

Pot & Puma

Vol. 4, No. 3-4 • Published by the Frankoma Family Collectors Association • Summer/Fall 1998



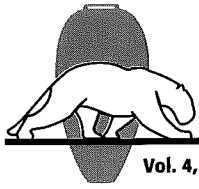
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Frankoma Family Collectors Association is a national educational and social organization formed in 1994 by collectors of Frankoma Pottery, dedicated to the appreciation, preservation and promotion of Frankoma Pottery as a collectible. It was granted non-profit corporation status by the State of Oklahoma on January 31, 1995.

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Summer/Fall Issue: The *Pot & Puma* is published quarterly: Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall by the Frankoma Family Collectors Association, 1300 Luker Lane, Sapulpa, OK 74066-6024. First Class postage paid at Oklahoma City, OK, and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to FFCA, PO Box 32571, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-0771. Contents copyright 1998 by FFCA.

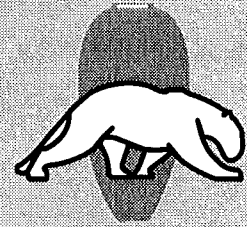
Membership: \$25 (family) per year. Membership includes subscriptions to the *Pot & Puma* and the *Prairie Green Sheet*. Back issues of the *Pot & Puma* are available at \$5 per issue. To order, write FFCA, PO Box 32571, Okla. City, OK 73123-0771.

Editorial correspondence: *Pot & Puma*, 1300 Luker Lane, Sapulpa, OK 74066-6024.

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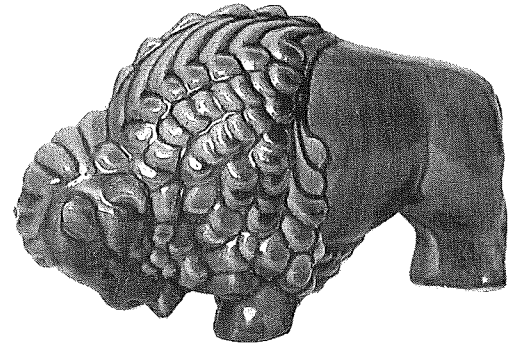
PRINTING
Cowan Printing/Bethany, OK

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A Special Thanks!

The Frankoma Pottery photographed in this issue of *Pot & Puma* was provided by numerous members of FFCA. These photos are not reproduced to scale; however, the actual size is given whenever possible. We wish to extend our gratitude and thanks to these members for helping us to enrich our issue with these photos.

On the Cover: 1954 Ada clay Frankoma Biliken marked "Boots Adams, Jester's Day." From Stoll Family Collection, Oklahoma City, OK. (Photography by Steve E. Littrell)

FROM YOUR FFCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Deb Oller, President • Jim Vance, Vice President • Donna Frank, Secretary • Nancy Littrell, Treasurer

Dear Frankoma Family and friends . . .

We sincerely wish to thank all of you loyal members for your patience and understanding while we've been updating and reorganizing your association to meet the challenges and growth with which the new millennium is presenting us.

Some of you have become a bit discouraged, for one reason or another. Remember, folks, that growing pains are inevitable for anyone and anything that is young and determined to live and grow. But also know this—no one or no thing has ever died from it! You grit your teeth, roll with the punches, sweat a lot, learn what you need to learn, re-adjust, and you get through it.

Let's think about what John and Grace Lee Frank had to endure before they were successful. They were shunned by a town to the point they had to move elsewhere to begin again, and this during the Great Depression. They built a small factory in a new town, and in just a few months all their hard work and sacrifices had burned to the ground, destroying virtually all master molds. The rebuilding process was torturous, and there were hard times that we today cannot possibly fathom. There was bankruptcy, during which they stubbornly would not allow the authorities to close them down. There were deep disappointments and heartbreaks that

Remember, folks, that growing pains are inevitable for anyone and anything that is young and determined to live and grow. But also know this—no one or no thing has ever died from it!

would have caused others to give up and walk away forever; but they believed in themselves and what they were doing. As Mr. Frank said so many times, "If you're right, a way will come. Like our pottery, we must go through tests by fire to show God what we're made of." And they never once gave up.

And what do we collect today? We collect and treasure the warm and wonderful products of John and Grace Lee Frank. The Franks endured and survived, and so did their creations that have become valuable to us today—a lasting testimony to their courage and determination. Perhaps our Frankoma Family bears a similar imprint of their trials and triumphs. Their two daughters have inherited their parents' tenacity, and what John and Grace Lee Frank gave to the people of their time, these ladies will work and fight to provide for the collectors of generations to follow. The challenges that FFCA have had, and are still having to face and meet today, hardly stand up to those which it took to bring Frankoma to us today.

