

# RED WING COLLECTORS SOCIETY



**“Commemorating the Northstar”**

**Eighteenth Annual Convention**

**July 6, 7, 8, & 9, 1994**

**Red Wing, Minnesota**

# The North Star Factory 1892-1994

By Gary Tefft

When the North Star Stoneware Company factory was built, in the spring and summer of 1892, the prospects for it serving as a pot shop for many years to come would not have been doubted by anyone who had witnessed the eager growth of Red Wing's day industry in the previous few years. Its distinguished forerunners, the Red Wing and Minnesota Stoneware Companies, had established themselves as the leaders in the industry and had been expanding their own shops at a remarkable rate in order to keep up with the demand. The new company entered the field with twice the capital stock of its predecessors and promised to do a first-class job of competing.

That the building served as a pottery factory for only four years was an unanticipated destiny. An acute economic depression, "the Panic of 1893", hobbled the company and its backers mere months after production began. The wounds eventually proved mortal. The building turned out to be remarkably more enduring than the company that created it. The demolition crew who razed it this past winter, to clear the lot for a new Americinn Motel, will testify that it did not yield willingly to their efforts.

North Star was incorporated on the 5th Of March, 1892, and immediately set to work on preparations for the construction of the factory. Early in April the contract for excavation of the lot was let, and the brick for both the building and the kilns was ordered. It is assumed that the brick was a local product; red clay brick was made by several firms in Red Wing as early as the mid-1850's and was one of the first products for which the city was known. Of the bricks examined in the rubble, there were a small number impressed "M.B. Co.". These initials might represent Minneapolis or Minnesota, but these bricks were the exception. Like examples of known Red Wing brick, the vast majority were plain, with no identification.

The foundation stones, another local specialty, were contracted to be in place by May 20 by the company of Gust Lillyblad. Heavy rains delayed progress and caused a re-doubling of effort. As summer turned to fall it was projected that operations would begin just a few weeks hence, but it wasn't until the end of November that the first successful kiln loads of ware were produced. The newness of the kilns and poor fuel were blamed for the failure of the first firings to match the high Red Wing standard.

While examining the rubble of the demolition this spring, one could still detect vestiges of the building's original purpose. An opening into the cellar once led to the clay mills where the clay and glazing slips were prepared. Direct evidence of its former use had been effectively obliterated by its conversion and nearly ninety years of use as a malting operation. The brickwork star emblem salvaged from the second story of the north wall remains North Star's epitaph, as it has since the pottery closed.

The whereabouts of the dumpsite where North Star deposited its rejects was finally revealed to wondering collectors. Whereas the dumpsite of the Red Wing Stoneware Company was thoroughly explored while it was fully exposed, the North Star dump was only revealed for a few weeks and has now been obliterated. It had been there all along, buried on the east end of the factory. The importance of a pottery

dumpsite is the opportunity it affords to study the styles and types of wares produced. Until now, the only examples of old stoneware that could certainly be attributed to North Star were those which bore a company signature. Completely missing among the known collections of signed North Star pieces have been hand-turned, salt-glazed jars of the sort whose hand-drawn decorations on the products of the other two Red Wing companies make them so highly desirable as collectibles. There was once speculation that North Star never even produced such ware because none had ever been found.

Once the thin covering of cinders was parted, it immediately became obvious that North Star had, indeed, made jars. The stratum of shards, while not as thick as that in the RWS Co. dump, due to the relative duration of accumulation, was rich in broken pieces of large jars. In color and style these were indistinguishable from the familiar products of the other local companies. Confirmed dump diggers and less experienced, but no less curious enthusiasts, paid the site daily visits after the excavation crews had retired for the evening. The immediate goals were to discover a shard bearing a side-stamped North Star signature and to determine if there were distinctive, unique decorations.

On both counts the urgent, intermittent survey failed to live up to hopes. Each day more and more truckloads were unceremoniously hauled away. Perhaps in one of these was the treasure so anxiously sought. No sidestamps were reported, but the study of decorations proved to be slightly more enlightening. Familiar geometric patterns such as the "target" and "lazy eight" were recognized, including, according to one report, a "target" with a five-pointed star circumscribed around it. Likewise deco-

rated, unsigned jars have been discovered "in the wild" and have been included in more than one of the books on Red Wing stoneware. It would appear that their origin can be confirmed as North Star. The most prominent decoration on the larger jar shards was the leaf, as it is on products from the older local firms. All the leaves reported were of a simplified, or "primitive" design, rather than the "classic" style so beloved by aficionados of Red Wing salt-glaze. However, primitive leaves on signed RWS Co. ware have been displayed, so it can not be concluded with authority that the unsigned jar in your collection, decorated with a primitive leaf, is North Star. Never-the-less, expect to see them "hawked" as such by eager sellers.

"Dinosaur dung," squeezings of clay used to prop up and separate pieces during firing, were found in great quantity, as they are at the larger site. These have long been a personal favorite dump find. They became fired and salt-glazed along with the ware, preserving the hand molds and even fingerprints of the kiln setter who charged the fiery furnace a century ago. A number of plaster molds were found, still legibly displaying the famous star logo after the repeated drenchings, freezings, and thaws of so many seasons. Perhaps Midwestern highways would be more durable if paved with plaster of Paris. Of greater monetary value are the rare whole pieces occasionally found. A complete, one-gallon, pear top jug with a single, small chip on the lip was recovered, as was a stack of bowls that had fused together during firing. Perhaps a gathering of the more interesting pieces will be displayed at this or a future convention.

The North Star company is long gone and now, too, is its factory. Both will be remembered among Red Wing residents as well as stoneware collectors.

## Goodhue County Historical Museum

Once again the Goodhue County Historical Museum is proud to welcome members of the Red Wing Collectors Society and its chapters to our community. We hope that many of you will find an opportunity during the convention to visit the museum and to see the progress we have made in our Red Wing pottery area as well as in all of our exhibits and the Museum Store. The wonderful contributions that the Collectors Society has made over the years have helped to make our new exhibits possible.

During the past year we have worked, with excellent advice and assistance from Dave Hallstrom, Larry Peterson and Chuck Drometer, to identify and appraise the pieces in the museum collection. For the first time, the collection is being put into proper sequence chronologically and identified as to manufacturing methods such as hand-turning, salt glaze, alban slip, etc. We still have a long way to go in order to portray a complete and accurate account of pottery making in Red Wing from the beginning to the end, but we feel we

have made considerable progress and will continue to research and interpret this important industry.

The donation of the Tom Arnold Collection by Neal Arnold in 1993 constituted a tremendous addition to the museum holdings. A portion of it is still in storage, as is about half of the large collection of beautiful barber bottles which he also gave to the museum. We plan to rotate both the pottery and the bottles so that eventually the public will be able to view all of the pieces.

Four significant pieces from the Eddie Swanson Collection, which the Collectors helped so much to put into the ownership of the museum, will be on display at the Convention this year. Three of the pieces are the work of Albert H. Olson, a potter for Minnesota Stoneware in 1897, while the fourth is a unique 1930 jar.

Again, welcome to Red Wing and to the museum in July!

Jean Chelsey, Dir. Goodhue County Historical Society



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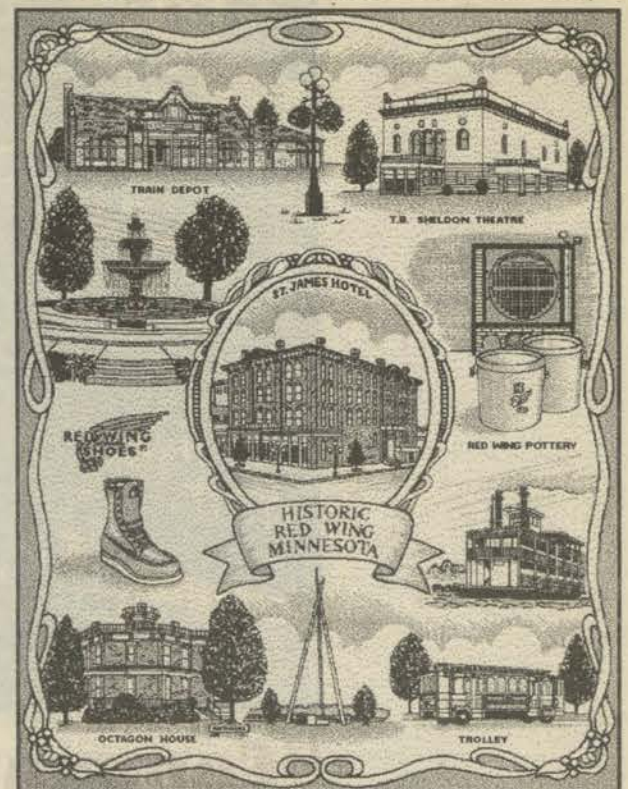
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# Welcome to Red Wing

Welcome to the beautiful City of Red Wing, Minnesota and the 1994 Red Wing Collector's Society Convention. It is hard to imagine that so many years have passed since our first Convention. The Society continues to grow, and prosper in its many endeavors.

Annually, my wife Deb, and I, look forward to our visit to Red Wing. It is an extremely busy time for us, what with Deb's involvement in the Auction Committee and my various activities as President, but we greatly look forward to renewing friendships, which have been made over the years. The chance to meet new friends and to visit various business establishments (antique shops) is always another highlight of the Convention.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Red Wing in July.

**Barney Olson II**

President



## Welcome Collectors

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# Greetings!

On behalf of the City of Red Wing, I would like to formally invite you, your families, and special guests to our community for our eighteenth annual convention.

Keep coming! We all love you in Red Wing and will do whatever is necessary to make your stay comfortable and your meetings successful.

While in Red Wing, be sure to take time to enjoy the natural beauty of the Mississippi Rive and bluffs as well as visit our restoration projects and shopping centers.

Thanks for coming and please keep coming back.

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# Welcome

I am happy to welcome you to the Red Wing Pottery Collector's convention. As fellow collectors, my husband Marv and I share with you your appreciation of these pieces and membership in the society.

