



VOL. 34 NO. 1

N E W S L E T T E R

FEBRUARY 2009

FROM SALT TO ZINC: RED WING'S TRANSITION ERA

Pages 7-9



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MEMBERSHIP

A primary membership in the Red Wing Collectors Society is \$25 annually and an associate membership is \$10.

There must be at least one primary member per household in order to have associate membership. Members can pay for more than one year when renewing their membership. Contact the RWCS Business Office for additional details.

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NEWS BRIEFS

CONVENTION LODGING RATES & AVAILABILITY



Dear Collectors: As promised, we have had several meetings and gotten together with the lodging association to try and better communicate and organize the rooms for the Red Wing Collector's Society Convention in July. Here are the listed rates. I realize that most of you have already made your arrangements for Convention, but the list will provide availability and special rate options at this time. Please realize that the status of availability was only current as of press

time, but know we will all do our best to accommodate your needs and make 2009 a great Convention. Thanks for coming and we look forward to seeing you in July!

—Kathy Silverthorn, Red Wing Visitors & Convention Bureau

AmericInn: Some rooms left, standard rooms (\$100.90 + tax) Rodeway Inn: Full

Country Inn & Suites: Rooms available (\$129) Super 8: Full, has waiting list

Nichols Inn: Some rooms left, standard rooms (\$100.90 + tax. Rooms with fridge and microwave an additional \$10.) Days Inn: Full St. James Hotel: See ad on page 10.

Parkway Motel: Rooms available, one bed (\$54 to \$59) and 2 beds (\$64 to \$69)

Best Western Rivertown: Few rooms available, single (\$110.91+tax) & 2 beds (\$138.91+tax)

HALLSTROMS NAMED "NEIGHBORS OF THE YEAR"

Congrats to longtime RWCS members Dave and Diane Hallstrom who were named "Red Wing Neighbors of the Year" at a recent Red Wing Kiwanis Club meeting. Those who nominated them touched on everything from their high social, business and professional standards to their generosity in giving not only money and goods, but also their time to promote Red Wing.

In addition to participation and leadership in a wide variety of community and civic organizations, the Hallstroms are quite involved with the RWCS Foundation. Friend and longtime collector Larry Peterson said the Pottery Museum would not exist if not for their involvement. He said their dedication goes above and beyond what normally would be considered the call of duty, even volunteering to open and close the museum every day to help save the Foundation about \$2,000 a year.



RWCS OBITUARIES

Longtime RWCS member Otto Bang (pictured at left) died on Dec. 29. Otto and his son, Tom, were in an auto accident on Dec. 21. Initially there appeared to be no serious injury, but later that day he lost consciousness due to blood clots. He was immediately transported to a hospital for treatment but to no avail. He was kept on life support until all his family could be on hand to be with him. He was 77.

Mary and Otto have been active members of the RWCS and the Gopher Chapter for many years. And for many years they have hosted an annual Friday evening get-together for our chapter at the Days Inn during the July convention. Recently Otto was instrumental in helping secure copies of the original Gedney labels used on the Gopher Chapter's 2007 and 2008 Commemoratives. He represented Edina in the Minnesota Legislature for 20 years. Otto was a wonderful member and a good friend; he will be greatly missed.

—Larry Roschen, Gopher Chapter secretary

RWCS Member Hazel Duden died on Jan. 22. She was employed at the Red Wing Potteries and her many hobbies included knitting, crocheting, gardening, picking strawberries and collecting Red Wing Pottery. Hazel also enjoyed fishing and traveling with her sisters. She was 73 years old.

CLASSIFIED ADS NOW LIVE ON RWCS WEBSITE

For the first time in its existence, the RWCS website contains the same classified and display ads that appear every two months in the RWCS Newsletter. The ads are posted live on the dates that the newsletter mails out to the membership: Feb. 15, April 15, June 15, Aug. 30, Oct. 15 and Dec. 15. This means that members who usually receive their newsletters later than others, such as those living in California, will now have access to the ads at the same time as everyone else. The Society receives all revenue from newsletter and website advertising. To place an ad, contact Editor Rick Natynski.



ABOUT THE COVER

If you scratched your head in disbelief when looking at the cover, it's because you've probably never seen a 5 gallon zinc glaze beehive jug with a cobalt leaf.

None of the Red Wing reference books picture or refer to a transitional beehive jug hand-decorated in cobalt and some of the top collectors out there have never seen or heard of one. Could this be the only one known to exist at this point? Perhaps so!

At 23.4 lbs., 12 inches in diameter and 18 inches in height, the transition jug dwarfs the ski oval jug pictured above and is even bigger than the Imperial jug, which weighs a pound less, has the same diameter, and is a half-inch shorter. Therefore, it's possible this jug was made for the Canadian market, as it holds 5 Imperial gallons, or 6 U.S. gallons.

The discovery of this jug inspired the 3-page article on Red Wing's Transition Era found on pages 7-9. This in-depth feature includes photos of more than 30 transition pieces, several of which are also quite rare.

If anyone out there owns a zinc glaze transition jug or water cooler that's hand-decorated in cobalt, we'd love to hear about it. Please contact Editor Rick Natynski so that a photo and a follow-up story can be shared with the membership.

2009 CONVENTION TENTATIVE SCHEDULE



2009 CONVENTION NOTES: CELEBRATING WITH RED WING

Wednesday, July 8

- Morning Board of Directors meeting at Red Wing High School (open to the public)
- Outdoor brat feed held at and sponsored by Pottery Place Mall
- Early badge pickup at brat feed
- Auction check-in

Thursday, July 9

- Orientation for first-timers
- Chapter presidents meeting
- Commemorative distribution
- Auction check-in
- Keynote Address
- Chapter meetings
- Kids seminars
- Sales of educational materials
- Narrated bus tour of historical Red Wing
- Display Room viewing
- Evening Auction

Friday, July 10

- Orientation for first-timers
- Commemorative distribution
- Adult and kids seminars
- Sales of educational materials
- Display Room viewing
- Annual business meeting
- New Pig Roast and Sock Hop (event replacing picnic)

Saturday, July 11

- Commemorative distribution
- Commemorative lottery
- Display Room viewing (open to the public)
- Show & Sale (open to the public)
- Evening banquet at the St. James Hotel

For more Convention info, visit
WWW.REDWINGCOLLECTORS.ORG.

New Registration Forms: The 2009 Convention Registration Form is now stapled into the newsletter to prevent loss during the insertion process. This one page document gives members the ability to simply tear out the page.

Auction Forms: Typically only 10 percent of the membership submits a piece for the Convention Auction Lottery, so in an effort to be more green and save money, the Society will no longer insert auction forms into the newsletter. However, the auction form will be mailed to everyone who submitted a piece in 2008, it can be downloaded on the RWCS website and any member can call the RWCS office to request one to be mailed.

Convention Theme: The theme for 2009 is "Celebrating with Red Wing". We're asking you to provide pictures of how you use or display your Red Wing when recognizing a season or celebrating a holiday, family gathering or other event. These photos will go in the Convention Supplement, so please send them in!

Pig Roast and Sock Hop: The Friday night picnic sponsored by the Red Wing Chamber will now be a pig roast sponsored by several Red Wing businesses and organizations. This event will also include a concert, prizes and a sock hop. The sock hop will be open to the community and give it a chance to experience Convention activities.

Crock Hunt: The RWCS will sponsor a scavenger hunt of sorts through Red Wing open to members and non-members. Participants will find their form in the Convention Supplement and attendee packets. The grand prize drawing will take place at the Friday night pig roast.

Convention Banquet: We are moving the convention banquet to the St. James Hotel's new Riverview Room next to the Veranda restaurant. We are also looking into planning a social for members who want to come and say goodbye on Saturday night, but not stay for the banquet. More information to come.

Registration Online: In 2008, twice as many members registered via the website than in 2007. Consider joining the crowd and saving a stamp! Register via the website or call the RWCS Business Office. We are happy to walk you through the process of registering online or take your registration over the phone.

