

\$5.00



# Pot & Puma

Published by the Frankoma Family Collectors Association



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Joniece's --  
Believe It Or Not

Gibb Green On  
The Very Prairie Green

The Little Stepchild

Get to Know Your Officers

FFCA Auction Action

History Without Books

Vera's --  
Nixon\Ford Mug

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

RAY STOLL

### REUNION 95 DECLARED A SUCCESS!

From the reports and correspondence I have received, I have to conclude that our second annual reunion was a success. We had 236 registered members and guests representing 22 different states along with a number of other visitors/guests.

Attendees had the opportunity to at least see, if not purchase, some of the more rare pieces of Frankoma. Those visiting the Frank home had the pleasure of seeing a number of "one-of-a-kind" items as well as other rarely seen pieces.

The confirmation of Tom Grogg and election of Phyllis Bess and Gibb Green to our Board of Directors will provide strong and knowledgeable leadership to our fledgling organization. In consonance with the wishes of the membership, I have appointed a Nominating Committee, which was confirmed by the Board of Directors at a meeting held on November 10th and which consists of Phyllis Bess (Chairman), Carol Rogers of Illinois and John Babb of California. It is intended that a list of nominees appear in the *May Pot and Puma* with instructions as to how to request an absentee ballot.

A By-Laws Committee was also appointed, to consist of Nancy Littrell (Chairman), Robert Hase, Sr of Illinois and Cece Winchester-Stoltz of California. Other committees will be appointed at the January 26, 1996 meeting of the Board, which will be held in Oklahoma City.

Our thanks to Tom and Jeannie Grogg for another super job in organizing and conducting the reunion. Thanks are due also to Donna Frank for the various arrangements she took care of, Corky and Judy Conrad for conducting the auction, Derek Grogg for being a willing, helping hand, Nancy Littrell for running the sales desk throughout the reunion, and all those who set up displays and/or helped in other ways. Together we put on a first-rate show. ■

## FROM THE SECRETARY

DONNA FRANK

### WE'RE JUST WILD ABOUT HARRY!

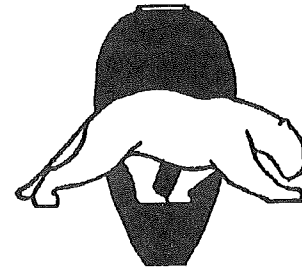
We had the honor and good fortune to receive a call from Mr. Harry Rinker of Rinker Enterprises, a research center in Pennsylvania devoted to the study of antiques and collectibles, with a large library housing thousands of books and periodicals on the subject. Editor/author Harry Rinker is also series editor for the *Warman Encyclopedia of Antiques and Collectibles*, and columnist for *Rinker on Collectibles* carried by a number of newspapers, as well as host of his own radio show called *Whatcha Got!* Mr. Rinker is a familiar name in the field, and quite possibly the nation's quintessential authority on the subject of antiques and collectibles.

His call told us he would be flying into Tulsa the next day and wished to meet us. He rented a car and drove to the Frank house, after which Donna took him on a tour of the Jenks antique malls and had dinner with him.

He then drove to Oklahoma City that evening and called Steve and Nancy Littrell. Steve sprang into action and got him to Channel 5 early the next morning to tape a segment for the Saturday Morning News. Then he was off to the Cowboy Hall of Fame for two days of book signing, lecturing, and a values clinic. The Littrells got to spend some quality time with him and the people at the Hall of Fame, making new contacts and talking Frankoma.

Mr. Rinker endeared himself to us all! We're very grateful to him for calling us and making himself so available to us with his helpful advice, his vast knowledge of collectibles, and his generous and cordial nature. He was very complimentary with regard to our Frankoma collectors organization and our *Pot & Puma*, which made us very proud to hear.

Thank you, Harry! We understand you've been invited back to the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Be assured that the welcome mat will again be out when you return. ■



## OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT

Raymond F. Stoll  
4618 NW 34th Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73122-1330  
405-947-8505

### VICE PRESIDENT

Samuel A. "Pat" Warner  
4900 NW 36th Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73122-2326  
405-942-9779

### SECRETARY

Donna Frank  
1300 Luker Lane  
Sapulpa, OK 74066-6024  
918-224-6610

### TREASURER

Nancy L. Littrell  
5632 NW 58th Terrace  
Oklahoma City, OK 73122-7329  
405-722-2941

### TRUSTEES

Phyllis Bess  
Tulsa, OK

Thomas Grogg  
Kellyville, OK

Gibb Green  
Windsor, CO

## ABOUT THE COVER:

1970—Ft. Worth, Texas

Joniece and John were photographed just after John was presented with the Harry E. Ebright Award for 1970 by the SW Section of the Ceramics Society in Ft Worth, Texas.

CO-EDITORS, Donna Frank, Nancy Littrell

COMPOSITOR, Nancy Littrell

CIRCULATION, Donna Frank, Steve Littrell

CONSULTANTS, Maxine Saddler, Pat Warner, Ray Stoll & Elaine Stoll

PHOTOGRAPHY, Steve Littrell

PUBLIC RELATIONS, Steve Littrell

RESEARCH, Phyllis Bess

COVER PHOTO: Joniece Frank & John Frank. Frank Family Collection, Sapulpa, OK.

Copyright© 1995 Frankoma Family Collectors Association. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint articles must be obtained in writing from the Frankoma Family Collectors Association. November Issue. *Pot & Puma* is published quarterly: February, May, August, and November, by the Frankoma Family Collectors Association. Third Class postage paid at Oklahoma City, OK, and at additional mailing places. Membership in the Association is \$25 per family. Membership includes a subscription to the *Pot & Puma* and the *Prairie Green Sheet*. Most back issues of the *Pot & Puma* are available, \$5 per issue, postage paid. Address all correspondence to *Pot & Puma*, 1300 Luker Lane, Sapulpa, OK 74066-6024 or PO Box 32571, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-0771.

The Frankoma pottery photographed in this issue of the *Pot & Puma* was provided by various members of the FFCA. We wish to extend our gratitude and thanks to these members for helping us to enrich our issues with these photos.

## FROM THE HISTORIAN

MAXINE SADDLER

**THE LITTLE STEPCHILD** On our path through life, we acquire or accumulate many things that slow us down. It could be arthritis, or any number of other things, that could spoil our "Golden Years." Looking at it another way—we trade the active pursuit of the "finer things in life" for "things we didn't have time for in our youth."

We gain a true sense of appreciation for people and things, along with a certain amount of patience and understanding—a time to "smell the roses." We seniors don't have to be put on a shelf. No indeed! We just need to find *something to love...something we love to do!*

The same is true with Frankoma. Most Frankoma has been cared for and is as beautiful today as the day it left the plant. But, like people, age and accidents happen.

There is a Frankoma Home here in Ohio that takes in hurt and/or crippled Frankoma. Less-than-perfect Frankoma pieces are gathered here and loved for what they are, admired and treasured. They respond to TLC. From time to time, the lady in charge of this Home gives public programs on Frankoma and takes different pieces for "show and tell." Always just one or two of the *special* pieces are chosen to go, because they each have a special story to tell.

**Case in point**—the little stepchild known as Bud Vase #40 (pictured), produced in 1986. It was the forerunner to its "sister," the Bud Vase #47. Here's its story: Joniece designed this little darling, who decided that a pair would offer a choice of one without handles (#40), and one with handles (#47). Time was running out to complete the catalog for 1986. Joniece quickly rolled out a couple of clay handles, attached them to the little #40, and fired it, just for the photo session. But the story, as I was told it, was that the make-shift handles did not withstand the heat of the kiln, although they sufficed for a photo.

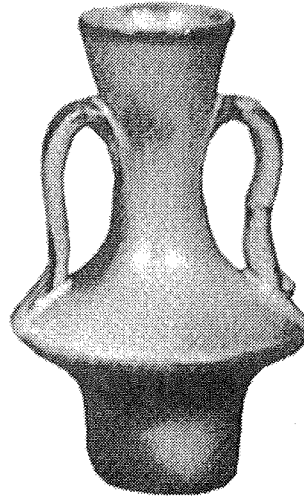
Enter your historian on one of her trips to Frankoma! Joniece offered the little "prototype" to me, to join with other handicapped pieces in the Frankoma Home for pieces loved for their contribution and place in Frankoma history because of their unique circumstances.

Little #40, hereafter known as #47, lives in Ohio with other of my *specials*

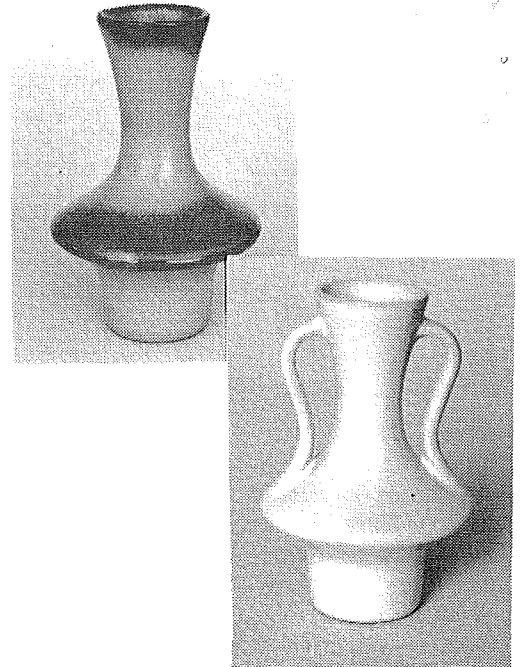


## TESTAMENTS BY THOMAS

has gone hunting and will return next issue.



Left: #47 Bud Vase  
Photo from 1986 Catalog



Top: #40 Bud Vase  
Bottom: #47 Bud Vase

If you take notice in the Frankoma catalog of 1986, and a few years after, you'll still see the little #47 with a disjointed handle. FAME COMES IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS!

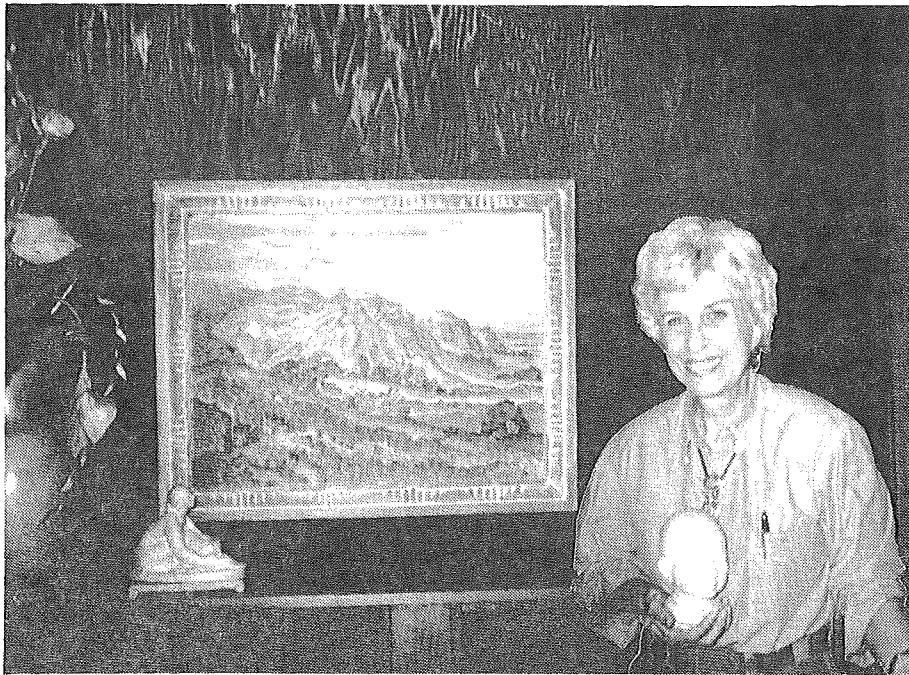
**Another case in point:** I gather *specials* in many different places. For instance, many years ago a big flea market in Columbus, Ohio, had a beautiful #7T—the Mayan-Aztec tea pot in the older Woodland Moss. Gorgeous to behold, but *without a lid*. Examining the tea pot, I discovered it had also been severely damaged, and someone had carefully glued it back together. After calling the man's attention to it, he was about to drop it into the trash barrel.

