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CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF STEUBEN GLASS | CRYSTALIS

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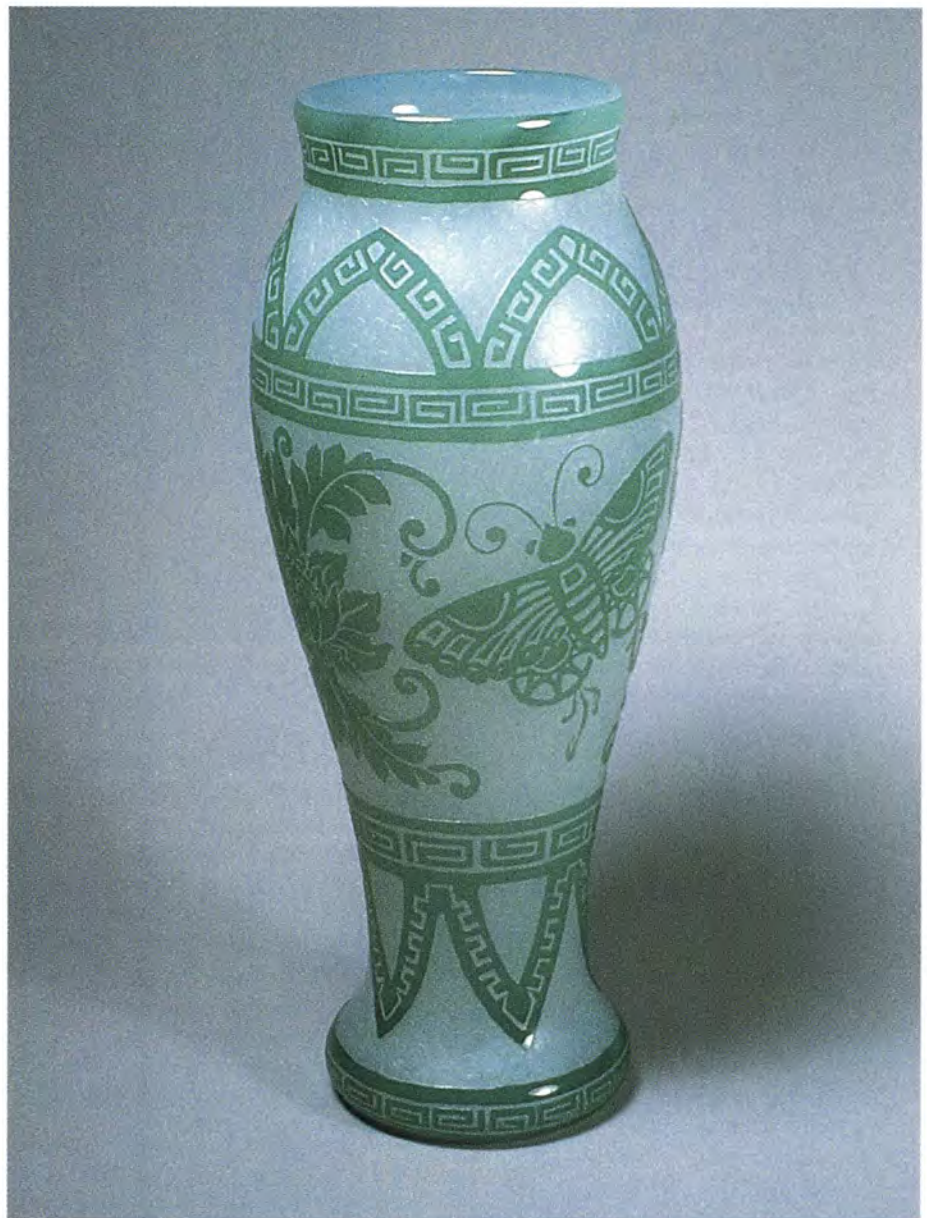
Special to The Leader

EDITOR'S NOTE | *In celebration of the 100th anniversary of Steuben Glass, The Leader is featuring a look at discontinued pieces of Steuben from both eras of the world-renowned art glass business. The Frederick Carder era lasted from 1903-1932, while the Arthur Houghton era began in 1932 and continues to this day. Local historian and Steuben Glass expert Thomas P. Dimitroff provides a look at common themes that tie the two eras together.*

Where there are flowers, can butterflies be far away? Frederick Carder would most certainly say, "no," and the vase pictured is evidence of that. Carder's love of nature, love of color, knowledge of glassmaking techniques and belief in classic design all come together in this handsome piece.

For technique, he has chosen to case two layers of glass—in this case green jade over a layer of alabaster. Both green jade and alabaster are translucent rather than transparent glasses. After the design is transferred to the vase in an acid-resistant material made up of asphaltum, beeswax, gum, mastic and turpentine, the piece is dipped into hydrofluoric acid, which eats away the unprotected portions of the green jade, exposing the alabaster layer, yet keeping the design in green jade.

The color green jade is from nature itself. Furthermore, this design focuses upon plant life and a wonderfully stylized butterfly. The shape of this piece—shape number 6535—is classic



**'Butterflies Acid Etched Vase' |
Designed by Frederick Carder in the 1920s**

Photo courtesy of The Rockwell Museum of Western Art

in form. It is very controlled and symmetrical. Other classic influences in this piece are the repeated use of a Greek Key-type design and the stylized acanthus leaf shapes.

One of the City of Corning's lanes—previously alleys—is named Jade Lane after this type of glass. This lane runs from McMahon Avenue to Park Avenue between Watauga Avenue and Lower Delevan Avenue. Alabaster Lane runs from Steuben Street to east of Conhocton Street between Woodview Avenue and East Market Street Extension.

**'The Butterfly' | Designed by
George Thompson in 1967 |
Engraving design by Alexander
Seidel**

A number of Steuben's glass designers from the post-Carder period shared Carder's fascination with butterflies. Several examples of this are "Butterfly Girl," "Moth and Flame," "Butterfly," "Garden of Delight" and "Butterflies Necklace."

Designer George Thompson got his inspiration for "The Butterfly" from oriental beads. He was well aware of the optical qualities of Steuben Glass and visualized a prism cut with planes that would reflect a single engraved butterfly wing, thus presenting a complete butterfly whose wings seem to open and close as the viewer takes in the piece from different angles.

The flawless clarity of the glass makes the butterfly float effortlessly above the engraved foliage. Alexander Seidel was chosen to design the butterfly engraving.

The first of these pieces were engraved by Ladislav Havlik, a master copper-wheel engraver who joined Steuben in 1960. Havlik was born in Czechoslovakia and trained in Turnov and Prague.

"The Butterfly" illustrates the movement—started in the 1950s—of Steuben designs away from functional, utilitarian objects and toward decorative, sculptural objects. The ability of designers to integrate engraving as an integral part of the object was also begun around this time.

George Thompson joined the Steuben Design Department when it was formed in 1936. He successfully designed many Steuben objects in many forms. His designs were includ-



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ed in all Steuben exhibitions from 1937 until his retirement in 1974. Thompson designs are included in the collections of major museums and galleries throughout the world.

Alexander Seidel was born in Germany. He studied art in Munich and Rome and became a successful painter. He arrived in the United States in 1939 and served as the staff artist at the American Museum of Natural History in New York from 1943 to 1961.