Badge Holders: We're asking members and chapters to help in reusing their badge holders from Convention. For those of you who have some from the past, please bring them to Convention.

Volunteers: All Convention departments are in need of volunteers: Auction, Commemorative, KidsView, Show & Sale, Registration, Display, Education, etc. Whether you want to help set up, improve or clean up after, we need your help. There is a special call out for Auction as the manager is in need of people to help grade pieces. We have members willing to train on the job, so anyone interested in learning more should contact Todd Avery at AUCTION@REDWINGCOLLECTORS.ORG or call the office.

Brown Jug: Thanks to all the members who have referred new members to the Society. We're proud to say that we had our first member from Germany join the Society in January! Chapters, don't forget that you are all in the running to gain bragging rights to the Little Brown Jug of Membership, so keep those referrals coming in!

Marketing: If you're planning to set up at flea markets, attend auctions, travel to antique shows or sell Red Wing on eBay, consider contacting the office for RWCS brochures and past newsletters to hand out. These are free, we just ask you to pay for shipping or pick them up at the office. Download a media request form on the RWCS website or call RWCS Membership Coordinator Katie Hardyman.

Street Banners: Members and chapters are able to purchase the banners that hang in downtown Red Wing the week of Convention. We discussed at MidWinter ways of reducing the cost of these (after the print deadline), so if you are interested in ordering one, call Katie at the office for new details.

Website: In 2009, the RWCS website will be under construction for a new face lift to bring it up to date and add new features including a classified section, latest eBay hot sales, discussion board and more information about Red Wing pottery. Members interested in helping with this project are asked to call Stacy at the office.

E-mail Addresses: Please make sure that if you have a new e-mail address or recently started e-mail service to let us know in the office. This way we can send you receipts for your transactions for events, update you on pressing club news and remind you when your membership expires. Thanks to the e-mail addresses we already have, the Society sends half as many commemorative confirmation and membership expiration reminder post cards than it used to send out. The new website will also provide us with a way to create lists that you can opt in and out of to receive timely club news and information about events.

RWCS FINANCIAL REVIEW

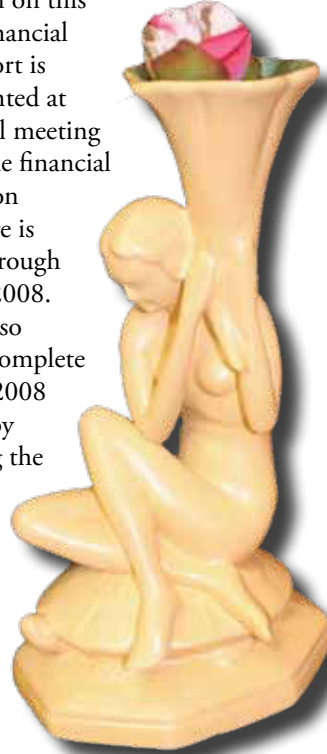
STATEMENT OF REVENUES ALL SOURCES

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DEC. 31, 2008

REVENUES	12 MOS. ENDED 12/31/08
ADVERTISING	\$761.00
AUCTION	128,694.00
BANQUET	2,152.00
CATALOG SALES	1,462.00
COMMEMORATIVES	70,430.00
COMMEMORATIVES (MAILED)	73,442.00
DONATIONS	160.16
FACILITIES	572.40
INTEREST	13,891.80
KIDSVIEW	2,438.50
LOTTERY SALES	12,450.00
MAILING FEES	18,290.00
MEMBERSHIPS	92,594.00
MISCELLANEOUS	512.70
NEWSLETTER ADS	2,050.75
PICNIC	2,565.00
PRE-REGISTRATION	46,800.00
REGISTRATION (WALK-IN)	3,790.00
SELLERS' TABLES	7,890.00
SURCHARGE - CC CHARGE	172.75
TOTAL REVENUE	\$481,119.06
EXPENDITURES	\$477,464.09
NET REVENUES	\$3,654.97

In every February issue of the newsletter, your Board furnishes you with a financial summary such as the one shown on this page. A financial status report is also presented at our annual meeting in July. The financial information shown here is current through Dec. 31, 2008. You can also receive a complete listing of 2008 expenses by contacting the RWCS Business Office.

Mark Collins,
Treasurer



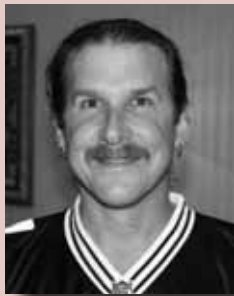
RED WING COLLECTORS SOCIETY – 2009 BUDGET RED WING, MINNESOTA

REVENUES	2008 ACTUAL	2008 BUDGET	2009 BUDGET
GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE	\$109,869.41	\$114,400.00	\$113,080.00
CONVENTION	56,786.50	67,809.00	60,714.00
COMMEMORATIVE	174,612.00	189,000.00	167,000.00
AUCTION	130,328.75	137,700.00	137,700.00
<u>MIDWINTER</u>	<u>9,522.40</u>	<u>8,472.40</u>	<u>10,641.30</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	\$481,119.06	517,381.40	489,135.30
EXPENDITURES			
GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE	239,897.54	232,726.00	217,252.00
CONVENTION	46,971.55	54,964.00	50,646.00
COMMEMORATIVE	59,214.48	87,740.00	80,250.00
AUCTION	119,751.34	125,700.00	125,700.00
<u>MIDWINTER</u>	<u>11,629.18</u>	<u>12,193.40</u>	<u>13,409.30</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$477,464.09	513,323.40	487,257.30
NET REVENUES	\$3,654.97	\$4,058.00	\$1,878.00

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES ALL SOURCES

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DEC. 31, 2008

EXPENDITURES	12 MOS. ENDED 12/31/08
ACCOUNTING	\$2,940.00
ADVERTISING	4,637.50
AUCTIONEER	2,571.00
BADGES/BUTTONS	111.77
BANK & CC CARD CHARGES	3,775.80
COMMEMORATIVES	37,182.97
COMMUNITY EVENTS	70.00
COMPUTER & RENTAL	892.11
CONVENTION BANNERS	1,064.41
CONVENTION SUPPLEMENT	3,342.02
DISPLAY	1,023.21
DONATIONS	21,400.00
DUES/SUBSCRIPTIONS	715.00
EDUCATION (STAFF)	340.28
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	6,234.30
EQUIPMENT RENTAL	4,672.93
EXECUTIVE BOARD	2,299.06
FACILITIES	20,872.40
FULL BOARD	11,245.19
INSURANCE	6,236.26
INTERNET/E-MAIL	420.00
KIDSVIEW	1,224.06
LODGING	451.96
MEALS	99.05
MEMBERSHIP COSTS	1,314.44
MILEAGE/TRAVEL	2,310.53
NEWSLETTER	79,218.13
NEWSLETTER TRAVEL	833.33
OFFICE SUPPLIES & MISC.	3,563.47
ONLINE MARKETING	4,933.75
ONLINE MEMBERSHIP	9,781.25
PAID TO OWNERS	115,331.00
PAYROLL TAXES	4,641.76
PETTY CASH	436.38
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	12,056.96
PRINTING (COMMEMORATIVES)	443.61
PRINTING (CONVENTION)	1,855.83
PUBLICITY/MARKETING	2,765.00
SALARY (ASSISTANT)	12,429.12
SALARY (BUSINESS MANAGER)	45,605.59
SALARY (STIPENDS)	8,216.13
SAMPLE	5,070.00
SECURITY	3,494.53
SHOW & SALE PRINTING	1,021.14
SIGNAGE	285.33
SOCIAL EVENT	8,471.52
SOCIAL EVENT (BANQUET)	2,125.34
SOCIAL EVENT (PICNIC)	2,243.40
SUPPLIES	219.31
TAXES	3,360.00
TELEPHONE	3,107.09
TOUR BUS	429.84
VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION	2,144.03
<u>WEB SITE</u>	<u>5,935.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$477,464.09



**BOB
MORAWSKI**

*Commemorative
Manager*

The Western Stoneware Company will once again produce this year's RWCS Commemorative. I have received the final samples and the master mold has been made. They are now in the process of making production molds from the master mold. Casting of the pieces will begin shortly.