But my appreciation extends beyond the value of the pottery itself to an acknowledgment of a company with which the community strongly identified. Quality was evident not only in the products they produced, but in the lasting value and evolving uses.

To those of you who are visitors to Minnesota and the beautiful city of Red Wing, Welcome! Enjoy Red Wing and Minnesota's hospitality.

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Lieutenant Governor



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This area's daily home newspaper

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Convention  
Supplement  
Volume X: 1994  
Editor:  
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# Recapping Red Wing Art Pottery

by Ray Reiss

Art Pottery is generally considered to have its beginnings in the Arts and Crafts movement of the late 19th Century. This movement began as a reaction against the increasingly mechanized roll of the worker in the industrial age. The Arts and Crafts



A group of early Red Wing vases with the *Nokomis* glaze, a metallic finish blended with tan & gray with a hint of copper. From left to right: #206 (7-1/4"), #196 (10-1/4"), #195 (8-3/4"), and the #236B which is unmarked (4-1/8" to the top of the trunk).

movement celebrated the individual's ability to make beautiful, useful objects. Art Pottery was an important component of the movement, and was generally made by hand, on a potter's wheel and decoratively glazed.

Many American potteries manufactured enormous quantities of Art Pottery, or artware, from the end of the 19th Century until well into the middle of the 20th. Red Wing Pottery, Inc. of Red Wing, Minnesota was in many ways a typical artware manufacturer. Although Red Wing got into the game a little later than better-known Ohio-based manufacturers like Weller and Roseville, they were not the only late-comers. Pottery companies all across the country that had enjoyed success as manufacturers of utilitarian stoneware products began to look for other related fields to exploit as the demand for stoneware decreased after the turn of the century. Art Pottery, along with tile and dinnerware, was a logical product for these companies.

Red Wing made art pottery from about 1929 until it closed in 1967. They manufactured primarily vases, and additionally, planters, figurines, candleholders, bowls, compotes, ashtrays, and what-nots, all of which were molded pieces offered in an incredibly diverse range of styles, shapes and glazes. Despite this seeming abundance, Art Pottery was always a small part of the company's output, accounting for only about 15% of their sales in later years. Stoneware, dinnerware, flowerpots, and gardenware constituted separate categories, and are not considered Art Pottery.

Red Wing also produced many items in a category it called "Kitchen Ware" that included cookie jars, teapots, coffee servers, water pitchers, mugs, casseroles, bowls and serving plates. The company also had a lamp division and produced specialty items for various companies such as Hamm's, Trader Vic's, Hanksraft, and others.

From the beginning, Red Wing produced art pottery for the mass market at affordable prices. While Red Wing's top of the line vase (a #249 Art Deco vase with nude figures as handles) wholesaled for \$4 in 1931, America's premier art pottery manufacturer, the Rookwood Pottery Co. of Cincinnati, retailed a single piece for \$100 in 1930.

During the four decades of Red Wing Art Pottery production, the nation and its tastes went through many changes and Red Wing tried to keep up. Generally, they produced a new catalog twice a year by (1) adding or modifying existing "lines" (a line is similarly styled pottery that had been given a name by the company), (2) adding or dropping individual pieces not in any specific line, and (3) by reintroducing older shapes in new glazes.

Throughout its years of Art Pottery manufacturing, Red Wing made more than 2025 different styles or shapes. Each shape was assigned a unique number (although some numbers were reused). Conveniently for collectors today, that number (referred to as a shape or mold number) almost always appears on the bottom of any Red Wing Art Pottery as well as on some of its Kitchen Ware.\*

With the benefit of hindsight, critics and collectors have put Red Wing Art Pottery into distinct aesthetic categories. However, a more useful categorization might be chronological. Red Wing Art Pottery can be put into three time periods: Early (1929-1937), Middle (1938-1952) and Late (1953-1967).

The official start of Art Pottery production seems to begin in 1929 with a catalog titled "The Red Wing Line." The initial publicity about this



Four vases that first appeared in 1938 from the "Belle Kogan 100," a series that begins Red Wing's middle period. From left to right: #771 (7-3/4"), #785 (10-1/2"), #808 (11-1/2"), and #774 (8-1/8").

new line came in an October 1929 trade journal that also carried news of Red Wing's new tunnel kiln. The Red Wing Line featured glazed pottery—a first for Red Wing—along with brushed ware. Brushed ware was a stoneware clay body stained green with the highlights brushed to expose the natural clay. Red Wing had made a brushed ware style for many years previously, mostly in flowerpots and gardenware.

By 1931, the company expanded its offerings to include 130 *Glazed*

*Ware* and 74 *Brushed Ware* pieces. The *Glazed Ware* had colorful high-gloss glazes on an eclectic mix of pieces. The shapes were Classical, Egyptian, Arts and Crafts, Art Deco and Art Nouveau. A series of simple, classic shapes were offered in a matt metallic blended glaze called *Nokomis*. Due to the current scarcity of these pieces, it is assumed that they did not sell in great numbers. In a 1934 trade magazine, the opinion of the day was expressed in what may have been a disparaging reference toward *Nokomis* as "an ashen gray-green coloring, made to resemble the weather beaten face of Hiawatha's grandmother." (In Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*, *Nokomis* is the name of Hiawatha's grandmother.)

By August of 1932, Red Wing began working with a sales agent named George Rumrill to distribute a line of art pottery that would be marked with his last name (including about 28 pieces that were already being produced by Red Wing). Rumrill, whose Rumrill Pottery Company was based in Little Rock, Arkansas, had been selling pottery for two Arkansas pottery companies, Camark and Niloak.

References have been made citing Rumrill as a designer, but it is now clear that one of the ways he got his shapes was to hire other people to design. He was involved in the design process, however, as one of his designers recalled how he directed her—

while perched on an old car seat in her shop—to "Take a little off here and a little off there." Rumrill's fourth wife—to whom he was married in the late 30s—was said to have designed some pieces.

During the years Red Wing made pottery for George Rumrill, it continued to produce and distribute pottery under its own name. Both Red Wing and Rumrill exhibited simultaneously at trade shows.

On December 31, 1937, Red Wing severed their relationship with Rumrill



Part of the *Over-lay* glaze series that came out during the 75th anniversary of Red Wing Pottery in 1953. From left to right: #2312 (7-3/4") white over luster black, #2305 (14") white over luster black, #2302 (10-1/4") gray over luster burgundy, and #2303 (4-7/8" height and 6-5/8" diameter) gray over luster burgundy.

with a vengeance. In the first part of 1938, both Red Wing and Rumrill aggressively sought to maintain their identities (and market share) by stating their respective cases in the wholesale trade magazines. Red Wing commissioned the prominent New York

industrial designer Belle Kogan to design 100 new pieces for release all at the same time. This was unprecedented, according to their advertisements and trade magazine write-ups.

For their new 1938 catalog, the "Belle Kogan 100" was mixed with about 80 pieces from the Rumrill era, along with a series of what-nots, candlesticks and ashtrays. In 1939 they produced a series of miniature vases and figurines, including those that are animal-shaped (commonly referred to as ash receivers) and now highly sought.

Belle Kogan designed several additional lines about this time, including *Terra Craft*, released in 1939. She also designed the *Magnolia Group*, a line featuring a magnolia flower in relief. Red Wing had asked her to design a line similarly to a previously popular Rumrill line that was glazed eggshell white with brown in the low areas. The *Magnolia Group* was also produced in solid colors and with colors other than brown around the relief. It is interesting to note, however, that Kogan's personal preference was to leave her vases unadorned.

During the middle of the 20th century Red Wing tried to keep up with commercial design trends by offering people many different "modern" shapes and glazes at an affordable price.

Continued on page 5

Welcome Collectors!

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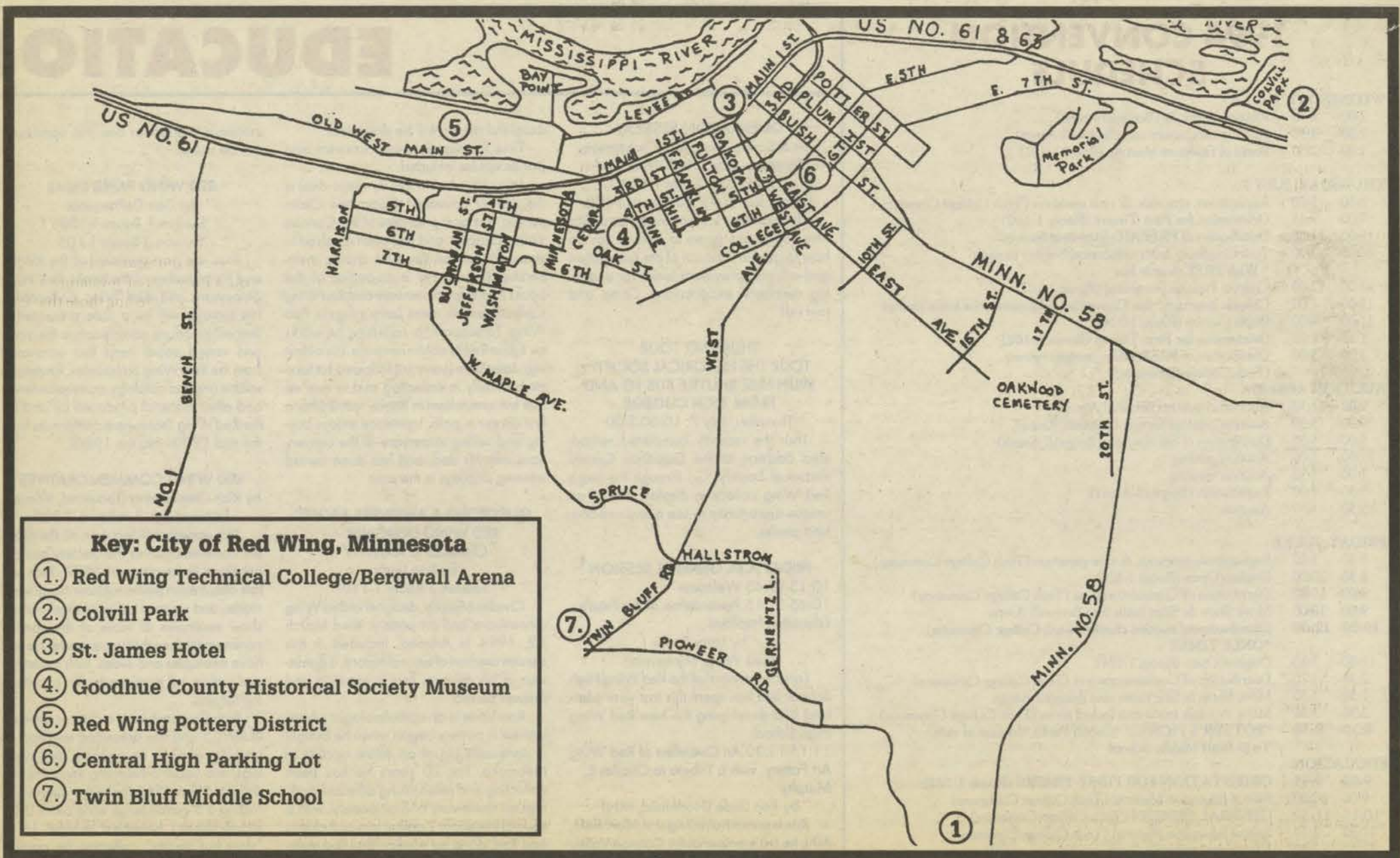
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**Key: City of Red Wing, Minnesota**

