

WPA PRESS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WISCONSIN POTTERY ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 46, MADISON, WI 53701-0046
WWW.WISCONSINPOTTERY.ORG



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From the President..

As we go into our tenth year, the WPA can look back on a very successful past with our large and very comprehensive exhibits of Ceramic Arts Studio, Wisconsin Art Pottery, Haeger, Roseville, Illinois Pottery and Weller Pottery. We have hosted one of the best pottery shows in the Midwest and have provided 8-9 educational talks per year on various aspects of the American Art Pottery Movement. We have provided educational exhibits at Cambridge and at the WADA show in Waukesha. And we have wonderful resources for distributing our information on the web and in print, via

www.wisconsinpottery.org and our newsletter, the *WPA Press*. All in all a very successful nine years. And only by the hard work of our Wisconsin Pottery Association (WPA) members have these successes been possible.

Our tenth year will see us host and carry out a major exhibit of Redwing stoneware, dinnerware and pottery. We also will have another pottery show in conjunction with the Redwing exhibit. With Jim Riordan

volunteering to take over the publicity job handled so adeptly by Chris Swart all these years, we appear to be well positioned to continue our exhibits and shows beyond 2002, if the membership desires to continue this fine tradition. We have a few volunteer positions yet to fill but are one step closer to continuing in the footsteps of our fine past exhibits and shows.

This year I would like to see us celebrate our ten years as a successful organization and plan for another ten years of educating others about and promoting art pottery in Wisconsin.

David Knutzen, WPA President, 2002

WPA Calendar for 2002

- March 12**—Niloak Pottery by Peter Flaherty
- April 9**—Early Weller Patterns by Bill Barker
- May 14**—American Indian Pottery by Steve Drake
- June 11**—Redwing Pottery by Steve Schoneck
- July**—no meeting
- August (early)**—Picnic
- August 24**—WPA Annual Show and Sale featuring Redwing Pottery; Alliant Center, Madison
- September 10**—Ceramic Arts Studio by Tim Holthaus
- October 8**—Blue and White Pottery by Bill Engel
- November 12**—to be announced
- December 4**—WPA Holiday Party (note that this is the *first* Tuesday in December)

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All meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month (except July, August and December) at the Shorewood Hills Community Center.

## Wisconsin Antique Dealers Association Exhibit, February 2002

This past month several members of the WPA prepared a pottery exhibit and presented it at the Wisconsin Antique Dealers Association (WADA) in Waukesha, WI. Chris Swart and Betty and Dave Knutzen prepared this report.

The WPA, in keeping with its educational mission, presented an exhibit of Wisconsin-made pottery at WADA's winter show in Waukesha, February 1-3. WADA provided locked showcases and a booth for the exhibit. Barbara Budig did an excellent job of organizing a display demonstrating the history and contributions of Wisconsin's pottery to the American Art Pottery movement.

The exhibit featured examples of Century House, Ceramic Arts Studio, Norse, Pauline and Pittsville pottery. Photos of rare

Frackleton Pottery were also shown. Written information about the histories of these six Wisconsin pottery businesses was also distributed.

Susan Frackleton made her salt-glazed art pottery in Milwaukee before 1900. Century House and Ceramic Arts Studio, both based in Madison, operated in the 1940s-60s. Norse and Pauline were Edgerton, WI firms that made pottery around the turn of the century. Pittsville pottery was made in Pittsville, WI circa the 1930-40s.

The three-day show was very well attended, and both customers and dealers complimented WPA members on the pottery, its presentation and the information provided. Being present at the show allowed WPA members to describe in greater detail the art pottery movement in Wisconsin and to encourage people to attend the upcoming 2002 show, August 24, in

Madison.

Special thanks to Barbara and Charlie, Ori-Anne and Paul, Kathleen and Gerald, Rose, Ed, and Barb and Jim for their time and efforts on behalf of the WPA!

- Chris Swart, WPA Publicity Chairman, Dave and Betty Knutzen, WPA President and Past President, respectively.

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## Pauline Log Cabin Update

As most WPA members know, the Arts Council of Edgerton, WI (ACE) is working to move and restore the log cabin formerly owned by Pauline Jacobus, founder and designer of Pauline pottery. WPA member Ori-Anne Pagel coordinates this effort and provided this update on ACE's upcoming activities:

ACE and the log cabin reconstruction advocates are scheduled to work this summer with Eagle Restorations. ACE is working to get their members to cosign with the bank for \$44,000.00 to complete the project. Ori-Anne has applied for grant monies; if the grants are approved, they will cover approximately one-third of the costs, with ACE having to ante up the other two-thirds.