FFCA was born just six years ago, in September of 1994. We never dreamed that our goal of eventually attracting 300 members would actually come true—but in less than a year there were more than 350! By the end of 1996, our "little hobby club" numbered well over 500 families—and the memberships continued to roll in, mostly from just word of mouth!

We had developed a great educational and entertaining Frankoma collectors publication we called the *Pot & Puma* (named after Mr. Frank's first trademark) with the generous help of Donna and Joniece Frank and many knowledgeable Frankoma experts—plus all those funny and heartwarming stories from you collectors! We had created a surprisingly successful and effective classified advertising paper that we lovingly called the *Prairie Green Sheet*. We

The challenges that FFCA have had, and are still having to face and meet today, hardly stand up to those which it took to bring Frankoma to us today.

had an annual convention, with two days of non-stop educational and social activities—and the John Frank Memorial Scholarship Awards were set into motion. The latter was a program we dared only dream that FFCA might be prepared to offer in 5-7 years, if then! Our members were receiving a lot for their \$25 a year.

By the end of 1997, our membership had swelled to well over 750, no longer "that little group of Frankoma enthusiasts." Donna and Nancy were still able to keep up with the administrative duties of FFCA, doing all the work themselves in order to keep costs to a minimum. Hiring others to do the work would have caused your dues to climb rapidly, and that we did not want. Longer and longer hours were being required. Deadlines were being stretched, along with endurance levels—but still we managed to keep up!

By 1998, with our numbers still climbing, Nancy and Donna were being stretched beyond their limits and heading for a major burnout! By that September reunion, our membership was at its peak, edging toward the big 1,000 mark! Our "little club" was now a full-grown national association with members in 45 states, and FFCA was being kept afloat by two virtually burned out ladies. A crash was sure to follow—and it did! We limped along with no president or vice president for a time, looking

forward to the next election to bring us new board members who would rejuvenate our basic staff of two.

FFCA WEBSITE LAUNCHED! Then we got a real shot in the arm! During the 1999 Thanksgiving holidays, Nancy and her husband Steve, along with the help of a local webmaster, initiated the FFCA Web site. The Web site has since mushroomed, happily taking some of the workload off the ladies' shoulders. Instead of having to sit for hours every day answering pages and pages of e-mails with long and involved answers to questions, people are now referred to the Web site to have 95 percent of their questions answered—along with lots of compelling information they didn't anticipate. The webmaster soon left for greener pastures, and it's now Nancy who has taken over as webmaster of the site. She has reorganized all the materials and given it a classy new look! Both Nancy and Donna are adding, editing and updating the information frequently.

FFCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 2000

So here we are beginning another year and a new millennium. *All things start anew!* Our first board meeting of 2000 was held on Feb. 4. Gibb Green resigned as president, Deb Oller confidently stepped up to fill the position of president, and the Board quickly filled the vice presidency with the capable Jim Vance.

P&P News!

At this meeting, our two ladies asked for help, and they got it. The board approved a specific publisher/printer/printer to handle the publications from now on. Donna and Nancy will continue as co-editors and will compile and orchestrate the publications as before. What began as a little "news-letter" grew up to be a "journal," and we're now ready to step up to the category of a 2-color "magazine!"

Membership Dues!

There has been some confusion

about the raising of the membership dues. After much discussion, the Board voted to continue the \$25 dues for all those joining or renewing in the year 2000. In 2001 dues will go to \$35, and to \$50 in 2002. The rising "cost of doing business" makes this a necessary move forward.

Presidential Appointments!

The president re-appointed the following persons: Steve Littrell as business manager; Joe Smith as deputy treasurer; Ray Stoll as liaison; and Elaine Stoll as recording secretary. Committees: Donna Frank, scholarship chair; Sharon Alexander, elections chair; Ray Stoll, bylaws organization chair; and Jim Vance, reunion chair.

Prairie Green Sheet Status!

The December issue of our *Prairie Green Sheet* was not published, as you know, and neither will you receive a February issue. There simply haven't been enough ads to make up a complete issue. Apparently people who normally place ads have been too busy to submit new ones, and even those we've had to beg for, which has become far too time-consuming. The next issue will be sent with the next *Pot & Puma*, and thereafter it will be published four times a year—mailed to you with the magazine to combine postage costs.

