

# Fairy Lamp Club



ISSUE L

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2009

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## CLUB NEWS

### COLLECTORS WEEKLY HALL OF FAME

The *Collectors Weekly* has selected the Fairy Lamp Club's website to the "Hall of Fame." Even though there are numerous such awards given out to collector websites, I am still honored by the selection.



The banner at the bottom of the Club's webpage will take you to the *Collectors Weekly* website. Pay them a visit when you get a chance. You just may find something besides fairy lamps that will interest you.

### JOURNAL OF ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

The *Journal of Antiques & Collectibles* called this week and wants to do a feature article on the Fairy Lamp Club and, of course, fairy lamps. Needless to say, I rarely turn down an opportunity to promote the Club and took the opportunity to provide all the information they needed to support the article.

The reporter indicated they would send me a copy of the publication when it is published. But, just in case they do not, let me know if you see the article before I do.

### NEWSLETTER BINDERS

As you may know I provide copies of all the back issues of the Club's newsletter in convenient 3-ring binders with numbered tabs. This two volume set is pretty popular with collectors who have recently joined and want to catch up. With this issue, the two volume set will be filled to capacity. The next issue, LI - May 2009, will force me to use a third binder and 51-75 numbered tabs. The additional cost will be passed along to new purchasers and will steadily increase as the number of newsletters increase.

Each time I print a collection of newsletters, I am impressed with the information we have collected over the years. Of course, this could not have been accomplished without the dedicated support from our members. On behalf of all our members, a well deserved "Thank You" goes to all who have contributed to this wealth of information. Your continued support is greatly appreciated by everyone.

## WEBSITE CHANGES

I have made a few changes to the Fairy Lamp Club website in recent weeks including:

**Lonely Parts Slide Show** – I have replaced the "Members Gallery" with a slide show of "Lonely Parts." Almost immediately I started getting inquiries and some parts have found new mates. In a couple of weeks I plan to create a "For Sale" slide show to help move some of your items for sale.

Speaking of items for sale.....two choice Taylor & Tunnicliff fairy lamp bases with berry shades were sold through ads on the Fairy Lamp Forum and the website. Congratulations to the new owner and seller!

**New webpage format** – I have been experimenting with a new webpage format. The new format will allow the selection menu to remain visible while you make your selections. So far, I have only modified the "Undocumented Fairy Lamps" section. I plan to modify others that have a selection menu as time permits.

I have also rearranged the links on the home page into similar categories. Hopefully, this will help visitors find what they are looking for a little easier.

**Newsletter Index** – I have changed the online Newsletter Index from an HTML format to an Adobe PDF format. (I apologize for the techno-speak.) This makes my job a little easier by only having to update one file as additions to the index are made. In addition, it makes the on-line version identical to the printed version. Now, you can print your own copy whenever you need one.

Yes, that also means I will not be providing copies of the Newsletter Index to everyone. I will only provide copies to those who are not on-line and request a copy for their newsletter collections.

## FROM OUR MEMBERS

### CLARKE'S FOOD WARMER & THE PANNIKIN – PART II by Jim

This article is continued from FL-XLIX-5. The previous article covered:

- What is a Pannikin?
- U.S. and British Patents and British Registration Dates
- Clarke U.S. Patent 298,448 – Night Light
- Clarke U.S. Patent 334,747 – Infant's Food Warmer or Night Light Apparatus
- Clarke U.S. Patent 399,741 – Cup for Food Warmers
- Clarke's Food Warmer Advertisements
- Markings

One would think we have exhausted all the information available on the Clarke's Food Warmer, however, as you will see in this article, we have only begun to scratch the surface of this utilitarian device.

#### *The Water Reservoir*

The water reservoir is a simple tin cup that holds the water for the Pannikin to sit in.



It is usually unmarked but there are some interesting exceptions.

The cup has been found stamped:

- Trade Mark Pyramid
- Trade Mark Fairy
- Cricklite
- It has also been found with an oval brass plaque marked "Clarke's....."

Since the trade names, "Fairy", "Pyramid", and "Cricklite" were registered over a nine year period, 1880-1889, it would seem to be logical that they could be used to help date the food warmer. However, specific trade names, such as "Pyramid" had been used long before and after they were registered.<sup>1</sup>



Occasionally, however, all three trade names are found together on the same water reservoir.