- ① Red Wing Technical College/Bergwall Arena
- ② Colvill Park
- ③ St. James Hotel
- ④ Goodhue County Historical Society Museum
- ⑤ Red Wing Pottery District
- ⑥ Central High Parking Lot
- ⑦ Twin Bluff Middle School

**Recapping continued from page 4**

In 1940, Charles Murphy was hired as staff designer. Besides his duties designing dinnerware, this talented designer (and artist) had an outstanding career designing Art Pottery on and off for Red Wing until 1967. He started by creating a more expensive line of Art Pottery to sell to jewelry stores and other more exclusive retail stores. This series first appeared in 1942 and mostly included figural pieces that combined bisque and glazed surfaces.

Both Charles Murphy and Belle Kogan designed pieces and lines during this period, with Red Wing acknowledging the designers with the letter "B" for Belle Kogan and "M" for Charles Murphy as a shape number prefix. Reportedly, pieces were also designed during this era by Red Wing's talented modeler and mold maker Russell "Teddy" Hutchison. It has been said that a few of his designs were also indicated with the letter "H". But all three people also designed many pieces that were not marked in this way.

The late period began in 1953. Red Wing celebrated its 75th anniversary with the introduction of some specialty glazes. These Over-lay glazes were either gray over luster burgundy or a white over luster black, the latter appearing blue where the two colors

blend. They are documented only in a 1953 price list. Because the shape numbers were in the 2300s, collectors now refer to them as the 2300 series. However, some of the pieces were renumbered earlier shapes. Another glaze in the 2300 series is a white stippling over a charcoal black body. Called the Oxford Line, it shows up on a 1954



Vases from the Prismatic Line, a series of angular geometric shapes designed by Belle Kogan that premiered in 1962. From left to right: #796 (9") orange with celadon lining, #799 (14-1/4") orange with white lining, #797 (11") orange with white lining, and #786 (5-1/2" height) orange with celadon lining.

price list.

During the remainder of the 50s, a glaze called Fleck—identified by a tiny black speckle on a field of pink, blue, yellow, or green—was prominently featured. A few other specialty lines showed up briefly during this era.

In 1959, Red Wing came out with Charles Murphy's Decorator Line—a series of vases featuring high-relief and free-form modern designs produced in three Crystalline glazes. By spring of 1960, the line had expanded from 14

shapes to 21.

The early 60s saw Belle Kogan's Prismatic Line, a series of angular geometric shapes in a variety of bright colors. Other lines of the 60s included Bronze, a metallic bronze-colored glaze with a bit of a crackle to it, Doric Ensemble, Chromoline Handpainted, and Birch Bark. The latter was a group of vases and planters, of which the most sought-after today is a series of canoes.

The incredible diversity of styles Red Wing made has enhanced its collectibility. From the Arts and Crafts connoisseur to the 50s collector, Red Wing made something for everyone. Every collectible is said to have its time: usually something sparks the market, such as a book or some national publicity. Red Wing art pottery collectors, get ready, because it's time!

About the Author: Ray Reiss has been an avid collector of Red Wing Art Pottery since 1977. He is a commercial photographer from Chicago and is publishing the book RED WING ART POTTERY: Classic American Pottery From The 30s, 40s, 50s, And 60s Including Pottery Made For Rumrill. He is always looking for original company printed material and photographs taken inside the factory or showroom to help with the book.

\*Ron Linde constructed a very useful shape number chart that was published in the June/July 1993 issue of The Red Wing Collectors Society, Inc. Newsletter.

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# 1994 CONVENTION SCHEDULE

## WEDNESDAY, JULY 6

- 2:00- 4:30 Auction check-in (Bergwall Arena)
- 2:00- 4:30 Auction catalogs for sale (Bergwall Arena)
- 1:00- 2:30 Board of Directors Meeting (Room 1-102)

## THURSDAY, JULY 7

- 8:30- 5:00 Registration, renewals, & new members (Tech College Commons)
- 9:00- 9:45 Orientation for First Timers (Room 1-102)
- 10:00- 11:30 Distribution of PREPAID Commemoratives
- 10:00- 3:00 Tour Goodhue County Historical Society museum  
\* With FREE shuttle bus
- 11:00- 12:00 Chapter Presidents meeting (Room 1-102)
- 12:00- 1:00 Chapter meetings\* See Convention Committee for room listings
- 12:00- 4:00 Display set-up (Room 1-124)
- 1:15- 2:00 Orientation for First Timers (Room 1-102)
- 3:00- 5:00 Distribution of PREPAID commemoratives (Tech College Commons)

## AUCTION AGENDA

- 9:00- 11:30 Auction check-in (Bergwall Arena)
- 9:00- 5:30 Auction catalogs for sale (Bergwall Arena)
- 9:00- 5:30 Distribution of bid numbers (Bergwall Arena)
- 11:30- 1:00 Auction grading
- 1:00- 5:30 Auction viewing
- 5:30- 7:00 Registration (Bergwall Arena)
- 5:30- ? Auction

## FRIDAY, JULY 8

- 8:30- 3:20 Registration, renewals, & new members (Tech College Commons)
- 8:30- 10:00 Displays Open (Room 1-124)
- 9:00- 10:00 Distribution of Commemoratives (Tech College Commons)
- 9:00- 10:00 Move Show & Sales items into Bergwall Arena
- 10:00- 12:00 Distribution of auction checks (Tech College Commons)  
\*ONLY TIME!!
- 11:30- 3:20 Displays Open (Room 1-124)
- 2:30- 3:20 Distribution of Commemoratives (Tech College Commons)
- 2:30- 3:30 Move Show & Sale items into Bergwall Arena
- 2:30- 3:30 Move souvenir items into locked room (Tech College Commons)
- 6:30- 8:30 "POTTER'S PICNIC" (Colvill Park) \*In case of rain - Twin Bluff Middle School

## EDUCATION

- 9:00- 9:45 ORIENTATION FOR FIRST TIMERS (Room 1-102)
- 9:00- 10:00 Sale of Education Material (Tech College Commons)
- 10:15- 11:30 GENERAL SESSION (Tech College Commons)
- 11:30- 3:20 Sale of Education Material (Tech College Commons)
- 12:10- 2:30 Educational seminars (Rooms to be announced)
- 3:30- 5:30 BUSINESS MEETING \*Be sure to be there (Tech College Commons)

## SATURDAY, JULY 9

- 8:00- 11:00 Registration, renewals, & new members (Tech College Commons)
- 8:00- 2:00 Displays open to members and the public (Room 1-124)
- 9:00- 11:00 Auction price catalogs for sale (Bergwall Arena)
- 9:00- ??? Distribute Commemorative \*While supply lasts (Tech College Commons)
- 11:00- ??? Commemorative lottery \*While supply lasts (Tech College Commons)
- 2:00- 4:30 Display removal (Room 1-124)
- 6:00- ??? Convention banquet (5th floor St. James Hotel)

## SHOW & SALE AGENDA

- 7:00- 8:00 Set-up for souvenir sale (Tech College Commons)
- 8:00- 9:00 Set-up for Show & Sale (Bergwall Arena)
- 8:00- 1:30 Souvenir sales open (Tech College Commons)
- 9:00- 11:00 Show & Sale open to MEMBERS ONLY (Bergwall Arena)
- 11:00- 1:30 Show & Sale open to public (Bergwall Arena)

# EDUCATION

## ORIENTATION SESSION

Con & Sandy Short, Rich Cronemeyer  
Thursday, July 7: 9:00-9:45 and  
1:15-2:00, Room 1-102

Friday, July 8: 9:9:45, Room 1-102

This session is for new members or first time convention goers to include tips on how to get the most out of the convention and will also provide a forum for exploring members' expectations. Come and join us!!

## THURSDAY TOUR TOUR THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WITH FREE SHUTTLE BUS TO AND FROM TECH COLLEGE

Thursday, July 7: 10:00-3:00

Tour the recently completed remodeled addition at the Goodhue County Historical Society. Go through the large Red Wing collection display. This is an unique opportunity to see many one-of-a-kind pieces.

## FRIDAY A.M. GENERAL SESSION

10:15-10:45 Welcome  
10:45-11:15 Presentation of the Future  
Education Facilities

by Larry Sonju  
(Red Wing, Minnesota)

Larry is principal of the Red Wing High School and has spent this last year planning and developing the new Red Wing High School.

