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## CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF STEUBEN GLASS | EAGLES

**BY THOMAS P. DIMITROFF**

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.*

The sight of an eagle majestically soaring against an azure sky is a memorable and awe-inspiring event. It is almost poetic. There are, in fact, 59 species of eagles in the world. These species are divided into four major groups: fish eagles, booted eagles, snake eagles and giant forest eagles.

Eagles of one group or another can be found on every continent except Antarctica. Two species of eagles, the bald eagle—a fish eagle—and the golden eagle—a booted eagle—are native to America.

Frederick Carder's love of nature and his adopted country goes a long way in explaining his choice of an eagle as one of the few bird figures he designed.

In fact, both eagles shown this week—Carder's and a figure designed by Donald Pollard during the Arthur Houghton era of Steuben—were made using similar techniques. Both were molded before being cut. Carder's eagle stands about eight inches tall and is cut all over.



**'Carder Steuben Cut Eagle' | Designed by Frederick Carder in the 1920s**

Interestingly, this eagle illustrates two of what are supposed to be Carder's dislikes in glass—brilliant cut-

ting and lack of color. It has often been reported that Carder disliked brilliant cut glass because it was too sharp

Photo courtesy of The Rockwell Museum of Western Art

and hurt one's hands when handling it. Writing in an unpublished manuscript titled "Glass and Glassmaking as I Know It," Carder said, "Well designed cut glass has a brilliancy such as no other material except the diamond. When the article is not overloaded or plastered with cutting and the shape of the article is accentuated and not destroyed, then cut glass is worthy of the name.

"Some of the old English and the so called Irish glass executed by English workmen are very good. Where however the article is cut all over and that so deep so as to be painful to pick up, then cut glass becomes the essence of vulgarity."

This statement seems to indicate Carder's displeasure with the brilliant style of cut glass rather than all cut glass. Carder's experiences in England were most certainly more germane to any dislike of brilliant cut glass he may have had than is anything as simple as it being unpleasant to handle.

In fact, according to Otto Hilbert, who worked with Carder, Carder indicated that his dislike of colorless and cut glass originated when he first went to Stevens & Williams to be a designer. At that time, the majority of items produced at Stevens & Williams were in colorless cut and engraved glass. One of Carder's contributions to the company was the reintroduction of color in the company's creations, a move that helped Stevens & Williams continue its business with financial success.

Subsequently, when Carder helped establish Steuben Glass in 1903, he began producing colored art glass in America. Later, it was the switch from colored glass to colorless glass in 1932 that Carder saw as the reason he lost control of Steuben. His passion for colored glass continued for the rest of his life.

Carder designed several other cut glass animals, including a pheasant, a pigeon, a peacock, a duck and Pegasus—a winged horse. Carder's cut eagle was used in a variety of ways. It could be a decorative object by itself. It could be used as part of a luminor lamp or as elements of a pedestal for a center bowl.

The cut eagle shown here still was included in Steuben's line drawings as late as 1934.

### 'American Eagle' | Designed by Donald Pollard in 1975

Steuben designers have been inspired to create more than 50 different designs featuring the magnificent bald eagle. About 30 of these works feature the eagle engraved on Steuben objects as part of either the United States Presidential Seal or the United States Seal.

This is not surprising when we think about how important and inspiring this magnificent bird has been throughout American history. Native Americans prayed to the eagle long before it became a patriotic symbol of our country:

*Oh, Eagle, come, with wings outspread in sunny skies!*

*Oh, Eagle, come, and bring us peace, thy gentle peace!*

*Oh, Eagle, come, and give new life to us who pray!*

(From the Hako, a Pawnee ceremony translated by Alice Fletcher)

The eagle has continued to inspire Americans, including modern musicians like John Denver and Mike Taylor, who wrote:

*I am the eagle; I live in high country  
In rocky cathedrals that reach to the sky*

*I am the hawk, and there's blood on my feathers*

*But time is still turning; they soon will be dry*

*And all those who see me and all who believe in me*

*Share in the freedom I feel when I fly  
Come dance with the west wind and touch on the mountain tops*

*Sail o'er the canyons and up to the stars*

*And reach for the heavens and hope for the future*

*And all that we can be, not what we are.*

(Copyright 1971 by Cherry Lane Music)

The bald eagle, with a wing span of up to eight feet, an average life span of more than 40 years, and a uniqueness to North America, was first chosen as the national emblem of the United States of America by the Second Continental Congress on June 20, 1782. It was actually officially adopted as such in 1787.



### 'American Eagle' | Designed by Donald Pollard in 1975

This was done, of course, in spite of Benjamin Franklin's objections as he preferred the wild turkey for our national emblem. Steuben's designers have also used the turkey as a theme as in the "Turkey Plate," an Audubon Plate, and the "Thanksgiving Bowl."

The American Eagle shown here was designed by Donald Pollard in 1975. It is still in the active Steuben line and remains a popular design with its clean, crisp lines. Its stature radiates power and authority. This eagle is and has been a part of collections throughout the world, including that of King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sophia of Spain.

Donald Pollard was a prolific and creative designer at Steuben for 30 years—from 1950-1980. Prior to coming to Steuben, Pollard had attended the Rhode Island School of Design, where he specialized in working with silver. He later worked in architectural theater design.

During World War II, he served in the Navy. In 1981, a retrospective exhibition of Pollard's work marked his retirement. Fittingly, the "Crown of Oberon," his masterwork, was the centerpiece of this exhibition.