

Metaframe:

The Man Responsible for over 3 Million Aquariums

By Gary Bagnall

Metaframe is beyond a doubt the most well recognized aquarium manufacture in the United States. When they started in 1931 they were named the "Metal Frame Aquarium Company" and the brand name for their aquariums was "POTTS Aquarium".

THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR OVER 3 MILLION AQUARIUMS

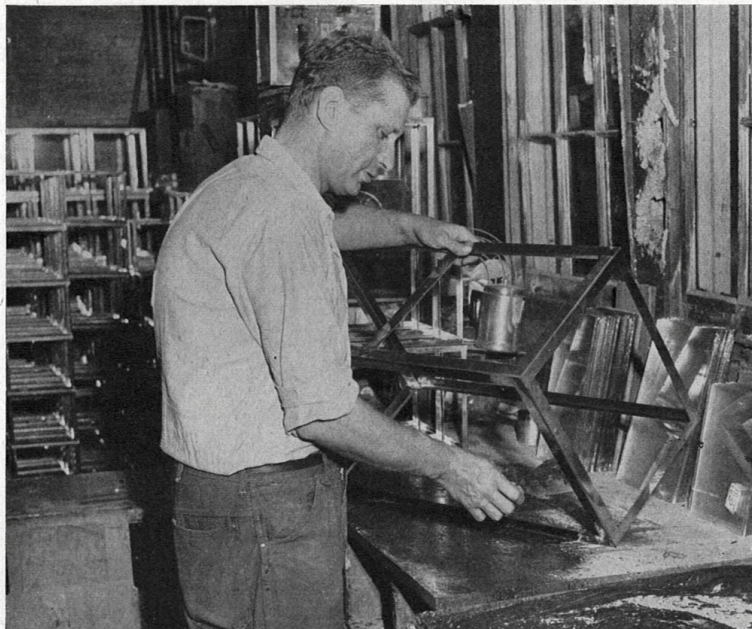
by *Bernard Duke*

Editor's Note: The people responsible for the information regarding our fishes are generally well-known. On the other hand, the men who produce the equipment for the comfort of our fishes and the methods they employ, are known to only a small percentage of the hobby. We propose to present some of these people and their work from time to time in an effort to produce a more complete accumulation of aquarium information.

IN 1931 a man who had achieved success in his own business retired to his home in suburban Caldwell, N. J. It was his intent to relax and enjoy his

remaining years with his family and friends, and stay as far away as possible from the mental strain and anguish of day to day business in depression-ridden New York City.

To further this desire, he developed an outside interest—tropical fishes. A friend learned of his interest and took him to visit a local aquarium manufacturer. In less time than it takes to tell,

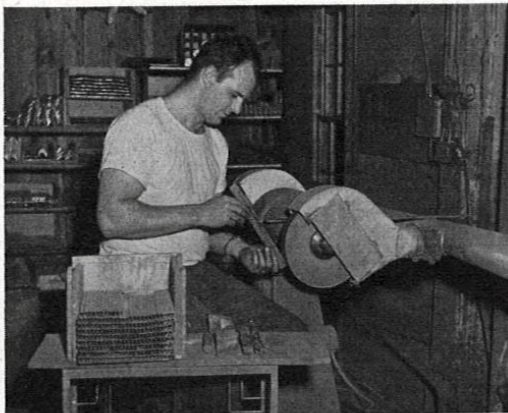


Applying the special cement to the frame of a Metaframe aquarium, prior to placing the glass sides and slate bottom. This man has personally glazed over a million aquariums. The large stack of waiting frames at the left is hardly a challenge to a man of this experience!



Mr. Sam Herman, President of Metal Frame Aquarium Co. Over 3 million aquariums have been made under his leadership.

the new hobbyist bought the aquarium manufacturing business, solely to keep occupied and further his hobby. Some men retire and play golf; he would build aquariums—and after 22 years Sam Herman is still building aquariums under the trade name of Metal Frame Aqua-



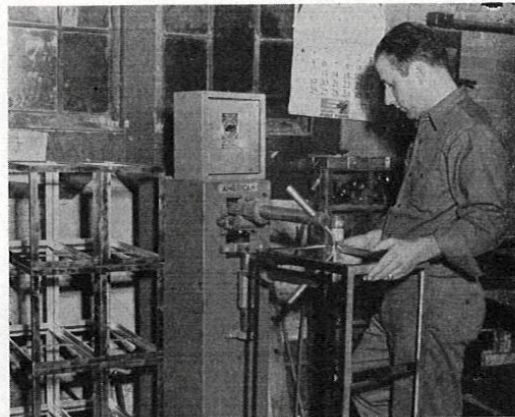
Polishing pre-formed parts for Metaframe aquariums.

rium Co. The trademark "Metaframe" is known wherever fishes are sold on this continent.

