

Heisey's Soda Fountain Glassware

In the first half of the 20th century, soda fountains were a fixture in American small towns and big-city neighborhoods. Often located in drug stores, they dispensed ice cream in all its forms – in sundaes, cones, banana splits, floats, milk shakes, and malts – along with soft drinks and candies. All of them needed glassware to store and serve their sweet treats, and A. H. Heisey & Company was ready to fill that need. There probably was a steady market for these wares, because breakage was inevitable in commercial use, and customers would need to replace broken items on a regular basis.

Heisey published at least three catalogs of soda fountain glassware, in 1908, 1911 or 1913, and 1918. They featured specialty wares designed for soda fountains, such as straw jars, crushed fruit jars, and large candy jars and trays. Heisey also made smaller items for soda fountain use, such as banana split and sundae dishes, ice cream nappies, sherbets, soda glasses, and root beer mugs. In view of the timing of this production, it is not surprising that many soda fountain items come from major Colonial-style patterns such as Nos. 352 Flat Panel, 353 Medium Flat Panel, 354 Wide Flat Panel, and 433 Greek Key. Several smaller patterns of the period, including Nos. 602, 804-807, and 461 Convex Circle, also featured soda fountain wares. Production of most soda fountain glassware seems to have ended by the late 1920s. One possible explanation is that, with the advent of the Great Depression, customers did not want to pay a premium for Heisey's high quality handmade wares and turned to cheaper alternatives.



Fig. 1. Tall covered straw jars, left to right: Nos. 331 Colonial Panel, 357 Prison Stripe, and 433 Greek Key (two photos)

Heisey's **tall covered straw jars** are highly collectible today. Heisey made the style shown in Figure 1 in three patterns (left to right): Nos. 331 Colonial Panel, 357 Prison Stripe, and 433 Greek Key (two photos). They are difficult to find, especially with their original glass covers, many of which were likely broken in the course of commercial use. It is also possible that Heisey sold the jars without covers to companies which added a metal cover attached to an insert that raised the straws when the cover was lifted. The cover in the second photo from the right in Figure 1 is the cover shown in Heisey's catalog drawings of the Greek Key straw jar. Collectors should be on the lookout for "marriages" like that shown in the photo at far right in figure 1: a No. 433 Greek Key straw jar with a No. 353 Medium Flat Panel cover (probably a cover for a sugar bowl). Compounding the potential for confusion, a later Heisey catalog shows the No. 331 Colonial Panel straw jar with the same cover as the Greek Key straw jar (Fig. 2).

