

shore lines

Spring / Summer 2009

The View from Here

by Mary Beth Beuke

President, North American Sea Glass Association

It's been said that sea glass collectors belong to unique and positive community; a group that's a little more friendly, somewhat dreamy and hopelessly drawn to the sea and its history. I recently experienced this "positive community" at one of the NASGA sea glass festivals. I described the event in an online post, saying "the people and exhibitors were a joyful and positive bunch. I've found that most sea glass people are that way... a different and refreshing breed. I felt like I was at a beach party during a family reunion and everyone was just happy to be there amidst so much color."

This issue of *Shorelines* and the NASGA community will always be dedicated to that sea glass collector in all of us. If you're reading this colorful newsletter now, we welcome you to the ever growing community. Here we hope you'll find a positive story, a friendly face, a dreamy photo (or two), a window to sea glass' history and much more.



Inside...

- [Collector Interview](#) 2
- [Rare Red Sea Glass](#) 3
- [Collectors' Page](#) 4
- [New NASGA Logo](#) 5

NASGA Cares...

Last year NASGA has made donations of \$2,500 to the Ocean Conservancy and \$1,500 to the Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park, Delaware. See the Letter from the [Ocean Conservancy](#)

2009 Sea Glass Festival, Erie, PA

On October 17th and 18th, 2009, beachcombers from across America will assemble in Erie, Pennsylvania at the fourth annual North American Sea Glass Festival. The event will feature artisans and collectors of this popular coastal collectible.

In addition to lectures and seminars the "Shard of the Year" contest will be held awarding a \$1,000 cash prize to the collector with the most rare and desirable piece of sea glass. The contest will be judged by board members of NASGA.

The festival is being held in Erie's Bayfront Convention Center. The

public is welcomed for a weekend admission charge of \$5.00. Children 12 and under are admitted free of charge.

Visit www.seaglassassociation.org for more information.

To All Sea Glass Collectors:

Tables will be provided in a designated Collectors' Area for those who would like to display their sea glass collection for all to see. This will be a "no sell" zone, and is intended for displaying only. Space is limited.

Please contact meganh@relishinc.com for more details.



Collector Interview: H. Jay Taylor



NASGA: How did you become interested in collecting sea glass?

Taylor: Since I was a young boy, I've always enjoyed walking along the beach but I never paid much attention to sea glass. After reading Richard LaMotte's book, *Pure Sea Glass*, I began to understand just

what it was. The next time out on the beach I found a beautiful frosted sea foam coke bottle bottom. I was hooked.

NASGA: What is it about sea glass collecting that you enjoy?

Taylor: I really take pleasure in the calm serenity of walking along a quiet long stretch of beach listening to the waves breaking on the shoreline. I also enjoy the exhilaration of finding an old, well-frosted piece and wondering what that piece may have come from and who may have been using it in its former life.

NASGA: Can you share one of your memorable beachcombing experiences?

Taylor: On a cold gray day this past winter, a friend and I were out beachcombing on our favorite beach. We walked pretty far down the beach, which included passing over a little, inch deep creek that drained and filled the marsh back behind the beach during tidal changes. When we returned from our long walk, pockets full with glass, we found that the little creek had turned into a raging 30 feet wide, nearly 3 foot deep river. We were trapped! We ended up having to wade through the mounting waters. The water was cold, the wind was blowing, and it was freezing. Finally air-dried off enough after walking another several hundred yards in the icy sand back towards the car, to put our shoes and socks



Jay takes a special interest in sea glass marbles.

back on and roll our drenched pantlegs back down. Our quiet day out on the beach turned out to be quite an adventure!

I really take pleasure in the calm serenity of walking along a quiet long stretch of beach...

NASGA: What are some of your other favorite pieces of sea glass?

Taylor: My favorite pieces of sea glass are the colorful frosted unique pieces I have found myself, although I also enjoy collecting sea glass marbles and unique bottle stoppers, which you won't find on our beaches here in Delaware. I also like collecting surf tumbled complete bottles.

Recently, within a week's time, I found two Coca Cola bottles in the mud flats at our favorite beach.

NASGA: What do you do with your sea glass?

Taylor: Much of my sea glass treasures are displayed in many places all around my home. My dining room has turned into a sea glass exhibition. I also enjoy photographing my pieces and hope to try my luck at designing some jewelry items.

NASGA: Do you have a sea glass collecting tip you would like to share with us?

Taylor: Just enjoy the quiet peaceful serenity of your walk along your favorite beach and maybe, just maybe, you'll happen upon some beautiful treasures left for you by Mother Nature and the beautiful sea.