I asked, "How much for it?" "Fifty cents," he said. IT WAS A DEAL!

And that tea pot is talked about and admired over and over again for its outstanding beauty! ■

*(Ed. note: Thank you, Maxine, for this article! I thought I was the only one doing silly, uncollector-like things like that. Just the day before the convention I*

*got a call from the owner of a local thrift shop who asked if I would deliver him a copy of my book, which I did. He showed me his Frankoma shelf, and I discovered a Mayan-Aztec #7D pitcher in the rich, old Desert Gold, with a hand-stamped "Frankoma" on the bottom. It's beauty knocked my socks off! The lip had been broken and patched, but I didn't care. I gladly paid \$8 for it. After I cleaned off an inch of muck, it found its place up on the beam over the piano, above those Aztec pieces the folks brought back from Mexico so many years ago. The flaw cannot be seen unless you're holding it in your hand. Up there on the beam, it's gorgeous! One day long ago, back in the "Clay Blue" days, Joniece was walking through the area where they sorted out seconds, and there was a large #227 leaf tossed into the throwaway bin, there because two large fire checks made it unfit for even a second! She dug it out, brought it home, and for as long as I can remember, it's been sitting on the kitchen island holding bananas. Check, schmeck. The richness of that Clay Blue is to fall in love with!*



Donna Frank holding her baby head sculpture by Joe Taylor.  
Also in Photo: #101 Amazon Woman by Joe Taylor and a painting by Oscar Brousse Jacobson.  
Photo by Glenna Ackerman, IL

## GET TO KNOW YOUR OFFICERS

Donna Frank, FFC Secretary & Co-Editor of the *Pot & Puma*

Let me go on record as being reluctant to write this. After all, the last few paragraphs of my book give a brief summary of the subject. But now I'm asked to sketch out a few more details about who and what I am and have been. Promise not to yawn, cousins.

From *Clay*, everyone knows the first part, so I'll pick it up where I left home. Like when Mom and Dad sent me to Hockaday School (girls' prep) in Dallas my last high school year—I suspect to try and make a lady of me. When it came to college, it was preordained that I was Oklahoma University bound, and I attended for three semesters. I dropped out for a year to get healthier, then returned to school, but chose Oklahoma State. There I met the BMOG (Big Man on Campus), married him, and worked his way through college. He entered the army as an ROTC officer, and while we were stationed in El Paso, I finished my hours for a BA.

I soon left him and headed for Hollywood, studied more voice and drama for a year, and thought I was ready for New York. For six years I lived in a Greenwich Village 6th floor walk-up, studied at Artists Repertory Theatre, did some off-Broadway, traveled with major road shows (minor roles), was featured singer in a few night club shows and musical comedy reviews, did summer stock gigs, commercials and bits on TV, and generally got my feet wet in show biz.

Between shows I often kept myself eating and studying by working as a secretary and public stenographer. I was what is commonly known as a "working actress/singer"—i.e., I managed to get jobs, but not my name on the marquee.

In the early '60s in NY, I re-met a producer I'd worked with years before at a theatre in Hollywood, I was lured back to the West Coast, and married him in 1964. We owned two summer stock companies in Colorado, in which I usually starred (I worked cheap). I took the name Dolly French to create an image in keeping with the excellent 1890s melodramas we did. (I divorced him in 1973.) "Dolly" stuck with me until 1977 when *Clay in the Master's Hands* was published. It wouldn't have made much sense to write it under another name—which was then Dolly March. So again I became Donna Frank, though many friends out West still call me Dolly.

Swearing off men (or at least husbands), I left the theatre to try and make an honest living as a single girl, meaning I had to bite the bullet and face the old eight-to-five. I worked as a chiropractic assistant, executive secretary, executive assistant, licensed masseuse, worked in museums, art galleries, and a worlds fair, and a few more occupations that need no comments.

I wrote all the magazine articles I could think of to write, and most were

published, primarily on the subject of travel. That was after I had traveled to Egypt, Jordan, Israel, to South America on a freighter, stayed for a time in a Shingon Buddhist monastery on a mountaintop in Japan, and hung out in India and Nepal for a while. I became enchanted by and began writing Haiku poetry. I wrote several books, too, but couldn't quite let them go to be published, never being truly pleased with what I had done, although it filled my needs at the time to write them. I guess they were just for me. But each served their purpose for me at those times in my life. Ultimately, I think it was too humiliating to look in my mirror and see living proof of the old adage, "Those who can't do teach." Writing indeed allowed me to see how much I knew, but also how much I knew not.

I've lived in New York, three places in Texas, Ohio, Tulsa, and many places and towns in Southern CA, doing mostly theatrical things, but I always returned to LA where I spent the better part of thirty-five years. But one day I woke up, knew I was through with LA, moved to Palm Springs, and became a very contented desert rat for nearly four years.

Sister Johnnie then started caring for Mother and Milton and was in dire need of help, so I migrated to Sapulpa in November, 1993. A few months later, FFC suddenly sprang up, and I was elected Secretary. When the newsletter editor resigned, Nancy and I jumped in together to make sure you would have more newsletters. When we had finished our second issue together, I looked on the inside cover and discovered I was its *Editor!* But that should be corrected to "Co-Editor." Because thanks to Nancy who researches, checks and confirms to be truth much of what I write, then formats the whole publication like the professional she is—we now have the best, most educational, most attractive newsletter/magazine/journal of any collector club in America.

And how do we know this? Well, gosh, that's what the big guys keep telling us . . .

# GIBB GREEN ON THE VERY PRAIRIE GREEN

Everyone knows what Prairie Green looks like—even the crusty old flea market crow who barks back at me, “Frankoma? Sure, we got some of that muddy green stuff!” And there’s also the New York tourist who purrs when I show her those graceful “guacamole” pieces that are gaining rapid popularity in the East.

Prairie Green is my favorite Frankoma glaze. It’s a good thing, as it’s by far the easiest to find. Still, I thought it would be of interest for us to explore this beloved glaze, from Genesis to Revelations, with the wonderful, subtle changes it has undergone over these many years.

Let’s start in the Frank Potteries era, circa 1933. I’ve had the privilege of staring at a #72 Large Indian Jar. The glaze is very thick and creamy green, very dull. The rutile brown shows up only on the high points in the design detail. What a blessing it is to hold in the hands a Frank Potteries or “small round o” piece, and know that it was lovingly hand-crafted, trimmed, glazed, and finished by John and Grace Lee in their tiny Norman shop!

I have a #502 3-1/2” Vase with the small round “o” (1934-35). The Prairie Green is thick on this one as well, quite matte with bronze patches and highlights. Gorgeous!

I have studied carefully several Pacing Puma logo pieces (1936-38), including my #12 Tall Ringed Vase and #131 and #132, Two Feathers and Maiden Masks. Again, the glaze is very dull. The brown highlights are much more golden than the 1934-35 bronze look.

My collection includes a #135 4” Indian Mask, hand-dated in 1940. The glaze is a shinier, lighter green, and the brown highlights are deeper and more mottled, almost speckled. A very intriguing piece.

Among pieces produced in 1942 only, I have carefully analyzed my #93 and #93A Cream and Sugar, and my #166H Bull Salt and Peppers. The glaze is shiny, and the brown is much more dominant than earlier pieces. It is a rich,

bronzy brown in large patches, not just highlights.

The Green green collection also includes a #555 Indian Thunderbird (or Eagle) Pitcher, hand-dated 1946. It’s a real charmer! The shiny green blends into mottled, speckled brown. Where the two colors come together, there’s a border of bubbly gold.

Old G. G. got borned in 1949, the year of the remake of the #72 Large Indian Jar. Mine is shiny, the green creamy and thick. The brown patches are bronze with bubbly gold trim.

In 1950-51 Frankoma made a few handfuls of miniature vases, #502, #503, and #505. They are pictured together on Page 127 of Phyllis and Tom’s first book. The Prairie Green here is at its finest. The creamy green blends in and out of the golden brown and is particularly expressive in the design highlights. These three little vases are among the hardest to find of all Frankoma pieces of any era.

I have an Ada clay #562 Lazybones Individual Creamer of its introduction year, 1954. Both the green and brown have lightened somewhat.

Then we arrive at the brick red clay era. I have a pair of #915H Dutch Shoe Salt and Peppers from 1957-60. The rich red clay produces deeper browns and brighter greens. The golden hues that used to flavor the browns are gone. Many collectors especially love the bold colors of the rutile glazes of the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. The Woodland Moss and Peach Glow are especially dramatic. However, I still prefer the Ada clay Prairie Greens.

From 1961 to date, the Prairie Green changes were progressive, as the clay from Sapulpa got less red and more pinkish. By looking at my Christmas cards, it’s obvious that the red was reddest from 1957-60. Of course, the rutile change in 1970 really watered down the Prairie Green. The titanium dioxide from Australia produces much less color intensity and much less definition between the greens and the browns. I have observed that, from 1974

forward, the pinkish tan clay has been pretty consistent, but the Prairie Green has become weaker and weaker. The 1990’s color is virtually lime green and tan.

Please allow me a few words to comment on two early first cousins of Prairie Green, namely Verde Green and Pompeiian Bronze. In 1933-35, Mr. Frank experimented with the glazes to arrive at the perfect Prairie Green, using also the Patina and Verde Bronze names in the early years.

I have a #29 Bud Vase with a 1934 black rubber stamp Frankoma logo. The Verde Green is a shiny, translucent emerald—the texture and color of the clay can be seen through the glaze. The green color is the same as the Pacing Puma logo era Prairie Green, but of course there’s no rutile effect in Verde Green.

I have a “small round o” #550 in what is either very dark Prairie Green or Pompeiian Bronze. It is a dull, dark brownish green with hints of gold. This littlest Guernsey Pitcher from 1934-35 could spark heated debate among the best Frankoma glaze experts. Please don’t tell me that the #550 was not made at all until 1940! Because I have *three* of the “small round o” #550’s!

Well, old Gibb ran out of brain several paragraphs ago. So compare the results of my studies and observations with your own collection and drop me a note, or give me a call if you think I’m “all wet.”

## By any other name - -

1933 - Bronze Green  
1936 - Bronze Green  
1938 - Bronze Green  
1941 - Patina  
1947 - Bronze Green  
1949 - Prairie Green

By Gibb Green, CO

# Pat Warner on Collecting Frankoma



The Cardinal Rule of all collecting is: "Collect what you like and enjoy". Do not be concerned with what the *Jones* collect unless you enjoy the same things.

## What shall I collect?

Frankoma offers many choices. Here are a few:

### ① By Markings

1934-35: Small round "o" (Frankoma),  
1936-38: Panther mark (Pot & Puma),  
1939 to date: many markings from  
small to large.