Christmas Ornaments!

Many of you have asked about the 1998 and 1999 FFCA Christmas Ornaments. This series was discontinued in 1998. The reason is that the ornaments are so small, Frankoma will only run a minimum of 2,000. We have many of the previous years' ornaments available for purchase.

Commemorative 2000!

It was also decided at the meeting that, although last year's Walking Ocelot was a smash hit, this year's commemorative will not be a miniature of an older piece. We would like to offer the club instead an exciting new and

original piece. FRANK X 2 (Joniece and Donna) is working now to create our FFCA 2000 Commemorative, and we're excited about the proposed work. They will be produced in Bronze Green, Turquoise, Ivory and Very Black. We may want to add this one in all four colors to our collections!

THE NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING IS SET FOR
MAY 12, 2000.

If you've read all of the above, surely you recognize that your association has only been going through some normal growing pains. We are still growing—or outgrowing what we've been in the past. It is essential that we reorganize, because what was working isn't working anymore. It's time to move on and find new ways of living and operating and serving the good and faithful members of our Frankoma Family.

FFCA has accomplished so much that we can be proud of! We hope you'll continue to ride with us and hold fast to the same faith in FFCA that we have—we who were with it from the day it was born. Recognize that things are looking brighter than ever for our Frankoma Family! Since the Feb. 4 Board meeting, FFCA has been rejuvenated and is again going strong! 🌱

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FRANKOMA FAMILY COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET

FOR YEARS ENDING DECEMBER 31



| | 1998 | 1997 | 1996 | 1995 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| ASSETS | | | | |
| CASH | \$13,331 | \$15,680 | \$10,171 | \$ 3,123 |
| PREPAID/DEPOSITS | -- | -- | -- | 75 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>\$13,331</u> | <u>\$15,680</u> | <u>\$10,171</u> | <u>\$ 3,198</u> |
| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | | | | |
| LIABILITIES | - | - | - | - |
| NET ASSETS: | | | | |
| UNRESTRICTED: | | | | |
| SCHOLARSHIP FUND (a) | 18,534 | 14,717 | 7,494 | 2,241 |
| OPERATING | (5,203) | 963 | 2,677 | 957 |
| TOTAL UNRESTRICTED | <u>13,331</u> | <u>15,680</u> | <u>10,171</u> | <u>3,198</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | <u>\$13,331</u> | <u>\$15,680</u> | <u>\$10,171</u> | <u>\$ 3,198</u> |

(a) Auction gain on sale of collectibles—designated for scholarships less scholarships paid



FRANKOMA FAMILY COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR YEARS ENDING DECEMBER 31



| | UNRESTRICTED | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | 1998 | 1997 | 1996 | 1995 |
| REVENUES: | | | | |
| MEMBERSHIP DUES | \$15,614 | \$ 15,534 | \$ 12,200 | \$ 7,765 |
| REUNION/AUCTION | 28,658 | 26,429 | 12,943 | 3,878 |
| REUNION/DINNER/COLLECTIBLES (b) | 9,695 | 11,061 | 6,332 | - |
| ADVERTISING | 729 | 1,298 | 660 | 529 |
| REVENUES | <u>54,696</u> | <u>54,322</u> | <u>32,135</u> | <u>\$12,172</u> |
| EXPENSES | | | | |
| REUNION/AUCTION | 24,841 | 19,206 | 7,690 | 1,637 |
| REUNION/DINNER/ COLLECTIBLES (b) | 12,187 | 9,908 | 7,231 | - |
| PRINTING | 5,125 | 7,097 | 4,691 | 3,440 |
| OFFICE SUPPLIES | 3,643 | 3,879 | 3,145 | 2,226 |
| POSTAGE | 5,204 | 3,729 | 1,471 | 1,671 |
| TELEPHONE | 1,930 | 1,540 | - | --- |
| INSURANCE/LEGAL | 4,115 | 1,325 | - | --- |
| SHOWCASE/VISA/COMPUTER/SOFTWARE | 2,129 | 934 | --- | --- |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | <u>57,045</u> | <u>48,813</u> | <u>25,162</u> | <u>8,974</u> |
| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | (2,349) | 5,509 | 6,973 | 3,198 |
| NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR | <u>15,680</u> | <u>10,171</u> | <u>3,198</u> | <u>-</u> |
| NET ASSETS END OF YEAR | <u>\$13,331</u> | <u>\$ 15,680</u> | <u>\$ 10,171</u> | <u>\$ 3,198</u> |

(b) 1995 Reunion expense unseparated



SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR 1998



We gained \$174 on the interest we paid earlier.

