



The SUNDAY LEADER

CORNING | NEW YORK

SUNDAY | JULY 20 | 2003

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF STEUBEN GLASS | EXPLORING

BY THOMAS P. DIMITROFF

Special to The Leader

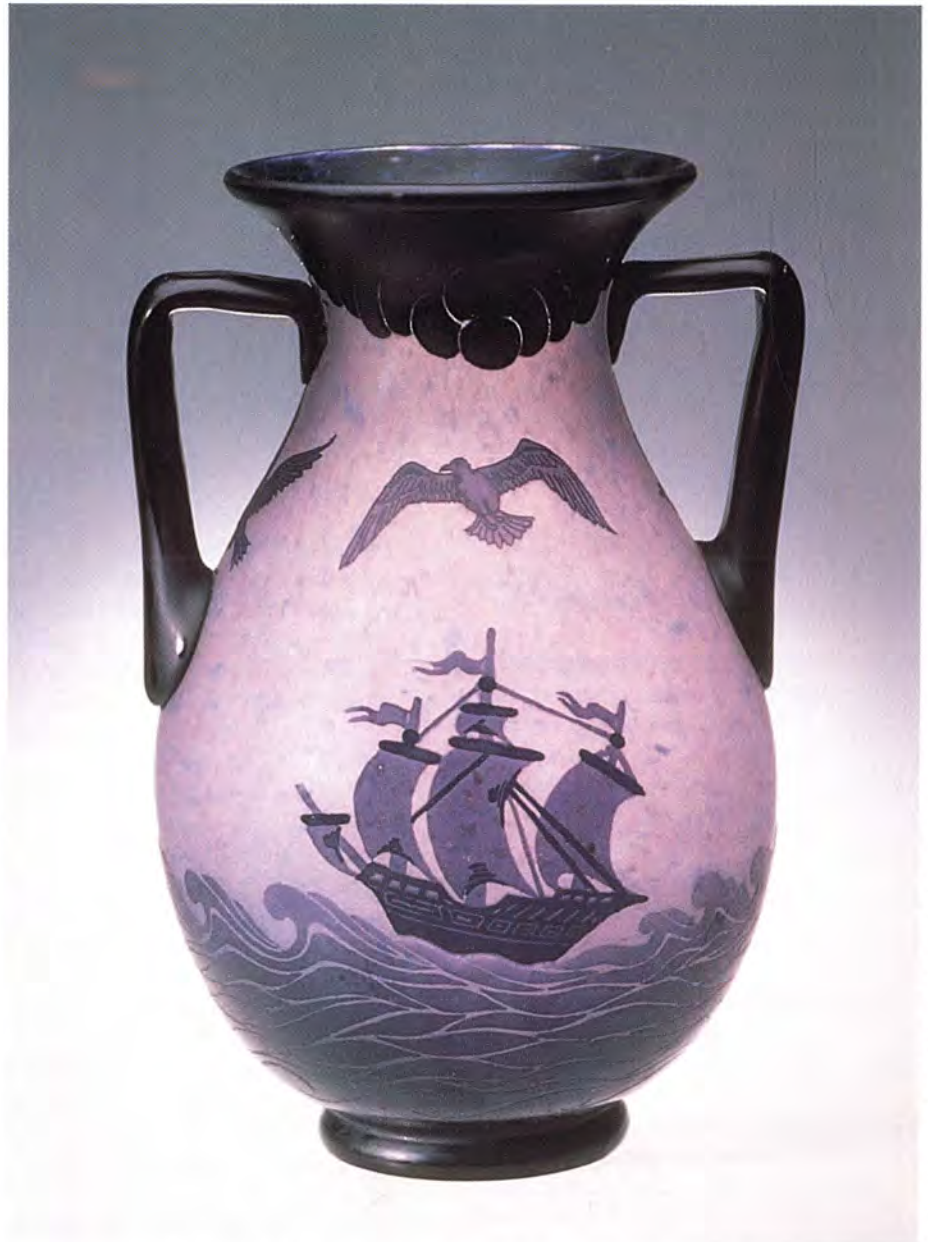
EDITOR'S NOTE | *In celebration of the 100th anniversary of Steuben Glass, The Leader is featuring a look at discontinued pieces of Steuben from both eras of the world-renowned art glass business. The Frederick Carder era lasted from 1903-1932, while the Arthur Houghton era began in 1932 and continues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

Frederick Carder constantly explored the world of glassmaking, searching for new techniques, new formulas and new forms. It is little wonder then that he also admired the sailors and explorers in history.