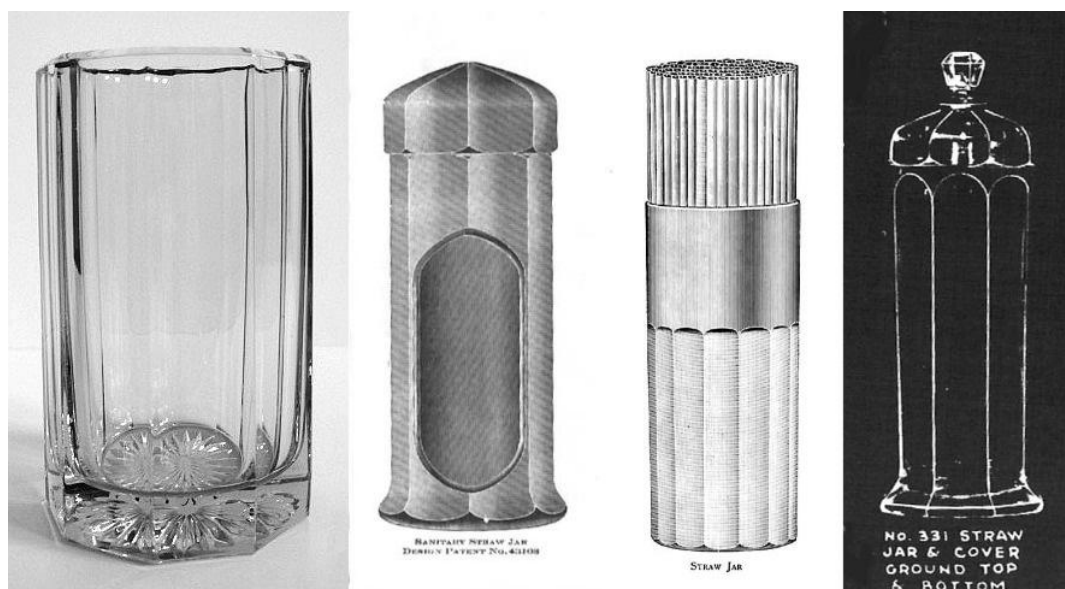


Fig. 2. Straw jars, left to right: Nos. 353 Medium Flat Panel small straw jar (also toothbrush holder); 354 sanitary straw jar; 602 straw jar; 331 Colonial Panel straw jar with same cover as 433 Greek Key straw jar

Heisey offered several other styles of **straw jars**. The No. 354 Wide Flat Panel "sanitary" straw jar (Fig. 2) has an opening on the side through which straws can be removed. Another "sanitary" offering (in an era when straws were not wrapped individually) was the horizontal No. 353 Medium Flat Panel straw tray (Fig. 3). Several patterns offered simple open jars to hold straws, including Nos. 352 Flat Panel (three sizes), 353 Medium Flat Panel (two sizes), 602, 433 Greek Key (two sizes), and 461 Convex Circle. The larger Medium Flat Panel jar was also available with a cover.

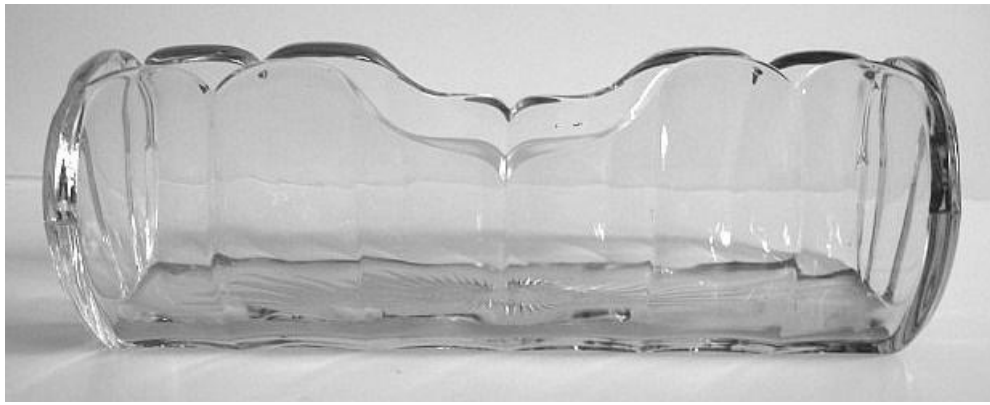


Fig. 3. No. 353 Medium Flat Panel sanitary straw tray

Heisey's **crushed fruit jars** are also popular with collectors today. Generally, they are of two types. One has a hollow knob in the cover, to accommodate a spoon. The second type has a solid knob or finial on the cover. The latter type may be listed in catalogues as both a crushed fruit and a candy jar. In many cases, the same base can be found with both cover styles, like the Nos. 355 and 354 crushed fruit jars shown in Figure 4 and the Nos. 356 and 357 crushed fruit jars shown in Figure 8. The No. 353 Medium Flat Panel line includes a crushed fruit jar that is a covered bowl with notches in the rim of the bowl to hold a spoon inside the cover (Fig. 5). The Nos. 341 Puritan and 337 Touraine (Fig. 6) crushed fruit jars are also simple covered bowls, with an opening in the cover for a spoon. Crushed fruit jars, often more than one, can be found in the following lines: Nos. 337 Touraine, 339 Continental, 341 Puritan, 352 Flat Panel, 353 Medium Flat Panel, 354 Wide Flat Panel, 355 Quator, 356, 357, 429-429½ Plain Panel Recess, 461-461½ Convex Circle, and 602-602½. Some of them are shown in Figures 7-9.