In this case, I think it is pretty safe to assume that the food warmer was produced after the trade name "Cricklite" was registered in 1889. (*But, not necessarily.*)

*The Food Warmer Stand*

The food warmer stand is designed to support the water reservoir, Pannikin, and the Nursery Lamp. As discussed previously, the base remains the same and the legs and heat

chamber are adjusted to accommodate the various sizes of Pannikin and water reservoir.



The stand is typically marked in two places.



On the top of the stand, around the heat chamber, is an embossed brass plaque that is soldered to the tin stand. It is typically embossed "Clarke's Pyramid Food Warmer."

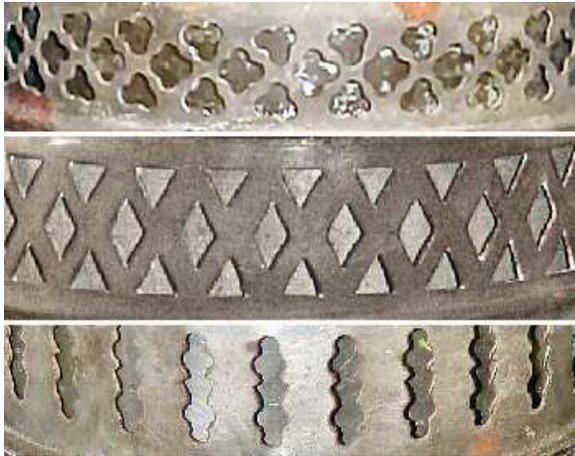


The base of the stand is embossed "Clarke's Pyramid Food Warmer" twice around the area reserved for the Nursery Lamp. This embossing is common to most stands and is typically shown in Clarke's advertisements. There are, however, 1881 advertisements showing the stand with no embossing.

<sup>1</sup> *Antique Glass & China*, Geoffrey Gooden, 1966.

The base of the stand is surrounded with a series of air holes, both outside the legs and inside where the Nursery Lamp rests. Considering how irregular the spacing of the holes is, it would appear that they were hand punched. Then again, I suspect the entire tin stand was fabricated one at a time by hand — a very labor intensive project to be sure.

The heat chamber portion of the stand is perforated to allow the heat to flow around the water chamber and escape.<sup>2</sup> The perforations are always present but of different designs.



Perhaps the design of the perforations could indicate a specific time period, but they could also be an indicator of a manufacturer.

*The Nursery Lamp*

Clarke's Nursery Lamp — also referred to as the "Burglar's Horror" in some advertisements — is typically comprised of three parts; the handled brass lamp cup, the pottery candle cup, and the glass shade. However, we know from Clarke's patent description that the lamp can be used with or without the pottery candle cup.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the openings in the heat chamber was described (but not illustrated) in Clarke's U.S. Patent Number 334,747 granted in 1886.

<sup>3</sup> The use of the pottery candle cup was described in Clarke's 1857 "Improvements in apparatus for burn-



In nearly every advertisement of the Nursery Lamp shown in connection with a food warmer, the shade is clear. Yet, most examples are found with a ribbed shade in either clear or frosted and the shade is often (but not always) embossed on the inside "S. Clarke's Trade Mark Pyramid."



We also know from an undated advertisement that the shades were offered in clear, roughed (frosted), and opaline.<sup>4</sup>

ing night lights and mortars" British Patent Number 2505.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to a selection of shades, this same advertisement indicates that a "tin Pannikin" was also available. (Ref. Pull6000.jpg)



The brass lamp cup is typically embossed on the bottom "S. Clarke's Trade Mark Pyramid" — the same embossing found on the ribbed shades. They are also found with no embossing or embossed with "S. Clarke's Fairy Patent Trade Mark Pyramid".<sup>5</sup>



The handle of the Nursery Lamp is embossed: "For Burning The Pyramid Night Lights Sam<sup>L</sup> Clarke Patentee."

The word "Patentee" may or may not be present. Again, this could be a possible indicator of the date of manufacture.

In addition to the common brass lamp cup, there is a seemingly rare pottery variant.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>5</sup> For additional information on Clarke's Nursery Lamp read "Clarke's Patented Hand Lamp – 1857", FL-XXXVIII-8.

<sup>6</sup> Also identified as U-155.