The vase pictured illustrates this, as its decoration portrays a galleon bravely sailing the stormy seas. Carder used this decorative theme on a variety of shapes and types of glass. In many cases, the decoration would be engraved into the glass using copper or stone wheels.

This handled vase is an example of Carder's acid-etched technique. The vase itself is of two layers of glass—a layer of amethyst glass over a layer of amethyst cintra glass. The outer layer of amethyst is so deep in color it almost appears black.

Cintra is formed when a hot gather of clear glass is rolled on fine glass particles, called frost—in this case, amethyst frost. After the frost is picked up on the clear gather, another clear gather coats the frost sandwiching it



'Galleon' | Designed in 1925 by Frederick Carder

Photo courtesy of The Rockwell Museum of Western Art

between the two clear layers.

The frost is captured between the layers of clear glass, yet it does not melt into these layers. Carder got the name cintra from the word "sinter," which means the bonding together of particles by pressing or heating.

The difficult and dangerous task of cutting the pattern in the glass using acids was carried out in Steuben's acid room—first opened in 1906.

Bolas Manikowski was hired by Carder in 1917. He became an expert at the challenging process of making acid-etched pieces. In 1920, Bolas was given control of the acid room. By the late 1920s, he began to make changes in Carder's designs, a practice somewhat frowned upon by Carder. After the 1932 change in Steuben leadership—from Carder to Arthur Houghton—Manikowski became a resident designer for Steuben.

One of the City of Corning's lanes—previously alleys—is named Amethyst Lane, and another is called Cintra Lane in honor of the types of glass used in these Steuben pieces. Amethyst Lane runs westward from Bridge Street between Pulteney and West William streets. Cintra Lane runs from Field Street to Chemung Street between Sunset Drive and West First Street and between Denison Parkway and East First Street.

'Leif Eriksson' | Designed in 1970 by James Houston

The mists of history often blur the fact the first Europeans to reach North America were Vikings. In 1001, Leif Eriksson, son of the famous Viking explorer, Eric the Red, sailed westward from Greenland on a voyage of discovery.

He landed in North America and named the place Vinland. Historians are not sure exactly where in North America Vinland was, but it is known the Vikings continued to visit there off and on until about 1013.

The Steuben piece pictured is James Houston's "Leif Eriksson." Like many other Steuben designs from the 1970s, this is an example of a non-functional art piece using Steuben crystal's ability to reflect and refract light.

Houston is one of Steuben's most popular and successful designers. He



**'Leif Eriksson' | Designed in 1970 by
James Houston**

has designed more than 120 sculptures. His designs reflect his love of wildlife and especially the Arctic. Houston was born in Canada and became a Canadian government civil administrator in the Eastern Arctic, living on Baffin Island among the Inuit for 12 years.

His territory covered 65,000 square miles, and he traveled it by dog team. Houston's insight and promotion gave birth to what today is the worldwide recognition of the importance of Inuit art. Houston joined Steuben in 1962 after a chance meeting with Arthur Houghton, who was in the Arctic on a hunting trip.

Today, he still spends summers off the coast of Alaska on the Queen Charlotte Islands. There, he designs glass, writes and draws. Recently, he wrote a book titled *The Arctic Fisherman* published by Steuben in 2002. He has authored more than 30 books and designed a number of other Steuben pieces based on the theme of

exploration. They include "Lewis and Clark," designed with Paul Schulze, "Henry Hudson," "Arctic Exploration," and "Exploration."

Other Steuben designs with exploration themes include: "Hernando Cortes," by Paul Schulze; "Ferdinand Magellan," by Lloyd Atkins; "David Livingston," by Donald Pollard; "Night Voyage," by Robert Cassetti; and "The Discovery Group," which includes "The Explorers," "Northern Lights," and "Southern Cross," all by George Thompson and Bruce Moore.