11:15-11:30 An Overview of Red Wing Art Pottery, with a Tribute to Charles E. Murphy

by Ron Linde (Northfield, MN)

Ron is an ophthalmologist in Northfield, MN, he is a member of the Cannon Valley Red Wing Collectors Club, the Iowa Chapter, Collectors of Illinois Pottery and Stoneware, the Uhl Collectors Society, the North Dakota Pottery Collectors, and is currently president of the Minnesota Art Pottery Association.

11:30-12:10 A very quick lunch!

## Educational Seminars

### LESS IS MORE - RED WING MINIATURE JUGS

by Larry and Larry Peterson  
Sessions 1, & 2 Room 1-123

Examples and slides of the miniature jugs, some that have never been seen before, will be part of this session. The benefits of collecting, the wide price ranges, and ways of displaying and enjoying these

delightful pieces will be discussed.

Time for questions and answers and stories will be included.

Larry (the dad in this dynamic duo) is the current Education Committee Chairperson, is a past president of the Cannon Valley Chapter, and has been involved in every convention since his charter membership began. He is co-author of the books *Red Wing Stoneware* and *Red Wing Collectibles*. He owns Larry's Jugs in Red Wing. To support his collecting he works for Edina Realty of Minneapolis. His oldest son, Lawrence (Larry Jr.) followed his footsteps closely in collecting and in real estate but specializes in hobby farms after a first career in polo. Lawrence enjoys buying and selling stoneware at the conventions with his dad, and has done award winning displays in the past.

### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT RED WING DESIGNER - CHARLES E. MURPHY

by Ron Linde

Session 3 Room 1-110

Charles Murphy, designer of Red Wing dinnerware and art pottery, died March 12, 1994 in Arizona. Included in this session are part of an oral history, a discussion of his designs, and a question and answer period.

Ron Linde is an ophthalmologist whose interest in pottery began when he bought a stoneware jug at an estate auction in Nebraska. For 20 years he has been collecting and researching different markings on stoneware and art pottery, with a special interest in 2 gallon jars and churns and Red Wing art pottery. Ron is a member of the Cannon Valley Chapter, the Iowa Chapter, Collectors of Illinois Pottery and Stoneware, the Uhl Collectors Society, the North Dakota Pottery Collectors, and is currently president of the Minnesota Art Pottery Association.

### INSURING YOUR COLLECTION

by Dale Erickson

Sessions 1, 2, & 3 Room 1-102

Dale is a member of the Cannon Valley Chapter and has been in the antique business, and for over twenty years has sold insurance for Norwest Financial Corporation and independently. He will talk about what to insure, what NOT to insure, what questions to ask the insurance company, and tell what the insurance companies want from the collector. He will talk about how to get an appraisal, and what infor-

mation is needed for one. No appraisals will be done.

### RED WING PAPER ITEMS

by Dan DePasquale

Session 1 Room 1-103;

Session 3 Room 1-105

Dan is a past president of the RWCS and his co-author of the books *Red Wing Stoneware* and *Red Wing Collectibles*. His seminar will be a slide presentation that will introduce participants to the many and varied paper items that emanated from the Red Wing companies. Reviewed will be original catalogs, correspondence and other material produced by and for the Red Wing Stoneware companies from the mid 1980s into the 1960s.

### RED WING COMMEMORATIVES

by Rich Cronemeyer (Leawood, Kansas)

Sessions 2 & 3 in Room 1-103

This seminar will focus on all the different commemoratives the Society has put out since its founding in 1977. Rich will talk about each piece, tell how many were made, and suggest today's value. He will show examples of some of the special commemoratives that were made. He will have examples and slides. Rich's seminar and outline will increase the fun of collecting for you.

Rich Cronemeyer is a charter member of RWCS and has presented seminars at past conventions on canning jars, catalogs, and paper advertising items. He has collected Red Wing stoneware items since finding a 5 gallon large wing crock in his grandmother's basement at age 16; a "slow but steady" collector, he particularly enjoys finding spittoons and sewer pipe pieces. Rich is a diagnostic radiologist, and a longtime resident of Kansas City.

### IDENTIFICATION PANEL ON STONWARE

Sessions 1 & 2 in Room 1-105

Pat and Paul Hauke

(Westminster, Colorado)

The Hauke's interest in Red Wing began a little over four years ago when Paul brought home an 8 gallon crock and a 5 gallon applesauce jar - it was love at first sight. "We bought every book we could find and read and read and hunted we now have about 300 pieces of Red Wing. Our real love is Greyline, pantry jars, fancy jugs, water coolers, all of it!" Both Hauke's are retired now and can devote all their time to the hunt.

## OVERVIEW OF AFTERNOON SEMINARS

	Room 1-102	Room 1-103	Room 1-105	Room 1-107 & 1-108	Room 1-109	Room 1-110	Room 1-122	Room 1-123
<b>Session 1 12:10-12:50</b>	<b>Insuring Your Collection</b> Dale Erickson	<b>Red Wing Paper Items</b> Dan DePasquale	<b>Identification Panel Stoneware</b> Pat & Paul Hauke Dave Hallstrom			<b>Red Wing in Canada</b> Gary & Deb Nato	<b>Collecting Red Wing Art Pottery</b> Ray Reiss	<b>Less is More - Red Wing Mini Jugs</b> Larry & Larry Peterson
<b>Session 2 1:00-1:40</b>	<b>Insuring Your Collection</b> Dale Erickson	<b>Red Wing Commemoratives</b> Rich Cronemeyer	<b>Identification Panel Stoneware</b> Pat & Paul Hauke Dave Hallstrom	<b>Repairing and Reproduction</b> Chuck Drometer	<b>Identification Panel Dinnerware &amp; Artware</b> Len Lindstrom Dave & Ardelle Johnson	<b>Red Wing in Canada</b> Gary & Deb Nato	<b>Collecting Red Wing Art Pottery</b> Ray Reiss	<b>Less is More - Red Wing Mini Jugs</b> Larry & Larry Peterson
<b>Session 3 1:50-2:30</b>	<b>Insuring Your Collection</b> Dale Erickson	<b>Red Wing Commemoratives</b> Rich Cronemeyer	<b>Red Wing Paper Items</b> Dan DePasquale	<b>Repairing and Reproduction</b> Chuck Drometer	<b>Identification Panel Dinnerware &amp; Artware</b> Len Lindstrom Dave & Ardelle Johnson	<b>Interview with Charles Murphy</b> Ron Linde	<b>Collecting Red Wing Art Pottery</b> Ray Reiss	

# DAY 1994 — Friday, July 8

## Dave Hallstrom (Red Wing, Minnesota)

Dave is a fourth generation Red Wing kid who naturally collects everything. He is a past president of the Cannon Valley chapter, and is sometimes absent from his Hallstrom's Florist business to attend auctions and play with his herd of Morgan horses.

## REPAIRING AND REPRODUCTION by Chuck Drometer (Cannon Falls, MN) Sessions 2 & 3 in Rooms 1-107 & 1-108

Chuck is past president of the Cannon Valley chapter and has assisted on the Identification Panels for two years and the World of Mini Jugs one year. With his wife, Eva, he has collected stoneware and miniatures since the early 70s. "Our collection has taken a definite turn for the smaller pieces — you can put 100 miniatures in a 2 gallon crock!"

This year I'll attempt to show how I repair some of my own potter and stoneware, and also how to recognize reproductions.

## IDENTIFICATIONS PANELS Sessions 2 & 3 Room 1-109 ART POTTERY AND DINNERWARE IDENTIFICATION

Len Lindstrom (Lubbock, TX)

Len Lindstrom was born and raised on a small dairy farm near Rush City, MN. Len got hooked on collecting about 8 years ago while attending auctions with his brother who has been an avid RW Stoneware collector for many years; Len has

disciplined himself to collecting only Red Wing cookie jars and RW dinner plates. Len is retired; he deals in antiques and collectibles with 2 booths at the Antique Mall of Lubbock, one devoted exclusively to RW stoneware and pottery.

## Dave & Ardelle Johnson

After selling their business, Dave & Ardelle needed something to do, so they fell in love with art pottery and have traveled extensively. They are members of the CVRWCC & the Art Pottery Association.

## RED WING IN CANADA by Gary & Deb Noto (Brandon, Manitoba)

Session 1 & 2 Room 1-110

This seminar will be slide presentation that concentrates mainly on their personal collection. They will describe how they started collecting Red Wing and how they came to be involved in the Collectors' Society. They will also discuss why Red Wing is popular in Canada and what is common and what is rare. Although the main emphasis will be on Stoneware, they will also touch upon dinnerware and other pottery that has shown up.

Gary is a teacher in Brandon, Manitoba and Deb is a customer service clerk at a local grocery store. They started collecting about ten years ago when they were struck by "auction and yard sale fever." They began collecting fruit jars and bottles but over time gradually zeroed in on Red Wing. They have owned a four-gallon Red Wing crock for about twenty years. Like everyone who collects, they accumulated

more collectibles than they had room for and began selling it at antique shows. It was at one of these shows that they ran into a Minnesota dealer — Richard Loveland — and he convinced them to join the Society and attend a convention. Their first convention was in 1987 and that solidified their love of Red Wing.

