

= Duncan & Miller Glass Company =

Duncan & Miller Glass Company was a well @-@ known glass manufacturing company in Washington , Pennsylvania . Items that were produced by the company are known as " Duncan glass " or " Duncan Miller glass . " The company was founded in 1865 by George Duncan with his two sons and son @-@ in @-@ law in the South Side neighborhood of Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania . By 1890 , the company joined other glass companies to form the United States Glass Company , a powerful glass trust . In 1892 , the factory was destroyed in a fire , and the company was relieved of its trust relationship with the US Glass Company . After the fire , the second generation of the Duncan family moved operations to Washington , Pennsylvania . In 1900 , John Ernest Miller , the company 's long @-@ time designer , became a full shareholder along with members of the Duncan family . By 1955 , economic pressures from machine @-@ produced glass forced the company to sell off its assets to the US Glass Company , who continued to produce Duncan @-@ style glass until 1980 .

= = History = =

In 1865 , George Duncan purchased the Ripley & Company glass factory at 10th and Carson Streets in the South Side neighborhood of Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania from D.C. Ripley , a former business partner of Duncan . The factory was located adjacent to the Monongahela River , which provided easy access to transportation . A new company , George Duncan & Sons , was formed by Duncan , his sons Harry B. Duncan and James E. Duncan , and Augustus H. Heisey , who was married to George 's daughter Susan . In 1874 , John Ernest Miller , a 20 @-@ year veteran of the glass manufacturing industry , joined the company as a designer . He was previously the foreman of the mould shop at King , Son and Company . The addition of Miller proved to be fortuitous , because Miller 's designs over the next 52 years became internationally famous . In 1877 , George Duncan died and James E. Duncan took control of the company .

In 1890 , the United States Glass Company formed a glass trust that included the Duncan & Miller operation . In 1892 , their factory was destroyed by fire , relieving the company of their trust relationship . After the fire , son @-@ in @-@ law Augustus Heisey left the company to begin his own glass manufacturing operation in Newark , Ohio . James E. Duncan rebuilt the factory on Jefferson Avenue in Washington , Pennsylvania , where access to railroads was convenient , and the natural gas which was needed to power the furnaces was inexpensive . Construction of the plant , which featured a 16 Pot Deep Eye furnace , was finished on January 3 , 1893 . The first pattern produced in the new facility was the well @-@ known Mitchell pattern .

On November 15 , 1900 , the firm was officially incorporated as Duncan and Miller Glass Company , with John Ernest Miller joining the Duncan family as stockholders . The company abruptly ceased operations on June 13 , 1955 . By then , modern assembly lines and glassmaking machinery caused hand made glass to be uneconomical . The remaining inventory was sold at greatly reduced prices , causing glass collectors to travel hundreds of miles to purchase the final pieces . The molds and equipment were sold to the US Glass Company , where their Duncan Division in Tiffin , Ohio continued to produce Duncan @-@ ware pieces . A number of Duncan employees also joined US Glass Company in Tiffin . The Duncan factory was sold to Andy Bros. , but before they could move in , a fire destroyed the building on June 29 , 1956 . Production of the Duncan @-@ ware glass ceased in 1980 .

= = Duncan craftsmanship = =

At its peak , Duncan & Miller 's glass was one of Washington 's most successful manufacturing concerns , and was more widely known throughout the county than any other line of goods made in Washington .

The glass making processes and technologies at Duncan & Miller did not significantly differ from contemporary glassmakers in Western Pennsylvania and neighboring Ohio and West Virginia .

Duncan differentiated itself through exceptional artistry and design . This was accomplished by employing highly skilled workers , and using unique batch formulas to produce colorful glass . The production process for each piece usually required 10 craftsmen .

Some of the most popular styles were produced during the 1920s through the 1940s , including the Canterbury , Caribbean , Hobnail , Nautical , Sandwich , Spiral Flutes and Teardrop . The most famous design was a swan which required 14 craftsmen . The most popular etching designs were the First Love , Language of Flowers , and Passion Flower .

= = Legacy and collections = =

The National Duncan Glass Society was founded in 1975 at a meeting of glass collectors at the Citizens Library in Washington , Pennsylvania . For the next 17 years , the society operated a Duncan Glass museum at the Washington County Historical Society office and the F. Julius LeMoyne House . On July 8 , 1993 , the society opened a stand @-@ alone museum in an old building on Jefferson Avenue , near the original location of the Duncan glass plant .

One of the Duncan family residences was a 17 room Victorian mansion on Wade Avenue in Washington , Pennsylvania that was built in 1892 . This mansion is now used as the Washington & Jefferson College President ' s House . Its design is archetypical Queen Anne Victorian style , with ornate " gingerbread " details , stained and beveled glass , recessed doors and windows , and louvered wooden shutters . In 1944 , Walter Hudson Baker , who was a graduate of Washington & Jefferson College , donated the house to the college in memory of his wife , Amy Duncan Baker ; it has been used as the President ' s House since . It was profiled in a book of regional architecture by the Washington County History and Landmarks Foundation .