



News & Views

Reamers - An Introduction

By Mary Marsh

Reamers were invented over 200 years ago out of necessity when it was discovered that citrus provided a cure for diseases like scurvy. The first reamers were all produced in Europe. Major china companies such as Bayreuth, Miessen, Royal Rudolstadt and Limoges produced reamers for some of the finer tables in Europe. Most of these reamers fall into the Elegant category.

The biggest boom for reamers came in 1907 when a co-op named the "California Fruit Growers Exchange" was formed. This co-op marketed the name Sunkist to sell fruit to the east coast.



Sunkist reamers were produced as a promotional item. However, not until 1916 when the "Drink an Orange" campaign was launched, were reamers marketed to the masses. Many of you are familiar with the ubiquitous white milk glass Sunkist reamers, but they were made in an incredible variety of colors - including transparent pink and green, and opaque colors of custard, jade and blue, just to name a few.

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Reamers are usually identified by an alpha numeric designation. This letter and number system comes from Mary Walker's books, Reamers (200 Years), More Reamers (200 Years), And Many More Reamers, and its 2004 Supplement. The letter and number system in the Walker books is the standard way of cataloging reamers. For example, the reamer pictured here was made by Fry Glass Company and is referred to as N-337. N is the Glass category.



Because glass was considered the most sanitary material, American manufacturers used it to make their reamers. The N-100's cover reamers that are described as having inserts, or cup sets, and hand-held specialties. In addition to pink-transparent, this reamer was also manufactured in green, yellow and blue milk glass, black, ruby red, amberina, and green-transparent.

Listed below is each category of reamer with their letter designation.

Group N:	Glass
Group A:	American Pottery
Group C:	Clowns
Group F:	Figurals
Group B:	Baby Sets
Group S:	Souvenirs
Group D:	Saucers & Strainers
Group L:	Oranges, Lemons, Grapefruits & Pears
Group E:	Elegants
Group M:	Mechanicals
Group PM:	Precious Metal
Group PL:	Plastics
Group P:	Pitchers
Group T:	Teapots
Group NRCA:	Convention Reamers
Group LE:	Limited Editions

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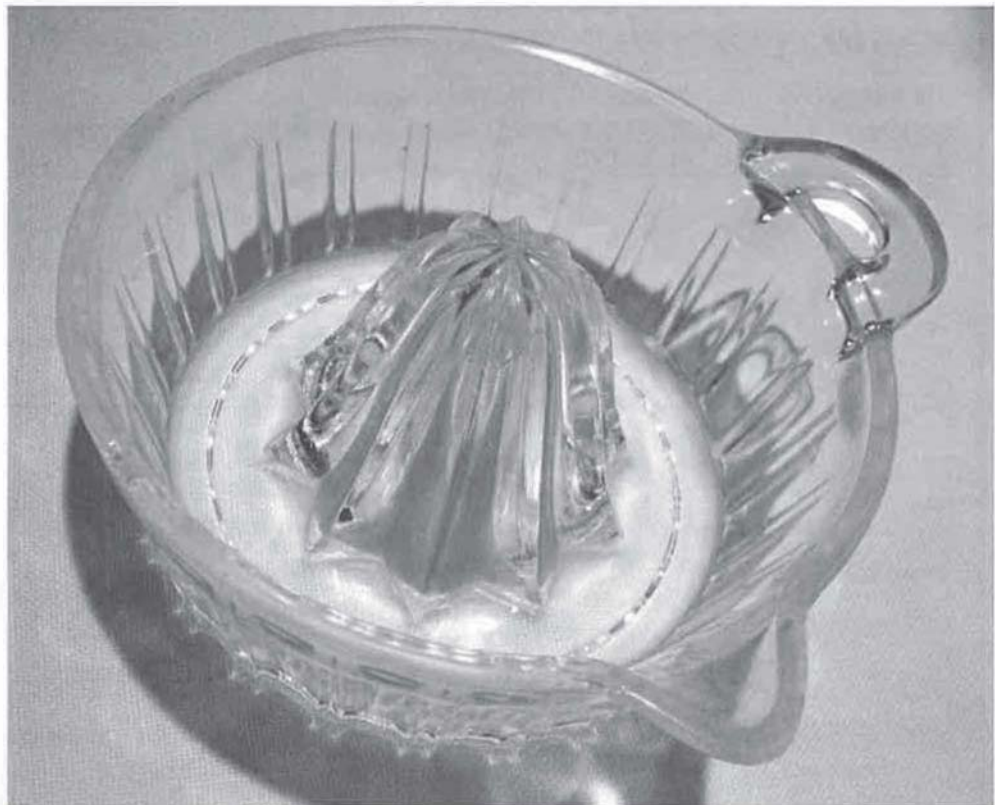
In addition to glass, reamers come in many other types of materials -- woods, metal ceramic, pottery, and most recently, plastic. Shapes vary from round, square, oblong, triangular to figurals, such as clowns, animals and people. There are one piece, two piece and three piece reamers. They come plain, fancy, engraved, embossed, frosted, hand-painted and trimmed in gold and silver. There are advertising reamers, souvenir reamers and regular utility pieces. The number of available reamers ranges to the thousands.

