entire life with the glass industry. How wonderful it would have been if he had lived to see our national museum!

Mrs. Irwin graciously provided me with information which should be of much interest to club members and we shall be using it in future issues. She also has a very lovely cut decanter which she has offered to display in the museum.

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #27

**"Helen Pallagi"**

by Frances Law

Helen Pallagi was born in Newark, Ohio on Case Avenue in May, 1911. When she was two years old her mother decided to go back to Hungary with her family. Before her father could follow them World War I had broken out and he was unable to join them. She lived in Hungary until July 4, 1923 when the family came back to Newark as her father had decided to stay here to work. She had first attended school in the old village of Polgar, Hungary. Back in Newark she attended Hazelwood School.

Helen's first job was at Newark City Hospital where she worked for ten years in the kitchen. She then spent two years in the supply room putting together everything used in surgery, readying it to be sterilized if needed. She also put together all items to be sterilized for obstetrics. She worked alone in this important area of the hospital and at night she took a 300 hour course at a riveting school.

In 1942 she went to work for Heisey while waiting for an aircraft department to open up at Newark Stove Co. She only stayed at Heisey for four months then went to work in this aircraft plant where the pay was higher, and worked there until the war ended.

She then went to Columbus by bus every day to attend beauty school. In 1946 she was licensed after passing the state board. This was a major accomplishment as she hadn't had much prior schooling. She had also learned to speak English fluently by this time. She worked in a beauty shop for three years but was very disappointed with this job as the hours were long and the pay poor.

Helen went back to Heisey in 1949 and stayed there until the plant closed. She started in the etching department at the fifth "table". First the design had been etched or engraved on a steel plate. The printmaker spread the acid resistant ink (made of ink and beeswax) on the plate using a knife to press it into the design. He then put a piece of tissue paper over this and rubbed it very hard with a piece of felt to transfer the design to the paper. The paper was then handed to the first girl, Helen who checked it for marks and thin places and then cut out around the pattern. If there were any bad places the pattern was discarded or bad places were cut out if possible. The tissue paper used for this purpose was specially made in Sweden.

There were four girls at each table, Helen would hand the pattern to the second girl who fit the pattern on the glass. This had to be done so that the pattern centered exactly with no wrinkles in the tissue. The third girl had a piece of felt which she used to transfer the pattern onto the glass by rubbing it. This had to be done exactly for each mistake would show up when the glass was dipped in acid. The last girl at the table dipped the glass (usually stemware) in a big bowl of alcohol and the paper could then be peeled off very carefully. If it was torn she could press it back on. If the tissue pattern had not been rubbed hard enough to transfer it turned out poorly and had to be discarded. This was demanding and exacting work. The last girl had large boards to place the stemware on, stem up. These boards would slide onto shelves. After a careful inspection the shelves were rolled to other girls who put on the wax resist. All of the goblet, for example, had to be covered with wax, except the portion with the pattern, before it went into the acid for etching.

Helen showed me several tissue patterns. One she had made herself. It was #99 and was called Wreath, which was cut rather than etched. She gave her niece a complete set of Wreath cutting when she was married -- lucky girl.

While Helen worked in the etching room all were laid off except the first table. Since four girls and a print man were at each of the five tables this was quite a lay-off.

Helen was then transferred to the cutting shop where she worked with Dove McDonald. In this department they used a tool shaped like a pencil with pieces of wood sticking out at intervals to mark correct spaces according to design. A fine brush was used for this and steady hands were needed. The glass or goblet was put in front of this tool, the goblet was held by the stem and turned slowly as lines were marked. If one made a mistake the red lines were washed off and the procedure was begun again. Helen really enjoyed working in this department. After the glass was

lined it was picked up by the cutter. A cut pattern takes a long time to complete. The men who did this were real artists, cutting with nothing but their skill to guide them.

Helen said her work in both departments was most interesting. It was a pleasure to see the plain glass come out with the beautiful cuttings and etchings. It is no wonder the glass was expensive, even then, when you consider how many hands it went through.