## COLLECTING RED WING ART POTTERY

by Ray Reiss

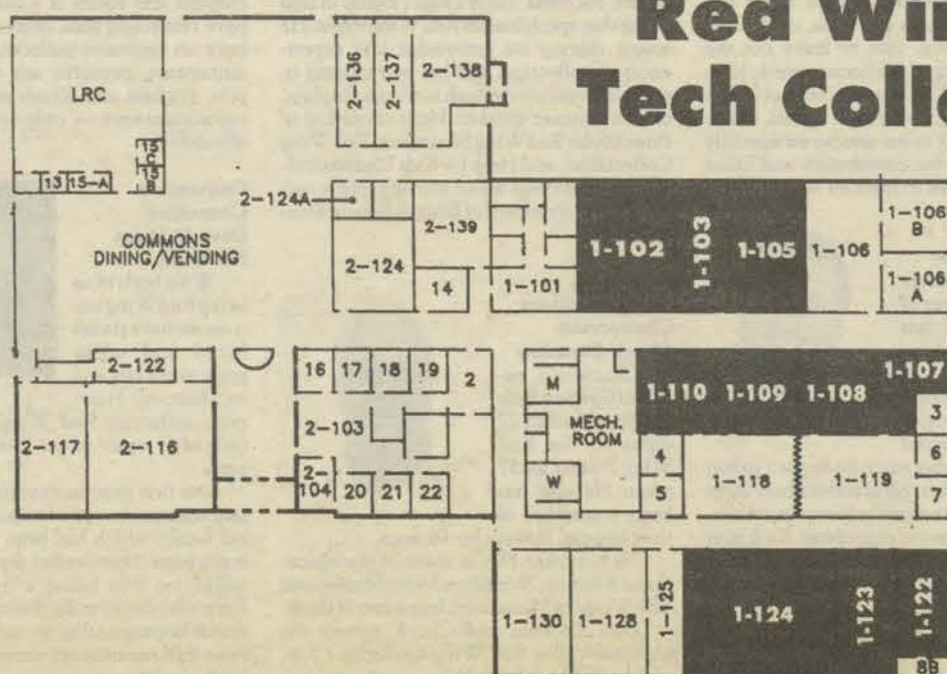
Sessions 1, 2, & 3 Room 1-122

Ray will be talking about the different lines of art pottery, what to buy, what not to buy, tips, and pointers. He will have lots of photographs and examples of Red Wing Art Pottery. Whether you are a beginning collector, or a seasoned pro, this lecture

should be interesting and fun.

Ray Reiss is a corporate photographer based in Chicago and an avid collector of Red Wing Art Pottery. He started buying Red Wing Art Pottery back in 1977 when he lived in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Originally from Topeka, Kansas, he is single, and now lives in the Bucktown neighborhood of Chicago. His book on Red Wing Art Pottery will be out soon.

## Red Wing Tech College



## Red Wing Boyhood Friends Instrumental in Opening Iowa Sewer Pipe Plant

by Corrinne Reed

E. G. Nelson and John Nelson were friends from boyhood. Even though they shared the same last name, they were no relation to each other. Both, however, were born in or near Red Wing, Minnesota. E. G. was born in 1872, and reared on a farm in Goodhue county, while John was born in 1875 in Red Wing of Swedish immigrant parents, Aaron and Emily



E. G. Nelson at the time What Cheer plant was built

Nelson. Not a farmer, John's father, Aaron, worked as a millwright for the Charles Betcher Lumber Co. As was customary at the time, rural children often stayed in town with other families for extended periods while attending school. That was the beginning of a life long friendship between the two, and would lead finally to the two of them becoming instrumental in the opening of the What Cheer Clay Products Sewer Pipe Co. in What Cheer, Iowa — one as a potter, and the other as the builder, secretary, and manager.

E. G. Nelson's first undertaking in the business world was in railroad construction work, whereupon he became a foreman in less than two weeks. Later, employed by the Red Wing Sewer Pipe Co., he worked in various positions from unloading clay to taking charge of various departments. By the age of 26, he was in the contracting business in partnership with J.C. Johnson of Red Wing. He was also a member of the Lillyblad-Nelson Construction Co. doing cement work. At

the same time, he was head of Nelson & Anderson Plumbing and Heating Co. He organized the Nelson Construction Co. about 1908, and dedicated all his time to large construction work — mainly factories, schools, and libraries. Moving to Mason City, Iowa, he built brick and tile plants at Mason City and Lehigh, Iowa, as well as Austin, Minnesota. While building a brick and tile plant at Belle Plaine, Iowa, he became interested in What Cheer clay and asked his friend, John, to test it for him.

John Nelson (most people called him "Johnnie") had begun working in the Red Wing Stoneware Company in 1888 as a lad of 13. Working there for 23 years, he did everything from running errands to being an apprentice who learned the trade from some of the early Red Wing "Clay Giants". He did piece work, cast work, jigger work, and "threw" pieces on the wheel. According to the 1894 Red Wing City Directory, he was by then working along side such well known Red Wing potters as George Hartnagel Jr., Otto Olson, and Emil Shotola.

By age 19 he had not only built a home with a kiln in the back yard for himself, but a home next door for his parents as well. Although slightly remodeled, his parent's home at 623 Jefferson Street and Johnnie's at 627 Jefferson both still stand in Red Wing — minus the kiln in the back yard. Living in the upstairs of Johnnie's house in Red Wing at one time was his friend, E. G. Nelson.

Johnnie did test the clay for his friend, E. G. According to the "What Cheer Patriot" of April 11, 1912, Johnnie made up sample wares, burned them in his own kiln in Red Wing, and they were displayed in the window of Mitchell's Clothing Store in What Cheer, along with brick and tile

pieces, and a lump of What Cheer clay. Johnnie stated it was the finest clay he had ever worked with.

At one time, barrels of clay were sent to Sheffield, England, where tests showed the clay suited to the manufacture of table china and kitchen ware. Finished products were returned to show the clay's excellent quality, but the manufacture of that type of product was never pursued.

According to a prospectus put out by the company, What Cheer fire clay was found to be one of the most refractory clays that had yet been tested. Its fusing point



Johnnie Nelson, Red Wing potter, and friend of E. G. Nelson

was found to be several hundred degrees above that of other well known material. (Could that material possibly have been that of the Red Wing Sewer Pipe Co.?) This meant the company would be able to furnish fire proof material as nearly absolute as could be obtained.

The What Cheer Clay Products Co. was built by E. G. Nelson and organized with him as its secretary and general manager.

Opening day, June 16, 1912, at exactly noon in the engine room, E. G. gave the signal for the machinery to be started, and the company's 16 kilns began

operating. The company owned 160 acres of clay and coal, the largest clay pit in the world. While fire clay beds generally run from 3-6 feet in thickness, the What

Cheer beds ran from 15-60 feet, and the company had a 4-7 foot vein of its own coal, the equal to that of any in Iowa.

It was known as early as 1843 that there were deposits of coal in the What Cheer area. The locality was marked on government surveys of 1844 to 1846 as "The Coal Banks". The stream that meanders between the hills became known as Coal Creek. By 1880 the town had a population of a few hundred. The next 3 years there was a rapid development of the coal industry, and the population jumped to 3,709. It became one of the coal mining centers of Iowa. Including neighboring mining camps, it reached a population ranging from 4,000 to 8,000. However, as the larger mines were depleted the population dropped.

E. G.'s becoming interested in What Cheer clay and talking his friend, Johnnie, into testing it for him, lead to Johnnie getting fired by the Red Wing Stoneware Co. The company didn't take kindly to one of their employees testing clay for a competitor. Especially since the clay was sent directly to their plant!

Although he was already working for E. G. by 1911, it wasn't until April 1, 1912, that Johnnie, his wife, and children moved all their worldly possessions (including some molds of items made by the Red Wing Stoneware Co.) in a rented railroad boxcar to What Cheer, Iowa. He worked at the What Cheer Clay Products Co. south

Continued on page 12

## APPLICATION FORM

# \_\_\_\_\_

Please start my \$15 membership and subscription with the next issue of the Newsletter.

Please renew by \$15 membership and subscription.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Make remittance payable to Red Wing Collectors Society, Inc. Membership fee is \$15 per year.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:  
Debbie Olson  
P.O. Box 184  
Galesburg, IL 61402-0184

My collection interests are:  
 Stoneware  
 Dinnerware  
 Art Pottery

Please print clearly

# Officers and committee chairs ...

## President Barney Olson II

My interest in Red Wing pottery goes back to shortly before the first convention. While roaming around a northern Wisconsin antique shop, the name is long since forgotten, I saw a 5 gallon jug with a large red wing. While it seems to be a fairly typical story of how people got interested in Red Wing, I purchased this jug and the fever began to take hold. I still have the jug, to this day. Over the years Deb and I have acquired many different types of Red Wing and have subsequently tried to refine our collection into mostly salt glaze, cookie jars and gray line areas. Not to leave out the dinnerware faction of the Society, we do have a rather complete (no water cooler) set of Bob White. Red Wing is very hard to find, in any quantity or quality in our area, so we annually look forward to the convention and other miscellaneous trips to the Red Wing area.



## Vice President Rich Cronemeyer

Rich Cronemeyer is a charter member of the RWCS. He has presented seminars at past conventions on canning jars, catalogs, and spittoons/cuspidors. He has collected Red Wing stoneware since finding a 5 gallon Large Wing crock in his grandmothers basement in 1968. He particularly enjoys collecting spittoons and sewer pipe pieces. Rich is an physician practicing diagnostic radiology in Kansas City.



## Secretary Ann Busse

Ann Busse is a resident of Sycamore, IL and is a speech instructor at Kishwaukee College, Malta, IL. She joined RWCS in 1985, after attending Dick Houghton's auction on the Sunday after the convention. Interest started in stoneware collecting after buying a 3-gallon salt glaze "torpedo" jug at an auction, and really became "addicted" to Red Wing after seeing all that stoneware at Dick's auction.



## Treasurer Jerry Flicek

Born in Rice County near New Prague, Minnesota. Direct descendent of first settlers in New Prague area. Graduate of New Prague High School. First job was trapper warden for Division of Game and Fish. Enlisted as private in the United States Air Corps in January 1942. Retired as Colonel USAF in 1972. Internationally recognized missile and space pioneer air crew member during World War II, commanded several military organizations involved in missile and space research and development.



## Display Committee Jeff & Ruby Benson

Jeff & Ruby Benson live in Prescott, WI, about 20 miles from Red Wing. We started collecting Red Wing in 1985. Jeff's parents had a 20 gal. Wing crock, a 5 gal. beehive, and a 5 gal. salt glaze churn which we purchased from them. After that we were hooked on Red Wing. We collect mostly stoneware. Jeff specializes in Birchleaf pieces. Ruby collects chicken feeders from all different potteries. We are active in the Cannon Valley Chapter. We did a display in 1989 and have helped out in the Display Room every year since. In 1992 we were elected to chair the Display Committee. This year there will again be some great displays by members, plus a special display of pieces from, the Goodhue



County Historical Museum. Also, there will be some real treasures on the Rare Item table. Be sure to stop by the Display Room to say hello and view the displays.

