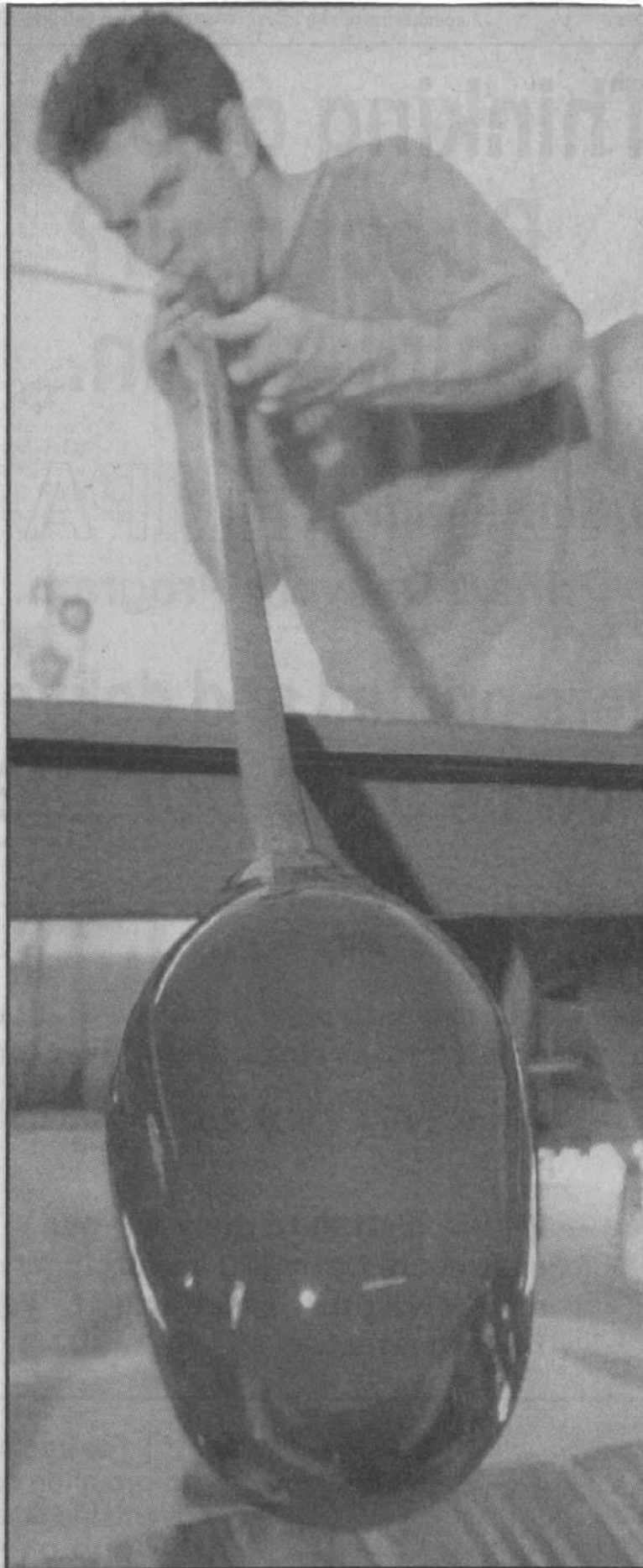


Bloomfield Glassworks

Intelligencer
photos by
Frank O'Connor

Top photo:
Time-worn tools of the trade. **Middle photo:** Forbes shapes the molten glass with a blower's jack. **At right:** Forbes balances a vase on a work table as he blows the piece to shape.



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Cont →

It's amazing the things
one can learn at college.

Mark Armstrong, for instance, discovered he preferred glass blowing to woodworking when he enrolled in a cabinet-making program at Sheridan College. Glass blowing was just a required option, but the course convinced him to change his career plans.

Some 13 years later, he is now a partner in a glass artisan plant in Bloomfield and his work is already scoring considerable success in international sales.

"Most of our product is sold in the United States," he and partner Ian Forbes report. The plant is officially called The Bloomfield Glassworks.

From Oakville for Forbes and Burlington for Armstrong, it's a long way to Bloomfield.

Forbes says he and his wife were looking for a rural location after several years of glass blowing both in Toronto and at Sheridan College - where he had met Armstrong earlier.

The search lead Forbes to a house in nearby Picton. A partnership to establish a workshop with Armstrong followed when an ideal facility became available at the rear of the former Cobi Foods plant.

From an oven and a 'glory hole' gas-powered furnace they made mostly themselves, Armstrong and Forbes started churning out glass works several months ago. But the official grand opening of the workshop and show room is slated for next May.

Meanwhile, Forbes has qualified to exhibit his art at the prestigious One of A Kind Craft Show running at the Canadian National Exhibition grounds in Toronto, Nov. 24-29.

Both Forbes and Armstrong have