

NEW WEBSITE DEDICATED TO THE RICH HISTORY OF EYEGLASSES

David A. Fleishman, MD, Retired Ophthalmologist

Beginning with the first pair of eyeglasses circa 1286–87 in Pisa, Italy, the optical lens must be considered one of the greatest inventions of all time. The art of making a pair of spectacles was an achievement of monumental significance for mankind. Although it has been relatively unknown to the general public, the evolution and development of spectacles over the past seven centuries qualifies as a long, significant, and quite fascinating journey through history, whose impact deserves to be better recognized and more widely appreciated. Your membership is encouraged to visit and evaluate the content and merit of an online resource where the 700 plus year history of the optical lens is celebrated.

A unique website www.anti-quespectacles.com has now been created for everyone's benefit and it is a non-commercial endeavor developed with the assistance of over 970 educators worldwide (so far). More than 565 institutions are already participating in this group effort. I am proud to be a part of the dedicated international team, a true "community" of educators, historians, collectors, historical society directors, noted clergy, librarians, government officials, eye professionals, researchers, and curators. This multifaceted group is helping to build this expansive multi-faceted website.

This online museum and encyclopedia is made up of some of the finest and most interesting histori-

cal items from both private and public collections, including paintings and other works of art. Slideshows, PowerPoint's, videos, audios, and educational activities are all present. Almost anyone who visits the website should develop and embrace greater interest, appreciation, passion, and knowledge of all sorts of antique vision aids. People of nearly all ages and from all walks of life should find this entire subject to be appealing. The famous people and significant events along the journey of spectacle development are presented. Many of the pioneers of the fields of Opticianry and Optometry are highlighted because they "led the way". Some are even featured on the Honor Roll of Distinguished Persons to whom the website is dedicated.

This website's greatest potential is to stimulate people everywhere regarding the history, cultural importance, and beauty of these interesting 'small fragments of history' that have been used by billions and have changed our lives yet they are taken for granted. All sorts of optical treasures which have been resting in storage for a few hundred years are now coming to light because of all this research.

This website was already featured on the front page of the April 6th



Wall Street Journal. Enjoy perusing over 235 web pages including the Introduction, Table of Contents, Goals of the Website, over twenty-five Interesting Topics, more than 70 Slideshows and also many Educational Games. More than 3,700 described and dated images are already on our website (all copyright protected). Major museums, art institutes, churches, and libraries from around the world are supporting this endeavor and most of them are listed on one of the pages in the Links section. The website is filled with History, Science, Religion, Culture, and Art and much more information and images will be added over the next few years.

Something quite substantial has been created here for everyone, especially opticians, to enjoy. The level of cooperation worldwide has been absolutely remarkable. Suggestions, comments or "leads" are welcome and people can always contact me directly at dflash50@comcast.net. Thank you for your interest and kind support.