## Education Committee Larry Peterson

Larry Peterson is a charter member of the Red Wing Collectors Society, past president of the Cannon Valley chapter, and this year its chairperson of the Education Committee. He owns "Larry's Jugs", a shop in Red Wing that specializes in Red Wing items. He enjoys sharing his knowledge and experiences of collecting, and has participated in every convention through seminars, displays, or as a banquet speaker. He is co-author of three books: Red Wing Stoneware, Red Wing Collectibles, and Help for Kids Understanding Their Feelings about Moving. He is currently Vice-President of Edina Realty in Minneapolis.



## Public Relations Chairperson Chuck Drometer

Chuck is a native of Cannon Falls and lived within 22 miles of the Red Wing Pottery for 57 years. He also has been a member of the National Society for 16 years.

He has taken part in many of the educational seminars: Stoneware Identification and The World of Miniatures, being two of them.

Dale Erickson and Chuck started the Cannon Valley Red Wing Collector Club, which now has about 110 members and is a very active club.

Hope to see you all at the convention. If you have any good suggestions please let me know about them. I do need help.



## Historian Rachael Morris

Rachael and her husband, Cecil, are semi-retired and now live in Red Wing. She is active as an antique dealer and also is a collector of Red Wing. Years ago, requests from a repeat buyer for "thick, heavy, sponged" bowls, caught her attention, and she became aware that Red Wing items were certainly collectible — and still are!

She currently is the Historian for the Red Wing Collectors Society, and collects, files, and stores any memorabilia pertaining to the Red Wing Collectors Society. This includes putting together a library of the 1992 & 1993 educational seminar video tapes, and also the tapes from the upcoming convention seminars. A listing of these tapes and the procedure to borrow (use) them, will be published in the Newsletter. These each contain a wealth of interesting information for all of you to appreciate.



## Auction Committee & Interim Chairperson Membership Committee Debbie Olson

I joined the Red Wing Collector's Society in 1981. During the ensuing years I have met a lot of interesting people and developed some very important friendships. The Red Wing Collector's Society Convention has become a meeting place for people from various backgrounds and interests to share information. My husband, Barney, and I live in Galesburg, Illinois. We have four children. I keep myself busy by attending auctions to look for Red Wing Pottery, Watt Pottery, Primitive Furniture, and various other antiques to decorate our home with, as well as to resell.



## Commemorative Committee Larry Roschen

Larry and Kathy Roschen began collecting Red Wing pottery in 1980. They became interested in Red Wing while helping his parents find pieces of Iris dinnerware to complete their set. It soon became a competitive but cooperative rivalry between father and son to outdo the other in the search for Red Wing. It was great fun and helped make a good relationship even better.

Larry is a pharmacist at a Twin Cities hospital and Kathy is a homemaker. They have two young sons, Brett and Scott. They have an extensive collection of Red Wing dinnerware, primarily salt & peppers, teapots, pitchers and dinner plates. They also enjoy stoneware — only wish it were more affordable.



## Convention Committee Dave & Diane Hallstrom

With both of us being Red Wing natives, we have always loved and taken pride in our city and its' history. However, collecting Red Wing Stoneware has only been a part of our lives for the last 14 years.

Our first introduction to Red Wing Pottery was a gopher on a football, given to us by her father, which had been in his family for many years. Shortly after that, several friends talked me into taking a trip down to the stoneware dump to dig through mountains of shards hoping to find an unbroken treasure. From that moment on, we were hooked. The hobby had begun.

Since that time, our collecting interests have grown to include lunch hour pieces, early salt glaze, rare and unusual pieces, cookie jars, and Red Wing memorabilia.



Being convention chairpersons the last four years has been a learning experience for us by meeting new friends from all over the United States who come to the convention.

## "East" Representative Pat Murphy

My interests in pottery began at least twenty years ago when my hobby was plants. Plants need pots and I was tired of the same old boring pots in the stores. I was interested in finding pots with unique designs for my plants. I would go to garage sales, antique shows, and flea markets looking for just the right pot.

Of course my wife's and my interests sparked after finding a water cooler for only seven dollars, and all of our friends wanted one just like it.

Before long we discovered people who collected pottery and interesting stories to tell about their pottery.

... maybe both. If you have any questions or comments about the Red Wing Collectors Society or the Newsletter don't hesitate to contact me at (708) 231-3973 or 30W536 Arbor Lane, West Chicago, IL 60185; and happy hunting from your representative east of the Mississippi River.

## "West" Representative Sandy Short

Little did Sandy & Con know when they started married life with a set of Round Up dinnerware that they would become avid (fanatic ?) collectors of Red Wing stoneware. In 1975 Con & son Dave glued a broken 25 gal. crock together and the search for more was on. They now look for salt glaze and ND advertising pieces.

Sandy is a high school Chapter I teacher. She is membership chairman of the ND Pottery Collectors Society and the western RW board member at large. She and Con and Rich Cronemeyer conduct the new member orientation sessions.





## Hager City Antiques

N 1597 Co. Rd. VV 4 Hwy. 63  
Hager City, WI 54014  
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715-792-2800

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Collectibles • Red Wing Stone-  
ware • Art Pottery • Dinnerware

Location: 20 miles west of Red Wing.  
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south at spotlight, 1 mile.  
Hours: Mon-Sat., 9:30 - 5:30  
Sunday, 11 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

EXTENDED CONVENTION HOURS:  
Friday, July 8  
8:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

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Hrs.: Tues.-Sat. 9:30-5:30 Sun.: 11-5  
Running late? Call ahead 367-2220



## Welch Trading Post



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Lots of pottery and large  
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antiques.

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G. & V. Rahman

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Bus Parking	612-388-1551	Sunday • 7-11

# About other chapters ...

## Rocky Mountain

The Rocky Mountain Chapter currently has 22 active members. We meet every two months and we do produce a yearly commemorative. We also have a summer picnic and a Christmas Party every year.

If someone is interested in joining our chapter, they may contact Bob Davis at 414 N. Loomis, Ft. Collins, CO 80521, (303) 221-1585.

## Cannon Valley

Tom Trulen  
612 E 7th St.  
Red Wing, MN 55066  
612-388-6337

Member total: 110

Activities: • Yearly antique show (or auction), • summer picnic • monthly meeting held 1st Tuesday every month - in Cannon Falls, Red Wing, and Northfield • window displays during convention week (Goodhue County National Bank and Josephson's Clothing), • Christmas party, • helps convention committee with various jobs during convention.

Commemorative: Yes - yearly

## Iowa Chapter

Corrine Reed, President  
2808 Vine st.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-225-3024

The Iowa Chapter is dedicated to the collection and preservation of Red Wing, Iowa, and other American pottery and stoneware.

The chapter was founded in 1979 and holds the distinction of being the first state to have received a charter from the national society. However, having become inactive after just a few years, it was finally reactivated in 1992 by the present officers.

Current membership is 98 household memberships representing 170 members. Yearly activities include the publication of a newsletter in January and August, annual publication of a list of chapter members of those giving permission to have their names listed, and production of an annual commemorative. The 2 commemoratives produced so far have both been done by the Red

Wing Stoneware Company in Red Wing. The chapter is currently involved in producing the '94 convention button and putting together a non-competitive convention display. Meetings in April, July, and October include a variety of activities such as distribution of commemoratives, show and tell, silent auctions, out-of-trunk show and sales, guest speakers, and pot luck dinners. The annual chapter business meeting is held at convention in July at the time assigned for all chapter meetings.

Any RWCS member is welcome to belong to the Iowa Chapter. Dues are paid on an annual basis and are \$10 per household membership. Renewals are due January 1 of each year. Anyone wishing to join the chapter may do so at the annual chapter business meeting at convention, or simply contact the chapter secretary/treasurer, Lowell Reed, 2808 Vine Street, West Des Moines, Iowa 50265, (515) 225-3024.

## Nebraska

Donna McGilvrey  
14742 Madison Circle  
Omaha, NE 68137  
402-895-9480

## Wisconsin

Pete Pavloski  
3811 10th St. So.  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494  
715-423-4683

Members: 25

Activities: 1 or 2 meetings  
Commemorative: yes, 1992 was the 1st one

Plan to attend the Wisconsin Chapter Meeting at the Red Wing Convention.

## Michigan

Michael Zaeske  
PO Box 643  
Oshtemo MI 49077-0643  
616-375-7948

Members: 19

Activities: Sporadic meetings at antique malls or homes.  
Commemorative: no

## Southwest Redwingers

Kent Williamson  
602-789-0764

Members: 24

Activities: 9 monthly meetings held last Monday of the month that typically includes a program speaker/presentation, club raffle, Bring & Brag, and refreshments. Meetings are held Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

Other activities are winter picnic and a club sponsored antique hunting trip.

The last 3 years one of our regular scheduled meetings was at the summer home of member Bill Close in Payson AZ, always an enjoyable trip and meeting.

December is topped with the annual Christmas party/dinner with presentation of the years commemorative to qualified members.

Commemorative: yes, each year since the chapter founded in 1982.

Person to contact for membership: Mary Ann Cleary, Membership, 2746 S. Pennington, Mesa, AZ 85202, (602) 820-4526

Officers 1994: Kent Williamson, President; Ken Olson, Vice President; Bev Winchell, Secretary; Gene Stonely, Treasurer; Diana Schneeman, Historian.

## Puget Sound

The Puget Sound Chapter is alive and growing. We cover Puget Sound from one end to the other and we even cross the Cascade mountains with two members in Warden, Washington. We have members in Minnesota, California and Washington for a total of 40.