Fig. 4. Nos. 355 crushed fruit jar and 354 crushed fruit jar or 358 covered candy jar



Fig. 5. No. 353 Medium Flat Panel crushed fruit jar



Fig. 6. No. 337 Touraine crushed fruit jar



Fig. 7. Crushed fruit jars, left to right: Nos. 433 Greek Key, one quart and two quart, 461 Convex Circle one quart, 352 Flat Panel one quart, 429½ Plain Panel Recess one quart

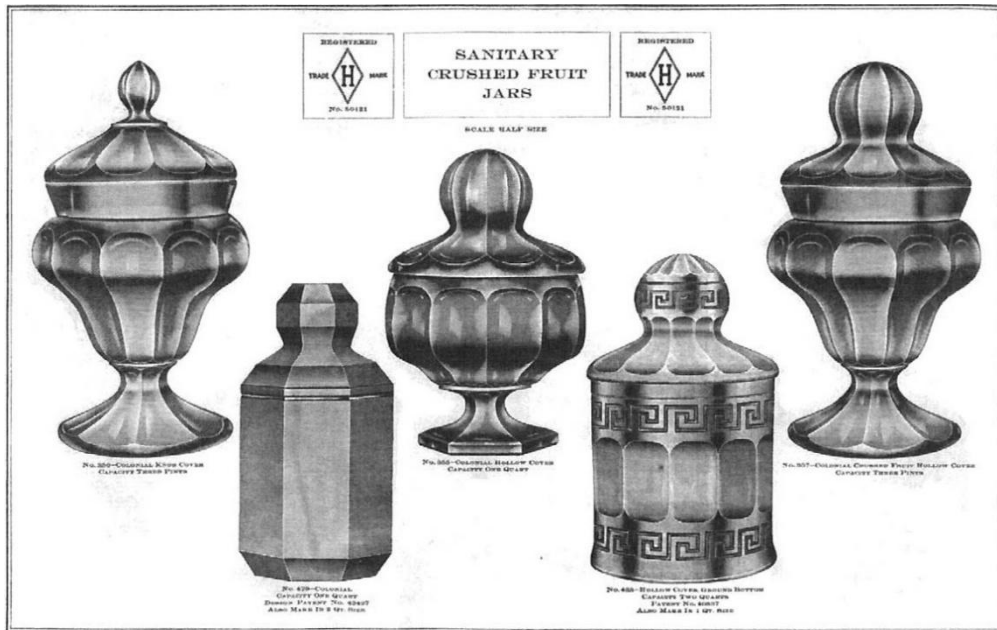


Fig. 8. Crushed fruit jars, left to right: Nos. 356 three pint, 429 Plain Panel Recess one quart, 355 one quart, 433 Greek Key one quart, 357 three pint