In other work, the stones for the fireplace

are at the new cabin site, while the logs need to be moved from their storage place, in just a few weeks, at which time Eagle will begin work. Here are the additional renovation details:

Visible stone foundation border with air vents: \$2,600.00  
Log work and needed replacements: \$8,000  
Chinking between logs: \$3,000  
Roof cedar or plank: ~\$8,000  
6 Windows and a good secure door: \$2,700 (WPA has bought one window)  
Interior, trim and floor: \$1,850  
Security and electricity ~\$1,850

Ori-Anne notes that they are looking for a mason to put the chimney together.

For those of you interested in helping to fund the log cabin restoration and in learning more about the art pottery histo-

ry of Edgerton, you may be interested in this book:

*Edgerton's History in Clay: Pauline Pottery to Pickard China*

You can purchase a copy by sending a check for \$13.00 to

Arts Council of Edgerton  
104 W. Fulton St.

Edgerton, Wisconsin 53534

The book is \$10.00 plus \$3.00 for postage & handling.

Ori-Anne will keep us posted on upcoming work dates. This is the year to finish the work and we wish good luck to everyone in ACE on obtaining funding and keeping the work going. Ori-Anne sends a special thanks to the WPA for their support.

- Editor, WPA Press

## Pottery Presentations From WPA Club Members Tracey Grant, Barb Reed, Barb Huhn, Dave and Betty Knutzen and Chris Swart

*To start our new year out right, the WPA had a wonderful January meeting during which five of our long-time members did presentations on some of their favorite pottery. The qualifications were simple: be willing to bring your favorite pottery and tell the group about it. As a double treat, all five presenters agreed to provide a write-up for the WPA Press, March 2002. Read on to learn some of what makes our club members collect.*

### Weller Woodcraft and Forest

In 1905 Rudolph Larber began working for Weller, remaining with the company until 1930. He was in charge of designing new lines of pottery and is credited with creating the Forest line, amongst others. Larber was inspired to design the Forest line while traveling by train to a pottery show.

Between 1910 and 1920 Baldin, Woodcraft

and Forest patterns appeared on the market. These lines were noted for their raised decorations of objects found in nature, Baldin with its apple motif, Forest with a tree motif and Woodcraft with owls, squirrels and apple trees. Woodcraft appeared in 1917, and featured pieces that looked like trees. Woodcraft was made into vases, lamps, ashtrays, candlesticks, compotes, wall pockets, umbrella stands and last but not least, jardinières and pedestals.

I have long been interested in pottery, as my parents were antique dealers for 22 years. Our house was full of Victorian furniture, stained glass lamps and pottery. I was never fond of Victorian furniture as a child, because it was uncomfortable. But I did love glassware and pottery. Although they didn't have a large selection of pottery, my parents did have very nice stuff. I was most attracted to a bowl with beautiful trees around it. I didn't know what it was called until I learned about Weller Woodcraft as an adult. After learning more about it and deciding to collect Woodcraft, we found our first bowl, just like the one my parents had, at an antique mall in Door

County and we were thrilled to buy it. Then we found a wonderful Forest vase in Appleton and good friends gave us a wonderful jardinière. We also found a basket in Algoma at a mall.

Then I decided it was time to branch out to Weller Woodcraft, which has a look similar to Forest. We found a squirrel wall pocket and a nice squirrel bowl to purchase. Scott came upon a Baldin vase at a garage sale. I love it too, particularly combined with the Weller Forest and Woodcraft. We also now have many of the tree vases, including one that has a bowl on top of it. I feel very fortunate to have these pieces.

I'd like to add that all of these pieces were found by hunting for them; not one of them came from eBay. I find it more challenging to look for pieces that way. I have heard about various shops closing after losing business to eBay. I hope that doesn't continue—it will take away the joy of searching for and finding these treasures.

- Tracey Grant, WPA Vice President

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### McCoy Floral Form Vases (1946–1958)

*Barb is a collector of many types of pottery but early on had an interest in McCoy, and McCoy Floral Form Vases in particular. Here is some information from her presentation in January.*

I decided to do a presentation on the root of my passion for art pottery, McCoy and the flower form vases in particular. I started collecting McCoy floral form vases in the mid-1980s. The appeal of these vases for me was their design, color variation and price; compared to Roseville pottery they were fairly inexpensive in the mid-80s. In addition, they appealed to me as a touchable means of impressionist art, and remind me of the work of Claude Monet.

