



Mary Mullaney  
Ralph Mossman



## CHEVRONS

Our Chevron Beads differ from most antique and contemporary Chevrons in the materials and techniques used to make them. Molten clear glass and solid bars of colored glass are the starting materials, differing from the traditional method of having pots of molten colored glass available. The advantage of our method is seen in the unique and unusual combinations of different colors in a single bead.

All Chevron Beads are made in two stages. The first uses glassblowing techniques, and consists of building up layers of color on a blowpipe, then stretching that gob into a long tube. The second stage uses lapidary techniques to turn the cooled tube into finished beads. In both stages, we have taken the Chevron in unique directions.

The glassblowing stage of the Chevron process begins with a thick-walled bubble on the end of a blowpipe. Layers of color are added to the outside of this bubble in four possible ways. The first way, gathering, is the traditional method of dipping the bubble into a pot of molten colored glass. The second way is to heat a chunk of glass on a rod until it is molten, dripping it onto the bubble while still soft. This way results in an appearance similar to the gathering method. A third way results in thinner layers of color, and is accomplished by blowing a thin bubble and wrapping it around the original bubble. The fourth way is done by applying pre-formed glass canes to the surface. We use some or all of these four layering methods in a single bead.

During the layering process, the hot glass is placed in a star-shaped mold to create the pattern visible from the end of the bead. After the piece has had all of its layers added, it is heated and stretched into a thick-walled tube, (the original bubble becomes the hole running the length of the tube) and allowed to slowly cool.

The lapidary stages begin once the tube has cooled, by cutting it into individual beads with a diamond saw. This is an important element in the artistry of Chevron Beads, as a subtle change in shape may drastically alter the surface design. We have created some unusual shapes to compliment our color and cane designs. Following the grinding, each bead goes through a five step process of tumbling and cleaning to bring them to a polish.