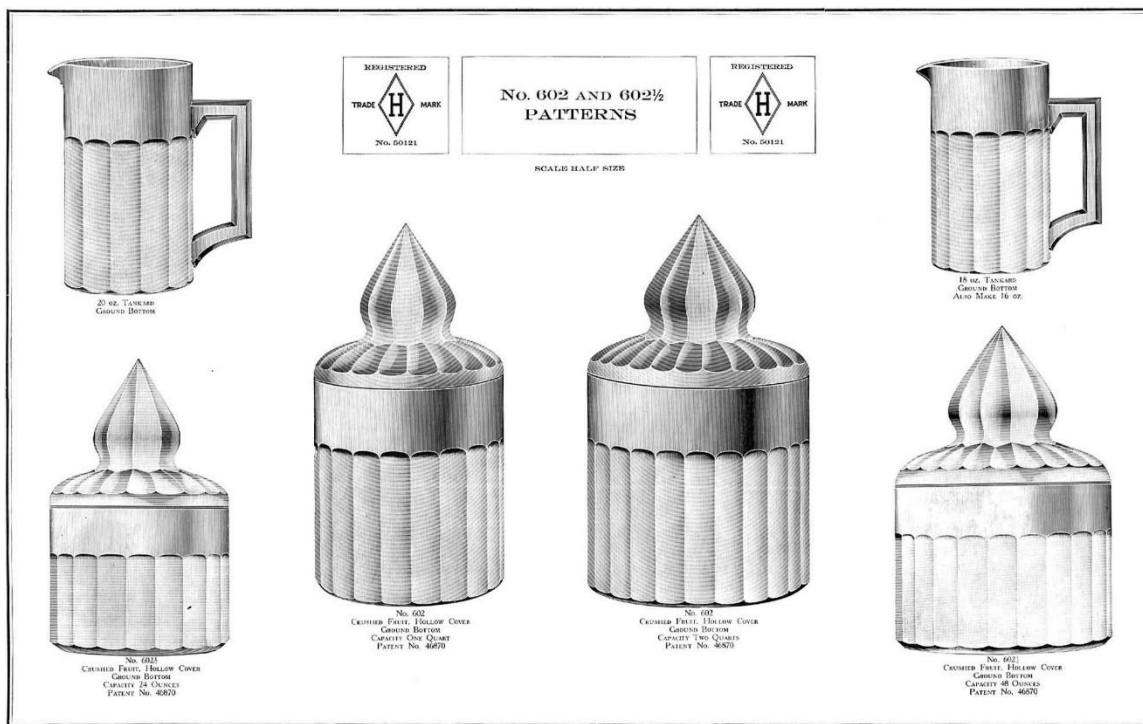


Fig. 9. Nos. 602 and 602½ crushed fruit jars, left to right: 24 oz. (602½), one quart (602), two quart, (602), 48 oz. (602½); also shown: 20 oz. and 18 oz. tankards

Heisey offered a large assortment of **candy jars and trays** for soda fountain use. Most candy jars included in Heisey's soda fountain wares were made in sturdy, canister-style designs in sizes of one pound and larger. Both the Nos. 352 Flat Panel and 433 Greek Key lines include candy jars in half pound, one pound, two pound, and four pound sizes. (Fig. 10, 11). With a design very similar to No. 393 Narrow Flute, the No. 804-807 series includes four sizes of covered candy jars (one and one-half to four pounds) (Fig. 12).



Fig. 10. No. 433 Greek Key candy jars, 2 lb. and 1/2 lb.

Consistent with Heisey's practice of assigning several functions to the same piece of glassware, the No. 352 candy jars (in sizes one pound and up) and the No. 804-807 candy jars are also designated as cracker jars, while the half pound Greek Key candy also serves as a pickle jar and, without its cover, as a small spoon holder or small straw jar. The No. 360 Colonial 3 lb. candy jar is identical to the No. 356 crushed fruit jar (Fig. 8, 13). The larger sizes (three pounds and larger) of the tall footed candy jars – No. 341 Puritan, 353 Medium Flat Panel, 465 Recessed Panel, and 1183 Revere – were likely intended primarily for commercial uses, including soda fountains. Heisey's catalogs also list several oblong trays from the Nos. 352 Flat Panel, 353 Medium Flat Panel, 1183 Revere, and 1184-1185 Yeoman lines as candy trays.