We have a commemorative every year that comes out at Christmas time and says Merry Christmas on them. Our Commemorative last year was a Pretty Red Wing ashtray. There will be about 10 of them on sale this year at the Saturday sale.

We would be happy to hear from any one that would like to join our Chapter. Just call or write Paulette Ostrom, 19202 4th Drive Se, Bothell, WA. 98012, (206) 672-6985 or Wally Armstrong 24129 Old Owen Rd., Monroe, WA 98272.

## Golden State

Members: 28 paid members  
Activities: four to six each year  
Commemorative: yes

Membership contact Denny Decker, 3624 Springer Ct., Walnut Creek, CA 94598, (510) 945-6613 or Mike Robinson, 1970 W. Bowman Rd., Stockton, CA 95206, (209) 463-5179

## Gopher

The Gopher Chapter was established October 7, 1978 and has remained active since that time. Presently, the Chapter has 70+ members. The Chapter meets each month, alternating between Saturday afternoons and Thursday evenings, usually in the Twin Cities, but meetings have occurred in St. Cloud and the Red Wing area. Meetings are held at member's homes and occasionally at a public place such as a restaurant or library.

The main purpose of our meetings is to socialize with friends and fellow collectors. Our informal format allows plenty of time to ask questions and enjoy casual conversation with other collectors. A typical meeting will include a brief business meeting, a silent auction,

Show & Tell time, and an informational presentation by the host or another member. The December gathering is a holiday pot luck social event and August's get-together is a family picnic at which we share convention stories and show off our latest finds. Members receive a 2-page monthly Chapter newsletter which includes minutes of the previous meeting, location of the upcoming meeting (along with directions and a map) and other announcements and information.

Any RWCS member is welcome to belong to the Gopher Chapter. Chapter dues are paid on an annual basis (due January of each year) and are \$12 for an individual membership or \$15 for joint membership (husband/wife).

Members are also entitled to purchase the annual Gopher Chapter commemorative. Past commemoratives include: Gopher on a stump, Little Brown Jug, a Spongware Advertising Bowl and a miniature Sewer Pipe. This year's commemorative is a spongware hanging salt box, decorated to replicate an authentic advertising piece from the J.J. Wolfram Store. There are still some 1993 commemoratives available for new members.

Please consider this your invitation to join the Gopher Chapter. Current officers include: President John Sagat; Vice President Gary Antoline; Treasurer Kathy Allen; Secretary Deanna Juergens; Membership Jay Juergens; Librarian Gerry Nehotte.

For membership information, contact: Jay Juergens, 10666 Vessey Road; Bloomington, MN 55437-2765; (612) 881-1676.

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## Membership Information

The Red Wing Collectors Society, Inc., is an organization which promotes the collecting of Red Wing and American pottery. Founded in 1977, the Society has members in 48 states and Canada. Membership is open to all persons interested in collecting American pottery/stoneware.

The highlight of the Society year is the annual 3-day convention held on the second full weekend of July in Red Wing, Minnesota. Education is a special component of the convention with a full day being devoted to seminars on Red Wing and U.S. pottery. Displays with an educational motif are also set up for viewing during the convention. Activities of the convention include a show and sale, auction, banquet, business meeting, and other special events.

A special commemorative piece is issued for each convention. These highly sought after pieces are made in limited quantity and are available only to Society members.

The Red Wing Collectors Society also publishes a newsletter issued 6 times per year. Each issue contains feature articles, a section on state chapter activities, information on new finds in collecting and a place for ads.

State chapters of the Society have been organized in several states including Arizona, California, Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Washington and Wisconsin. These chapters meet several times throughout the year.

Membership to the Society is \$15 per year. Additional immediate family members living at the same address may be included at no additional charge. Family members wishing to purchase their own convention commemorative, however, must purchase individual memberships. One membership per person. Contact the Red Wing Collectors/Membership Committee c/o Debbie Olson, PO Box 184, Galesburg, IL 61402-0184.

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# 100 Years Later

by Chuck Drometer

Steve Showers spent as much time as he could at the Northstar site when the building was taken down and the bulldozers tore into the shard dumping area.

Few secrets were unearthed, but among them was a dated shard, 3-5-94, close to the closing date of the Northstar plant. The shards found show that they made crockers, water coolers, churns, jugs, bowls and milk pans similar to Red Wing and Minnesota Stoneware. The cobalt decorations varied some from the other plants.

The leaf decorations were more crude and primitive and not filled in, but having stick lines or small decorations within the leaf. Many of the shards of the 2, 3, 4 gallon crocks salt glaze beehives had just a target ball without the long tail as we see many 2 gallon open crocks today.

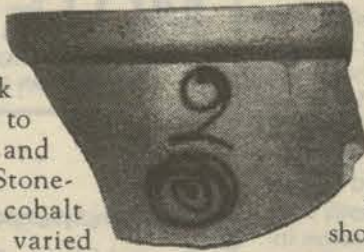
Many years ago Steve bought the 2 gallon crock pictured here that he thought could be a Northstar piece. Several shards that were dug up had the same marking as the 2 gallon crock that Steve owns. So this proved to be a very important find for Steve.



At this writing Steve has not found any sidestamped crocks, jugs, advertising or bottom marked crocks. The only thing that varied very much from the other

stoneware factories in Red Wing were the churn covers. They were very flat and didn't have the spill cup for the dasher as did the early Red Wing and Minnesota churn covers.

Don't miss the Northstar shard display at this year's convention. It should be of great interest to everyone interested in stoneware and pottery history.



## Seventeen years of Red Wing Commemoratives

To help you answer the question, "How do I know if this is a Red Wing Collector's Society commemorative, what do they look like, when did they start, how many were made and how much did they cost," read on.

To answer some of the above questions: The Red Wing commemoratives are stamped with the words, "Red Wing Collector's Society Convention," plus the year and date. Most of the time the stamp is on the underside of the piece, and some are side-stamped like the 1992 North Star Jug.

The first two commemoratives, the 1977 and 1978, were available at the 1978 convention. There were 250 of the

Open Crock and 350 of the Jug. That was the only year that every member at the Collector's Society could own a complete set of Red Wing Commemoratives. In 1979 there were over 300 people attending the convention in Red Wing, MN.

At the 1993 convention there were 4,820 Buttermilk Feeder commemorative made. That was 4,570 more than the 1977 Open Crock. So if you have a complete set of Red Wing Commemoratives, you could belong to the "Two Hundred Fifty Club" — if there was one.

Happy collecting.

Chuck Drometer



## Red Wing Collector's Society Commemoratives

	Year	Description	No.	Cost
<b>A</b>	1977	Crock	250	\$7.50
<b>B</b>	1978	Jug	350	4.00
<b>C</b>	1979	Churn	400	10.00
<b>D</b>	1980	Bowl	400	10.00
<b>E</b>	1981	Min. Jug	750	8.00
<b>F</b>	1982	Mug	697	10.00
<b>G</b>	1983	Canning Jar	1,026	12.00
<b>H</b>	1984	Leaf Water Cooler	1,161	12.00
<b>I</b>	1985	#6 Ice Water Cooler	1,750	12.00
<b>J</b>	1986	Acid Pitcher	1,982	12.00
<b>K</b>	1987	Red Wing, Wing	2,500	12.00
<b>L</b>	1988	Plate	2,550	12.00
<b>M</b>	1989	Gray Line Pitcher	2,700	12.00
<b>N</b>	1990	Fancy Jug	3,550	12.00
<b>O</b>	1991	Pantry Jar	3,560	12.00
<b>P</b>	1992	North Star Jug	4,260	15.00
<b>Q</b>	1993	Buttermilk Feeder	4,820	15.00

## Chronology of Pottery Manufacturing in Red Wing

John Paul .....	1860
Philleo Potteries and Terra Cotta Works .....	approx. 1863-1880
Red Wing Stoneware Company .....	1877-1906
Minnesota Stoneware Company .....	1883-1906
North Star .....	1892-1896
Union Stoneware .....	1894-1906
(organized to sell the ware of the 3 companies listed above)	
Red Wing Union Stoneware Company .....	1906-1936
(This was the combination of the Red Wing and Minnesota Stoneware Companies)	
Name changed to Red Wing Potteries .....	1936
Closing of pottery manufacturing .....	1967

## More Tips

Clean the inside of graniteware pots by boiling peeled potatoes in water.

Gilt frames can be cleaned with beer.

Remove rust by soaking item in kerosene for 24 hours or use a commercial product such as navel jelly.

Some tea & coffee stains on dishes can be removed by rubbing them with damp baking soda.

Modern bleach can damage 18th century and some 19th century dishes. Try hydrogen peroxide or bicarbonate of soda. Each removes different types of stains.