### ② By Clay

1934-54, 55: Cream colored ada clay,  
1955-63: Brick red Sapulpa clay,  
1963 to date: Pinkish red Sapulpa clay.

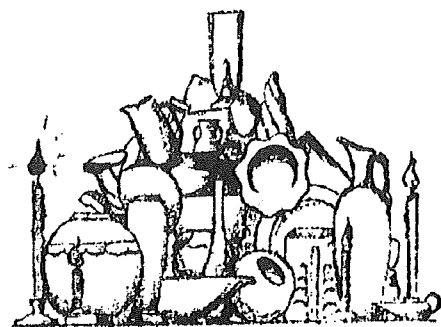
### ③ By Color

Your favorite color may be common or rare. You may like the Norman single color glaze types, the American rufle or the modern glazes.

### ④ By Size

Small items if your space is limited. Larger pieces if you have spacious areas for display and storage.

☞ To be continued ☞



# HISTORY WITHOUT BOOKS

by Maxine Saddler

Many towns and states have what they call a "College Without Walls," where people can complete their education at home and work at the same time—a real plus.

Frankoma can rightly boast of having "History Without Books." Over the years, too numerous to list, Frankoma has commemorated special events in history in beautiful plates and trivets. It takes both sides of the pieces to show in pictures *and* words a thumbnail sketch of events, so I like to have two of each and display both sides.

Think of the history on some of these Frankoma historical pieces: OKLAHOMA DIAMOND JUBILEE—1907-1982; OKLAHOMA LAND RUN—1889-1989; and a special trivet that I consider the most magnificent was OKLAHOMA'S SEMI-CENTENNIAL—ARROWS TO ATOMS—1907-1957. On the back of the latter, it states:

*In less than a lifetime, Oklahoma has gone from Pioneers to World Leadership...from Horses to Airlines...*

*Tepees to Towers...Arrows to Atoms. 1907-1957—Semi-Centennial Celebration.*

Available in 1957 only. A real jewel!

The STATE PLATES give a thumbnail history in pictures and words, containing the date that the state entered the Union, its capital, state bird, state flower, and picturing its industry, recreation, and points of interest. They were made for Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Kansas, Florida, and North Carolina.

Oklahoma naturally is highlighted over and over again. Lucky Oklahomans! But the other states and the country as a whole are far from forgotten.

STATUE OF LIBERTY PLATE—1886-1986. A special tribute to Lady Liberty, designed by Joniece Frank. This familiar landmark was many years in the planning and creation. It was a gift from France to the people of America for the Centennial of Independence in 1876. Lady Liberty holds a tablet in her left hand, while lifting the Light of Freedom in her right.

Its theme was, "PROGRESS IS NOTHING BUT LIBERTY IN ACTION." She stands on Liberty Island

facing southeast to welcome ships coming into the harbor. She has seven 20-foot spikes on her crown to symbolize the seven seas. This beautiful plate was a limited edition in 1986.

Were you one of the lucky ones to receive Grace Lee's 1986 Christmas card? It also carried the theme of the Lady of Liberty, holding high her torch, in commemoration of that special centennial year.

By far the most outstanding historical plates Frankoma produced were the five BICENTENNIAL PLATES. Frankoma produced one plate each year beginning in 1972 and ending in the bicentennial year, 1976. Each year depicts history with special themes:

- 1972—Provocations
- 1973—Patriots and Leaders
- 1974—Battles of Independence
- 1975—Victories for Independence
- 1976—Symbols of Freedom

These plates contain much of our U.S. history, in words and pictures, and the completed series contains the signatures of all the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Frankoma produced other plates under the theme of history: The WILL ROGERS PLATE for Oklahoma's famous son, made in 1979, the 100th birthday of this famous man.

The METHODIST PLATE commemorates the bicentennial of Methodism in America, 1766-1966, honoring the pioneers who gave their lives in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pictured is the house where the first sermon was preached in New York in 1766 by Phil Embrey. Also John Wesley, C. Wesley, Susanna Wesley, and the circuit rider, Frances Asbury. So much is on this plate, it reads like a book.

Transportation history in plates began with the beautiful CONESTOGA WAGON—1725-1850, produced in 1971. There was to be a series of HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION plates, depicting land, sea, and air transportation. But this was the first and last one, as the plans for the series could not be completed.

What a wonderful contribution of HISTORY WITHOUT BOOKS that Frankoma has produced for us over the years! ☞

# What they're saying about the Reunion

excerpts from letters of members who attended the reunion . . .

☛ Thank you, thank you, all of you who gave us such a wonderful convention! We thought the first one could not be topped, but you did it. Joniece's trivet and the collector mug will be treasured always. And to have Joniece, Grace Lee, and Donna all sign my trivet was a most special treat! What will you do next year that could possibly top this one? I wouldn't miss it to find out.

☛ Words can't quite express what a good time we both had at the reunion. Congratulations to all the officers and board members for a "job well done". Meeting all of you was wonderful. All the good conversations we had, the fun, the stuff we learned and the stuff we bought. What can we say! Thanks for a great time.

☛ We learned so much we did not know before about Frankoma. The tour of the Frank house was a grand and unexpected experience. Now we are legitimate members, and we are looking forward to next year for another wonderful and fun two days.

☛ We came to the Frankoma collectors convention with the idea that it would probably be interesting. We were not prepared to have such a great time talking to the other collectors and spending our money.

☛ Phyllis's book is absolutely marvelous, a collector's item in itself. And Donna's book made me laugh—and cry—*both* times I read it! My wife and I thank both of you ladies for such wonderful Frankoma treasures.

☛ A note to thank you for the very warm and friendly way we were treated at the gathering. We learned so much about the history and life of the Franks and their associates, like Willard Stone. Can't wait till next fall to make the pilgrimage back.

☛ Donna: Your book is just perfection. Thank you for the exemplary work you have done for all of us who love Frankoma. Joniece: Your acumen and talent are boundless. Thank you for your tremendous effort to show us hospitality and giving such pleasure. The new trivet is simply wonderful. The circle of Frankoma is awesome. I love the picture of the turtle meeting the turtle. Wouldn't it be a great page for a Frankoma calendar? Grace Lee: How perfectly your name suits you! Thank you for so graciously letting us visit your beautiful home. Meeting you is my high point of all time.

☛ Thanks for all your (Nancy) and Steve's efforts on behalf of the FFCA, and especially the annual meeting and all that it entails. I know that it's generally a "thankless" job...I, for one, think our officers have done a sterling job in getting this thing organized and "off the ground." The publications are *excellent!* I'm proud of you—and you should be, too.

☛ You have been so generous in sharing your home, your time, your knowledge, and your memories. You have made us feel like family! We hope that one day we can give back to you as you have given to us.

☛ I just finished reading "Clay!" It is wonderful...a joy! We had a glorious time last week and brought home many treasures, both in clay and heart.

☛ Thank you so much for your hospitality. Seeing your creative spaces, no longer will I feel that my writing space has to be spotless. *(Ed. note: And just think—you saw it at its very best! Before I lived with my sister, I too needed clear, uncluttered spaces to work in. But that was then. This is now. We've been called "The Odd Couple." Guess which one is Oscar and which is Felix. Uh-Huh.)*

## Our treasured Trivet & marvelous Mug

We've had nothing but hurrahs and raves about this year's reunion commemorative trivet and collector mug! So we feel it's only right to give credit and applause to those involved in bringing those little jewels into being.

As to the trivet, it was Frankoma owner Dick Bernstein who first suggested that we use one of Grace Lee's poems in some way. Joniece of course came up with the outstanding, inspired design. Gene Gosvenor worked his unique magic with his King Kong computer to translate that design, ensuring all the details were right and perfect, including the beautiful backing with an excellent pot and puma.

Steve and Nancy Littrell thought of the mugs and talked to the people at Frankoma to

get them done. Splendid color choice, Steve and Ray! And Steve got those popular FFCA logo T-shirts made for us.

Jeannie Grogg sorted and boxed all the trivets, and Derek put the little green felts on all the bottoms. (Remember, Derek—that's how Joniece started out!)

And finally, Tom Grogg pushed like a Marine Colonel to make sure the trivets and mugs were ready in time for our shindig.

*Thanks, Dick, Thanks, Grace Lee, Thanks, Joniece, Thanks, Gene, Thanks Steve & Nancy, Thanks, Tom, Jeannie, & Derek, Thanks Ray, Thanks, Frankoma.*

**All together now—take a bow!**

## Statistics Anyone!

### Convention:

Attendance: 300 plus

- ☑ 236 Members
- ☑ 40% of Membership
- ☑ 22 States

Traveled greatest distance:

- ☑ Leif & Janis Erickson-WA
- ☑ Donna Barlow-OR
- ☑ Jim & Terry Tradewell-OR

Best state representations:

- ☑ 100%-GA, LA & SC
- ☑ 65%-OK
- ☑ 60%-NC
- ☑ 50%-AR, CO & WA

FFCA Sales:

- ☑ 152 Trivets
- ☑ 137 Mugs
- ☑ 40 T-shirts

New Memberships:

- ☑ 30 from 11 States

### Auction:

Total Sales: \$2,728.64

158 Pieces + 3 boxes of Dinnerware  
46 Bidders

What they sold for:

- ☑ Clay in the Masters Hands—\$130
- ☑ Evelyn Stone Belt Buckle—\$100
- ☑ #138 Circus Horse, DG—\$100
- ☑ #58 Flowerabrum, PG—\$100
- ☑ Signed Jesus Plate #3—\$95
- ☑ 1983 GOP Mug, WS—\$75
- ☑ CA Pottery Show Sign—\$55
- ☑ Dorcus Plate Prototype—\$55
- ☑ 2 Cox Books 1 & 2—\$50
- ☑ Conestoga Wagon Plate—\$55
- ☑ Peter Plate Prototype—\$45
- ☑ 1979 Xmas Plate Prototype—\$45
- ☑ #227 Large Leaf, ReB—\$45
- ☑ 1968 GOP Mug, TC—\$42.50
- ☑ 1994 Commemorative—\$37.50
- ☑ 1969 Nixon/Agnew Mug—\$40

WELL AS YOU CAN SEE...

*We had lot of fun buying, selling, trading, looking, bartering, auctioning, sharing, giving, signing, photoing, storying, eating, playing, traveling, spending, spending, spending...*

# Joniece's



1972 Frankoma Catalog Cover  
*The Forget-the-Pottery-This-is-my-Daughter photo*  
Joniece Frank & her Pony Tail Girl

Joniece told the stories...

Donna wrote them down

Behind almost every piece of Frankoma you pick up there's a story to go with it. Some of the pieces in your collections may be enhanced if you know some of them. Of course, some pieces have more to say than others. When I look at some of the items that you collectors own, I'm often reminded of one or more of those stories. Some are fun, some are strange, many border on the unbelievable, and some are just plain laughable.

Perhaps as you learn some of these stories, they will come to mind when you pick up your collection pieces to dust them or glance at them in passing. I hope they'll ultimately add to your appreciation of them and maybe bring a smile or a giggle. To me, part of the fun of collecting is knowing a story about a piece, because it becomes part of its personality and character.

There are so many intimate stories that Daddy and I shared between the two of us as we were making a new piece, or working on a design, or just sharing thoughts toward the finalization of a project. I cherish them, and I hope you will too. He called our brain storming "chewing the fat." A part of me says, "Why would these be of interest to others?" And yet, because of your love for Frankoma, I feel compelled to share them with you.