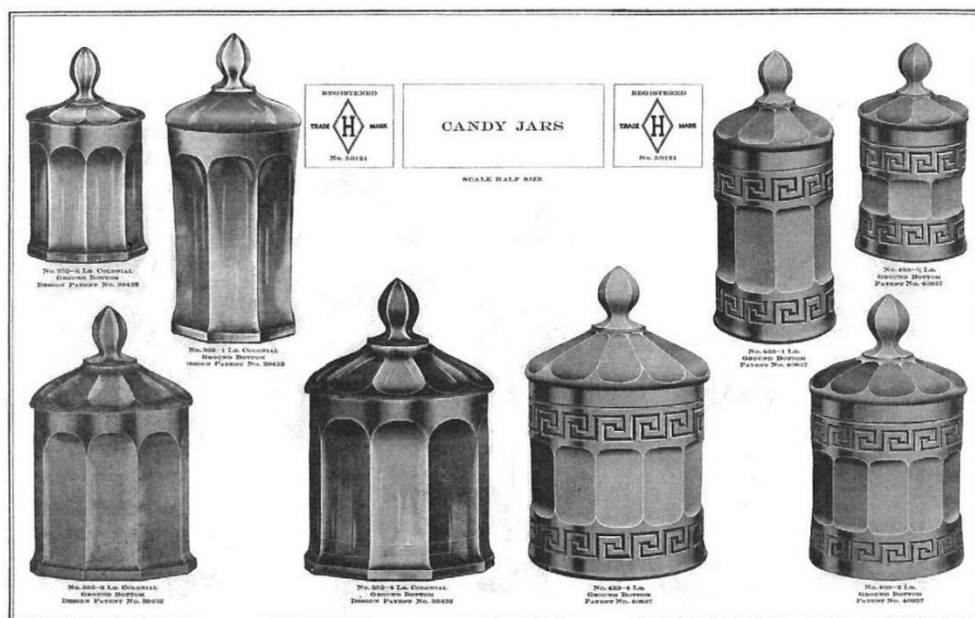


Fig. 11. At left: 352 Flat Panel candy or cracker jars, 1/2 lb., 1 lb., 2 lb., 4 lb.

At right: 433 Greek Key candy jars, 1/2 lb., 1 lb., 2 lb., 4 lb.