Interest in the Commemorative has been on the decline over the past few years, so I'm implementing the following enhancements, which I presented to the membership at MidWinter. This year, we will have approximately 3,700 regular Commemoratives and 18 Special Commemoratives made. Of the 3,700 regular pieces, there will be three different limited editions. All three versions will come from the same mold and will be the same size and shape. Version A will be approximately 90 percent of the 3,700. Version B will be approximately 9 percent of the 3,700 and there will be 33 pieces of Version C to match the club's anniversary.

For example, if the Commemorative were an art pottery piece, Version A might be red, Version B blue and Version C green. If it were a stoneware piece, Version A might have a target decoration, Version B a leaf and Version C a butterfly. No one will know which version they are going to get until they pick it up at Convention or receive it in the mail. If picking up at Convention, you will come to the Commemorative Room and choose a sealed box from the table of approximately 100 boxes. The table will be restocked as needed. You will then break the seal on the box to see which version is inside. If for some reason you are unhappy with the quality of your piece, you may exchange it for a piece of the same version that meets your approval. As for mailed Commemoratives, pieces will be chosen at random to fill mailed orders.

In the past, members with lottery numbers 1-500 were able to buy their lottery piece as early as Thursday. This year we're lowering the numbers to 1-300. This is because I have received a lot of positive feedback from members about the new changes and I don't want to run out of lottery pieces on Saturday for members with low numbers. It shouldn't matter if you arrive at Convention on Thursday or Saturday. If you have a lottery number below 300, I want to make sure you'll get a lottery piece if you want one.

In the Commemorative Room this year, we will also hold a silent auction for a set of the three versions of the regular Commemorative. In addition, whereas we'd normally sell 12 of the 2009 Commemoratives at the 2010 Thursday Night Auction, we will instead sell four sets of the three pieces. Each set will contain a piece from versions A, B and C.

I hope you are as excited as I am with the new changes and plans. I have already received much positive feedback and I can't wait until Convention arrives!



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT YOUR MUSEUM?

Story by Ron Linde, RWCS Foundation Board Member

Come see the newly loaned stoneware items on display at the Red Wing Pottery Museum! Also, George and Evelyn Stein of California have generously loaned many of their Nokomis-glazed pieces from their fabulous Convention display for the Museum diorama. Thank you to all members for your Museum loans.

As you likely know, 85 to 90 percent of all items in the Museum are on loan. These loans give us all the opportunity to see items and pieces that are otherwise usually stored in collections. The Museum does not buy any stoneware or pottery items, and never has – it relies strictly on loans and donations.

As you have noticed, the Museum is busting at its seams. At our Jan. 3 meeting, we began the arduous task of interviewing professional fundraisers. Thoughts of a new space, a covering for the kiln and an executive director for the Museum dance in our heads. Board member Wayne Burk from Iowa is leading the effort.

Speaking of Board members, recent additions to the Foundation Board include Dave Short of Urbandale, Iowa, Carmen Selfridge of Healdsburg, California and John Key of Red Wing. Welcome aboard! And many thanks to Dave Hutchison and Dave Hallstrom, who are leaving the Board. The Foundation Board elected Dave Hallstrom to the position of Museum Director because of his numerous efforts to keep the Museum in tiptop shape. He expressed his appreciation to members of the Cannon Valley Chapter, led by Connie Kolberg, who have helped with much of the Museum signage and used their "elbow grease" on more than one occasion to clean windows and display cases. Thank you all!

In addition to developing and managing the Museum, the Foundation continues its efforts to educate prospective Red Wing collectors and inform the public about efforts to help preserve the important pottery heritage in Red Wing. The Board also added the Red Wing Pottery Museum Scholarship at its January meeting. The \$500 award will be presented annually to a high school senior in Red Wing who: (1) is working to his/her full potential, (2) demonstrates active support of the Red Wing community through community service and volunteer activities and (3) is passionate about the preservation of the historical assets of Red Wing, including the potteries of Red Wing. Realizing the many increasing costs associated with running the Museum and the importance of securing a prominent image for the Museum, longtime Red Wing collectors and meeting guests Bonnie Myers and Nick Marson of Winona, Minn. generously gave an initial donation to help with this scholarship. As they presented the donation, they asked that other RWCS members also give regular donations to this scholarship to match or add to their annual donation to help with the funding of this award.

In our endowed scholarship that takes no money from our thin coffers, talented young potter Aaron Sober was the scholarship award recipient for 2008. He crafts stylish, functional pottery in his studio at the Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis. During his Red Wing visit, he toured our Museum and was fascinated with the scope of Red Wing pottery production.

Hope to see you all at the MidWinter GetTogether in Des Moines! Join members of the Foundation Board as we discuss and answer your questions at one of the educational seminars and be sure to check out our website at

WWW.RWCSFOUNDATION.ORG.

"A derivation of water emulsion zinc, cheap, sure-sealing, even-coating, it could skip two steps – interior sealing with a separate clay and salt glazing during firing."

–Lyndon Viel's description of zinc glaze from page 15 of *Clay Giants*.

FROM

SALT TO ZINC

Story by Rick Natynski

When it comes to the period between 1895 and 1900 when the Red Wing and Minnesota Stoneware companies moved away from making salt glaze stoneware, some very unique pieces were turned out of the potteries.

This time frame is known by collectors as the Transition Era, as it is when potteries around the country began to produce white-glazed ware because it was easier to make and higher in quality. According to *Red Wing Potters & Their Wares* by Gary and Bonnie Tefft, the white, opaque glazes were developed in Bristol, England, which is why they're referred to as Bristol glazes. (Collectors often refer to Red Wing stoneware carrying the red wing, birchleaf and Elephant Ear decorations as zinc glaze or white glaze, so these two terms are used interchangeably in this article.)

Why the Change?

One of the biggest advantages that zinc glaze held over salt glaze was in the quality. Zinc glaze was stronger, more consistent and less likely to show stains from lard and other contents. Anyone who has collected for awhile will tell you that they've seen a lot more pieces of salt glaze stoneware with stains than they have zinc glaze. In addition, glaze pitting caused by exposure to acid is much more common on salt glaze than it is on zinc glaze.

Another significant advantage of white glaze stoneware is that it could be manufactured

and decorated faster and with less skill than salt glaze. Thus, Red Wing could make a better product and they could make it faster and cheaper than before.

"Applying Albany slip to the inside of the crock was no longer necessary," says longtime Red Wing Stoneware collector and dealer Larry Peterson. "Plus, they needed a talented artist to decorate stoneware with leaves and butterflies and that took time, but anybody could quickly stamp a set of elephant ear leaves on the side of a crock."

The stark white backgrounds of zinc-glazed pieces also lent themselves better to advertising stamps for companies looking to put their names on crocks, jugs and churns. In addition, the white glaze also made it easier for people to tell how well they cleaned a piece of stoneware after using it.

Transition History

White-glazed stoneware was first available for purchase in 1895 according to Union Stoneware Company price lists, but as the Teffts report in their book, only pieces 1 gallon and smaller were manufactured at first. This is because the soot and ash produced by the wood and coal fuels would ruin white-glazed wares, so they had to be placed in larger salt glazed crocks when they were in the kiln to be protected from the impurities. The Teffts say that protective fire clay containers called saggars were also used to "keep the ware out

of the direct draft of the kiln fire." By 1895, however, the kilns were converted to oil heat, so soot and ash were no longer problems.