Sam Herman started building aquariums from the point of view of the

hobbyist. Only the finest materials were acceptable, and a keen eye was kept open for improvements. The finest skilled help available were obtained to help improve and maintain the quality and uniformity of Metaframe products.

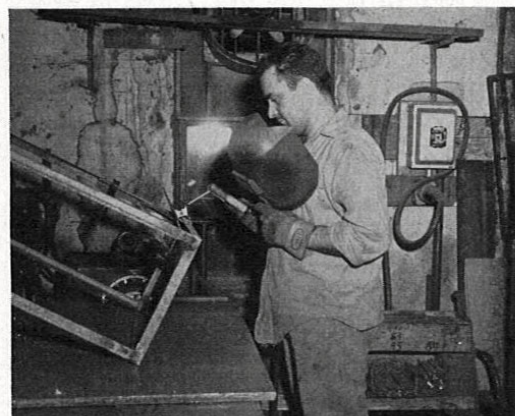
Metal Frame Aquarium Co. prides itself on its employer-employee relations. The man who glazed the first tank for Sam Herman in 1931 today heads the glazing department. He lends



Spot welding an aquarium frame. Note the finished frames stacked at the left.

the experience and knowledge gained from personally having glazed over 1 million aquariums to the young apprentices of today.

The production manager is another who has been with the firm since 1931.



Welding an aquarium stand at the factory of the Metal Frame Aquarium Co.

His constructive genius and engineering ability has resulted in the top-quality Metaframe product of today—beautifully designed and sturdily built, but at the same time economical.

A short time after the production of aquariums was begun, public demand forced Metaframe to add other products to its line. Carefully made stands are now standard products, along with an assortment of scientifically designed, highly polished aquarium reflectors.

Sam Herman, now a youthful 75 years of age, still controls production and styling, still pursuing his original purpose—to produce a better aquarium for hobbyists like himself. Some men play golf—Sam Herman built 3 million aquariums, and he has never regretted his choice.

Steps In Manufacturing A Metaframe Aquarium

The stainless steel coils are sliced into appropriate widths for the various sizes of aquarium. The cut-to-size metal is fed to a punch press where special dies cut patterns into them for usage as top rails or bottom rails, simultaneously rounding off the corners, and stamping the METAFRAME mark into the top rail.

The metal strips are then put through two to four bending operations in order to achieve the correct shape. The degree of the bends must be accurately controlled to assure the uniform appearance of finished aquariums.

The completely formed strips are then polished in our own polishing department, removing all scars of fabrication. The polished metal is then spot-welded together forming the frame work, ready for glazing.

As needed, the completed frames are glazed and cleaned, then inspected before being shipped.

Book Review

“The Tropical Fish Book” by Ruthven Todd, 144 pages, 6½x9½, Fawcett Books, Greenwich, Conn. 75c.

Besides some natural prejudice in favor of this book because it has been dedicated to our editor, Wm. T. Innes, we find many really good points about the production.

It is essentially built for the beginner, and it tells, in an easy way, the things he ought to know.

The cover, printed on thick gloss paper shows, in brilliant colors, about a dozen of our most popular and striking species. Inside pages, on smooth uncoated paper are artistically done by



offset lithography. A mellow green tone gives an appropriate velvety effect to the illustrations. These include most of the popular species that the beginner should know about.

Ample space is given to gadget and general mechanics, including aquarium construction.

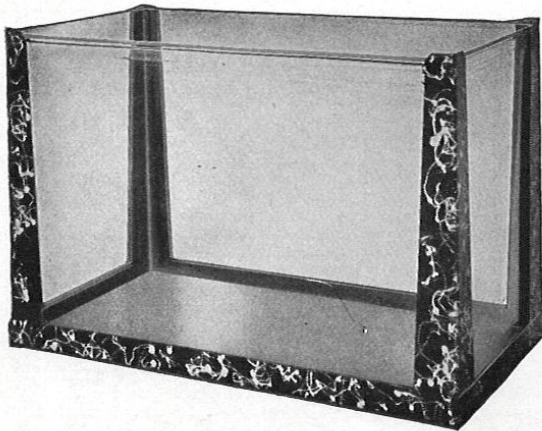
A feature we like to see is an international directory of aquarium societies, containing over 100 listings.

