

Flower Garden and Butterflies

As spring approaches we anticipate the return of the flora and fauna we enjoy during the warmer weather. Throughout history many designers of glass, china and pottery have typically included floral designs among their patterns. This practice continued throughout the production of American glassware made during the Depression Era as well. One such floral pattern is Flower Garden and Butterflies, produced by the Tiffin Glass Company, a division of U.S. Glass Company of Tiffin, Ohio.

The Tiffin Glass Company, founded in 1888 in Steubenville, Ohio, merged with the U.S. Glass company in 1892 and became known as "Factory R" which initially made pressed barware and tumblers. As time went on, Tiffin began producing lighter weight stemware and brilliant cut glass. In the early nineteen teens, Tiffin expanded its production to include elegantly etched stems and dinnerware. During the 1930's, Tiffin was one of America's finest glass manufacturing companies with its many popular etched patterns and its venture into colored and satinized glass. Tiffin grew and prospered and adapted its production to meet the changing customer demands. With U.S. Glass Company under the leadership of its new president, C.W. Carlson, Sr., the company pioneered new colors and shapes. Among the new lines were the Swedish line of the '40's and the Modern line that debuted in the '50's. They also purchased some of the old Duncan and Miller molds, continuing the production of Duncan swans and the popular Canterbury pattern. By 1959, the U.S. Glass Company was forced to close due to bankruptcy. C.W. Carlson, Jr. formed the Tiffin Art Glass Corporation in 1962 and continued producing glass. In 1966, Continental Can purchased Tiffin Art Glass Corporation only to sell it to the Interpace Corporation two years later. During that era they made casual lead crystal to coordinate with Franciscan earthenware patterns of the era. In 1980, the company was sold again to Towle Silversmiths. With strong foreign competition, all Tiffin glass production ceased and the factory closed in October, 1984.

During its heyday one of Tiffin's most intricate pressed patterns was Flower Garden and Butterflies. According to author, Gene Florence, in his Nineteenth Edition of Collector's Encyclopedia of Depression Glass, the early name for this pattern was "Brocade", which is very appropriate given the busy design of roses and leaves with occasional butterflies hidden among the foliage. Another name given the pattern by collectors is "Butterflies and Roses", but the foliage far out numbers the butterflies. Locating the butterflies in the pattern is much like searching for items in an "I Spy" picture. Some pieces only have part of a butterfly which can be frustrating to find.

The pattern was introduced in 1924 and was manufactured for about ten years. The pieces include dresser set items such as perfume or cologne bottles, dresser trays, powder jars, covered candy jars, candlesticks, vases, and ashtrays and cigarette boxes. There were also plates, cups, tumblers and saucers, as well as a

creamer, sugar, sandwich server and mayonnaise. Colors include pink, green, canary (often called "Vaseline"), teal blue, light cobalt, crystal, amber and black. This is not a pattern of prolific production, so most collectors manage to have just a few pieces. Among the rarest of pattern pieces is a heart-shaped candy which can command \$1000+ depending on the color.

U.S. Glass also made 7" and 10" trivets similar to the Flower Garden and Butterflies pattern, but there is no butterfly on them. These pieces were also used as mixing bowl covers, but do not constitute part of the pattern.

To gain an appreciation for the beauty, variety and quality of American glass manufacturing, consider attending one of the shows that promotes these items. The next glass and pottery show featuring depression glass mentioned in this article will be sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Depression Glass Society (RMDGS) which will be holding their 37th annual glass and pottery show on April 23rd (10-5) and April 24th (11-4), 2014, in Castle Rock, CO.

Pieces similar to those described here, as well as other vintage American made glass from the 1800's to the 1970's, including Early American Pattern Glass, cut glass, carnival glass, depression glass, elegant depression era glass, kitchenware, mid-century glass will be available at the show and sale. Also included for sale will be pottery such as Fiesta, Van Briggie, Roseville, Franciscan and more. Whether you are seeking a decorative item for your home or trying to complete a set of dinnerware, you will have a vast selection at the show. In addition, there will be two seminars presented by Pattern Glass experts and authors Danny Cornelius and Don Jones, on Pattern Glass Table Sets and another on Pattern Glass Cake Stands. Come meet our guest authors and learn more about beautiful American made glass, china, pottery and more. Dealers at this show will also offer antiques and collectible items related to the glassware and china for sale. The show will be held at the Douglas County Events Center, 500 Fairgrounds Road (Exit 181 – I-25) in Castle Rock. Please visit the RMDGS website to learn more about their club and show: (www.rmdgs.com) & ([show](#)). The show will feature an exhibit of elegant glass pitchers. There will also be additional table displays of elegant glass. There are hourly door prizes for adults and a special \$25 door prize just for children every 2 hours during the show. The Events Center and vendor booths are easily accessible for the disabled community. Please feel free to submit questions about this article or about the show etc. on the club's website. A club member will get back to you with an answer.