My first floral form vase was a McCoy Hyacinth, bought at an estate sale for \$3. In fact the first five vases I bought cost between \$3 and \$20! These vases have increased in price since 1985; a poppy vase recently sold for \$500 and a single wide lily vase for \$272 on eBay (1/02).

I have eleven McCoy floral form vases and one floral form lamp. The lamp is Hyacinth, which is the most unique of all my collection. A poppy floral form vase (with pink or yellow flowers) would round out my collection nicely. The variety of McCoy floral form vases available include:  
Chrysanthemum  
Hyacinth  
Double and Triple Tulip  
Lower Tulip

Magnolia  
Single Wide Lily  
Triple Lily  
Tulip(?) planter bookends  
Double cache

In terms of prices, it is safest to check eBay or antique malls for the most up-to-date prices, and for prices consistent-to-design. These vases look classy when presented alone or among other flower forms, with or without flowers in them. I continue to look for and collect more floral form vases.

-Barb Reed, WPA

## Royal Hickman Pottery

Royal Hickman began his career designing pottery in 1934 in California where he and his wife started producing pottery creations in their garage. They named the company Ra Art and sold their wares through the Gump department stores. In 1935 they moved their small company to the California Art Tile building in Richmond, CA, staying there until Haeger hired Hickman, in 1939, to become their designer.

At Haeger, Hickman collaborated with Frank Petty, sculptor and glaze developer, and Harvey Hamilton, who ran Haeger's lamp division. This collaboration created

some of the more striking pottery designs being done in the United States at that time.

In 1944 the three men left Haeger to set up their own pottery. They did so in Tennessee and named the company Royal Hickman Industries. During this time they produced both pottery with the Royal Hickman mark and lamp bases for Philmar, which later changed its name to Ceramic Arts, Inc.

Royal Hickman moved to Tampa, FL where he opened another pottery. He was not in business very long as this pottery was destroyed by a fire. Royal Hickman then went to work for the largest pottery com-

pany in Mexico, Losa Fina in Guadalajara. He remained in Mexico until his death in 1969.

Pottery from the Tennessee era has striking Petty crystalline glazes and was marked Hickman USA, Royal Hickman USA or Royal Hickman Petty Crystal Glaze. Many of the shapes associated with Haeger were also used during his California, Tennessee, Florida and Mexico periods, although the crystalline glazes are only seen on the Haeger and Tennessee pieces.

- David Knutzen, WPA President



Pictured left to right: Royal Hickman horse figurine, a label from Hickman's California pottery days and (right) a Rookwood Vellum vase created by Lorinda Epply.

## Rookwood Coromandel and Vellum Glazes

The Coromandel glaze was developed at Rookwood in 1931-32. It was during the depression and the company was experiencing financial losses. In an attempt to save money, Rookwood cut back on artists and the labor intensive work of decorating vases. Coromandel is a rich burgundy glaze with a crystalline dip. This glaze was not in

production very long and all the Coromandel pottery with the crystalline glaze is from this era. This glaze was revived in 1950 during Rookwood's 75th anniversary. The 1950s Coromandel features the same rich burgundy, but does not have the crystalline dip.

The Vellum glaze was developed in 1904 by Stanley Burt. It was first introduced at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St.

Louis where it was awarded a grand prize. It is a transparent matt glaze applied over the artist's decoration, creating an illusion of depth to the decoration. Pieces with this glaze are stamped on the bottom with a "V", in addition to the other Rookwood marks. It is a very popular and sought after glaze and commands very high prices.

- Betty Knutzen, WPA Past President



Examples of Weller Woodcraft in the form of a wallpocket (left) and bowl (right). In the center, a McCoy Double Tulip floral form vase.

### Amphora Pottery

Amphora was the trademark for pottery made by the firm of Reissner, Stellmacher and Kessel between 1892 and 1905 in the Turn-Teplitz region of Bohemia, near Dresden.

(Reissner, Stellmacher and Kessel used the red RStK mark shown on a small portrait vase that Chris brought along to his presentation, for those of you that saw it in January.)

Amphora became a generic term for the production of many potteries operating in the Teplitz area, just as Gouda or Haviland became generic terms for pottery ware made by various potteries in those regions.