Less than a year later, the Oct. 1, 1896 Union Stoneware price lists offered more white-glazed pieces, but still nothing larger than a 20 lb. bailed jar with lid. The price list reproduced in the Tefft book shows that white-glazed pieces were priced slightly higher than the same pieces that were all brown or salt-glazed.

When Larry Peterson acquired the 30 gallon F.A. Morley jug, he dug deep with his research to figure out when it was made and he was amazed to discover that the early pieces of zinc glaze stoneware were older than he thought. He believes the third branch of the Union Stoneware Co. – the North Star Stoneware Company – might have caused that misconception among collectors.

"I think one reason people believe that zinc glaze wasn't made until 1897 and beyond is that the North Star Stoneware Company was only known to produce salt glaze, and they ceased operation in 1896," Peterson says. "But the fact is, they were struggling to stay afloat, so experimenting with white glaze probably wasn't an option for them like it was for the larger of the three companies."

By the time 1897 rolled around, the Red Wing and Minnesota Stoneware companies

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

At top: Crocks decorated with three cobalt leaves are hard enough to find in salt glaze form, but being a zinc glaze transitional piece makes the three-leaf 20 gallon jar with Union Stoneware oval exceedingly rare.

1a-1b. As the Potteries began to invest in rubber ink-stamped numbers, it's clear they started with smaller sizes first because small pieces were ordered more often by consumers.

Elephant Ear crocks sized 2 through 6 gallons always seemed to have the number applied with a rubber ink stamp.

However, earlier Elephant Ear crocks ranging in size from 8 to 40 gallons have the gallon capacity hand-drawn in cobalt. **2.** This 2 gallon zinc glaze beehive jug not only has excellent form, but also some great turkey droppings, indicating that it's probably a transition piece because salt glazing still coated

the ceiling of the kiln and dripped onto the jug. This particular piece sold for more than \$200 on eBay in January, but it's likely it wouldn't have topped \$50 without turkey droppings.

3a-3c. These two 8-gallon crocks were obviously decorated by the same person, so it's possible that they were made only months or even days apart. The transition piece is stamped "Red Wing Stoneware Company" on the front.



1a.



1b.



2.



3a.



3b.



3c.



put to shame most of the transition pieces we've seen to date. Clearly, these pieces were made specifically to display at the exposition, as they carried the Union Stoneware name in big, bold script. Red Wing wanted to put its best foot forward in showing the country what it could do, and as the photo indicates, it was successful in doing so. But what happened to these pieces? One theory among collectors is that they were destroyed at the end of the Omaha exposition so they wouldn't have to be shipped back to Red Wing. It's more fun, however, to dream that they were sold to the locals and today a few are out there somewhere sitting in an old Nebraska barn or basement. Even though more than 100 years have passed since the exposition and none of these impressive pieces have shown up to date, it's always possible that one of them might surface someday. We can only hope....

decorations, rubber ink stamps and "Red Wing Stoneware Company" and "RWSCO" stamps impressed into the clay are a sign that a lot of experimentation was taking place. What's really intriguing is that it wasn't like there was a quality-control department in place to keep these pieces from getting out. They were being sold just like everything else, and that's why so many different variations of the same piece exist today. The photos on these pages show some of the different types of pieces that were made.

were turning out huge amounts of quality zinc-glazed wares. The Teffts cite a June 16, 1897 article from the *Red Wing Daily Republican* in which the reporter describes seeing a load of white-glazed stoneware being taken out of a Minnesota Stoneware kiln. "Two years ago had you told the managers of these works that white ware would be made here, they would have looked at you with the eye of a skeptic. Yet here was presented a kiln of ware of the purest creamy white glaze, uniform in color throughout, firm in body, perfect in form; in short fulfilling every particular all that could be desired by anyone in stoneware manufacture."

Most collectors believe that the rubber-stamped Elephant Ear leaves predate the rubber-stamped birchleaves, and the number of Elephant Ear transition pieces existing out there certainly support this theory. In collecting photos for this article, plenty of transition Elephant Ear pieces were found and used, but the only photo of a transition crock with birchleaves is the 40 gallon on the opposite page. There's also a 25 gallon birchleaf crock just like it on page 49 of *Red Wing Stoneware*. Because the Potteries didn't make many 25 and 40 gallon crocks early on, it's likely that the rubber ink stamps for these sizes hadn't been made at that point.

The best and perhaps the only photo to reference from the Transition Era is that of the Union Stoneware Company booth at the Trans Mississippi & International Exposition in Omaha (seen above), which started on June 1, 1898. It shows crocks, jugs and churns decorated with a mixture of rubber stamp-applied Elephant Ear leaves and capacity numbers, and hand-drawn cobalt leaves and capacity numbers.

The Teffts write on page 67 of their book that the transition to white-glazed wares was complete in 1900. They site the following quote from the 1902 *Red Wing Year Book*: "Their most radical change in wares was about three years ago when they discarded the dark glaze in favor of the white glaze which is the highest stoneware product to be made. After that comes the art of making wares from mixed bodies in every degree of intimacy."

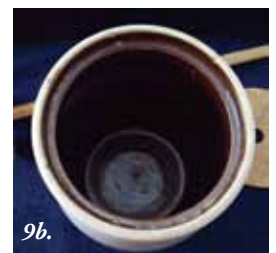
The decorated pieces shown in the 1898 expo photo only have hand-drawn cobalt leaves and rubber-stamped Elephant Ear leaves. This serves as additional proof that Elephant Ear leaves came first, as no birchleaves are visible on pieces in the Union Stoneware booth.

There are also some ornately decorated pieces of transition stoneware in this photo that

The Oddities That Make Collecting Fun

One thing that's clear about Red Wing's transition is that it didn't take place at the flip of a switch, because a combination of old and new production techniques are found on a variety of pieces made during this time. The intermingling of Albany slip interiors, hand-drawn numbers and

Gary Tefft suggests the Elephant Ears were abandoned before long, possibly because it was more difficult to apply without making a misprint. This makes sense, as you often see Elephant Ear pieces that appear to be



double-stamped with one set of leaves right on top of the other. This is less-often the case with the birchleaf decoration.

Because there are salt glaze and zinc glaze crocks out there that bear identical hand-drawn cobalt decorations, one would think that the production of new white-glazed pieces signaled that the last salt glaze piece had been produced. However, the photos of the 2 and 5 gallon salt glaze Elephant Ear crocks with Albany slip interiors and the Union oval (photos 8a and 8b) prove otherwise. Although it doesn't seem possible, these were probably made sometime after the first zinc glaze stoneware bearing hand-drawn cobalt decorations, even though they're salt glaze pieces. To add to the perplexity, Tefft recalls seeing a few salt glaze pieces that had the rubber-stamped birchleaf decoration at the RWCS Convention that took place sometime before 1981. He says he's seen a few since then, as well. These are obviously quite rare, as no photos exist in books or old *RWCS Newsletters*.

On the other end of the spectrum, the absence of certain hand-drawn cobalt

decorations on transition stoneware tells us which decorations were earlier than others. Since only targets, leaves and butterflies have been seen on white-glazed pieces, it's likely that decorations like ribcages, drop-8s, single Ps and specialty decorations like birds, lilies and flowers were no longer used by the mid-1890s. But just watch...now that this article has been printed, a zinc glaze transition crock with a bird will probably show up. It always seems to happen that way....

Until recently, only zinc glaze transition crocks and churns have been found with hand-drawn cobalt decorations. When asked if they'd ever seen or knew of a white-glazed beehive jug or water cooler with a hand-drawn cobalt decoration, both Larry Peterson and mega-collector Lyle Berman said they hadn't. It's possible that the 5 gallon zinc glaze transition beehive jug with hand-drawn cobalt leaf pictured on the front cover of this issue is the only one known to exist at this point, but if there's one out there, conventional wisdom tells us there could be more.