So I've started making notes of these little tales as I think of them, and I'll try to put them into categories for you. It's time they officially came out of the closet and become shared. ☺



# BELIEVE IT OR NOT

## I. CATALOGING

### SEEING IS NOT ALWAYS BELIEVING

Typical of our enthusiasm, which Daddy and I shared, as well as our lack of foresight as to how long a project would take, our ideas and thoughts and prototypes were sometimes photographed and put into the catalog long before they were ready for the market, and some of them never manifested at all. So don't always assume that because a certain piece was in the catalog of a certain year that this was the year it entered the line. Don't rely on that as proof of the fact. Most of the time it was—but there were exceptions.

Many times we announced with fanfare that a particular item would be in production "after the first of the year" or "by next spring" or "by Christmas," which simply did not and could not happen until later—or in some cases, *much* later—and in some cases *never*. But please remember that our intentions were always of the highest, if that counts. In those days, as in these, there were simply only twenty-five hours in a day, and Daddy's enthusiasm caused him always to spread himself much too thin, and I *am* my father's daughter.

#### ◀ The #106 Pony Tail Girl

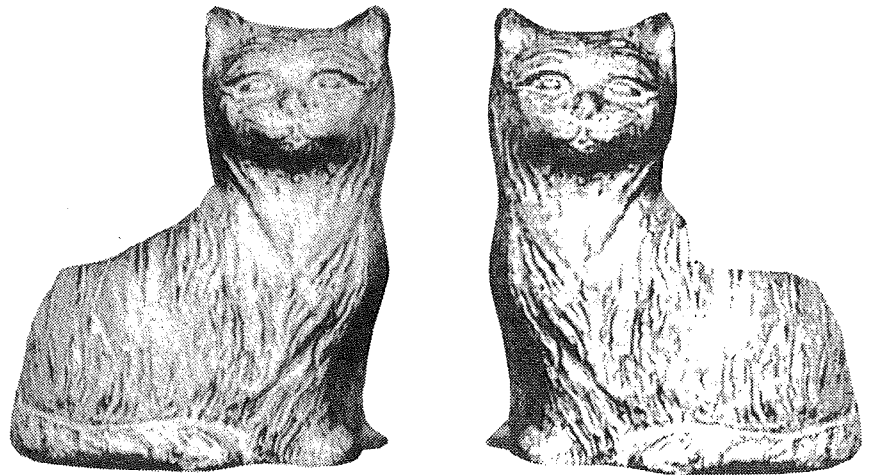
Take the Pony Tail Girl, for instance, pictured with me on the 1972 catalog cover. I've often called this the Forget-the-Pottery-This-is-my-Daughter photo. At the time it was taken, I protested loudly that this piece was far from being ready for production. But I was pleasantly ignored. "Take the picture!" ordered Daddy. I was right. It was fourteen years later, long after Daddy was gone, that it finally got into line. That clay model still had lots of work to be done, and a lot of changes were made before it was finalized.

Incidentally, this is the only time I can remember Daddy and I locking horns on how a mold should be made. He wanted to make it in a four-piece mold, and I wanted a five-piece. Doing a four-piece required that I compromise my figure in certain ways, and I would lose some of its graceful lines. It was 1972, he was getting ill, and I suspect that he just wanted to get it done the quickest way possible. I, on the other hand, was an artist *recreating* a piece of sculpture that I had previously done. Normally, compromising design for the sake of the mold (i.e., efficiency in production), must come before one's artistic ego and personal pride. But on this one I stood firm. And when it finally went into production years later, it was done in a five-piece mold.

#### The Kitty Planter & Bank ▼

My #393 kitty planter and #386 kitty bank were also good examples. The prototypes were pictured in the 1981 catalog. Today, collectors get frustrated because they can't find any. But there's a very good reason—they *were never produced!*

The photograph was once again of the model, unfinished, and a mold was never made. The reason it was never done is that I was a dog owner, and I knew what a dog looked like. I didn't really know how a cat was anatomically structured, and it turned out to be a pretty poor likeness because I didn't have time to go study one. So out of necessity, I decided to forget it.



#393 Kitty Planter >< #396 Kitty Bank  
Photo from 1981 Frankoma Catalog, page 5

### The Willard Stone Sculptures

It was the original woodcarving of the Willard Stone Madonna that was photographed and shown in that 1972 sculpture catalog. It was more than *ten years* before I could get it into production!

Speaking of Willard Stone, he had worked as a caster at Frankoma when he was a very young man, I believe during WWII. There he learned the principles of how a piece had to be carved to come out of a mold. That's why the pieces he designed for Daddy are true and exact reproductions of his pieces as he carved them. But on the other hand, which is often the case with a true artist, and Willard was, his very tall figures, with their artistic small bases, created production problems. Those tall pieces are all prone to tipping, therefore easily broken.

But the designs are perfection, and the beauty and spirit are there. The Indian Maiden (#101), Coyote (#102), Mare and Colt (#103), and Squirrel (#105) all remained unchanged, with his very small bases. I'm sure many of you have had to replace broken Indian Maidens in your collection. However, now look at Willard's Madonna (#104), and you'll note the base is comparatively larger. Because of its height, we had no choice but to enlarge the base some to make it more substantial. Willard objected at first but, as he became aware of our dilemma, he conceded and gave us permission to make this slight change.

Also, I believe Willard had in mind a four-piece mold to include the hands and folds on the front part of the figure. I chose to make a three-piece mold of the body and face, with the hands being made in a separate mold and "slipped" onto the figure at time of casting—eliminating a seam down the front of her face, which would have created untold difficulties in trimming.

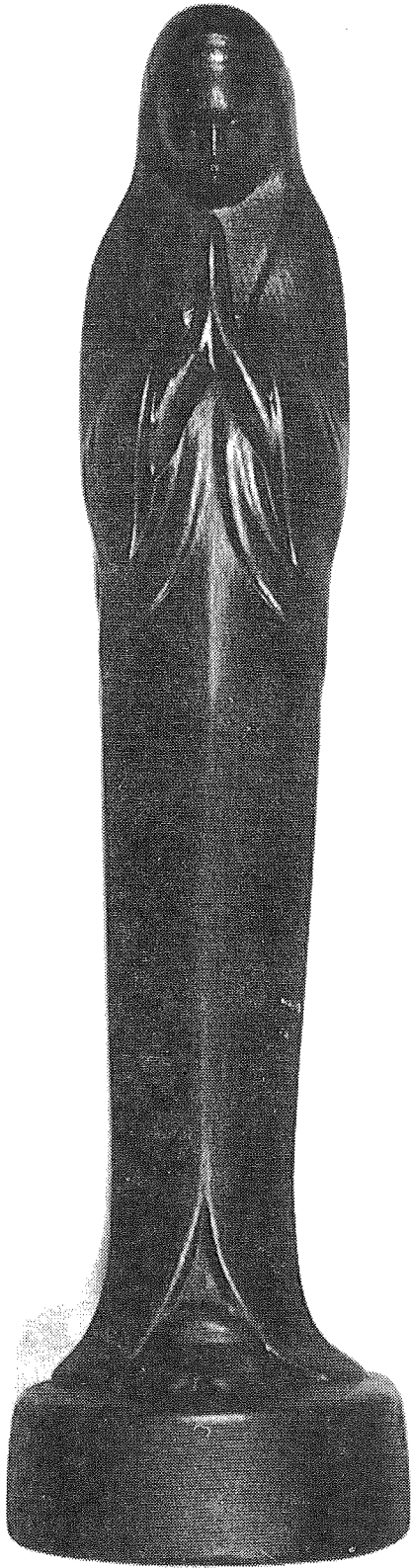
Because of the intricate detail in the face of the Madonna, and the proximity of the hands to the face, it was a scary proposition for a pottery mold maker to start making a mold of that splendid original. The chance of the mold swelling during its normal developing (set-up) time and breaking the hands off was very likely.

I maintained for years that the only person I would let touch that piece to make a mold of it was my cousin, master mold maker extraordinaire, George Springston. Finally, after he retired from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, he and his wife Marj took a

week off and came down from Wisconsin, and George made a mold of the original wood carving. True to his expertise, he came through like a champ, and it was done perfectly. They left on Friday for home.

That Sunday evening, two days later, September 25, 1983, I very carefully cleaned and oiled the original to restore and preserve its beauty. I held it in my hands for a long time, admiring it. I started to take it home with me, but I thought, "It's safer here than anywhere." I was wrong. By morning, Frankoma was in ashes, and the original went with it. (All of the other original Willard Stone wood models are still alive and well.)

That night before, I had carried the Madonna mold out into the casting department to dry. The following week, as soon as the ashes were cool enough, I made my way back into where the casting department had been, knowing exactly where I had put it, and walked right to it. This was pretty amazing, actually, when you realize that molds all look pretty much the same, except for a slight difference in size, and there were nothing but disordered mounds of them everywhere. Heat disintegrates and returns plaster to powder. However, an employee and I very carefully lifted that mold onto a board and carried it out. Later, I was able to pour a plaster model to get a true and perfect impression from the inside cavity (the important part). Besides the Squirrel, the Madonna is the only one of all of the four tall pieces that is still the size of the original; the others were necessarily reduced in size for production purposes, and to make them more compatible with home decor.



#104 Madonna, 14" High



#105 Squirrel, 6" H x 3" L

### My #216 Gracetone Squirrel >

After Daddy bought Gracetone, he decided I should make a companion piece for Willard's squirrel (#215). Ha! Me do a squirrel, eating or running or whatever—as a mate for a squirrel by a great artist like Willard Stone? I laughed a lot. But Daddy said those words that were to become all too familiar to me—“*Just do it, baby!*” Well, so I did it. And it looked just like what it was—a squirrel done by an inexperienced, some-day would-be artist trying to be a one-of-a-kind Willard Stone. My squirrel (#216) running on a log (probably running for cover) did go into production, and a few were made, I believe only at Gracetone in Muskogee. You may have seen it pictured in our Gracetone flyer (see photo on page 15) with the Willard Stone pieces. We offered it in satin white or woodpine. The fact is, unlike S&P shakers, good sculpture doesn't need to come in pairs. Willard's squirrel sold, and has sold for thirty years. Mine of course didn't. (Just a few of you crazy collectors could maybe bear to own one!)

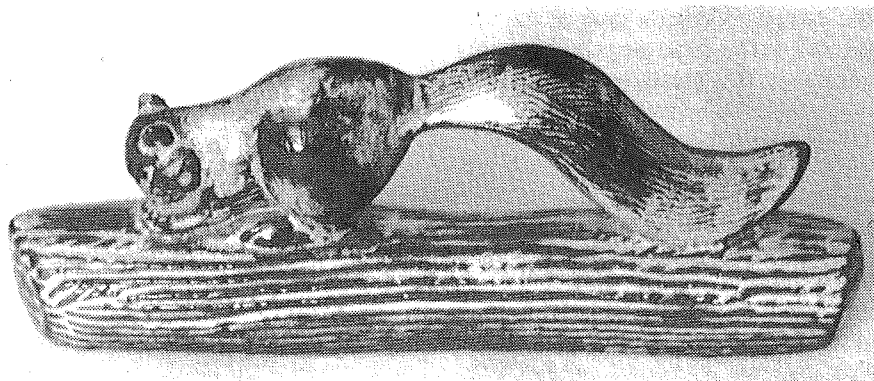
### My Donkey Mug >

We introduced the first donkey mug in 1975, but it was a full six or seven months before we had any at all to sell. Now *there's* a story!

