



THE BEAD FORUM

Newsletter of the Society of Bead Researchers

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SOCIETY NEWS

As the Society of Bead Researchers has grown so has its need for a Constitution and Bylaws. Consequently, the Executive has put together what it feels is a viable document and presents it herein for your perusal and approval.

As stated in the Constitution and Bylaws, the officers of the SBR shall be a President, a Secretary-Treasurer and an Editor, the first two to be elected by the membership and the latter to be appointed by the President and Secretary-Treasurer. The Nominations Committee, consisting of Karlis Karklins and Roderick Sprague, has nominated Peter Francis, Jr. for the office of President and Elizabeth Harris for Secretary-Treasurer, both to run unopposed in this initial election.

Please indicate your approval/disapproval of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws and slate of officers on the attached ballot and return it to the Editor before the first of December. Kindly sign the outside of the envelope for voter verification.

The results of the vote will be announced in the April issue of The Bead Forum. The deadline for material intended for that issue is February 15 (mark it on your calendar now so you will not forget it). Please ensure that I receive your submission by that date.

IMPORTANT LATE 19TH-CENTURY VENETIAN BEAD COLLECTION

One of the major bead finds of the decade was made not too long ago by Charles and Gloria Arquette of Scottsdale, Arizona, at, of all things, a neighborhood garage sale! The find consists of a sample book and two 2-panel samplers of wondrous late 19th-century Venetian glass beads.

According to the fancy label on the cover, the sample book displays the products of the firm of Fratelli Giacomuzzi fu Angelo located at S. Marziale No. 3587, Venice. The label goes on to say that the Giacomuzzi Brothers, sons of the late Angelo Giacomuzzi, were fabricators and dealers of small glass beads (conterie), necklaces, lampworked beads, enamel (smalti) in colors and metallic hues, artificial marble and stones, etc. They were also producers of mosaics in the Greek, Roman and Florentine styles for both sacred and secular use. The company was awarded gold medals for its products in 1837, 1838, 1846 and 1852. There is no date on the book but the notation "09.97A" appears on the front cover and may stand for September 1897. This date would be consistent with the types of beads that are contained in the book.

The book is comprised of four cardboard sheets measuring about 14 in. by 21 in. which are hinged along one long side with cloth. The three other sides are edged with 3/4 in. by 1.0 in. wooden slats so that the beads do not touch when the book is closed. The book exhibits 478 consecutively numbered varieties and sizes of plain to fancy beads set in four vertical columns per page. Each variety/size is represented by one to ten specimens which are attached to the pages with white string. In addition to the catalogue number (brown ink), a numerical size code (red ink) and another number of an unknown nature (black ink) are provided for some of the specimens.

The two accompanying samplers are of like size and construction. The first of these displays 180 consecutively numbered specimens arranged in four columns per page. The specimens range from small monochromes to very large fancy types. The catalogue numbers run from 181 to 360 indicating that this sampler was originally part of a set. The second sampler contains 108 style/size varieties set in three columns per page. The different page layouts for the two samplers suggest that they do not form a set.

The Giacomuzzi bead book and samplers are very similar in style, format and contents to the so-called "Venetian Bead Book" held by the Museum of Mankind in London, England, and which I described in "Glass Beads" (History and

Archaeology no. 59). This confirms the Venetian origin for the London book and the late 19th-century date that I assigned to it.

The Giacomuzzi bead collection is currently housed in The Bead Museum, 140 S. Montezuma, Prescott, Arizona 86301 where it is available for study by serious investigators. Gabrielle Liese, the museum director, has offered to supply colour prints of the collection to interested parties for \$9.00 plus \$2.00 for postage and handling. They are well worth the money.

BEADMAKERS' STRIKE IN INDIA

February and early March just weren't the same in Papanaidupet. The village of 12,000 in southern Andhra Pradesh state provides all India with small drawn glass beads and marbles. But the tube-drawers working at 24 furnaces in the village had stopped drawing.

Tube-drawers come in pairs: one to manage the lada or ladi, a tapered tube which holds the glass as it is being drawn, and another to draw the tube out hand-over-hand for three hours running. The pair are paid 22 rupees a day (11 each), while the minimum daily wage for a man and the average daily per capita income is 5 rupees (a rupee is currently worth 9¢ U.S.). But they have also been forced to pay rent to the owners of the furnaces where they draw the tubes. So they drew the line at drawing glass tubes.

The issue highlights the "feudal" structure of the Papanaidupet glass bead industry. Two dozen families own furnaces and the land on which they are built. Some 300 men find work at the tube-drawing furnaces or the 30 small heating-and-tumbling units. Many people cut tubes and size and string beads -- perhaps 5,000 altogether, counting women who do occasional stringing in neighboring villages. At the top of the ladder are four families who market the beads, some of whom make their own raw glass.

In the 1950s the government tried to start a glass bead and bangle center in Gudimallam, 3 kms (but a long walk) away. There is not even a trace of an