Still, no transition water coolers with hand-drawn cobalt decorations are pictured

in books or known to exist by the general population of Red Wing collectors. The transition coolers that do exist have a rubber-stamped "Ice Water" ink label and just like other transition pieces, bear either a rubber-stamped Union Stoneware ink oval, a Minnesota Stoneware ink oval, or the "Red Wing Stoneware Company" signature from the salt glaze era stamped into the clay (see photos 4a-4d). We aren't aware of any zinc glazed transition pieces being side-stamped with the Minnesota Stoneware Company split oval, but again, that's not to say that one won't turn up someday.

Although we'll probably never know everything there is to know about Red Wing's Transition Era, the fun thing is that new pieces are always being found or "re-discovered" so they can be documented with a photo and shared with all collectors. The Potteries made so many pieces with unique attributes during this time that anybody has the opportunity to find something that wasn't previously known to exist, even though collectors have been paying closer attention in the 30+ years that the Red Wing Collectors Society has been around. ■

Transition Photos

4a-4d. These Ice Water coolers really help tell the story of what was going on at the time in Union Stoneware's history. They're virtually identical except for the fact that the one on the far left is salt-glazed and the one on the far right has a white-glazed interior. From left to right: unsigned salt glaze, front-stamped Red Wing Stoneware, Union Stoneware oval and Minnesota Stoneware oval.

5a-5b. These Success Filter tops both have a rubber ink stamp, but the toggle wheel decorations indicate that the salt glaze version is a Minnesota Stoneware piece and the transition version is a Red Wing Stoneware piece.

6. This 4 gallon Elephant Ear crock has an Albany slip interior, a Union Stoneware oval and a Red Wing Stoneware Company side-stamp. Larry Peterson sold a 20-gallon Elephant Ear crock with Union oval last summer that was back-stamped.

7. This remarkable 3 gallon transition crock has both a hand-drawn cobalt number with target decoration AND an ink-stamped number, Elephant Ear decoration and Union oval. Who knows? If the worker who decorated this was feeling sentimental, maybe it's the first piece to have an ink-stamp and last to have a cobalt decoration.

8a-8b. These 2-and 5-gallon crocks are salt-glazed, but also have rubber-ink stamped Elephant Ear leaves.

9a-9b. This Mennig & Slater advertising churn is quite desirable not only because it's only 1 gallon in size, but also because its Albany slip interior makes it a transition piece. A 5-gallon salt glaze churn with a hand-drawn "5" and rubber ink-stamped Mennig & Slater oval is pictured on page 52 of Red Wing Collectibles.

10a-10b. An impressive grouping of transition churns with hand-drawn cobalt leaves, some of which are front or back stamped "Red Wing Stoneware Company" or "RWSCO".

11a-11d. Transition crocks with hand-drawn cobalt leaves were usually made between 5 and 30 gallons in size, but this 40 gallon is the only known to exist and predates the 40 and 25 gallon Elephant Ear crocks with hand-drawn numbers. 40 and 25 gallon Elephant Ear crocks seem to only have hand-drawn cobalt numbers, as do a few early 40 and 25 gallon birchleaf crocks (see photo 11d). These ink stamps probably hadn't been made yet because the crocks were odd sizes that weren't ordered as often by consumers.

12. Believe it or not, this 4-gallon salt glaze leaf churn has a white glaze interior! Unfortunately a photo of the inside couldn't be located, but it sold on eBay in March of 2007. It's no surprise that this is one of the only examples that exist...you'll have to take our word for it, but the salt/zinc combination isn't very attractive.





A SPECIAL NOVEMBER DIG

Story by Steve Showers, Red Wing Pottery Dump Digger

November 4 started like any other digging day. Paul Boudin (my digging partner) and I started a hole at about 9 a.m. and dug about seven feet down to the water, spending the better part of the day finding broken crocks, jugs and flat-bottom bowls. After finding several whole bowls, Paul and I decided to call it a day at 4 p.m.

We were pulling down the sidewalls, which were mostly raw clay and molds, when a large section came loose and revealed the bottom of a small crock or jug. I told Paul to dig it out carefully because it could be intact. To our surprise it was not only intact, but it was also a salesman's sample 20 gallon salt glaze crock with a cobalt leaf. It was in excellent condition; the only flaw was a small crack on the back side. I had never dug a piece of anything like this before. It was a great find and the perfect way to end our day. ■

Top: Steve Showers in his element with one of his best finds yet - the salesman's sample crock.

Above: Paul Boudin poses with the piece in the hole it came from.

Upper right: A life-sized photo of the salesman sample crock.

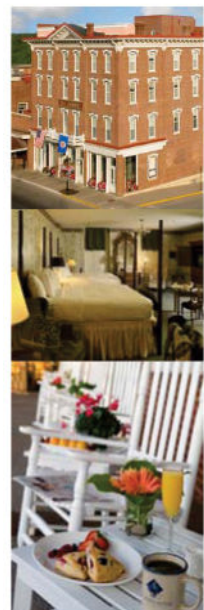
Digging photos by Connie Mathison

CHAPTER EVENTS

Southwest Redwingers
1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 28 at the home of Kirk and Greta Hoermans at 9006 West Escuda Drive in Peoria, AZ. Call 623-322-9966 for further information.

Annual Spring Fling at noon Saturday, March 28 at the home of Colleen and David Nelson, 16 West Wood Drive in Phoenix, AZ. Call 602-863-4418 for more information. Visitors welcome at both meetings!

Cannon Valley Chapter
6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 10 at Liberty's Restaurant in Red Wing. Begins with dinner, followed by meeting at 7 p.m. Call 507-263-9245 for more information.



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Stay 3 nights at the Historic St. James Hotel

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A Year in the Life of an Amateur Collector

Story by Karen Wegner, RWCS Member

My life has changed a lot in the past year. Before moving away to college, I had lived my entire life in the same room of the same house in Red Wing, Minnesota. The potteries of Red Wing were undiscovered for me. I knew that Red Wing pottery existed, but the only images that came to mind were different sized crocks with red wings on the sides. This was not very inspiring for me.

I guess I have to share my first piece with my husband, Levi, because it was a wedding gift, but it was a brushed ware vase from our uncle, Todd Avery, who's now the RWCS auction manager. I never realized that something so beautiful had been made in Red Wing! Then my in-laws gave me the Ray Reiss *Red Wing Art Pottery* books as a Christmas gift in 2007. At that moment I really began to see the depth and creativity that came out of the Red Wing Potteries. Art pottery became a reality! The hunt was on.

In the beginning, I spent hours on eBay looking and waiting for pieces that I could afford. They were very few and far between. I went to the MidWinter GetTogether in 2008 with one word from Levi: "BUDGET". I didn't know exactly what I liked and what I could actually afford, but the auction was a great time. I didn't win a single item, but it was my first auction and I did bid on a few items. My sister-in-law, RWCS Executive Director Stacy Wegner, won a box of Town & Country dinnerware. When I looked at it, I found that I liked the look and how it formed to your hand. It fit my criteria of function and aesthetics. Stacy eventually traded a chartreuse Town & Country creamer in collector condition for a pizza dinner. I got the best of that deal.

eBay and the Ray Reiss books trained my eye to pick out Red Wing. I began to spend less time on eBay and more time hunting through lots of junk in the many thrift stores in the Twin Cities. I also learned to look for estate sales in the Thursday paper and search for classified ads that said "diggers paradise" and "years of accumulation". One of my favorite finds was a 13-inch forest green Town & Country salad bowl in mint condition at a local estate sale that I bought for \$1. Another patron had set it aside and I had to wait 10 agonizing minutes for her to decide whether she wanted to buy it or not. She left it and I immediately picked it up and didn't set it down until I left the sale.

At the time I was not completely sure what it was, but the shape, color and the fact that a smaller, cracked salad bowl in the metallic brown telltale glaze color was also there made me pretty sure it was Red Wing Town & Country. The uncertainty prompted me to buy a dinnerware catalog and coin the slogan, "Where there is one, there are more". Red Wing pottery is often unmarked and unrecognized by many

estate sale managers, so a discerning eye can find bargains.