This mug, in my mind, was the ultimate feat, my personal best in meeting a design challenge. These were my challenges: ① The donkey had to be compatible on the shelf with the GOP elephant mug. Now, there is no resemblance of compatibility whatsoever in the basic natures of a skinny-legged, taper-nosed donkey and a tree-legged, bulky, enormous pachyderm! Therein lay my *first* challenge. ② It had to fit into the same dozen-divider box, so it had to be the same height and width as the elephant. ③ I had to invent a space big enough for the date, and another space big enough for the names of a president and vice president. And ④, where are you going to put a handle on a donkey?!? Now, *that*, my friends, was the biggest challenge of all.

All of these things just blew my mind. In my research on that donkey, I worked it, I carried it home with me at night, and I breathed and slept donkeys. I've known a lot of Democrats, but never one as nightmare-ish as this one was becoming to me!

It was the summer of 1975, and I took my first (and last) honest-to-goodness vacation (just me). And as I



#216 Gracetone Squirrel by Joniece (7½" L X 2¾" H)

left for the plane bound for Hawaii, Wanda Morgan and an entourage of my Frankoma family related to sales pinned to my shoulder with a very large diaper pin a sign that said, “DONKEY MUG.” This was so I wouldn't forget I hadn't finished the donkey mug. I guess it did me good to get away to another environment and let all those donkey ideas blow around in the ocean breeze.

Then one evening after I'd returned, I took a photo of Daddy and me (see front cover photo) from the office wall and carried it into my studio, set it down on my modeling table, and looked at it. I wanted to talk to Daddy. I just sat

there and grinned at him. He grinned back at me, and I said, “Daddy, I know that this is a Democrat, but I think it'll sell anyway.” I'm sure I heard him laughing. I started from scratch, and within only four hours after I had sat down, I had a finished model ready for a waste mold. This was not the only time he has helped me when I needed him.

It fit in the box, it was the same height, it was compatible with the elephant, there was room for a date, and a place for the names of a president and vice president (short names, *please!*). And I even managed to make a rather respectable handle out of that Democrat's tail.



1975 Donkey Mug  
Glaze = Autumn Yellow

## The Stepchild and the Pot Boilers

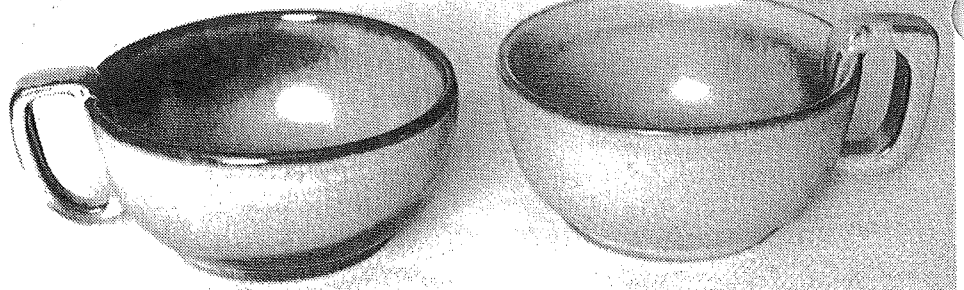
Maxine Saddler's story of the #40 and #47 ("The Little Stepchild" in this issue, page 3) is a very good example of some of the things we did to introduce new pieces that were on their way to being completed while the catalog was being printed.

You'll notice that there were many pieces we began making, then later had to make changes in some way because of production problems. There was that #4SC soup cup. Check the 1972 catalog, Page 17, lower left corner, and you'll see an early one. On Page 13 is the later one with a different handle. We didn't reshoot it for Page 17, because we were so cost conscious we couldn't have a new photo made, and we just hoped no one would notice.

Before I go on about why these two catalog pictures of the soup cup were different, let me reconfirm something and enlighten those of you who don't realize that *art potteries are few and far between*—and even fewer have lasted as long as Frankoma. Daddy began Frank Potteries as "fine sculptured artware in pottery," and I'm proud we were able to maintain its quality over the years. But in order to do so, we had to diversify and also make items such as dinnerware and floral containers so we could sell enough of them to stay afloat. Those are known as "pot boilers." You simply must have them. That's because a cup can be made so much easier and more economically than pieces of sculpture. The profit from the dinnerware allowed us to continue making art pieces just for the love of it. After all, when you buy plates, you buy six, eight, sometimes twelve; you only buy *one* of a piece of sculpture.

Part of this element of making something for profit is in production efficiency. If you make 100 of an item and lose 25% because of drying and warping problems, 25% because it's so difficult to glaze that it's an incomplete product when finished, and 25% in the kiln because the foot is too shallow or the stress points in the design cause fire checks (cracks), you can't make enough profit on the remaining 25%—half of which turn out to be seconds (for any of a million reasons). So when we designed a piece, it was most important that there were no problems, or at least a minimum, along the way in the assembly and manufacture of it.

With the soup cup in the first picture referred to above, I'm 98% sure the handle was made separately, pressed in



Left: Early #4SC >< Right: Later #4SC

the same mold at the same time, and "slipped" on. But it cracked, it warped, it took too much time—it just didn't fly. There were various experiments, including one where we tried to bend the handle around from top to bottom and stick it on, and others.

We had *terrible* problems with those handles! Now, sticking a handle on with slip while the piece is still wet is okay for some art pieces. But when it's something that has to endure so much handling, chances are it'll one day fall off in your hand and dump the hot contents into your lap. Ouch!

We really *wanted* to *press* the soup cup. The reasons were three-fold—it was faster, we could do them in higher volume, and the clay used on a press is already partly dried. And less drying = less chance of warping. It was also a technical challenge to be able to press it, make a uniform cut, and do so time and cost efficiently.

A handle like a coffee cup couldn't be done from a two-piece press mold. We knew we could press a solid handle, then cut out the hole after the piece was made. Although cutting clay may sound easy, it is not. Clay grabs the cutting surface, causing a drag. This resistance puts a strain on the grain of the clay and causes the clay to split, and/or misshapes the piece.

Through the genius and innovative talents of John Frank and Ted Steeples, and (I'm sure) input from other Frankoma employees, a jig was made that resembled a "horizontal cookie cutter." Sounds simple, but there was a lot more

to it than that. In a nutshell, after the soup cup was pressed, it was set into a jig that held the shape of the piece, while the cookie cutter was manually pushed into and through the solid handle.

After a piece was pressed, there was a person sitting there to set the piece into the jig. Then an arm with a very *thin* piece of stainless steel (the cookie cutter), which was the shape of the hole to be cut, was moved forward and carefully pushed through and back out again. Voila!

Ah, but there was that slab of clay clinging to the inside of the cookie cutter, and you couldn't begin cutting another without somehow removing it. And digging it out by hand was not the answer. So Daddy and Ted devised another feature that would take it out in a blink. As the cutter was retracted, it slid back to make contact with a little piece of bent metal, which pushed the clay out of the cutter, dropping it into a bucket below. Plop. Well, what the heck, it worked. And we had soup cups with handles that didn't fall off.

Daddy's inventions and innovations he came up with were often laughable, but few dared laugh. They had to admit that, for the most part, they did work. I've often regretted not taking a picture of him and his "motorized wheel barrow" he concocted to get all those loads of compost from the bottom of the hill, up the terraces, and into the flower beds around the house! It wasn't exactly poetry in motion. But bless him, as awkward and clumsy as it was, it did work for him. I suspect that thing just didn't have the heart not to.

## II. DESIGNS

I'm frequently asked, "How did you come up with all those designs?" Ah, let me count the ways.

Michelangelo once said that carving figures is easy. The figure is already in there—all you have to do is chip away the excess.

---

***In clay, you sometimes need to sit with your clay for a while and listen to it. It may sound silly, but each piece of clay has a personality all its own, and it will often tell you what it wants to be.***

---

That's okay for doing marble figures. In clay, however, you sometimes need to sit with your clay for a while and listen to it. It may sound silly, but each piece of clay has a personality all its own, and it will often tell you what it wants to be. Not always, but it's one way to start. Believe me, designing is not as simple as looking at a lovely sunset and waiting for a "divine inspiration." There are dozens of considerations when designing for commercial reproduction that make an artist feel quite restricted and, in a way, trapped. So many dos and don'ts and can'ts can drive you crazy.

A piece has to be constructed so it can be made in (usually) a three-piece mold for production efficiency; it has to be a size that will fit into a certain box already on hand that was made for something else (can't have a new one made—too expensive!); placement of the mold seams must be planned so that trimming and sponging won't obliterate the detail; one must know about and avoid stress points that cause fire checks and warping; and the list goes on and on.

The freedom of creating a one-of-a-kind sculpture is heaven for an artist! But if we plan to eat any time in the future, we need to make something that the public will buy lots of.

Okay, back to where design ideas come from. I was in school at OU when I came home one weekend, hoping Daddy would put me to work for a few hours so I could earn a few much-needed dollars. He said, "Okay, go design something." Bewildered, I asked, "What? How? What do you mean?" He just put

his hands in his pockets, smiled, shrugged, and walked away. So I went back to the casting department, picked up a paring knife and began playing with some of the pieces I found drying on the trucks. And lo and behold, the #835 soon gave birth to the #302 candle vase (1994's reunion commemorative piece). If you put the two side by side, you can easily see how it came about. By the way, that was the very first piece I designed that Daddy put into the Frankoma line.

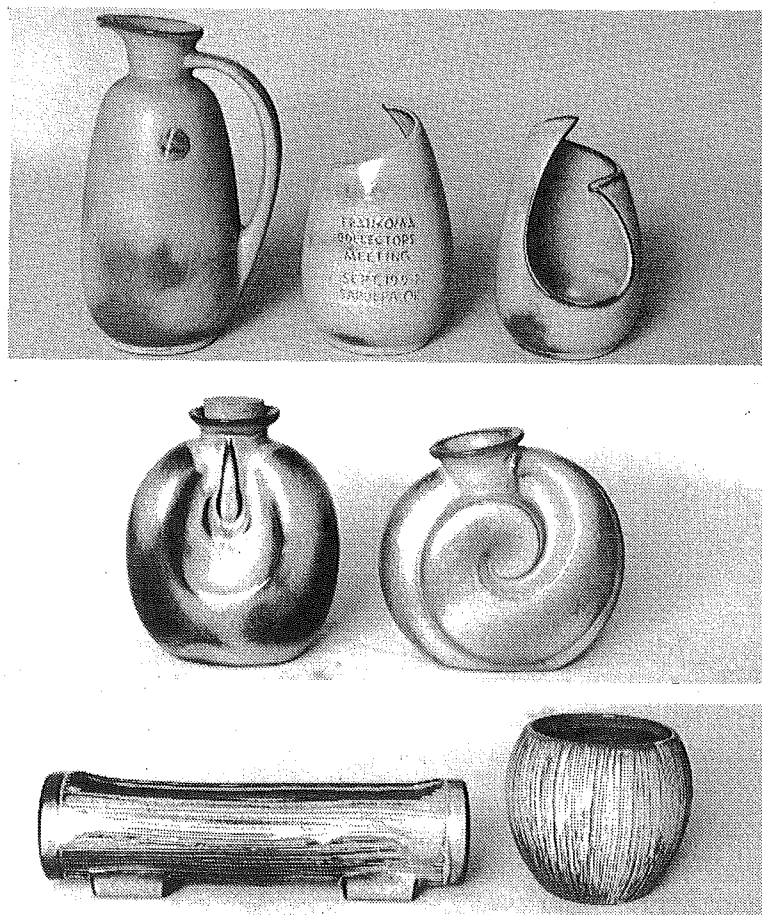
The new Frankoma thunderbird S&P shakers are the old 94H's—minus the spokes, plus the bird. Because it's a good basic shape.