After the pattern was cut it was very dull looking and had to be polished to make it glisten. However glass could be bought in this dull finish (gray cutting). Helen worked at a polishing machine after the cutters were through. Each piece of stemware was put into a machine with two brushes in it. When the door was closed the machine revolved rapidly. She walked up and down by two machines all day. This process had to be timed, then the glass was taken out and dipped in hot water, dried and checked. If it was not clear enough it was put back in the machine for more polishing. It took a lot of tedious work to make this beautiful glass. During a slack time in the cutting department, Helen was transferred to the blow shop to work on the glazers. In the blow room the girls used something like a blow torch. When the glass came in it was closed at the top.\* The girls used a piece of metal with a diamond point, and while turning the goblet around, scratched the place to cut off the top. Then the stemware was held against the flame to crack off the top at the place where it was marked. This left the top of the bowl very rough. A row of girls used special belts on grinding machines which went up and down and they held the top of the bowl against the belt to make it smooth. After the grinders were through they placed the glass on a conveyor. This moved the glass on the conveyor through heat to give its lustrous smooth appearance. Helen removed glass from the glazers sometimes wearing two or three pairs of gloves. Even then the glass was so hot that her thumb was usually burned. The glass cooled and was then inspected for chips or rough spots on top. Then it was laid on another conveyor and moved to a girl, usually Violet Richards, who wrapped the pieces in tissue paper and packed them in ware boxes. The girls from the stockroom put them in the proper bins.

Helen always enjoyed her work and said it was like one big family in the plant. Clarence Heisey came through the departments every day and always knew his workers no matter where he saw them. It was a very good place to work as many workers found out when the plant closed.

I really enjoyed our visit with Helen. It was a pleasure to see the joy of accomplishment shining in her eyes and to know she loves Heisey ware as we all do. Most employees seem to have the same feeling.

\* When a piece of stemware is blown in a mold there is always a bubble of glass at the top which has to be removed.

Reprinted from Heisey News, April, 1976

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #28

**"Mary Matilda Gabriel"**

by Frances Law

FLASH!! STOP THE PRESSES! This profile is about a Heisey employee who has reached the century mark plus three years. Yes, Mary Gabriel is 103 years old, and is in remarkably good health for one of her years. She was born in Delaware county Ohio on March 8, 1873. She attended a one room log cabin school for a while, but she couldn't attend for very long, as she had to help with the chores at home. She walked ten miles to get books to read after she dropped out of school. Mary continued to be a great reader until about three years ago, when her eyesight became poor. On Sunday her family ate food prepared on Saturday, and then read books or the Bible.

Mary has seen a doctor only once in twenty years; she has never been to the dentist. She is able to move about the house, usually pushing a favorite chair with her to sit in. In 1929 she lost her sight completely and the specialists said she would never see again, but in two years her vision was fully restored. She was born a blue baby but by using a little whiskey and warmth she survived. Mary won't take medicine or go to the doctor. She can see well enough to get around the house and check the clock. She hasn't been in a car for ten years, maybe because her grandson-in-law teasingly scared her.

Mary worked in a cigar factory in Newark, and she also worked at the Taft and Warden Hotels. We are not sure of the dates of this employment. We hated to ask her so many questions as she told her granddaughter, "no more questions." She is a feisty old girl whose mind seems remarkably clear.

Her grandparents were full blooded Indians, but in a very old family Bible we could find no trace of their names and birth dates; however they died at the age of 108 and 109 but we could not find when. Maybe Mary's heritage is partly responsible for her age. We learned her second cousin was Jesse James of whom she has a picture. She says the James boys were blamed for lots of things they didn't do.

She started work at Heisey in 1913 and worked there for four years. She was employed in the mold room cleaning the molds. She was about 40 years old when she began at the plant.

Mary was married twice. Her first husband was Warden Pickham who died October 6, 1916, at the age of 86. He was many years older than Mary; they had no children. She was thirty years old when she married Alonzo Eugene Gabriel, who died August 30, 1929. They had one child, Hazel, who died November 13, 1948. Hazel was the mother of Matilda Catherine Huff who so kindly gave us this information on her grandmother. Mrs. Gabriel makes her home with her granddaughter. An interesting tidbit was that Mary named her daughter Peasely (second name) after her doctor.

Mary lived first in Delaware, Ohio, moved to Columbus for a short time and her daughter was born there in 1904. Then she moved to Newark, living on Harrison Street. We didn't get the dates on these moves as it meant more questions and she was obviously tired of inquiry.

Mary had a slight stroke sometime back, but she has completely recovered so that she can take care of herself. She has lived with the Huffs for twenty years.

Believe me, I looked upon this grand old lady with awe. It boggles the mind to think of all the changes she has seen take place during the march past the century mark. We wish her still more Happy Birthdays.