Another find was an unmarked Crocus teapot and cover that has a small chip under the rim of the lid for \$3 at a thrift store in Burnsville, Minn. I could not believe my luck. I was unfamiliar with the pattern, but the moment I saw it I knew it was Red Wing. The handle shape on the lid and a funny leaning look gave it away.

I was very impressed with the Nokomis display at Convention this year. The glaze is gorgeous and with any luck I will be able to add my first Nokomis piece soon.

I was also privileged to meet and dig with Steve Showers during the past year. Someone get that guy a new carabiner! That was an eye opening experience. I don't know what I was expecting, but I didn't think it would be mounds and mounds of broken pottery. I quickly found out that Steve doesn't give up easily and that he is in better shape than most of us. I was standing in water to the top of my galoshes not finding much and he would say, "Go a little more". If anyone is thinking about attempting to dig with Steve, bring waterproof boots, something to sit on (shards are sharp), loads of drinking water and a snack. My greatest find wasn't even pottery, but a belt buckle with the monogram "FJF". It's in fair shape, so I wonder if it accidentally fell into the dump. At the time I found it, I was waist deep in a hole with shards, roots and dirt all over. I want to get down there again soon so I can become an official "Dump Digger".

Of course I also returned home with a bucket full of shards that day. One day when my dad was visiting, he combed through my findings and took the handle and spout of an Albany slip jug. Using a complete Albany slip jug he had as a reference, he gave us a beautiful creation which he crafted from a solid chunk of walnut (pictured at lower left).

All of these experiences over the past year have helped me discover the things I like about Red Wing pottery. I admit that I would buy anything when I first started, but now I have a much more careful eye. I know what I want and what to look for. I have learned much from my beginner mistakes in buying and displaying alike. To date I have more than 100 pieces of Red Wing that need protecting. Something as simple as a small investment in cabinets has made it possible to have both pets and pots in my home. I can't wait to see what adventures in pottery are around the corner. See you at Convention 2009! ■

(If anyone has information to share about Town & Country, I would appreciate hearing from you. I want to learn as much as possible about these works. Why is it always unmarked? E-mail me at KWEGNER963@GMAIL.COM.)





Above: "Wow" is the first word that comes out of most collectors' mouths when seeing this photo for the first time. The large tobacco cabinet makes an already incredible display look even better. Note the spongeband decoration surrounding the room near the ceiling. Below: The Stepps' stack of Red Wing Koverwates.



Whether they primarily collect stoneware, dinnerware or art pottery, a lot of collectors like to focus on a couple specific lines within their interest when looking for new pieces to add to their collection. But Nebraska collectors Kevan and Terri Stepp have only two broad categories in which a piece must fit to attract their interest. It doesn't matter if it's spongeware, spongeband, salt glaze, zinc glaze, saffronware or transitional. It just needs to be stoneware and it needs to be made by Red Wing.

"We like it all," Terri says.

"That's the problem," Kevan adds.

With more than 470 pieces in their collection, they're quickly closing in on the milestone no. 500. Fortunately they have the space necessary to display their massive collection. They've reclaimed their

finished rec room in the basement for stoneware, as their sons, now ages 19 and 23, aren't around the house as much as they used to be.

Most of us have someone who we can blame our Red Wing addiction on, and for the Stepps it's Kevan's sister, Shelley. She was turning a barn into a house in Blair, Neb. the late 1970s when she began decorating with Red Wing. In fact, she was the one who uncovered a coveted spongeband cake stand many years ago for only \$65. Kevan and Terri have held on to it for her ever since she moved out to the West Coast several years ago.

"When we saw how Shelley was decorating her home with stoneware, we just like the way it looked," says Terri. "It really fit our style."

Focusing at first on spongeband or anything decorated with a wing, the Stepps joined RWCS in the club's early years. Like some other regretful collectors, they recall passing over the chance to by the 1978 Commemorative.

"We couldn't understand why anyone would want a 'new' piece of Red Wing," Terri says. "Boy was that a mistake."

Three or 4 years later, the Stepps took a break from collecting and turned their focus to raising a family – they had two sons born in

In Stepp with Kevan & Terri Story by Rick Natynski



1985 and 1989, respectively. During that time they picked up the occasional piece of stoneware at local farm auctions, but never anything too expensive or large in size. But they rejoined the Society in 1993 and slowly began building their collection. Before they knew it, they were returning from a family vacation with a camper full of stoneware and they have been dedicated to their passion for Red Wing ever since.

As they learned more and more about Red Wing, one of the things Kevan and Terri liked the most was the way the company diversified.

“As one product line became obsolete due to the advent of refrigeration, Red Wing changed its focus to fill needs of consumers,” Kevan says. “It’s neat to learn about how they changed with the times.”

Displaying their collection appropriately has always been important to the Stepps, and it shows. From a wooden icebox and apartment-sized Hoosier cabinet to a hardware case and an enormous tobacco cabinet, their interest in antique furniture well-complements the many different lines of stoneware the Stepps collect. Terri found the tobacco cabinet back in 1999 at a farm auction only about 10 miles from their home, buying it specifically for displaying their smaller pieces of stoneware. Although a dealer bid her up, she still got a good deal – paying only \$1600 for the massive piece.

“I remember I had gone walleye fishing and I called Terri at one point to see if she found anything good,” Kevan says. “I didn’t expect her to find anything like that.”

Red Wing is a long-term investment for the Stepps. When they buy a piece, they buy it because they plan on appreciating it for a long time.

“When it came to investing, we tried playing the stock market at first, but we weren’t very good at it and it wasn’t very enjoyable,” Kevan says. “But unlike keeping your money locked up in a bank somewhere, Red Wing is something you can come home to every night and enjoy.”

Even though they have a huge collection, every collector still has that next piece they’re searching for, and the Stepps are no different. Counting Shelley’s cake stand, they have every piece of spongeband except for the largest of the two mugs that were produced. Terri is also looking for winged pantry jars and water coolers they don’t have, and Kevan hopes to find a signed salt glaze water cooler with hex bung at a reasonable price someday.

The Stepps’ interest in salt glaze has heightened in recent years. Pretty much any decoration catches their eye, but they’ve started to zero-in on side-stamped pieces. They’re also starting to get interested in transition stoneware, and they like to pick of piece of Red Wing memorabilia when they can. The couple acquires most of their new pieces on eBay, but also find things at antique shows or through word-of-mouth.

After all these years of collecting, it’s hard to believe that the 2008 Convention was their first. Terri is an accountant and her company’s fiscal years always ended around Convention time, so there was no chance

of getting away. But last year her employer’s fiscal calendar changed, allowing the Stepps to make their first July trip to Red Wing.

“It was awesome,” Kevan says. “It’s a beautiful town, and to find all that high-quality stoneware in one place and all those people who were just as excited about it as us was a lot of fun.”

As for the boys, Kevan and Terri hope they’ll both become collectors someday. For now, the older is starting to appreciate Red Wing, but the younger still thinks it’s silly. Fortunately they were always pretty careful around the collection – except for one time their older son had some friends over.

“We had a 4 gallon birchleaf churn that got the bottom broken out of it,” Terri says. “To this day we don’t know what happened to it. Maybe one of his friends got a little overzealous with the dasher.”

“I’m sure somebody will fess up someday,” Kevan laughs. ■



Top of page: These photos show the depth and variety of the Stepps’ collection. Immediately above: Kevan and Terri pose with some of Terri’s favorites – Red Wing Ice Water coolers and pantry jars.

Classified ads are 20¢ per word; \$4 minimum charge and are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. In addition to appearing in the newsletter, classifieds and display ads are posted on the RWCS website.