Did you know that the 7JH Aztec 9" bottle vase w/lid (1972 catalog) holds 24 oz., exactly the same amount as the #835, the #8, and the #833 honey jugs? It appears to be larger, perhaps because it's square, but in fact it has the same capacity. There was a company that always gave Frankoma jug filled with honey as their Christmas gifts, and when they had given all the honey jugs we

made, we had to come up with a new design, and the Aztec honey jug was designed for them, as well as the #832 (back cover of undated 1957 catalog) and #833 swirl honey jug, which doesn't look like a honey jug at all.

What tool would you guess was used to get the texture of the #9L log planter, the #T7 coconut planter, and (much to my dismay!) the hair on the Pony Tail Girl. It was an old hand saw blade. It was great for the first two pieces, but when it came to my girl, I was livid! You see, I had spent hours and hours on her hair to get the effect I wanted—lovely sculpted cascading tresses that fell in just the right lines and folds, and it easily pulled off the mold. I was so proud of it!

I failed to realize, however, that the mold dividing line that would go across the top of her head created a panic for the trimmers. So when it reached production, Ted thought it would be easier for them if it were simplified, so he finished it off with the old saw blade. Well, of course it broke my heart. So much for the artist's ego.



Top: #835 Honey Container & #302-1994 Commemorative Vase  
Middle: #832 Honey Container & #833 Swirl Honey Container  
Bottom: #9L Log Planter & #T7 Coconut Planter

### III. STOCK NUMBERS

Many of you don't realize that there's actually a logical rhyme and reason to them. The Wagon Wheel items were all 94's, the Plainsman all 5's, Mayan-Aztec all 7's, etc. The common denominator in all of them is the letter that follows the number. The 94A & B, 5A & B, and 7A & B are all sugars and creamers. The 94C, 5C, and 7C were all cups, the saucers were E, the plates F (FL for large, FS for small), G's were salad/desert plates, H's were S&P's, X's were bowls (XL for large, XS for small), and so on.

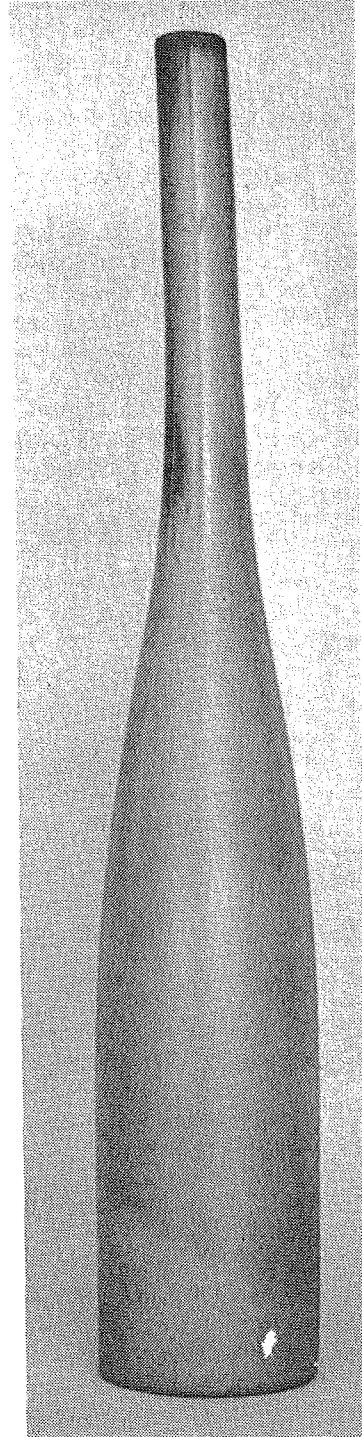
And then there were those we did just for fun, which took simplicity to the ridiculous. Like the fondue dish was designated FD. Is that easy enough? We frequented a certain restaurant in town that served individual portions of baked beans, which Daddy loved and almost always ordered. He kept saying he wanted some day to make a little individual bean pot, which he eventually did (the BP). In the catalog, the word "custard" was added because Mother had begun using it more for custards. Many used them also for sugar bowls, mustard and relish holders, and heaven knows what else.

WA1 (WA for "warmer—get it?) was the first warmer Frankoma made that held a candle. When we made a smaller one, it was the WA3, because between the two came the fondue dish warmer, and it was WA2.

Most of the trivets are TR. The BTR is the butterfly trivet, the OTR is the owl, ZTR is the zodiac. However, there's the OK3, the Five Civilized Tribes trivet, numbered thusly to designate it as one of the Oklahoma souvenir items. When I went to school the five civilized tribes were Choctaw, Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw. But the trivet substitutes "MUSKOGEE" for "CREEK." The reason is that, about the time the trivet was coming into being, several tribes, including the Creek, were officially merged into one tribe and designated the MUSKOKE Tribe. (Note: The Oklahoma town south of Sapulpa is spelled MUSKOGEE. The tribe is spelled MUSKOKE. We erroneously spelled it like the town, which I've been meaning to correct for twenty years.)

There's the ATR, the American Eagle trivet of 1976. What's wrong with this picture? I was training a boy to help me at the time, and I was teaching him how to carve in reverse in the plaster. It

was his first try, and somehow he reversed the reverse, and this poor bird got his feet switched. Nobody noticed until we had made a few thousand, too late to correct it, so we just turned our heads and looked the other way. Oh well.



#F55 Wine Bottle Vase  
17" Tall

### IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Ever wonder why the #F55, 17" wine bottle vase (1960–1976) kept going in and out and in and out of the Frankoma line through the years? A better question may be—has anyone ever seen one that didn't lean to the side? We did everything in the world we could think of to keep that bottle vase from warping in the firing and/or drying. Daddy would get so disgusted with it, he'd exclaim, "If I can't do it right, I won't do it!" and order it discontinued.

Then there would come a loud cry from the public to bring it back. Salesmen reported that wholesale accounts wanted to re-order them in quantity because they sold so well. So—back in line it would go, warped and leaning as it was. Daddy would try to discourage the accounts by pointing out how warped they were, but they didn't care. "It's part of its charm," they insisted. So back in line it would go. Then would come the day that Daddy would again get upset that they wouldn't stand up straight, and out it would go again. More complaints would come in, and back into line it would come. I don't remember how many times it happened, but if you ever find one that's standing perfectly straight and tall, hold onto it, because it's got to be a freak and a prize. And if you find a perfect one in Flame, it is a treasure indeed!

Why were so few #94FC Wagon Wheel Lazy Susans (1957–1963) ever made? Gosh, that's easy. Although it was a popular item and everyone was crazy about it and wanted one, the truth is that we could get only *one first out of about twenty*. Because of its heavy cantilever design, it warped horribly! I remember taking them off the kiln one by one, maybe getting one that was "good enough I guess," saving two or three for seconds, and breaking the rest in the trash bin. On most of them the glaze was gorgeous, but they were deformed. It was heartbreaking! So we had to give it up.

Now, about that #FD fondue dish (1969–1973). That was another give-up. The bottom was pressed, and the lid was cast. Both warped badly, and we could never get one to fit the other as they should.





### Finger Prints

Okay, now let's do some detective work. Criminals who aren't smart enough to know better leave their finger prints at the scene and get caught. But artists can leave their finger prints on their works and become famous for them. At least we know one who did. It's fun to go looking for John Frank's thumb and finger prints on some of his works, especially the vintage pieces.

To name a few, there's the #74 vase that features his thumb prints. And how about the old #83 and #84 water jugs? It's loaded with them, just like the #4 tree cactus vase (the low plants *and* clouds). Remember that little piece (no #) that Daddy made for his salesmen to give to the accounts as a thank-you gift when they placed a good order? That was also pressed into the palm of his hand with his thumb.

There's the #4V lid handle. He pressed some clay into the palm of his hand with his thumb, then with a knife

cut and shaped the edges and added a foot. The original was larger (#466, #466R with roadrunner). But after shrinking it a few times, it was used as a 1959 Christmas card, and then later it found its way to the top of the #4V baker lid.

---

**Artists can leave their  
finger prints on their works and  
become famous for them.  
Daddy's prints were not only  
left on the bodies of certain  
pieces, but on some handles,  
as well.**

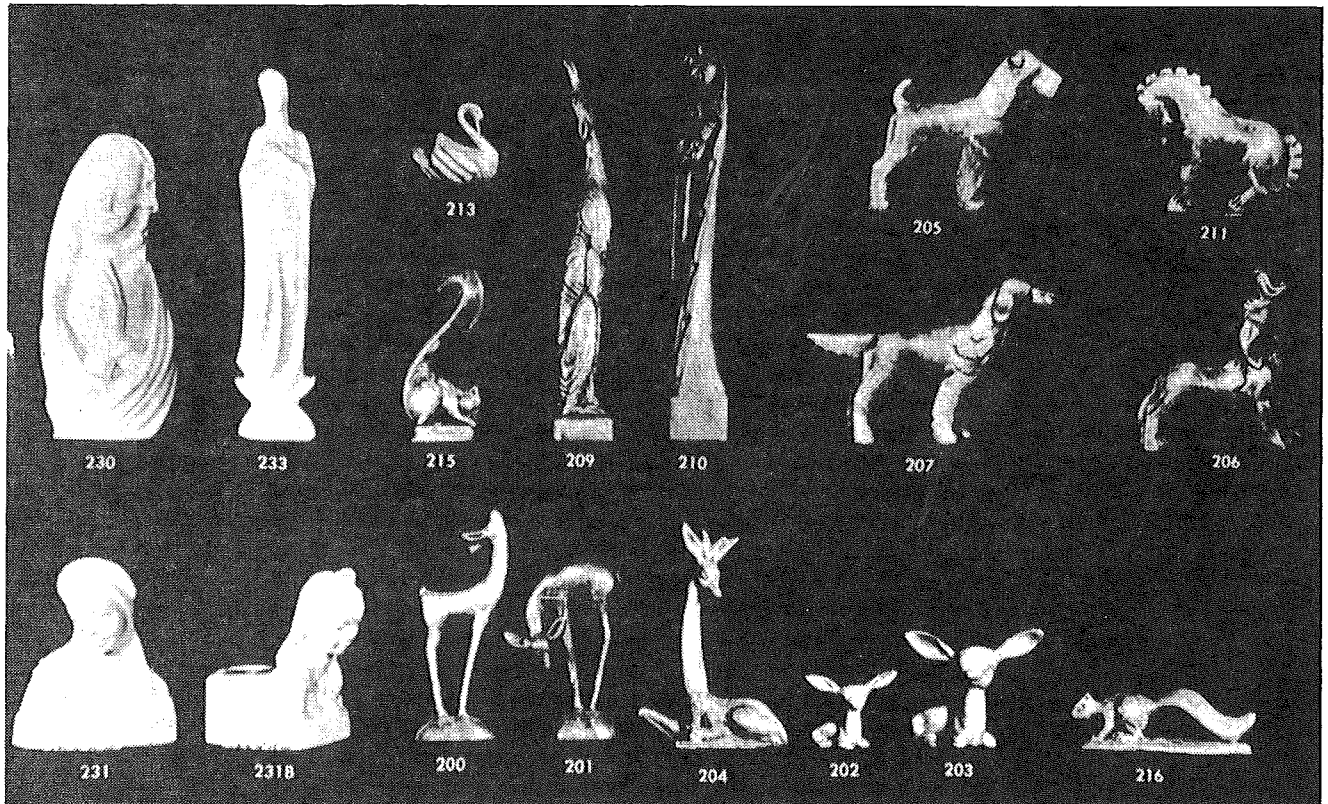
---

Look at the front cover of Donna's *Clay in the Master's Hands*. Isn't that a great example? Someone actually caught him in the act. On the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Plate, I made some note of those famous signature thumb prints, although few people recognize them as what they're meant to be.