Jay lives in Lewes, DE collecting sea glass along the Delaware Bay for display in his home.



Rare Red Sea Glass

by Mary Beth Beuke

Red sea glass. It is said to be the most coveted of the many sea glass colors. Where does it come from? Why is it so rare? And can it be found much any longer?

After years of studying thousands of pieces; some in my own collection and after interviewing and seeing rare finds from other collectors from across the globe, it's a proven fact that red is one of the most difficult colors of sea glass to find. Some collectors have confessed it's taken a lifetime of sea glass hunting to find just one piece.

The reason why some serious collectors have more than just a couple pieces is due to several factors. It seems red was just a bit easier to find even twenty years ago. Therefore, some of the older collections that were searched for and compiled long before the recent popularity of sea glass just may have some reds. Does your family have an old beach house passed down from earlier

One source of red sea glass, a pre-1950's red boat lantern.

How rare is red sea glass?

According to Richard Lamotte, author of *Pure Sea Glass*, 1 out of every 5,000 pieces of sea glass found will be red in color.



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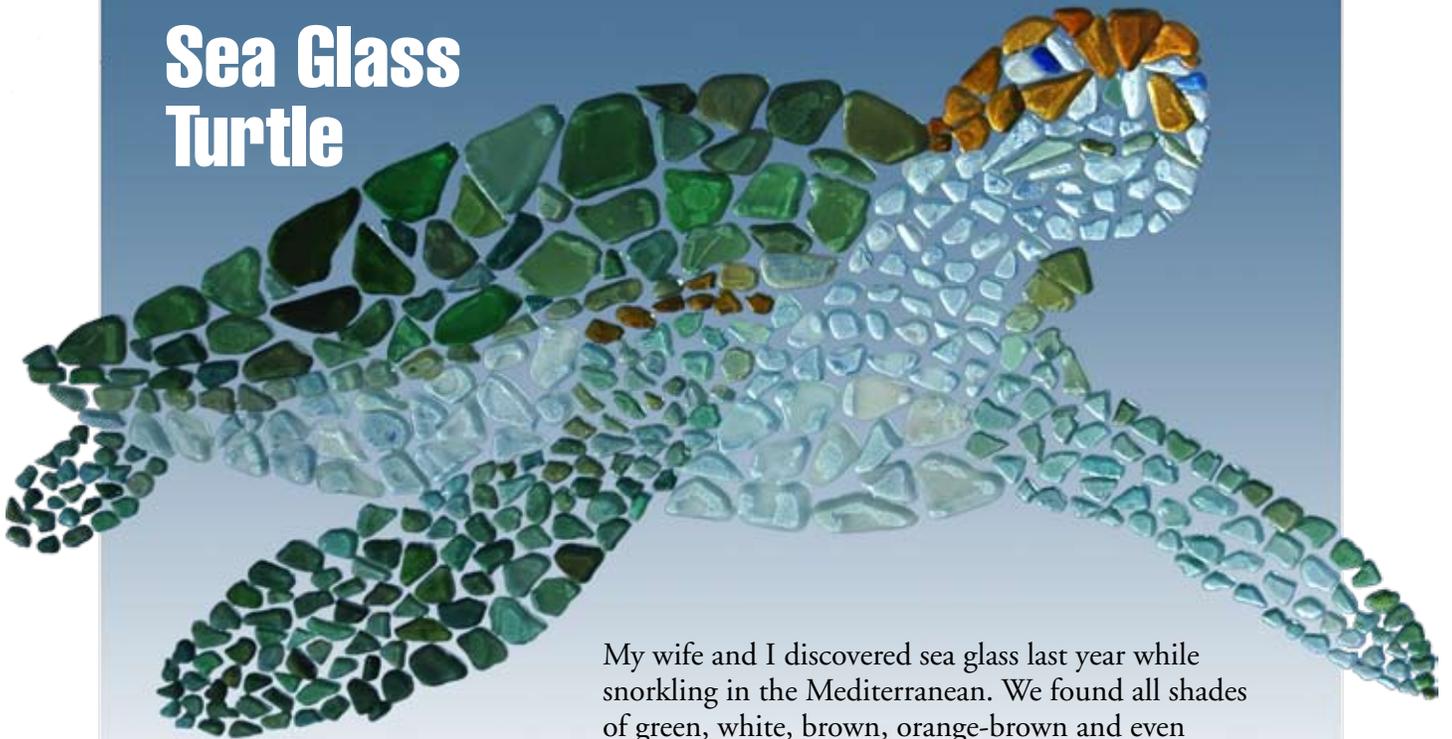
generations? Check the shards in the old canning jars in the garage. Those old collections may have some historical pieces. Some enthusiasts are beginning to “supplement” their compilations also by trading or buying from trusted sellers.