Ads are divided into the following sections: Red Wing For Sale, Red Wing Wanted, Other Pottery For Sale, Other Pottery Wanted, Events, Auctions, Clubs & Publications and Websites, Announcements and Services. You will not be charged for these words, but please indicate which section your ad should be placed in. If ad is to run in more than one issue, please indicate at time of placement. (Note: the small number at the end of an ad tells when the ad expires, e.g., 12/09. Ads without dates are one-time ads.) Please type or print clearly and proofread before submission.

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1/4 page	125	115
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1/4 page	3 5/8 x 4 7/8
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Display ads are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The publisher reserves the right to refuse ads for any reason.

Ads must be supplied electronically as an EPS or PDF file for PC. If you are unsure about acceptability, inquire with the editor. There is an additional 10 percent fee for design and makeup if needed.

DEADLINES

Issue	Ad Deadline	Editorial Deadline
February	Jan. 10	Jan. 1
April	March 10	March 1
June	May 10	May 1
August	July 25	July 15
October	Sept. 10	Sept. 1
December	Nov. 10	Nov. 1

EDITOR ADDRESS

Make checks payable to RWCS and mail with ads to:

NOTE: New Address Rick Natynski
as of Feb. 2009 PO Box 198
Pewaukee, WI 53072

Or e-mail ads to NEWSLETTER@REDWINGCOLLECTORS.ORG with checks sent separately. Or, call Rick at 414-416-WING (9464).

RED WING FOR SALE

Handles and wooden lids. Send SASE for flyer to Larsen's Collectibles, 757 120th Street, Hampton, Iowa 50441-7555. Phone 641-866-6733. 8/09

Complete set of RWCS Commemoratives (1977-2008) mint condition, \$6,000. Bob White Lunch Hour tile by Edna Boldt featured on back of June 2006 *RWCS Newsletter*, \$1,200. Two 12-piece place settings of Bob White including dinner/salad/bread & butter plates, and cup & saucer, \$450 each set. All other pieces available including pepper mill, tumblers, mugs and 2 gal water jar w/solid base. Call 913-721-2188 for prices or price list. If no answer, leave number and we'll return your call. 2/09

Commemoratives – mint condition: 1984-2007. Best offer. Please call Deb at 507-236-3115.

Blue tint lid for 3 lb. bail handled refrigerator jar. Lid is mint. \$135 – shipping & insurance included. Call 507-526-5966.

Selling commemorative pieces:

1994 20 lb. crock, \$95; 1995 giraffe, \$95; 1996 cookie jar, \$150; 1997 20th anniversary, \$85; 1998 blue pitcher, \$90; 1999 koverweight, \$95. Shipping is additional. I will consider all reasonable offers. Excellent condition, not in boxes.

E-mail sschlitt@waukeshaki2.wi.us.

20 gallon salt glaze crock with hand-drawn "20" and two leaves marked "Minnesota Stoneware Company Red Wing" similar to the one sold at 2008 Convention. E-mail MCDANCL@MTCO.COM for details and photos. 4/09

RWCS Commemoratives: 1989 through 2008. \$2,600 plus shipping & insurance. Call 815-732-7141.

Pink Spice dinnerware from 1950s: (8) dinner plates, (6) 6-inch plates, (5) 5-inch bowls*, (4) saucers, (3) light green cups, (2) 7-inch & (1) 9-inch serving bowls, (1) 12-inch serving platter. All excellent condition, *except tiny chip on (2) bowls. Make offer. Sell separately or as a group. E-mail jws93060@ROADRUNNER.COM.

Commemoratives in box: 1995, \$80; 1997, \$110; 1998, \$100; 1999, \$75; 2002, \$75; 2004, \$80. Commemoratives out of box: 1986, \$210; 1987, \$190; 1988, \$115; 1990, \$100; 1994, \$80 or all 11 for \$995. Please call Grace after 5 p.m. at 507-645-4660.

Are you looking for a particular 2 gallon churn or a particular piece of art pottery? Leave a message at 952-922-9169 for Ron Linde.

10 gallon Red Wing water cooler w/complete drinking fountain. Cover for barrel and the wrought iron stand are included. The water cooler and accessories are in remarkably excellent condition. The complete water cooler was purchased at an auction in 1976. Formerly it stood in the Temperanceville, Virginia Elementary School until Aug. 1912. Asking price \$2,200.⁰⁰ plus shipping & insurance. Call Robert T. Hoppe at 410-334-3554.



RED WING WANTED

Wanted: 2 gal brown top wing jug, 2 gal brown top wing ball-lock jar, stacking refrigerator jars and Pantry jars (any size). Call Sid at 701-749-2586.

Wanted: Old Racine, Wis. advertising items wanted. E-mail HORLICK@WI.RR.COM or call 262-554-0488. 12/09

AUCTIONS

7th Annual Stoneware/Pottery Auction Sunday, March 1, 2009 at 12:30 p.m. at Storden School City Center, Storden, MN. 300+ Pieces Stoneware & Art Pottery, Roseville, Red Wing, Hull, McCoy, Watt, Rumrill, much, much more. Croatt Auction Service: John Croatt 17-32 at 507-445-3919, 507-830-1984, WWW.RRCNET.ORG/CROATT or WWW.MIDWESTAUCTIONS.COM 2/09

EVENTS

The Minnesota Antique Bottle Clubs presents its 38th annual Antique Bottle, Advertising, and Stoneware Show and Sale, March 29, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Select (note new location), 34th Avenue South and 80th Street in Bloomington, Minnesota (one block south of I-494 at 34th Ave). Hours: 9:30-2:30. Admission \$4.00. This show features antique bottles, country store, breweriana, soda fountain and plenty of stoneware. Info: 952-920-4205 or S.KETCHAM@UNIQUE-SOFTWARE.COM.

WEBSITES

Visit WWW.RAREREDWINGCOLLECTABLES.COM - a unique, new approach to buying and selling. Open to marketing your rare Red Wing pieces. Check it out! 12/09

CLUBS AND PUBLICATIONS

Stoneware book (*Antique Trader Stoneware Price Guide*); includes Red Wing; Monmouth-Western; Blue/White; Eastern U.S. 288 pages; colored photos; \$20 postage paid. Gail Peck, 2121 Pearl, Fremont, NE 68025; 402-721-5721. 12/09

NEW 2009 values for *Red Wing Stoneware* for \$12.95 and 2008 values for *Red Wing Collectibles* for \$9.95 or \$19.95 for both plus \$2/\$2.50 postage, respectively. Gail Peck, 2121 Pearl, Fremont, NE 68025; 402-721-5721. 12/09

Blue & White Pottery Club –

Visit the club's website for membership form at WWW.BLUEANDWHITEPOTTERY.ORG. Annual membership is \$15 for first member, \$5 each additional member and \$1 for members under 12 years old. You can also write to B&W Pottery Club, PO Box 460517, Aurora, CO 80015.

Collectors of Illinois Pottery & Stoneware – Visit the club's website at WWW.COIPS.ORG for membership form. Annual membership is \$20 for the first member of the household and \$5 for each additional member. You can also write to COIPS, c/o Susie Nolan, 402 N. Laurel St., Elmwood, IL 61529 or e-mail COIPS@MCHSI.COM.

RECENT FINDS & DEALS

Did you find a rare piece or a great deal worth sharing? Briefly describe the item, where it was sold, date purchased, venue (store, auction, etc.) and price paid. Send on a post card, or e-mail RWCSNEWSLETTER@WI.RR.COM, or enclose in an envelope if you'd like to include a photo for publication. Multiple submissions result in multiple entries in the Newsletter Special Commemorative Lottery at the 2009 Convention. Send to the editor at the address on page 2. All entries received between July 2008 and June of 2009 are eligible whether published or not. Please keep submittals with purchase dates within six months of the newsletter issue.