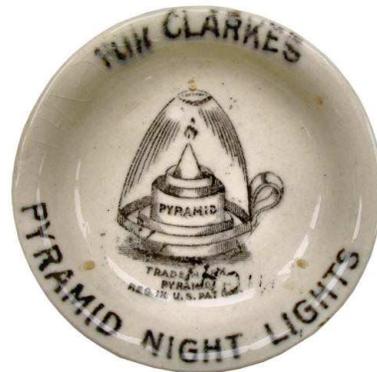
It is not clear, however, that this variant was to be used with a food warmer, although it certainly could have. The sturdiness of the pottery lamp cup would make it more suitable as a stand alone hand lamp.



One of the most unusual features of the lamp cup is the integral candle cup. It is molded right into the base and is marked "For Clarke's Patent Pyramid Night Lights" and includes Clarke's trademark. The base is also embossed with "88" on the bottom. In all likelihood, this is a maker's mark. However, could it also be a date (1888)?

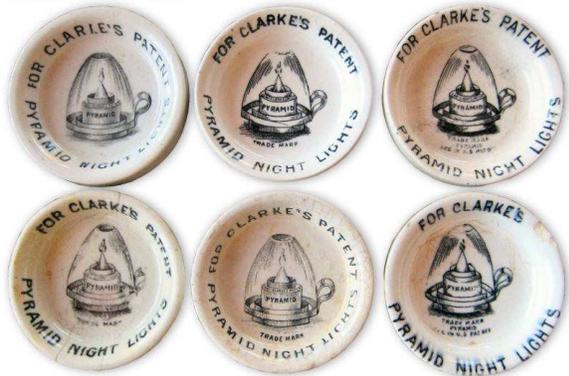
*Pottery Candle Cup*

The pottery candle cup is typically missing from the Nursery Lamps, probably due to its small size and less than obvious purpose — even though it is shown in the trademark illustration.



The pottery candle cup was designed to hold a small amount of water for the candle to

rest in.<sup>7</sup> It is found with a variety of different markings.



Perhaps the different markings can be attributed to the very long period (over 50 years) the pottery candle cups were in production. The hand lamp trademark shown in the center of each candle cup was registered in 1876<sup>8</sup> but was likely in use for many years prior.

One of the designs reads: "Reg. in US Patent Off." It is not clear, however, if this refers to the trademark itself or the Pyramid candles in general.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Variants to the Food Warmer*

Considering the long period that the Clarke's Food Warmer was in production, it should be no surprise that there are variations to the design. Some of these variations may have seen limited production and are seldom found.

The first of these variants was illustrated in *Fairy Lamps* by Ruf & Ruf, Appendix B, pg. 230. For lack of a better term, I refer to this food warmer as the "straight-legged" variant.

<sup>7</sup> Clarke's original patent No 2505, September 29, 1857.

<sup>8</sup> *Antique Glass and China - A Guide for the Beginning Collector* by Geoffrey Godden, pg.86.

<sup>9</sup> There are several U.S. Patents related to Clarke's candles – U.S. Patent Nos 298,448 (1884), 329,536 (1885), and 343,567 (1886).



It has many unusual features, some obvious, some not so obvious. The most obvious may be the Pannikin itself.



The Pannikin has no integral finger handle. Instead it has a tin handle attached to a tin band that goes around the cup and is formed to fit around the spout. As you see, the spout does not include the "pour from the bottom" feature that Clarke so heavily promoted.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the Pannikin lid has a tab that extends over the spout which is common prior to the Clarke's "Improved Pannikin" design.

The Pannikin, typically covered in advertising, is only marked once on the lid with "Sam<sup>L</sup> Clarke's Patent Pyramid Food Warmer."

Some additional features of this food warmer include:

- The water reservoir is unmarked.

<sup>10</sup> Clarke U.S. Patent 399,741 – Cup for Food Warmers, March 19, 1889.

- The stand is marked on a brass plaque "Pyramid Food Warmer." It does not include the name "Clarke."
- The handle on the stand appears to be of a heavy metal instead of formed tin.
- Finally, the stand is too small to accept the fairy-size Nursery Lamp. The stand is shown with a pyramid-size fairy lamp but even that does not fit very well.

While this design is a rarely seen variant, a very similar model is well documented in Clarke's 1888 Catalog Price List.