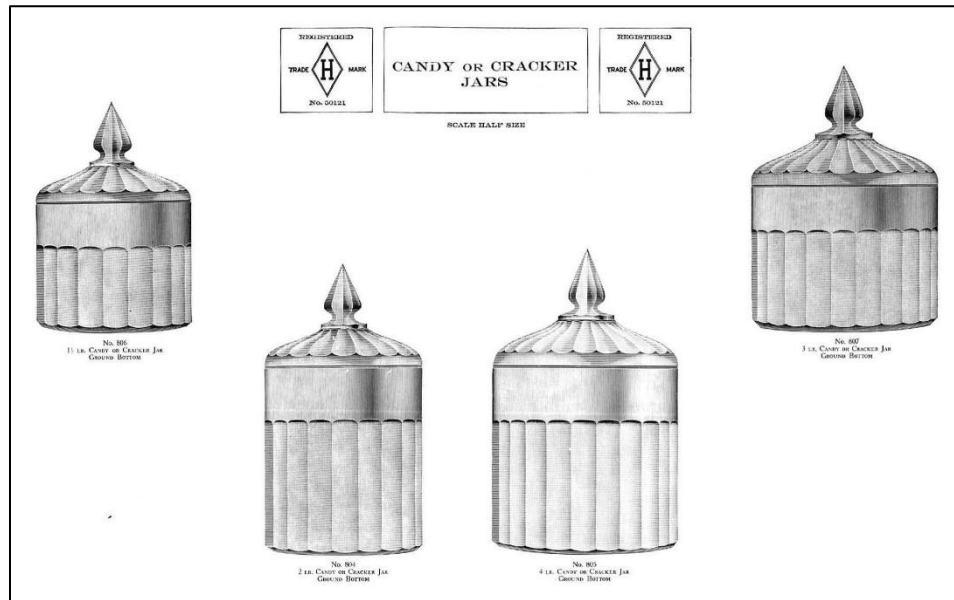


Fig. 12. Nos. 804-807 candy or cracker jars

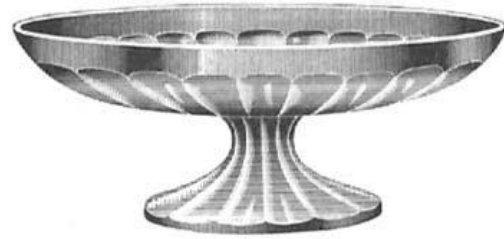


Fig. 13. No. 360 Colonial 3 lb. candy jar or No. 356 Colonial 3 pint crushed fruit jar

No soda fountain would be complete without ice cream cones, banana splits, and root beer floats. Heisey had these covered, with the No. 352 Flat Panel ice cream cone holder (Fig. 14) (also listed in catalogs as a “violet vase”), banana split dishes in five patterns (Nos. 393 Narrow Flute, 412 Tudor, 433 Greek Key [two styles, with and without a foot], 473 Narrow Flute with Rim, and 1184 Yeoman) (Fig. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19), and the Nos. 150 Banded Flute and 602 root beer mugs (Fig. 20, 21).

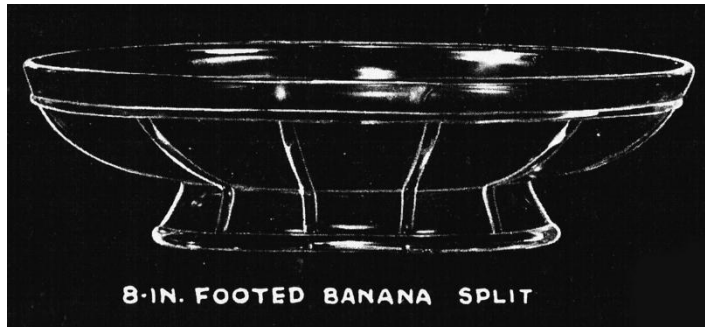


Fig. 14. No. 352 Flat Panel ice cream cone holder



8-IN. FOOTED BANANA SPLIT

Fig. 15. 393 Narrow Flute banana split dish



8-IN. FOOTED BANANA SPLIT

Fig. 16. No. 412 Tudor footed banana split dish



Fig. 17. No. 433 Greek Key banana split dish



Fig. 18. No. 473 Narrow Flute with Rim banana split dish



Fig. 19. No. 1184 Yeoman footed banana split dish, Moongleam

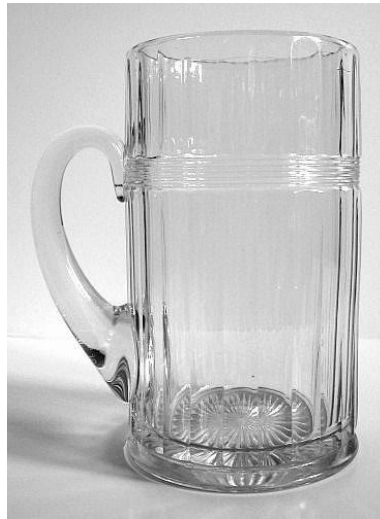


Fig. 20. No. 150 Banded Flute root beer mug



Fig. 21. 602 root beer mugs, 16 oz., 18 oz., 20 oz.

Heisey also supplied soda fountains with other types of glassware too numerous to cover in this article: sundae dishes, ice cream nappies, sherbets, and soda glasses in many different styles and sizes. That article will have to wait for another day.

References:

Heisey Glass, Volume 2, by Clarence Vogel, edited with supplemental information by Neila and Tom Bredehoff (2014), pp. 136-141

A. H. Heisey & Co. Catalog No. 76 (1915)

Heisey News, November 2004, "Heisey Straw Jars," pp. 10-12

Heisey News, June 2007, "Soda Fountain Line 602," pp. 8-11