



SPECIAL TO THE PCA BULLETIN

DECEMBER 14, 2018, Milwaukee, WI.... The Johnne Parsley family has initiated Great Lakes Paperweights, Inc., (GLP), a 501(c) (3) corporation based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Mission of the organization is to preserve the rich history, legacy and enjoyment of fine glass paperweights through education and interaction with Midwest museums as well as work with galleries, collectors, glass artists and the general public.

In April 2018, Joan Parsley, former President of Midwest Paperweight Collectors, announced the Johnne Parsley Legacy Project at WheatonArts Paperweight Fest as GLP's first initiative. Parsley family, friends, dealers, close artists and invited collectors gathered to witness the ceremonial melt of nearly 70 Parsley paperweights, his imperfect "seconds" so to speak. Working with the dedicated staff at WheatonArts Hot Glass Shop, Hank Merta and Don Friel, as well as Gordon Smith, created a very special event that included pouring molten glass over Johnne's less-than-perfect weights that were found boxed in his Pennsylvania studio shortly after his death.

JOHNE PARSLEY, one of the great fine glass paperweight artists of his generation, as well as scientist, gardener, pilot and family man, had all the characteristics attributed to an entrepreneur: high energy, creativity, self-confidence, risk taking and problem solving. He was, indeed, a perfectionist. Joan, his younger daughter, recalls, "Johnne was always reaching for the ideal, whether it was baking his notorious apple pie, raising a beautifully productive garden, developing a product to clean and soften woolen goods, or taking his glassblowing to the next level, he sought perfection no matter how difficult the pathway. Life was a challenge and Johnne was always raising the bar for himself as well as his family!"

As GLP's Director, Joan states, "The Parsley family is committed to advocacy for the art work that was Johnne's passion, the paperweight. Not only did we appreciate our father's dedication to his craft, but the work of his colleagues whose friendships and weights we all enjoy today."

THE Legacy Project now offers a speaker and slide lecture on the life of the artist that is now available to paperweight organizations and museums. Secondly, the Project will include the development of a book which will accompany an exhibit of Johnne's work from his early years working as a chemist for Metropolitan Life Insurance's Department of Standards and

Technology, the creation of various naive *objet d'art*, through the evolution of his small jewel-like weights and his association as the first American artist to work with Perthshire Paperweights. This relationship culminated in the exceptional creation of a limited edition Piedouche designed in collaboration with glass artist Peter McDougall.

This year, on October 23, the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass, accessioned one Piedouche from this choice edition as part of the museum's permanent collection. This was made possible through the generosity of Gary and Marge McClanahan. The Bergstrom-Mahler has four of Parsley's earlier weights. John's weights are also celebrated in various private collections around the world as well as museums in Toronto, New York, New Jersey, to name a few.

It is the goal of the GLP through the Legacy Project to bring about a new awareness of John's work to a greater audience. At this juncture, the Legacy Project is also searching for all Parsley paperweight collectors, especially owners of the limited edition Piedouche paperweights, as well as all collectors dedicated to his work. Project staff ask that collectors contact the Project if you hold one of his paperweights in a collection and share your memories of John. Questions about the Legacy Project as part of Great Lakes Paperweights can be forwarded to Joan Parsley, Director, at joan@greatlakespaperweights.org or write to Joan Parsley, Great Lakes Paperweights, Inc., 157 N. 87th Street, Milwaukee, WI. 53226.

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