



Mark Vuono



Sketch for American Glass stamp



Ten Mold-Blown glass objects



The American Glass postage stamps issue from the early 1990s.

Observations on the May Issue, Mark Vuono and the American Glass Postage Stamps Issue

by Richard Sheaff

First, I must comment on what an outstanding issue your May magazine is! Bob Strickhart's interview with Mark, of course, and Ralph Finch's compilation of reflections about Mark, but then so much additional exceptional content. I was totally taken with Tom Akjem of North Dakota, an amazingly together young man. And Bram Hepburn's tale of the Stoddard

salve jar perfectly captured the sense of history that most of us feel in connection with the antique glass objects which we treasure.

When I conceived and designed the American Glass postage stamps issue back in the early 1990s, Mark Vuono was his usual generous and accommodating self. Without hesitation, he lent me a bunch of his treasures to photograph for the Mold-Blown stamp. One of these days I will write up that stamp issue process in detail. But, in a quick nutshell, I grouped our early glass and bottles into four categories for the purposes of the stamp set: Mold-Blown, Free-Blown, Pressed and Art Glass. I was aware that three of those are processes, while Art Glass is a category, but that organization seemed to work well to cover the basic ground. In each stamp, I tried to include various kinds of such glass.

The Mold-Blown items under consideration were borrowed from Mark Vuono and from Norm Heckler. The Pressed was borrowed from the Sandwich Glass Museum, courtesy of then-curator Kirk Nelson. The Free-Blown and Art Glass objects are all in the collection of the Corning Museum of Glass, which was kind enough to temporarily take each off

display and let me join their staff photographer in moving them around in various possible arrangements.

For each of the four stamps, several different arrangements were photographed, some with as many as ten items to better cover the range in each category. Mark, Norm, Kirk and Corning generously supplied several more candidate items than ultimately ended up on the issued stamps, which displayed four items on each. Whichever objects I requested, they were kind enough to provide. On the individual stamps and across the set, I tried for a range and a balance of colors.

I'm sending along here a preliminary sketch I made for the Mold-Blown category, as well as one of the several photographs in that category which were made along the way.

On a personal note, I knew from the beginning that I would include the GII-6 blue barrel decanter Mark owned. I had dearly wanted to buy that one when it went up for auction at Bourne's in 1990, and — as was often the case — I ended up an underbidder to Mark (or Charlie, I forget which). Nonetheless, Mark was delighted to lend it to me for the photo shoots. He was a fine human being.