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #29

**Harry "Boots" Gebhart**

by Frances Law

HARRY "BOOTS" GEBHART was born in east Newark on August 18, 1898. He attended St. Francis and Blessed Sacrament schools. He continued his education through the first year of high school. After this he worked a year at Worley's and a year at American Bottle Co. (which we now know as Owens Corning). During World War I he put in six months at Simpson Foundry.

"BOOTS" began his career at Heisey's in 1917. He did general labor on the yard gang and spent three years in general construction. In 1920 "Boots" went on the lehrs and remained at this job for 37 years. His family was really Heisey connected as two of his brothers worked in the plant. His sister sold Heisey at Mohlenpah's a store in Newark. Boots said he knew the pattern numbers, but his sister called them by etching or cutting names. This led to many interesting family discussions trying to find out who was correct. "Boots" said he had always been interested in glass per se. When he was eating he always checked out the glass used to serve in.

When glass is made and is still hot, it is run through the lehr to anneal it. Annealing makes glass strong and tempered so it won't break. "Boots" ran the glass thru the lehrs. The temperature varies with the piece sent through; higher for large pieces. The heat can be adjusted in the lehrs. Every piece of glass had to be annealed which helped account for the fine quality of Heisey glass.

Mr. Gebhart's father came from a Pennsylvania glass company to work for Mr. Heisey. He was nicknamed "Hokie Pokie" and Boots was afraid he would inherit the name. He told us his family tagged him with the name "Boots" when he was about three years old. It was the style at that time to wear red boots and he cried around the house for a pair, hence the name. Strange to say he couldn't remember whether he got the boots or not. Once "Boots" was in a grocery store on Oak Ave., when someone brought in a piece of Heisey glass and put it on the counter. A salesman came in and saw the glass; he was taken with it and had an idea to promote the sale of his product and Heisey, too. He was sent to Clarence Heisey and he told Clarence didn't "cotton" to the idea and threatened to throw the salesman out of the plant. None of his glass was going into cereal boxes.

"Boots" started a bingo game over Mohlenpah's and he wanted to give Heisey glass as bingo prizes. He approached Wilson Heisey about this and was told emphatically that he wanted none of his glass on the shelves as prizes. All the Heisey's were very proud of their glassware and preferred to sell it in high class stores, a practice which continued until the plant closed.

According to "Boots" the Heisey closing down was brought about by poor economic conditions. They didn't turn the fires out for about three months hoping the business could be saved. Sometimes the employees worked only two days a week. The cost of producing hand made glass was fast becoming prohibitive and several plants were doomed in the late fifties, Heisey being one of them. The plant closed December 24, 1957 for Christmas vacation and never opened its doors again. The end came on May 23, 1958, when the fires were finally extinguished. No glass was made after the December date, so 1957 was the official closing. This was a sad period for makers and lovers of fine hand made glass.

Well, to get back to "Boots'" job, the lehrs were fifty feet in length and varied in width from six to eight feet. They were made out of fire bricks. The glass was brought in on a paddle or fork. The lehr worker stepped on a pedal to open the door, the glass was put in and onto a moving screen. Each lehr had a different temperature which was applied to the glass on the moving screen. The extremely high heat was applied for about ten feet, and then it began to cool down. By the time the glass was sorted at the other end it was cool enough to handle.

Mr. Gebhart has been married for thirty years to the former Anna Wachaya.

"Boots" remarked, as have most employees, that he really enjoyed working at Heisey's. It was like one big family and the Heisey men always knew the workers by name. The workers were allowed to go throughout the plant and mix and mingle with those in other departments.

“Boots” was Heisey news writer for the Flint Glass Magazine, the union publication. He later worked at Newark Catholic School starting in the spring after the plant was closed down. He was custodian at the school for 1958-1965, when he retired.

PROFILES of FORMER HEISEY EMPLOYEES #30

“Victor Lukasko”

by Leo J. Lukasko

Victor Lukasko was born in Krompf, Austria-Hungary on July 15, 1879, where he attended the customary six years of elementary schooling. He learned the mold-making trade in the “old country” where he became adept on both lathe and bench-work.

At about age 16, my father came to the United States and lived with his brother, Karl and his wife, in Newark, New Jersey. He attended night school while working in the immediate area. It was at Karl’s home that he met Margaret Ferenz. She was visiting her aunt, and had recently arrived from Roznou, Austria-Hungary. They were both born of German-speaking parents, had grown up in the same vicinity ‘over there’, but their paths had never crossed. It took their trips to America for them to meet.