While this illustration is not exactly like the photo, it illustrates one very important design feature. It was not designed to take the Nursery Lamp with the handled brass lamp cup. Instead, it was designed to take only a glass shade, pottery candle cup, and of course, a pyramid candle. This explains why the complete Nursery Lamp will not fit within the stand and, equally important, why there are air holes within the center section of the base.

Another interesting feature of this stand is the circular label (barely visible in the drawing) on the water reservoir. I was fortunate to see this model recently and the circular label is a brass plaque marked with Clarke's name. The exact wording I am unable to recall. (*I was not fortunate enough to have my camera with me.*)

While this variant of the Food Warmer is well documented, others remain a complete mystery.



This unusual stand is shown with a pyramid-size fairy lamp, water reservoir, and Pannikin. However, it is not known if this unusual stand was designed to be a food warmer. It may have had another unknown purpose entirely.

The stand is approximately 5 5/8" high and 5 5/8" diameter. The bent metal legs and rings are riveted together and painted green. The carrying handle is attached to one of the legs. The stand is embossed around the bottom ring "S. Clarke Pyramid Trade Mark". The pyramid-size lamp cup fits nicely in the tapered supporting ring. (The handled brass lamp cup will not fit within the stand.) A No. 1, half pint, water reservoir and Pannikin fit nicely in the upper supporting ring.

The following unusual stand consists of a Clarke Pannikin, a tin water reservoir, and a pierced tin tapered base with an opening to accept a heat source, presumed to be a candle but may have been designed to accept a small oil lamp.<sup>11</sup>

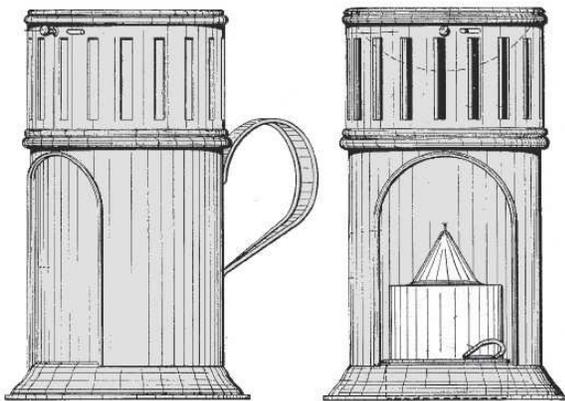
<sup>11</sup> Image source: Islington Artefacts Library, London, [www.objectlessons.org](http://www.objectlessons.org)

I have included this unusual device as a pre-  
amble to the next article, *Clarke Vaporizers,  
Inhalers, and Kettles*.



I think this stand has been adapted to fit the  
Clarke Pannikin and was perhaps a vaporizer  
produced by another company competing for  
Clarke's share of the market.

While not the same design, the following  
U.S. Patent was issued to Arthur Chambers,  
Thorncliffe, England on September 27, 1898  
— about the same period that Clarke was  
promoting his own line of medical vaporizers.



The design uses a concave cup to hold the  
medication to be vaporized. The candle is  
held in place by a tin cup with a ring handle.  
What is most interesting is that the patent de-  
scription promotes the use of Clarke's pyra-  
mid candles.

The patent description reads:

*"The holder receives the lower end of a can-  
dle of the kind well known and largely used  
as 'pyramid night lights' which when once  
lighted are capable of giving, without atten-  
tion, a steady flame for many hours."*

On one hand Mr. Chambers endorses the use  
of Clarke's candles and, at the same time, is  
competing for his share of the vaporizer mar-  
ket.

It is an interesting device but I believe it to be  
an inappropriate marriage. I would love to be  
proven incorrect.

### **CLARKE'S VAPORIZERS, INHALERS, & KETTLES** by Jim

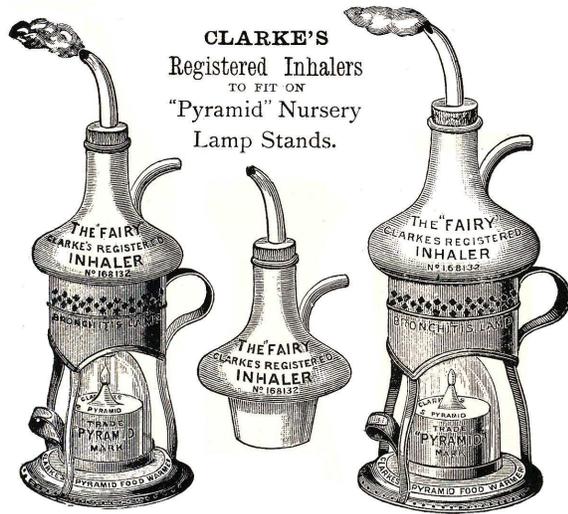
There is little doubt that Clarke had a suc-  
cessful product in his line of food warmers.  
Not being one to rest upon his successes, he  
adapted the same tin stand and Nursery  
Lamp to market a line of vaporizers, inhal-  
ers, and kettles. Once again, Clarke was  
adapting his product to fit the needs of his  
consumers.