No, those aren't his thumbnail prints in the #60B and #61 reed vases, as someone suggested. Donna remembers watching him use the rounded end of one of our old-style dinner knives to make the reeds.

Daddy's prints were not only left on the bodies of certain pieces, but on some handles, as well. Start looking for them in your own collection and in whatever catalogs you have. *Make a list of the stock numbers, send them to Donna, and we'll get them together for the next issue and see how many we can come up with.*

*Note: This has been fun for me, sharing these stories with you—Believe It Or Not. Let me know if you'd like more. There are many, many more to be told, but there's not enough room in one issue. If you want more, write to Donna (a post card will do) at FFCA, 1300 Luker Lane, Sapulpa, OK 74066, and cast your vote for a running article. This is your journal, people! If we don't hear from anyone, this will be the last of them.*

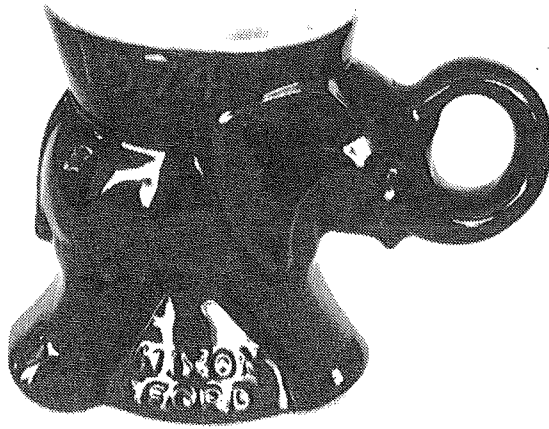


From Gracetone Pottery Flyer, date unknown

Glazes available—Beaver Brown, Pink Champagne, Blu-Green, Satin White, Coppertone, Woodpine & Matt Black

# Vera's Nixon/Ford GOP Mug

by Joniece Frank, as told to Donna



1974 Nixon/Ford GOP Mug, Coffee Glaze

In 1969, the inaugural year of Nixon and Agnew, the GOP mug came out with their names on it. Normally, for the following three years after an inaugural year, there would be no name on the mug—only the year. Nixon and Agnew were re-elected, and were re-inaugurated in 1973, and a mug was made with their names on it with the 1973 date. Later, when Agnew resigned, Ford became Vice President. But there were no plans to do a Nixon/Ford mug for the series, because Ford was never *elected* to the office. Nor was his name ever on a GOP mug as President because, after Nixon resigned, Ford "moved up" to President—again, not *elected*.

In 1974, Vice President Ford was scheduled to come to Tulsa for a Republican fund raising banquet. Vera Outhier, one of our FFCA members was then Chair of the Ways and Means Committee for the Mary Nichols Republican Women's Club in Tulsa, and a tireless worker.

The organization was having some difficulty selling tickets to that banquet, and Vera approached me to do a Nixon/Ford mug to be given as prizes to those who sold a designated minimum number of tickets. At first I firmly rejected the idea, because I felt it would not be true to the series.

But after it was made very clear that this particular Nixon/Ford mug indeed *would not ever* be considered part of the "regular series" of GOP mugs, and it would never be sold on the market, I was persuaded. And, too, I wanted to help Vera, as well as the Republican Women's

Club. So I agreed to make a limited number of mugs for them with Nixon and Ford's name—never to be sold—but only *awarded* to those who sold a certain number of tickets to the Ford banquet. (After the seconds were culled and broken, there was approximately 500 delivered.)

And so, after much publicity and ballyhoo about the fact that it would not be a part of the regular series, I thought, "What could it hurt?" (As I recall, Frankoma made a gift of them to the club, so no money was ever exchanged for this item.) Well, who could have dreamed that those few mugs made only for that organization would become so collectible? Back then, true Frankoma collectors were rather few and far between. Remember, folks, this was twenty-two years ago! And as time went on, people found out about these specially-made mugs and sort of went crazy to obtain them. That's the reason, if you can find one, you may pay up to \$350.

Before that time, and since, Vera Outhier has probably bought, sold, and promoted more political mugs than any other single person we know of. There's another reason I made those mugs, and it's because Vera had found her way into my heart, and I would do almost anything for her. Want to hear the story?

For a long time prior to Daddy's passing, he and Vera had worked together for the Republican Party, and she had become a very special friend to him. I was acquainted with Vera, but we were not yet close. I knew that she and Lavena Graham had been friends since their

college days, having been roommates.

On the day of Daddy's funeral, Chester and Lavena Graham (our dear and loyal friends, and for decades the foundation of the Frankoma sales force) were in the kitchen, relieving me of the worries as to the food—writing down who brought what, going to the store for fill-ins, etc. There were many relatives and friends in the house, milling about, waiting to be assigned a limousine or car that would take them to the church. When I had gotten them all into the right groups and into all the right vehicles, by now all full, and we were about the leave for the funeral, there was dear Vera standing by the front door.

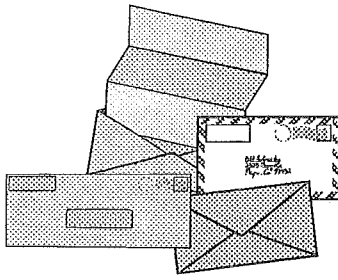
I was half way between the front door and the limo when I stopped and looked back at her, concerned as to how she would get to the church. She gave me a little smile that told me that it was okay and I should go on. And I somehow felt it *was* okay, although I didn't know why at that moment. As I took my seat at the church, I realized just what it was that Vera had taken the initiative and offered to do—something I nor anyone else had thought of. It hadn't occurred to us that someone should be there to secure the house during the funeral. I suddenly remembered horror stories about thieves who often preyed upon houses of bereaved families when they know they had left for a funeral. (And this one was indeed one of high profile.)

Here was this dear friend of Daddy's whose funeral was so important to her, and surely she wanted very much to be there. But true to her character, she chose to sacrifice her own desires to be of service to us and remain at the house. For this, she endeared herself to me from then on, and I shall never forget her kindness.

Vera has devoted her entire life to serving other people in so many ways, too often without the thanks or recognition due her, and this is what she chose to do for John Frank and his family.

So now you know. When credit is being given for the birth of that rare 1974 Nixon/Ford GOP mug, let Vera Outhier's name be uttered first! It is she who is responsible for its existence, giving collectors yet another sought-after item to search high and low for. Call it what you may, but to the Frank family, it will always be referred to as "Vera's mug." ☺





Dear

Donna...

want to tell you how much I enjoy my Christmas plates. I have 28 plates out of the 30 you have made. The only plates I don't have are the first two.

Do you plan to continue making the Christmas plates? I keep thinking you will run out of ideas and close the series. I am running out of room to display them!

Donna from CO

*I'm sure you'll find your missing plates in the classified ads section of the Prairie Green Sheet. Your wall space problem is one we all share! But we see no end in sight at this time.*



I'm very much interested in joining FFCA. I would also like the price of the 6" angel.

Our Wagon Wheel dishes were started for us as a wedding gift 43 years ago. We have so very much of it, and have used it all these years and never tire of it. We also have many, many of the extra pieces. We also have the Christmas plates. We're very interested in finding more of the Christmas cards. We have 1977, 78, 79 and 80.

Cletus & Jo from MO

*Your missing "Christmas cards" will surely be found in this very newsletter. Gee, 43 years?? This certainty says something about the durability of Frankoma—and your husband!*



Thanks for the Frankoma Family Collectors Association—about time we had an active one!

I've collected Frankoma for years. I always visit the plant in Sapulpa on my visits to Oklahoma, my home state.

The new angel by Joniece is lovely. I would like to buy one, could you send me the details please? I met Joniece soon after she

took over, she and her gifted mother are so lovely. I have all of Grace Lee plates, I love them!! Thank you.

Irene from CA

*The Angel for All Seasons comes in 6" and 8", \$12 and \$20. You may order directly from Frankoma Industries, Box 789, Sapulpa, OK 74067. Give them your membership number to receive a 10% discount. Look for announcements of new Angels by Joniece in this very issue of the Pot & Puma.*



Frankoma and I go way back . . . to the late 50's when as a young mother/wife I chose the Prairie Green. And I have used it through today!! I sometimes think I must have more pieces than the shop does!

Mrs. S. from LA

*So happy to hear from you! Seriously, with all the patterns and colors the new Frankoma has discontinued, you probably DO have more of what you have than they do. So hang onto them!*



My wife and I recently joined the Frankoma Family. The short story in the latest issue of the *Prairie Green Sheet* reminded us of a story we wish to share with you.

When my wife first became interested in Frankoma Pottery, she was attending a local auction. The auctioneer picked up a prairie green tepee logo FRANKOMA sign and said, "I don't know how to pronounce this Indian's name, but what am I bid for 'im?" The gavel fell at \$7.50, and my wife Gloria had her first FRANKOMA sign. It is one of her most cherished pieces!

Bill & Gloria from NE

*Congrats and Hooray for Gloria! Auctioneers are the only people we don't mind taking advantage of. All's fair in love and auctions, ya know! Ugh!*



Enclosed is our check in the amount of \$25. for membership in FFCA.

We want to tell you we are most happy to finally find a Frankoma association. We have been collecting Frankoma for several years now and have a rather extensive collection and in our area, virtually nobody to talk about it with. At this time it is not on the list of best sellers in our area and we feel many people are missing the boat in the beauty of collecting it. It makes buying much less expensive for us but we would really like to see more interest in it.

Thanks for listening and we look forward to being members of your association.

Bud & Pat from OH

*Hey, haven't you heard of our Librarian/Historian Maxine Saddler in Lima? Counting you, we now have ten members in Ohio! If you want to talk Frankoma to Maxine, make sure your ears are good and rested before you call. But she'll always entertain and enlighten you, folks. She's one of the country's best authorities on the subject!*



I didn't want to ruin the **Pot & Puma**, so I'm using this note as the membership coupon. Please enroll me in FFCA, and if possible I would like to purchase issues 1 & 2 of the **Pot & Puma** and any club items (mugs, etc.) I have missed. It is not easy for me to get to your gatherings, but one day I hope to attend.

There are not many outlets for Frankoma in my area of the country that I have found, but I order every year from the factory and have the elephant mugs from 1970 and all the donkey mugs. I first saw the mugs on a trip through Oklahoma in 1970 and fell in love with them, and since have ordered many other items (mugs, trivets and Christmas plates, etc.) each year.

Thanks for your time and enclosed is my check.