Bohemia was part of the Austrian empire until after WWI, when it became the western part of the new nation Czechoslovakia. Thus, Amphora made for export may be marked Bohemia and/or Austria or Czechoslovakia, depending on when it was made. Today the area is part of the Czech Republic.

Pre-WWI Amphora was usually art nouveau style. The term Art Nouveau was coined by

the Belgians Octave Maus and Edmund Picard, founders of the journal "L'Art Moderne" in 1881. They used the term, by 1884, particularly in reference to paintings that rejected French 19th century academic traditions. Later the term was applied to architecture and other art objects, including ceramics.

Countries outside of France created their own terms for Art Nouveau such as Jugendstil, Sezessionstil (Secessionist), Modern Style, Arte Joven and Style Liberty. These movements shared three characteristics: they rejected academic and classical traditions, emphasized the observation and imitation of nature, and emphasized the curved line rather than the straight. The last two features were influenced by Japanese art, which became readily available in Europe and America after 1854. The Gothic architecture of 12th-16th century Europe was another major influence on Art Nouveau.

During and after WWI, amphora turned away from Art Nouveau to incorporate stylized Arts and Crafts, Egyptian Revival, and Art Deco motifs. The post-WWI Amphora Werke Reissner pottery is fairly common, easily recognized by its squeeze bag use of semi-gloss glaze on an unglazed

matte foreground. This pottery was made from 1920s-1930s.

Some of the best pre-1917 Amphora bears the crown mark and name "Imperial Amphora". I am not sure if this firm was an offshoot of RStK, which also used a crown mark, or related to the Austrian Imperial Technical School for Ceramics and Associated Applied Arts (1885-1917), which provided a steady stream of fresh talent for Austrian potteries. It is known that factories in the Teplitz area donated clay and other materials to the school to be used by ceramics students. Use of the crown mark is common.

- Chris Swart, WPA Publicity Chair



On the left, dinner ware designer Eva Zeisel, designer for many companies, including Red Wing. On the right, an example of Museum Ware by Castleton. Plate pictured below, Tomorrow's Classic "Bouquet" pattern. Photographs courtesy of [www.evazeisel.org](http://www.evazeisel.org)

### About Eva Zeisel

Born in Budapest in 1906, Eva Stricker entered the Royal Academy of Fine Arts at age 17, but soon after apprenticed herself to a traditional potter, and a year later began her own pottery workshop. Just a year after that her work was displayed at the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial, where she won an honorable mention. By then she was working as a designer a Kispester Factory in Budapest, then later moved on to other factories in Hamburg, Berlin, and Russia, where she became the art director of the china and glass industry. She later traveled to Austria and England where she married Hans Zeisel, a sociologist/lawyer, and then to the US in 1938.

One of her first designs in the US was for Sears, Roebuck. She has since designed for Hall China, Red Wing China, Castleton China, Norleans Meito (Japan), Western Stoneware, Hyalyn, Phillip Rosenthal (Germany), Manciola (Italy), Federal Glass, Heisey Glass, Noritake (Japan), and Nikkon Toki (Japan), and almost too many others to mention.

Honors collected by Zeisel include being commissioned by Castleton China and The Museum of Modern Art to design a line of fine porcelain dinnerware, which was presented in an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1947. She has received a senior award from the National Endowments for the Arts (1982), and was the subject of a touring exhibition sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and the Musee des Arts Decoratifs de Montreal, in 1984. She taught ceramic arts industrial design at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn from 1939 to 1952.

Her works are in the permanent collections of Brohan Museum, Berlin; The British Museum; The Brooklyn Museum; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. She has had retrospective exhibitions in dozens of museums, has lectured widely, and has received two honorary doctorates in recognition of her work, among other honors. Her recent works include designs for Zsolnay Factory in Pecs and Kispester-

Granit in Budapest, as well as the American firms of Klein-Reid and Nambe. The Museum of Modern Arts and the Metropolitan Museum are both currently featuring reissues of earlier works in new glazes and colors designed and supervised by Zeisel. At age 95, she continues to produce new works regularly.

**Editor's Note:** Our many thanks to Pat Moore and the Eva Zeisel Collectors Club, [www.evazeisel.org](http://www.evazeisel.org) for this information! It is most welcome in anticipation of the **WPA's 2002 Show and Sale**, featuring: **The Red Wing Legacy: Stoneware, Art Ware and Dinnerware**



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