These devices were used to vaporize medi-  
cation to relieve congestion brought on by  
illnesses such as Bronchitis and Influenza.  
The medication could have been simple  
home remedies or medications promoted to  
prevent contagious diseases. *(In at least one  
instance, Clarke even promoted his own  
brand of medication.)* The medication was  
vaporized into a steam to enable the patient  
to breathe it in while they slept or to breathe  
in by means of an inhaler.

The following advertisement, although un-  
dated, is typical of several published in the  
late 1880s through the 1890s. It illustrates  
how Clarke adapted his food warmer stand  
to accommodate "The Fairy Inhaler."

This design was registered by Clarke as R<sup>d</sup>  
N<sup>o</sup> 168132 on March 13, 1891. The com-  
plete device (Nursery Lamp, stand, and in-  
haler) was marketed as the "Bronchitis

Lamp" even though the stand still carried the embossing "Clarke's Pyramid Food Warmer" on the base.



The porcelain inhalers came in three sizes to fit each size of food warmer stand.



The porcelain inhaler was used without the water reservoir. It apparently sat directly above the Nursery Lamp.

The inhaler had two porcelain tubes. One tube was used to inhale the medicated steam. It was held in place with a cork at the top of the vessel. The second tube on the side (integral to the vessel) was used to allow air to enter the chamber when the inhaling tube was used.<sup>12</sup>



The inhaler is marked on both sides. One side reads:

**THE "FAIRY"**  
 CLARKE'S REGISTERED  
**INHALER**  
 N<sup>o</sup>. 168132

The reverse side reads:

**CLARKE'S FAIRY "LIGHTS"**  
 should be used in the lamp for the  
**INHALER & BRONCHITIS KETTLE.**

**PYRAMID LIGHTS**  
 for warming food.

It is interesting to note that Clarke differentiates the use of Fairy Lights and Pyramid Lights (candles). Perhaps the Pyramid Lights did not produce enough heat to vaporize the medication and the double wick Fairy Lights were necessary to heat the fluid.

*(The term "Bronchitis Kettle" will be explained a little later.)*

<sup>12</sup> The exact purpose of the tubes is undocumented. The term "inhaler" has led me to this logical conclusion.



This vaporizer was advertised in the *Pears Christmas Annual*, 1897.

The advertisement reads in part:

**"FAIRY" BRONCHITIS LAMP**  
 Made in Copper  
*"Worth its weight in gold."*

The also states:

Double Wick "Fairy" Lights should be  
 burned in this lamp.

And finally, the drawing of the vaporizer is marked:

**CLARKE'S**  
 Trade  
**"CRICKLITE"**  
 Mark

It is very curious that the trade name "Cricklite" is associated with this vaporizer. This trade name usually brings to mind another of Clarke's products.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The trade name "Cricklite" was registered by Clarke in 1889 and is typically associated with Clarke's line of formal lighting.



Unfortunately, I do not have a very good photo of this vaporizer. However, the water reservoir (kettle) with a wooden handle and the spout cap do indeed appear to be copper and the food warmer stand appears to be tin.

Finally, there is this advertisement from the *Illustrated London News*, January, 1892 promoting Clarke's "Fairy" Combination Lamp.<sup>14</sup>

The Combination Lamp includes a Pannikin, inhaler, kettle, and a stand that accommodates all three devices. And, of course, Clarke's Nursery Lamp is common to all purposes.



The description included with this advertisement clearly explains exactly what a "Fairy" Bronchitis Kettle is. In addition, it

<sup>14</sup> Image source: [www.allposters.com](http://www.allposters.com)

explains what Clarke's inhalers were used for and why they were important to have in the home. The advertisement reads in part:

**INVALUABLE TO SUFFERERS FROM BRONCHITIS, INFLUENZA, ETC.**

**FOR PREVENTION OF INFLUENZA**

Clarke's specially prepared Bacillus Destroyer for use in the Combination Lamp

**FOR RELIEF OF BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA, ETC.**

Clarke's specific (Pine) Inhalation for use in the Inhaler.