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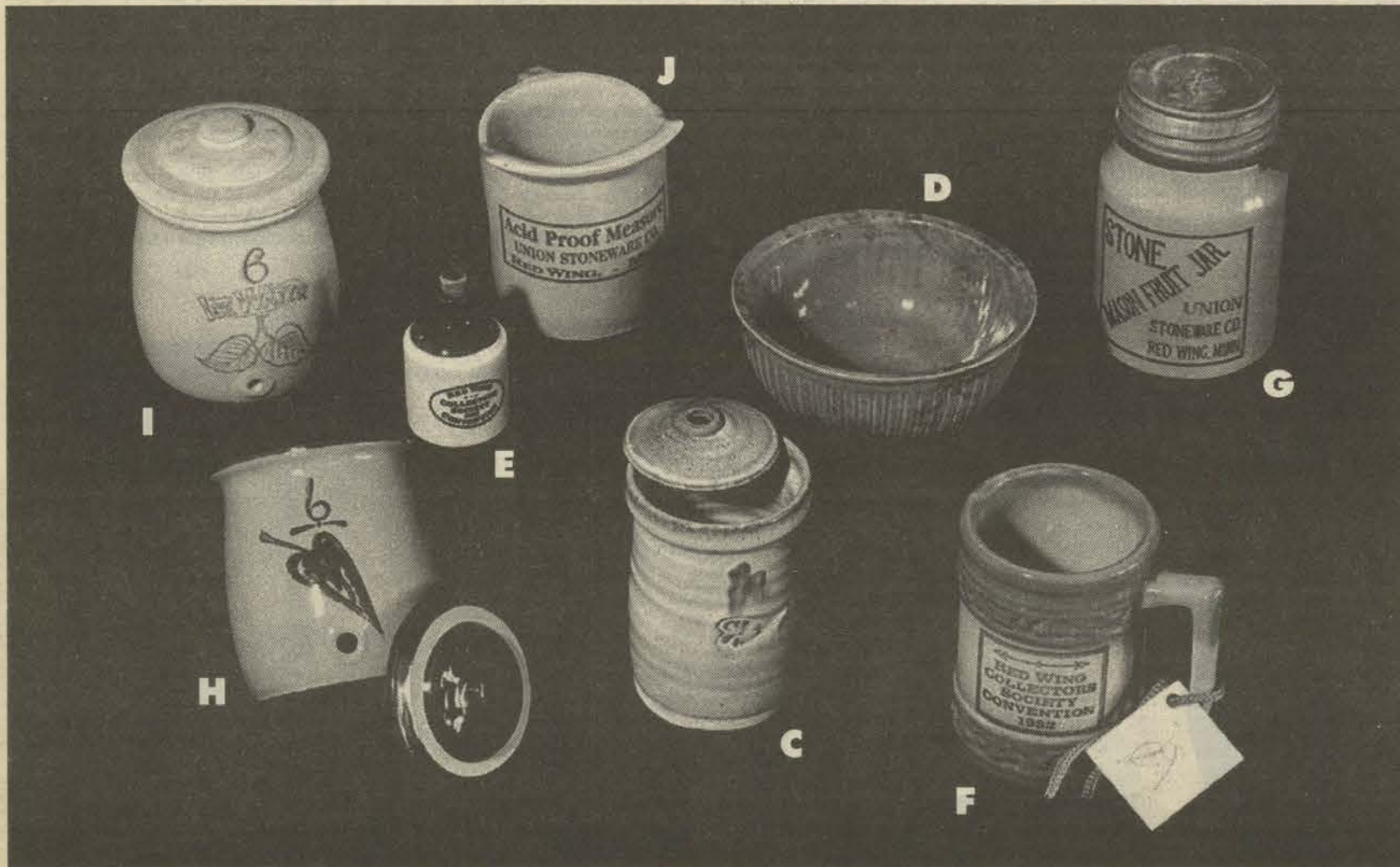
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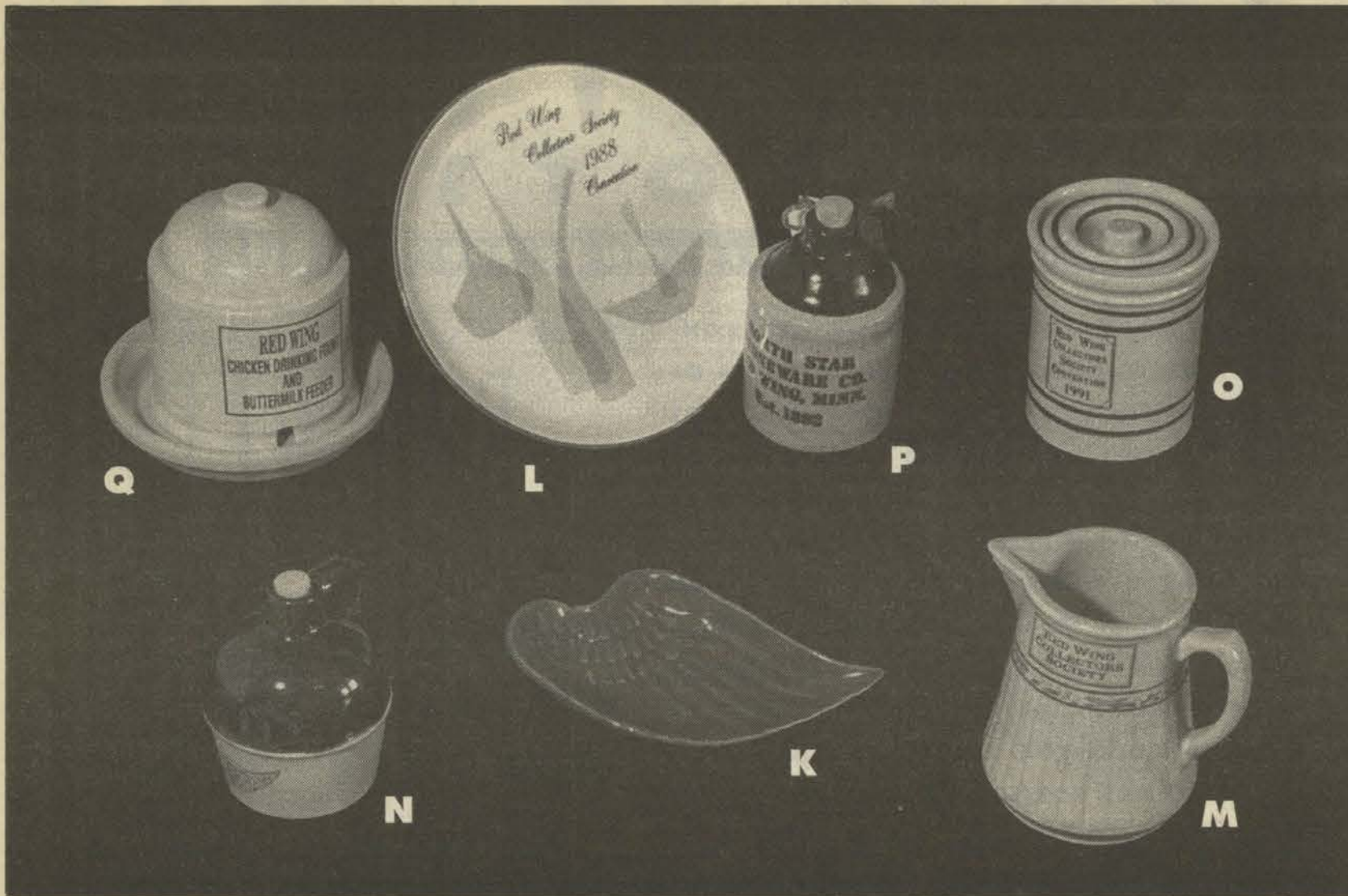
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**Boyhood Friends continued from page 7**

of town until 1917 when he finally opened a pottery of his own along Coal Creek.

Johnnie's only living son, Earl, talked to this author about he and his father's trip back to Red Wing for Johnnie's mother's funeral in January of 1928. According to Earl, it was like "family reunion" time meeting with old pottery friends. Johnnie introduced his son, Earl, to his friend, George Hehr, and George's father, Gottlieb, a German mold maker and designer brought to Red Wing from Canton, Ohio, in 1883. Gottlieb made the first molds in Red Wing, and his son, George, continued doing the same until his retirement in 1941. These two men had shared their knowledge and skill of mold making and design with Johnnie while he worked in Red Wing. Earl was also introduced to George A. Cook and his father, George Cook, who had been plant foreman and plant superintendent about the time Johnnie left Red Wing. The elder Cook told Earl things about his father that Johnnie had never mentioned. One thing Earl remembered him relating was that whenever the company would get a special order for something unusual, the other potters wouldn't tackle it, but Johnnie would take it on and follow it from the time it was turned or

molded, till it was glazed, and finally went into the kiln. George A. Cook, the son, went to Marshalltown to work in the plant there when the Red Wing Union Stoneware Co. purchased that plant in April of 1909, and Johnnie would visit him there.

E.G. remained the company's head until November of 1947 - the greater part of its history. Under his guidance it became the largest manufacturer of sewer pipe in the midwest, with some years having the demand exceed the production. By 1949 the plant produced almost 20,000 tons of products including sewer pipe, wall coping, flue lining, septic tanks, drain tile, and clay fittings. At one time when there was a wave of drainage improvement, large quan-


tities of agricultural drain tile were made. As the need tapered off, drain tile became a minor item. Up to 25,000 tons of clay were dug in a year and hardened at 1,900 degrees from 5 to 10 days, using 12,000 tons of coal. After the tile was "burned off", it took 5 to 6 days to cool in the kilns. A day was required to "draw" or empty one of the 19 kilns the plant had then. All tile 8 inches or bigger was stamped with the famous "What Cheer Frog". Each company had its own logo. According to Norman Reed, a ceramic engineer for the company and brother-in-law to the author of this article, law required that the tile be stamped, so one would know from where it came. What Cheer, once a coal center,

had become a clay center.

In 1947 E. G. sold the controlling interest of the What Cheer Clay Products Co. to the Rawson family of Des Moines, and E.G.'s son-in-law, E. D. Brown, became general manager. In 1956 Mr. Rawson sold his interest to H. L. Northfield of Minneapolis. When he died in 1957, his son, H. L. Northfield Jr., became president, and another son, William Northfield, became executive vice president. In 1962 American Steel Foundries of Chicago acquired the company, and a new subsidiary, Griffin Pipe Products Co., was formed. This made What Cheer one of 26 ASF plants, and more were added by later expansion and diversification. Main ASF

production

had been railroad products. That same year the corporation name was changed from ASF to AMSTED Industries, Inc. The acquisition of the plant by Griffin Pipe Products was generally regarded in the community as good news, but in December of 1963, men were laid off, and effective January 15, 1964, the plant was closed because of "production limitations caused by obsolete equipment" - despite a 3 year modernization program that had occurred from 1958 through 1960. Thus ended the 52 year history of the What Cheer Clay Products Company begun by two boyhood friends from Red Wing, Minnesota.



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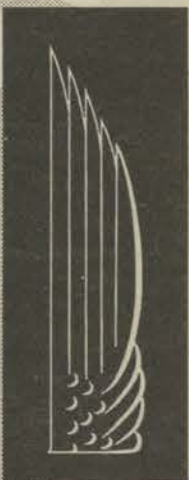
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