There are evidences that this first edition was rushed through, resulting in several wrong or transposed names of fishes. In one instance the illustration is even upside down. On the whole the job is commendable, and we welcome it as one of the many recently appearing that soundly promote our cherished hobby. The minor faults will no doubt be corrected in subsequent editions, which we do not hesitate to forecast.

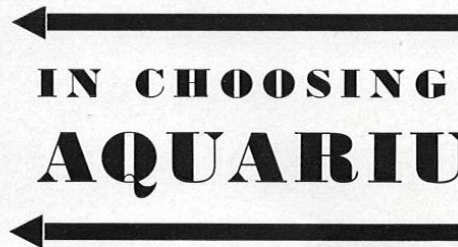
Antique Metaframe Ads

MARCH, 1933

THE AQUARIUM



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THESE POINTS**



**IN CHOOSING
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**IS IT NON - CORROSIVE
AND NON-RUSTING?**

**WILL IT GIVE PERFECT
LONG SERVICE?**

**IS IT FULLY GUAR-
ANTEED?**

YOU KNOW how important a good aquarium is to the enjoyment of your hobby. You want clear vision and simple beauty and, above all, you want an aquarium that is absolutely troubleproof. The metal in every POTTS Aquarium is non-corrosive and non-rustable, securely welded without any foreign substance. Finest clear glass and select black slate is used. They're thriftily priced, and remember—every POTTS Aquarium is **FULLY GUARANTEED** against rust, leaks and defects of any kind. Look for the black and-white quality label and be **SURE** of **SATISFACTION**.

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A Million Air Bubbles a Minute
Postpaid, \$1.00
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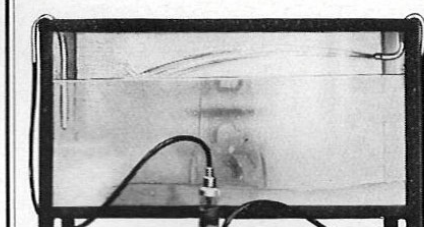
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POTTS Aquarium ad from March 1933 issue of The Aquarium.

Look for the Label

A Tradition of Quality

**...Over 20 Years
of Fine Aquariums**

Quality is more than a word with Metal Frame Aquarium Company. It is superbly built into every detail of our famous aquariums. For almost a quarter of a century, we have endeavored to produce only the finest and have built dependable aquariums exceptional for quality, beauty, and utility.



ROLLED BASE STAINLESS STEEL AQUARIUMS

A masterpiece of design and construction created by our craftsmen with utmost precision and care. Built with rolled base and tapered corners which are an integral part of the aquarium. No finer mounted base aquarium is made. Available in capacities of 6 to 38 gallons.

TWISTED WROUGHT IRON AQUARIUM STAND

The fine rolled base stainless steel aquarium is shown on the attractive twisted wrought iron stand, made of high grade steel and flush welded for maximum rigidity and durability. Beautiful gunmetal that looks and wears well.

OUTSTANDING FEATURES

Magnificently constructed of only the finest materials for maximum beauty and durability.

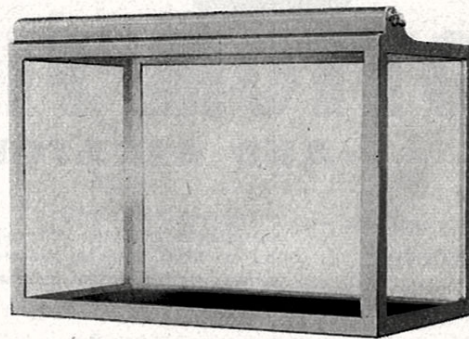
Special care has been taken with the glass to insure extra clearness of vision.

Corners and edges are spot welded to attain a completely smooth finish.

Special attention has been given to their leak-proof construction . . . and the cement used on all our aquariums is an original formula perfected and made in our own plant.

Stainless steel is highly polished to a sparkling mirror-like finish.

All our products are built for lasting service and enduring satisfaction by our own highly skilled craftsmen, each with many years of experience in the field of aquarium building.



DELUXE STAINLESS STEEL AQUARIUMS

Magnificently constructed of only the finest materials for maximum beauty and durability. Special care has been taken with the glass to insure extra clearness of vision. Available in capacities 2 to 50 gallons.

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PINE BROOK

Designers and Manufacturers of

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PET SHOP MANAGEMENT, October, 1965

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AQUARIUM & PET
HISTORY

Metaframe ad from October 1965 issue of Pet Shop Management.

The
MUSEUM OF
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HISTORY