The strong objection to the ordinary Bronchitis Kettle is that a fire in the bedroom is imperative and the amount of steam emitted is greatly in excess of what is required. The "Fairy" **Combination Invalid's Lamp** will diffuse the proper and equal amount of steam throughout the night by using the "double wick" Fairy Lights. Boiling water should be put in the Kettle and Inhaler.

When the "Inhaler" is required, simply remove the lid from the Kettle and place in the Inhaler, the contents of which will be kept at the proper temperature. The same instructions refer to the Registered China Pannikin when the Lamp is required as a Food Warmer.

It is interesting to note that the lid on the kettle is perforated to allow the steam to escape.

Clarke's vaporizers and inhalers were clearly utilitarian in nature. They served a specific purpose and he paid little attention to promoting the decorative qualities of his line of fairy lamps. Or, so it would seem.

There are several ads promoting the use of Clark's decorative fairy lamps in his vaporizers. None, however, are as impressive as this color version of Clarke's 1887 catalog advertisement.



This advertisement illustrates all three sizes of fairy lamps, No. 1a "Fairy", No. 2a "Pyramid", and No. 3a "Wee", each in a uniquely designed vaporizer stand.

I wish I had actual examples of each model to show you, but I only have one.



This is Clarke's Model No. 1a shown in the advertisement. It is a standard handled brass Nursery Lamp cup with a brass arm to hold the brass medication cup.<sup>15</sup> The handled brass lamp cup is marked as normal. In ad-

<sup>15</sup> A 1904 advertisement indicated that this vaporizer could be used for disinfectants or perfumes.

dition, the supporting brass arm is marked "Clarke's Pyramid Vaporizer."



In addition to the Nailsea shade, the vaporizer consists of a concave medication cup, Nursery Lamp handled brass cup with supporting arm, and a pottery candle cup.

I suspect many are wondering why are Clarke's food warmers and vaporizers so important. For me, the answer is simple. If it were not for the success of these utilitarian devices, Clarke's decorative fairy lamps may not have been developed. These devices are certainly the genesis of what was to follow and contributed greatly to Clarke's unsurpassed marketing skills.

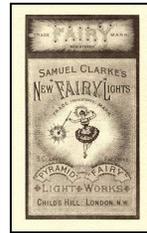
Finally, I am deeply indebted to everyone who contributed photos and detailed information to support this article. They are Brian, John, Graham, Lloyd, and Connie. Without their support, this article would not have been possible.

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

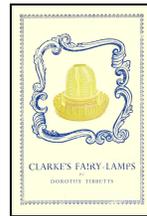
**REFERENCE MATERIALS OR SALE**



*19th Century Fairy Lamps*, by T. Robert Anthony. A spiral-bound reference with 18 color plates illustrating over 200 fairy lamps from Anthony's personal collection. The condition is new and unused. \$30 (shipping to US included).



*Samuel Clarke's New Fairy Lights*, catalog reprint by T. Robert Anthony. This is a rare reprint of Clarke's original fairy lamp and Cricklite 1887/88 and 1898 catalogs. The condition is new and unused. \$40 (shipping to US included).



*Clarke's Fairy Lamps*, by Dorothy Tibbetts. This invaluable fairy lamp reference was first published in 1951. It is the first contemporary publication on fairy lamps. It contains a wealth of information including photos of Dorothy Tibbett's personal collection and fairy lamp examples from Clarke's original catalogs. This book is increasingly difficult to find. The condition is good. \$35. (shipping to US included).

Place your order by sending payment to:

Jim Sapp  
P.O. Box 438  
Pine, CO 80470

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

To join the Fairy Lamp Club and receive the Fairy Lamp Newsletter for one year, please send \$20.00 (\$25.00 foreign) to:

**JIM SAPP**  
**P.O. BOX 438**  
**PINE, CO 80470**

E-mail:.....jimsapp7@msn.com  
Telephone:.....(303) 816-0944

**Checks must be made payable to Jim Sapp.**

PayPal payments to jimsapp7@msn.com are also accepted at no additional charge.

**Thanks**

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of the newsletter.