ITEM	LOCATION	DATE	VENUE	PRICE
Brushware cemetery vase, bottom-signed		11/08	eBay	\$36. ⁰⁰
7-inch sponge panel bowl w/Hill City, Kansas adv.	Iowa	11/08	Goodwill	\$40. ⁰⁰
Stag & doe sand jar, bottom-signed, hairline		12/08	eBay	\$124. ⁷⁰
Two 1 gal blue sponge crocks, mint & shipped		12/08	eBay	\$91. ⁰⁰
5 gal salt glaze beehive jug w/leaf	North Carolina	12/08	Auction	\$600. ⁰⁰
7-inch cobalt Reed mixing bowl, mint	Alden, MN	12/08	Estate sale	\$5. ⁰⁰
3 gal Sidney, NE adv crock w/wing, mint	Holdrege, NE	1/08	Auction	\$8,900. ⁰⁰



That's not a typo!

THE BITTERSWEET COMPLETION OF A RED WING CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT COLLECTION

Story by *Lori Madden*

Back in May of 2008, I called up my best friend, Donna Ayrens, but instead ended up speaking with her husband, Dave. In addition to being great friends of mine, Dave and Donna are big Red Wing collectors and RWCS members, so it wasn't a big surprise that he and I ended up that day discussing the topic of Christmas ornaments made by the new Red Wing Stoneware Co.

Dave and Donna had been collecting these ornaments since 2000, but it was the first and hardest to find piece that had eluded them all these years... the 1999 Red Wing Christmas Ornament. I told Dave that I'd keep my eyes open for one and he wished me luck since he was having a heck of a time trying to find one.

I must have called hundreds of antique shops and auctioneers over the course of the summer and spent countless hours trying to find one on eBay, but to no avail. I even called the Red Wing Stoneware Co. store in September, but they said all had been sold long ago and only 125 were made. I did, however, buy the 2008 ornament for them.

In late September, my husband, Roman, and I went to the Nebraska Junk Jaunt with Dave and Donna and I'm so glad that we did. We had a memorable time, but had I known it would be the last time we would all be together, I would have savored each moment. On Oct. 10, Donna, my best friend of 26 years, called to tell me that Dave had a massive heart attack and passed away. The news hit me like a ton of bricks. He had always been like a second father to me.

I was now more determined than ever to find the ornament that was missing in their collection. Donna never knew I had been searching for this piece because it was a secret between Dave and me. Although a small thing in the grand scheme of things, I thought that finding the ornament and giving it to Donna would put a smile on her face and help her reflect on all those good times she and Dave had together searching for Red Wing.

Numerous phone calls and eBay searches continued to lead to dead ends until late November, when I was shocked to

find one for sale on eBay. I placed a bid and even contacted the seller to tell them how excited I was about the chance to win it.

The next day I called Donna to chat, which wasn't out of the ordinary because we talk daily. But this time Donna proceeded to tell me how she had found the 1999 Red Wing Christmas ornament on eBay that she and Dave had sought after for so long. She said she was going to place a bid and was confident that she'd get it because the high bidder had only purchased six things on eBay. Little did she know that the current high bidder was me.

At that point I could barely speak. Donna asked what was wrong, so I told her how I was the high bidder, how Dave had filled me in on how rare it was, and how I had been secretly trying to find her one for several months. Now that everything was out there, Donna told me I could handle the bidding.

When the final day of the auction arrived, I was glued to my computer. There was no way I was going to miss my chance at getting this piece. In the final seconds I was bidding like mad, but someone out bid me just as the auction ended. I was crushed. I called Donna and told her the bad news. She tried to assure me that it was OK and we'd eventually find another one someday. I couldn't sleep that night, so I checked my e-mail and was shocked once again to see that the seller e-mailed me a second chance at the ornament, offering me the one from her personal collection because she knew how badly I wanted it. I clicked on the button, and it was done – I got it!

On December 10, two months after Dave died, the ornament arrived. Since it would have been Dave's birthday on Dec. 12, I planned on spending the weekend with Donna, all the while not telling her that I had ended up with the ornament. She said she was going to put up her small Christmas tree and decorate it with Dave's ornaments, and I said I'd bring the 2008 piece along.

That night, Donna first opened a gift from Roman – an ornament about spending a first Christmas in Heaven. Then I gave her the 2008 ornament, followed by the 1999 ornament wrapped in snowflake paper. I sat there with tears streaming down my face as she opened the 1999 piece; she was ecstatic. I had surprised her after all. I could only think about how Dave must be smiling down from Heaven, knowing that his ornament collection was finally complete. Happy Birthday, Dave - we miss you lots.



STONEWARE Q & A

The "Ask the Experts" section on the Red Wing Collectors Society website has been running for about 2½ years and continues to be a great resource for advanced collectors, people who aren't familiar with Red Wing pottery, and everyone in between. If you haven't logged on to WWW.REDWINGCOLLECTORS.ORG in awhile, you'll be greeted with lots of stoneware, dinnerware and art pottery questions and answers.

Stoneware expert Al Kohlman has been collecting Red Wing Stoneware since 1985 and he joined the Red Wing Collectors Society in 1987. His primary interests are stoneware and Red Wing animals, but he also dabbles in other areas of Red Wing and collects decorated Wisconsin Stoneware. The questions Al answers here are just the tip of the iceberg compared to the rest of the information already available on the site, and new questions are posted regularly.



Q: I am a member of the society and have just started collecting more pieces. My husband got this piece at a farm auction for about \$200 and I love it. Can you give me any information on this piece?

It looks like a preserve jar. Is it Red Wing? What would the value on a piece like this be? I'm pretty sure this is not the lid that goes with it...do you know what the lid should look like? I would greatly appreciate any information you could give me. Thank you very much!

A: Your preserve jar could be a Red Wing, North Star or a Western Stoneware jar. I would really need to see more of this piece to

say for sure. The time frame it was manufactured in would be anywhere from the late 1860s to the early 1890s. You are correct with the lid not being Red Wing. Not sure of the pottery that would have produced it, but here is an example of what the lid should look like. With the chip in the jar's rim, the value would be in the area of \$200.



These early preserve jars have a gorgeous shape and just seem to stand out in a salt glaze collection setting.

Q: I recently came across this piece and was surprised because the decoration looks like a North Star leaf. Is it really possible that this was made in Red Wing? I've been collecting for awhile, but didn't think they made salt glaze preserve jars.

A: Your 4 gallon salt-glazed preserve jar with leaf absolutely reflects the look of the primitive North Star leaf. The dash dot dash under the "4" along with the leaf just screams North Star or a potter from the North Star Stoneware Company that moved to another Midwestern pottery. As far as the style of the preserve jar, you can see an example of this in Albany



slip on page 52 of *Red Wing Potters & Their Wares*. We know that the Albany slip glazes were used in and during the salt glaze era. Also on page 79 of *Clay Giants 3* you will see a 3 gallon preserve jar with a cobalt leaf with the same style. Lastly, the cover of *Red Wing Potters & Their Wares* features a factory photo

of the North Star Plant and on the shelves are numerous salt glaze preserve jars of this style. With all of this information, I feel quite optimistic on your jar being North Star. It is a stunning piece!

Q: We found this piece on eBay last fall. There are two identical pieces pictured on pg. 43 of *Warman's Red Wing Pottery* that are owned by a collector who lives in Lake City, so some people have told us it's a strong possibility that the egg is some type of lunch hour piece. What does "lunch hour" mean, and do you think this egg could have been made in Red Wing? Thanks.



A: I have never seen or heard of this egg and for this reason, I'm afraid your stoneware egg is not Red Wing. This is my opinion, but I have been wrong before...according to my wife. I have never seen anything like it and therefore just do not have an answer for you on it. However, there may indeed be a collector out there who knows the history of this piece. Lastly the meaning of a "lunch hour" piece is a piece that was made or modified by a potter who was on their lunch hour break and not being paid by the stoneware company at the time. Some of these lunch hour pieces were quite elaborate and so unique that collectors will pay dearly for the one-of-a-kind or small numbers of them produced. Hope this helps. ■

COMING IN THE APRIL ISSUE...



MIDWINTER REVIEW

CRESCENT CREAMERIES TRIVETS

