

1454 DIAMOND POINT AND 1535 DIAMOND ASH TRAYS

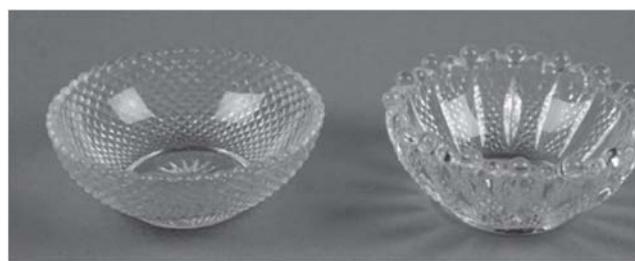
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Poor little 1454 Diamond Point. Walk into any antique mall in the land, and there they are, glittering for all they're worth, stacks of them, trying to charm you into finding a place in your home. And what do you do? You walk on by, don't you? Just admit it. These little gems of Heisey are among the down-trodden masses, dismissed by some because they are just so common, and you can see the words bedecked with icicles as they are uttered. As if that isn't injury enough, Diamond Point suffers the indignity of being mis-identified, not just now and then, but constantly. These little ash trays, practically alone in the world but for their jelly and top hat relatives, are called many things by the unknowing: salts, nut dishes, butter pats, toy bowls, pin dishes, miniature punch bowls (yes, I've seen that one!), and I'm sure you can add to the list.

And yet. Just hold one in the bright light. The glass may be a bit thin, but it is usually as high quality as some of the big fancy stuff, with the brilliance we'd expect of any Heisey product. Each one is covered from top to bottom with 816 perfectly formed little diamond pyramids (864 if you count the tiny partial ones right at the bottom) never losing precision as they become tinier. (Imagine that day in the mold shop, when the foreman had that tedious task to assign. "Hey, Jimmy, I've got a little job for you today....") Why, they even have the Heisey star, delicately scaled down so that there are many fine points (20 in the example I'm looking at), not those blunt 12-point things you see in an 1183 Revere salt, for instance. And look, someone took the trouble to grind and polish the bottom so the star shows up nicely. Heisey seems to have made millions of them (just an impression - I don't have the real figures), but they appear to have marked proudly every last one. The 1454 ash tray appears in Catalog 211 (1935). It last shows up in Price List 217 (1944), and there you have to read carefully. Under the heading "Ash Trays," 1454 is listed simply as "ind. ash tray." Under the heading "Miscellaneous Items," however, both the jelly and the individual ash tray are listed, this time with sizes. The jelly is correctly shown as 3 1/4", but the ash tray is shown as 4", so either someone made a mistake or there is another size that has

never been seen. My money is on the former.

Now, as for what to call them, it's Heisey's own fault that so few 1454 Diamond Point ash trays are actually called ash trays. There is no cue in the shape to hint at cigarettes or ashes, just a simple little bowl with a simple little design. And then they flattened some of them out and called them jellies. Really? Jellies? So often the two appear as a set that they must have been sold together at least part of the time, and that's what gets me. I can hear it now: "Gee, after that cigarette, what I could go for right now is a nice dollop of jelly." I don't smoke, so maybe I'm missing something, but I don't see empty jelly jars stacking up in the homes of friends who do.



1454 Diamond Point and
1535 Diamond Ash Trays

As long as we're dealing with these little ones, let's talk about 1535 Diamond. These ash trays endure the same name-calling as their relatives in 1454 Diamond Point, being labeled something else, and for the same reasons. Vogel illustrates the jelly in Vol. 4 with a photo taken looking directly down on the piece. Since he called it a nut, not having the documentation at the time, this sometimes leads collectors now to call the ash tray a nut dish, apparently assuming that Vogel's photo was the bowl-shaped piece. That, after all, makes more sense as a nut dish than the flat jelly. But the measurement he gives and the spread-out ovals in the pattern leave no doubt which piece he illustrated.

1535 Diamond does not share 1454's commonness. While certainly not rare, they come up seldom enough that some collectors don't know what to make of them. The pattern name took a while to be established. Vogel first gave them a number, 7018, and I've seen them referenced by name as Oval Diamond Point, Oval in Diamond Point, and Pointed Oval Point. But Heisey called them Diamond. The pattern (though not our ash tray) appears in a factory photo from the 1940's,

probably around 1947 or so, since a 1567 Plantation one-light candlestick is shown with them. (See the Newsletter, July, 1978.) Apparently, the ash tray and the jelly appear in at least one price list of the time, but it isn't in any of the re-printed ones.

The 1535 ash tray is edged with 16 large beads and 16 small beads. The large beads sit atop narrow ovals, while the small beads are actually the top of small wedges arising farther down the bowl. (The wedges are more evident on the large pieces such as the comparatively giant salad bowl. Again. Cigarettes and salad? Just what was in those cigarettes, anyway?) The diamonds are less numerous than in 1454. I'm not counting them; consider that your homework assignment. They are also less precise. (Our beleaguered mold-maker was relieved to learn both these facts, I'm sure.) The bottom is simple, plain, and recessed,

although marked and ground around the rim. It is sometimes said that this is a copy of the old 150 Pointed Oval in Diamond Point. There is certainly a strong resemblance. There is, however, no way to prove that one begat the other. Given that beaded edge and the lack of a Heisey tradition of copying their older patterns, I doubt it.

Vital Statistics

1454 Diamond Point ash tray: Diameter (top), 2 1/2"; diameter (bottom), 1 1/4"; height, 1". Star bottom, ground. Marked inside.

1535 Diamond ash tray: Diameter (top), 2 1/2", diameter (bottom), 1 1/4"; height (to top of beads), 1 1/8". Plain recessed bottom, ground rim. Marked outside.

Are diamonds a Heisey collector's best friend?
You tell me, at heisey@embarqmail.com.