After their marriage at Newark, N.J. in 1903, my parents set up housekeeping at New Martinsville, W.VA., where dad had work at the local glass factory as a mold-maker. In 1906 and 1907, he was employed at a small mold shop in Wellsburg, W.VA. By 1908, he had moved on to Mt. Pleasant, Pa., where he became affiliated with the Anchor Glass Company. In 1908, my parents took up residence at Westport, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore, where my father worked in the mold-shop of a nearby glass plant. In those days, I am told by an elderly glass-worker friend that it was not uncommon for a glassworker to pack his toolbox for as little as a fifty-cents per week increase in wages and to move on to another shop, because at that time fifty-cents was a lot of money.

My father often said “the fields far away always looked greener” and so it was in 1910, that he saw an ad in the American Flint magazine advertising for mold-makers at the A. H. Heisey Co. in Newark, Ohio. At that time the Heisey mold department was regarded in trade circles as the top-shop in the whole country and paying the best wages for those who could qualify as first-class mechanics. It was soon thereafter that he made his final move and that was to the Heisey plant on Oakwood Avenue. There he made life-long friends with such personalities as the late Ted Allen and the late Harry Humphreyville, both of whom had learned the mold-making trade in England.

Dad took great pride in his work, aiming at perfection, and this was soon recognized by the Heisey family, who had him do special work for them both in the plant and at their homes. Clarence Heisey, especially, sought dad’s opinions on the practicability of making certain molds. It was in the mid-thirties that Clarence, an ardent horse-enthusiast, designed the #1 Horse Head Book Ends and selected ‘Vic’ - as he was known to his associates - to make the mold. Such a mold would take at least several months of a full work schedule to complete. Many a time I stood by dad at that bench overlooking Oakwood Avenue to watch him carve, chisel, rub, file, scrape, ‘sculpture’ - as it were - out of cast iron the mold wherein the hot glass eventually would be poured. I am told that the #1 Horse Head Book Ends were the only pieces of Heisey ware displayed at the New York World’s Fair of 1939-40.

My father in his later years was chosen to do the nature work in molds. That, I have been advised, is an art in itself. Take note of the eyes and general features in the Horse Head Book Ends. However, three of my father’s favorite pieces were the 1522 Colt, 1527 Kicking Colt and the 1529 Balking Colt. He felt that they looked so graceful. The molds for the 1522, 1527 and 1529 were made by dad.

The #1401 Empress Dolphin-footed one-light candlestick is a product from the mold made by ‘Vic’. The first run was in flamingo, and Clarence Heisey was so pleased with it that he presented Dad with a pair of these candlesticks from that first run. Another mold made by my father was for the #1252 Twist Plate, which was modified in 1952 for the Newark Sesquicentennial with the pioneer scene added thereon for a souvenir plate\* at the sesquicentennial celebration here.

Victor Lukasko respected the Heisey family greatly and also the A. H. Heisey Company. A son, Raymond, residing in Newark, learned the mold-making trade in the Heisey shop and worked there for some time after finishing his apprenticeship. I, myself - the other son - worked in the hot metal department during vacation - before and after the factory closed down for the hot summer weather - in the late twenties and early thirties of my high school and

college days. There are two daughters - Mrs. Mary Margaret (Harvey B.) Smith of Fresno, California, and Mrs. Helen (John) Dorsey of Newark, Ohio, both Heisey glassware enthusiasts.

Dad remained with the Heisey Co. until his death in 1941. The move to Newark was regarded by dad and mother as the best that they had ever made. My father was a person whose job and family were his life, and had spent his entire life with the glass industry. How great it would have been if he had lived to see the National Heisey Glass Museum! Mother passed away in 1971. Both are buried in Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Heath, Ohio.

The above picture of my father is a blown-up portion taken from a group picture of employees from the mold-shop and related skills which hangs in the National Heisey Glass Museum, and which was taken in 1925 on the plant grounds at the northwest corner of the A.H. Heisey building by Worthland Studio, 240 N. High St., Columbus, Ohio.

\*Ed. note: Leo has one of these plates still in the original wrapper which was purchased at Edmiston's in Newark in 1952. The plate has both the original Heisey sticker and the price sticker, \$1.50.