By the mid 1930's, trade agreements were entered into with the Japanese. This opened the door for a glut of Japanese goods, including reamers. It also made it more difficult for many American manufacturers to compete with the less expensive goods from Japan. Many of these items continued to be imported in the years after World War Two. In addition to these two types of reamers, Japan was noted for the production of many of the figural reamers.

Reamers continue to be prized by collectors. The reamers shown in this article and mentioned here barely scratch the surface of what has been discovered by antique collectors. One of the benefits of belonging to a group like the National Reamer Collector Association and attending gatherings of knowledgeable collectors is to keep current on what is available in the market. We also make an effort to educate our members on the care and maintenance of their collections and to avoid the purchase of reproductions.

“Get Your Kicks on Route 66” is the theme of the National Reamer Collector Association’s annual convention planned for Tulsa, OK from May 19-21, 2011. The Vaseline Fry reamer to the right is one of the treats that might be in store for you if you attend the public show and sale on Saturday, May 21 from 9 AM to 12 PM at the Hard Rock Hotel/Casino. For those unfamiliar with this reamer, it is designated as an N- 275.

We thank you for allowing the NRCA to share information on our passion. We extend an invitation to all NDGA members to visit our show and sale when it is open to the public. There is no admission



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charge to attend the show on Saturday. If you would like more information about the organization, please visit our website www.reamers.org.

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(Editor's Note: NDGA was very lucky to have the National Reamer Collector Association participate in the 2009 Danbury, CT Convention. This was the first time that the NRCA was part of our convention - and it certainly won't be the last. At the 2010 Convention in Wichita, KS, NRCA Vice President Dick Winne and member Edie Walsh did a reamer display for us.

As Dick said in the *National Reamer Quarterly Review*, " This will be a great opportunity to gain more reamer exposure with NDGA members and other glass collector. There are many glass shows around the country every year, so if we make an effort to display reamers at some of these shows we stand to grow our NRCA membership from crossover collectors. After all, most glass show attendees are already glass collectors and we may be able to expand their collection to include reamers."

It's wonderful to have national glass clubs working together to preserve and educate about the glassware we love. Thank you, NRCA, for your participation in our conventions and our newsletter - here's to a long and happy friendship!)

Glass Articles - and Definitions - Needed

Why not share your knowledge about glass with others?

This extra section depends upon you. If you want more glass education articles, you must submit them.

The only thing glass collectors love more than buying glass, is talking about it.
We'd love to have you teach us about the glass you collect.

Please send your articles and definitions to me at editor@ndga.net. Remember, I can't print what I don't have.

Rosemary