Joseph from NY

*Not wanting to mar your Pot & Puma is a welcome compliment to those of us who work to maintain its quality. We know Frankoma is less plentiful in your area, but our publications will be of help in finding collectibles, and more so as they grow. To purchase our FFCA collectibles (mugs, trivets, T-shirts, etc.) just use the enclosed order form or if you can't wait, just give Nancy a call, she'll be glad to take your order. Whistle if we can help! That's why we're here.*

## IN SYMPATHY

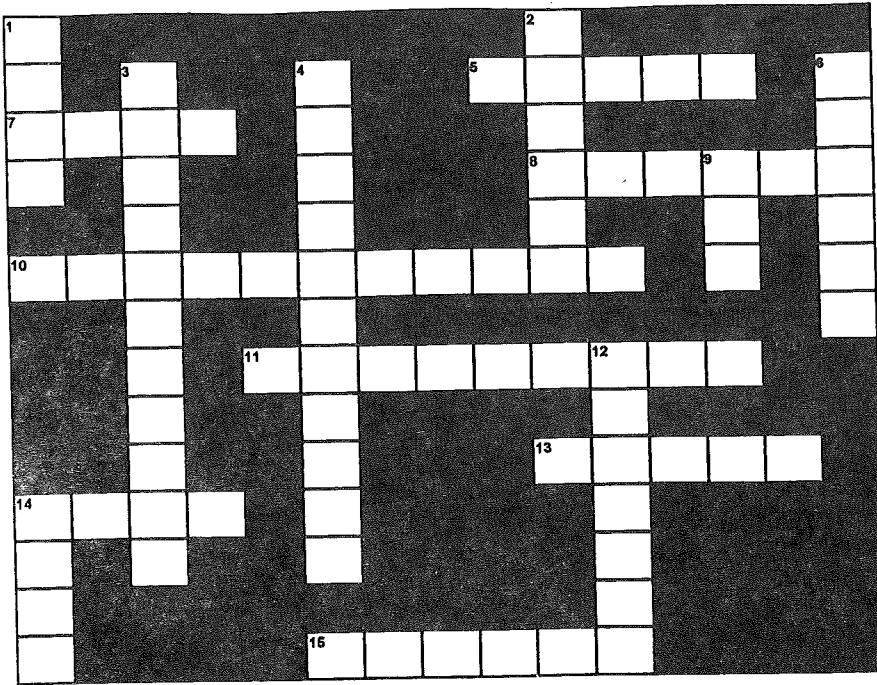
Louise Lesch, wife of Charter Member David Lesch, passed away May 5, 1995. Louise was a resident of Oklahoma City, OK.

If you wish to send a card to the Family, the address is 918 Oakdale Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73127.

The officers and members of the Frankoma Family Collectors Association offer our sincere sympathy to David and his family in their loss.

# FRANKOMA FUZZLE FUN

BY CECE WINCHESTER-STOLTZ, CA



## OH THOSE STOCK #'S

THIS ONE'S FOR JONIECE

### ACROSS

- 5. #2TR
- 7. #168
- 8. #102
- 10. #427 Bookends
- 11. #113 Sculpture
- 13. #190 Wall Pocket
- 14. #507 Miniature
- 15. #94T

### DOWN

- 1. #20
- 2. #4E
- 3. #702 "Kid"
- 4. #600
- 6. #47H S&P
- 9. #394 Planter
- 12. #T7 Planter
- 14. #233

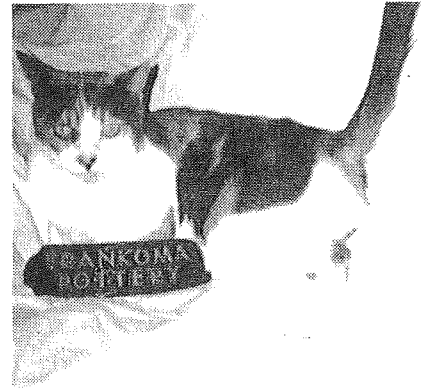
## Roseanne, a Frankoma Collector?!?

Sandi Brackney of Athens, IL, is a Roseanne fan. She sez that in Roseanne's kitchen there's an archway, around which are several plates. Sandi swears one is a 1975 Large Mouth Bass plate from the Wildlife plate series, Prairie Green of course.

Maybe Roseanne's Executive Producer, Jay Daniel is responsible for this one—you see he's a born and bred "OKIE".

All you other Roseanne regulars out there, ✓ it out! We'd like second, third and fourth opinions. Then write to Donna and tell her your thoughts.

Have you seen Frankoma on any other TV show lately?



Puma

You've all read about Jim and Terry Tradewell's new feline whom they've named PUMA. Well, here she is, already being tutored in the ways of Frankoma collecting. As you can see, her face is aglow with enthusiasm and appreciation for quality—although perhaps recognized only through the eyes of a felinophile. ♡

## Frankoma Cryptoquote

by Gretchen & Kaydee Adams, MN  
Age 13 & 7

Here's how to work it: LABYDXRB  
is FRANKOMA

One letter stands for another. In this sample L is used for the letter F, B for the two A's, etc.. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints.

AWX TQMA OV, IUROEX

V&Y VWQEXJV, NLLK

VMIRYAIJX KLXVU'A

UXXK AL MLPX OU

YQOJV. —ZT

Puzzle answers on back page

# Frankoma Dealers & Antique Malls

## Looking For Frankoma ?

Come by Tom Grogg's Booth  
in both Malls

# Abbey Road Antique Mall

Shirley Robinson  
107 East Main • Jenks, OK 74037 • 918-299-4696

# Homespun Treasures

Formerly

## Antique World Mall

209 East Dewey • Sapulpa, OK 74066 • 918-227-4508

*Investment Quality Antiques featuring*  
*Furniture • Toys • Pottery • Glass • Clocks plus*  
*Frankoma • Antiques • Collectibles*  
*90 Quality Dealers • 4 FFCA Member Dealers*

## May Antique Mall

1515 North May • Oklahoma City, OK 73107

2 Minutes North  
on May off I-40

Bill & Denny McConnell  
405-947-3800

FRANKOMA  
ANTIQUES • COLLECTIBLES

125 Dealers • 25,000 Sq. Ft.



## ANTIQUE MALL

1629 East US 66  
El Reno, OK 73036  
405-262-9366

West of OKC  
Just off I-40 [Exit 125]  
On US 66

Hours: Tues. - Sat. 10:00 to 6:00  
Sunday 1:00 to 5:00  
Thurs. 10:00 to 8:00

# FRANKOMA

Handcrafted American Giftware Since 1933



*Angels* Collection  
*by Jennie Frank*

#145	6" Angel For All Seasons	\$12
#146	8" Angel For All Seasons	\$20
#147	5" Shepherdess	\$12
#148	7" Shepherdess	\$20
#149	Candle Base (for #145 & #147)	\$ 6
#151	Angel Wall Plaque	\$15
#152	9" Angel with Bird	\$20

Order from Frankoma Pottery ♦ PO Box 789 ♦ Sapulpa, OK 74067  
OK residents please add 4.5% tax. Postage/Handling - \$5 & up  
Mention your FFCA membership number and receive 10% discount  
918-224-5511 ♦ 800-331-3650 ♦ FAX 918-227-3117

# TONKAWA MALL

117 East Grand, PO Box 33  
Tonkawa, OK 74653-0033

FRANKOMA, ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

OPEN: Monday - Saturday  
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Just 2 miles of I-35  
take Exit 211 or 214

Bert & Iona Huddleston  
405-628-2622

Oak and Victorian Furniture  
Glassware • Primitives • Collectibles • Restorables  
FRANKOMA POTTERY  
Refinishing & Upholstery Available

## ANTIQUE CO-OP

1227 North May  
Oklahoma City, OK 73107  
Off. 405-942-1214 Res. 405-947-0203

H. Glenn & Beverly Elliott

★ ★ 10% Discount with this AD ★ ★

**NOVEMBER REMEMBRANCES**

It was 57 years ago on November 10th, 1938, that Frankoma suffered the first fire. It was 22 years ago on November 10th, 1973, that John Frank passed away. Ted Steeples' father also died that day, and both their funerals were on the same day, November 14th. Ted passed away on November 14th, 1991, 18 years later.

What John Frank was to Frankoma as an artist, Ted Steeples was to Frankoma as a technician. We wonder if John could have produced all that he did without Ted to manage his plant, as he knew everything there was to know about how it worked, and how to run it—the total dynamics and orchestration of ceramics production. There was nothing mechanical at Frankoma that Ted could not put right and make work.

Cheers to two good men who were both masters as what they did!

**FRANKOMA  
CRYPTOQUOTE**

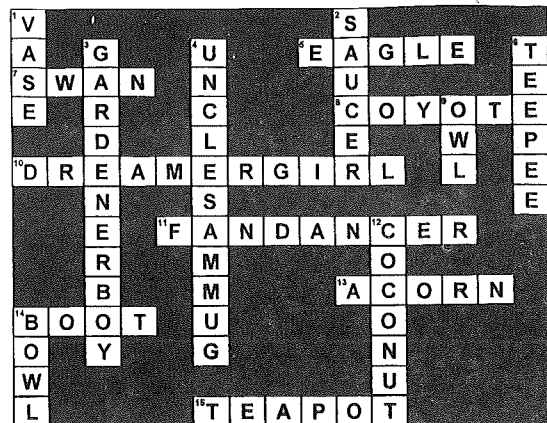
**Answers**

*This issue:*  
THE FACT IS, UNLIKE  
S&P SHAKERS, GOOD  
SCULPTURE DOESN'T  
NEED TO COME IN PAIRS.  
—JF


*Last issue*  
IT ALL DEPENDS ON  
HOW WE USE OUR  
CLAY—GRACE LEE



**Frankoma Fuzzle Answers**



**Oh Those Stock #'s**




*Remember When Antique Mall*

119 South Main (HWY 77) • Noble, OK 73068 • 405-872-8484  
7,000 sq. ft. • Over 75 Dealers

**FRANKOMA ❖ ANTIQUES ❖ COLLECTIBLES**

Hours: Monday thru Friday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM  
Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Ben & Ginger Silvia




**Pottery, China & Porcelain Restoration**

 CLIP HERE AND MAIL

**COME JOIN US!**

**YES !, I'D LIKE TO JOIN THE FRANKOMA FAMILY COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION**

- PLEASE ACCEPT MY \$25 DUES AND ENTER MY/OUR FAMILY MEMBERSHIP IN FFCA.  
 New Membership     Renew Membership

 \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME / NAMES

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP + 4 DIGIT CODE \_\_\_\_\_

AREA CODE + TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FFCA MEMBERSHIP NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR PREFERRED LISTING FOR THE FFCA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY:

- COMPLETE LISTING AS PRESENTED ABOVE     FULL ADDRESS, OMIT PHONE  
 DO NOT LIST MY NAME, ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE     NAME AND CITY ONLY

**Mail to:** Nancy L. Littrell, FFCA Treasurer  
 PO Box 32571  
 Oklahoma City, OK 73122-0771

**Make Check Payable to: FFCA**

**Advertising in the Newsletter**

Mail ads to FFCA Newsletter, PO Box 32571, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-0771.  
 Ad rates are subject to change without notice. You may arrange for advertising space at current rates up to four issues in advance. Members may place one-time ads at yearly rates.  
 The Newsletter is produced in Pagemaker; all photos are scanned. We prefer that partial-page ads be supplied in the same, or similar format—inquire if in doubt as to compatibility, font availability, etc.

**Display Advertising Rates**

AD SIZE	1X	4X
Business Card 3 1/2" X 2"	\$15	\$ 10
1/4 page 3 3/4" X 5"	25	20
1/2 page 7 3/4" X 5"	40	25
Full page 7 3/4" X 10 1/4"	70	48
Page Banners 7 3/4" X 1"		18.50

**Publication Schedule**

ISSUE	CLOSING
FEBRUARY	January 31
MAY	April 30
AUGUST	July 31
NOVEMBER	October 31