But why is red sea glass so rare? One reason is that red glass was not a common color in glass blowing. The additives needed to make the bright ruby colors were more costly and difficult to come by 100 years ago when glass bottling went industrial. In fact, bright red glass was never really mass produced in bottle form ever in the US. Many pieces in my collection may have originated from such obscure items as pre-1950 ship's signal lights or car tail lights.

Most of our ocean's hold a seafaring skeleton in the closet; an infamous stretch of shoreline which is termed “the graveyard”. There is a section of the Pacific Ocean that is so notorious for its hundreds of shipwrecks between the 1700's and mid 1900's that it too is called the Pacific Ocean Graveyard. Many of the sea glass pieces that I've gathered since I was a little girl on the Oregon coast come from those very beaches. Knowing that many ship lantern lights and lenses were bright red in color makes me wonder where the rare, tiny red's I now have originated from. What a fascinating history mingled with maritime tragedy to hold in one's hand.

*Mary Beth Beuke, President of NASGA
Proprietor of West Coast Sea Glass*

Sea Glass Turtle



Have you created something with sea glass?

Tell us about it. Send an email with a brief description and a photo (if applicable) to info@seaglassjournal.com.

My wife and I discovered sea glass last year while snorkling in the Mediterranean. We found all shades of green, white, brown, orange-brown and even some blue (turquoise to dark bright blue), but no red. It was so interesting to hunt for these little treasures and to see how this mostly man-made material has found such a natural place in our ecosystem.

Out of our collected pieces, in total maybe some 700-800 grams, we made this mosaic: a seaturtle, which we glued with invisible glue to a glass plate.

Wouter de Vos, Germany

Ode to Sea Glass

by Deb Farrell

Oh, Shards of Glass,
wet sparkles from whence
Rolled into surf
then spray tumbled hence

Upon the sand
of a distant shore
You appear as gold
amidst the roar

Your stories unfold
and secrets unfurl
Rich colors implode
through salt frosted swirl

Repainted, rewritten
then spattered anew
A reed brushed tale
in breathtaking hue

Green tourmaline
you fountain of rage
Dashed upon stone
once verdant, now sage

Off course, yet serene
true love to entwine
Iced aquamarine
emerald flashes in brine

Lo, cobalt blue
of empires past
Lost to the deep
recovered, recast

Refraction hung
on a bosom so fair
An indigo glitter
that sapphired rare

And precious amber
beneath the deep
A burnished throwback
to ebb, then seep

A fossiled star
long trapped in tide
A glowing stowing
mystery ride

Picture glass perfect
so perfectly clear
Now shattered, clouded
unable to steer

Opaquely quartzed
then lulled and waved
A touchstone for life
once lost, now braved



Mary Beth Beuke

But, ah the red ruby
the Queen of the Sea
What magic awaits
when we meet, you and me!

In a crest of glory
on red dazzled foam
And a click of shard slivers
buoyed hearts surge home.

A Letter from the Ocean Conservancy

Dear NASGA,

On behalf of Ocean Conservancy, I'd like to thank you, the board, and the members of the North American Sea Glass Association for your decision to contribute \$2,500 in support of our global efforts to clean up shorelines and waterways through the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC). We are delighted that the NASGA has selected the ICC as the leading initiative to preserve and protect coastal shores. This is particularly meaningful as I am a sea glass collector of 20+ years myself.

The ICC is the largest and most effective one-day cleanup event, in 2008 taking place in 76 countries worldwide, with close to 400,000 volunteers picking up more than 6 million pounds of debris from the environment. This year, which will mark the ICC's 23rd year

anniversary, Ocean Conservancy and our volunteers and coordinators are actively transforming the one-day cleanup event into a year-round educational program, continually determining and providing solutions to prevent debris from entering our fragile ocean environments. With this refined approach, we are confident that the program's impact on reducing marine debris will be even greater.

Thank you again for recognizing Ocean Conservancy as a Shoreline Restoration beneficiary. I look forward to bringing you more positive news on this year's ICC.

*Sincerely, Vikki N. Spruill
President and Chief Executive Officer
Ocean Conservancy
August 20, 2008*

NASGA Has a Logo

As the North American Sea Glass Association (NASGA) continues to grow and flourish, we found ourselves in need of a logo. Commercial and board members were asked to review and vote on various designs.

And the winner is...



We would like to thank all who participated in creating and choosing of our new logo.

Do you have a sea glass story you would like to share?

Tell us about it. Send an email with a brief description and a photo (if available) to info@seaglassjournal.com.

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