Also, our forms 990-EZ (short form return of organization exempt from income tax) for 1995, 1996 and 1997 have been accepted by the IRS. We shall now file form 990-EZ for 1998 and subsequent years. Returns are due May 15 of the following year. We have prepared our 1998 financial report (see page 4) and 990-EZ.

Our 1998 auction was the best ever and continues to grow. Members seem to enjoy it as indicated by the gross proceeds shown in next column:

| | |
|------|----------|
| 1995 | \$ 3,389 |
| 1996 | 6,343 |
| 1997 | 11,519 |
| 1998 | 15,498 |

FFCA also continues to grow in many ways. Our *PGS, P&P* and members' advertising are making it well known. Martha Stewart's article helped too. You can see the value of your collection growing in value every day—just look at the prices on eBay (an internet auction house).



A Message to Our Members...

The primary purpose of this journal is to educate our members on collecting Frankoma Pottery. One way we can achieve this purpose is to provide a platform for discussion among our members. We feel strongly that our members have the right to have their opinions heard (or read) by all.

We realize there is still much work to be done on our publications, but we are very proud of what has been accomplished to date. We will continue to be self-critical and highly dedicated to meeting your needs. We want every one of our members to be proud of our Frankoma Family and all its publications. We must always keep in mind that the Frankoma Family was born with the purpose of enjoying good friendships and promoting the fun of collecting.

Therefore, we have chosen to print the following letters received from members, as well as from former members, all unedited.

Let us hear from you. Send your letters to:

Letters to the Editors
1300 Luker Lane
Sapulpa, OK 74066-6024

Letters to the Editors



I was just this morning reflecting on the gifts John and Grace Lee bestowed on all of us whose lives have been touched by the beautiful art work they created. Their goal was to enable the common person to own a piece of beauty without spending huge sums. There was no snobbery in their purpose, just a wish to share what God had given them.

My experience with FFCA members has been that that goal has been honored and perpetuated by most of the cousins. It seems that today, honesty, integrity and compassion are increasingly ignored and disdained. I believe they are compelling qualities which bring out the best in all of us and which speak to the best that is in us.

This is embodied in the light in my little grandson's eyes when he runs to tell me he has "discovered" a piece of Frankoma in an antique store. He has seen my Frankoma pieces and recognizes the same beauty and integrity of design in his "discoveries." I believe that, just as Joniece has expressed that the clay has to be formed with integrity of design in order to come through the refining fire, our thoughts and actions must be based on the highest principles. Else how can we equip our children and grandchildren to honor the highest that is in them?

That is what my parents instilled in me, and that is the lodestone of John and Grace Lee's lives. I thank you, Donna and Joniece, and the majority of the FFCA membership for recognizing and honoring that obligation.

Pat from TN

I agree that Gary's book is a gem. I also find using all the Frankoma reference guides in concert to explore a puzzle or to research an item a complete joy. There is value in comparing the information they contain. It's like having a treasure map, looking for the evasive chest of doubloons. Okay, maybe that's a little corny, or maybe I'm just a romantic at heart.

Jack from CA

(Continued next page)

My heart ached for you as I read the Pot & Puma yesterday. I guess what was printed is only the tip of the iceberg. I cannot believe the vitriol. I'm tempted to say to those people, "Get a life!" How much better could all that energy and thought be working for something to help others.

This journal is a great issue! You really do a terrific job. Did any of those who complained about "unconscionable delay" offer to help you in getting it out? Contrast that to what Joe Smith did in threading through the complexities of accounting and the IRS Code—as a volunteer. Wonderful job!

My humble opinion is that I want to know about re-issues and reproductions, and have the information to make my own decisions about whether or not to buy an item. I question the honesty of those who want the differences blurred.

I guess, following the two physical fires Frankoma has sustained, this is the third "trial by fire." I pray it's the last. I'm proud of the Board for handling the mess with compassion, integrity and good grace. There IS divine justice, you know—but it's not always recognized.

The cry of victimization, so popular these days, depends on the premise that "we demand to be treated fairly." If we don't observe the same honesty we demand of others, we come into court with unclean hands.

I re-read Phyllis's article on the Three R's and found it

excellent. And in my opinion, it was unbiased. We demand authentication and full information in our food products, the air we breathe, and in our lending policies. Does this not apply to other areas of our lives? Where do we draw the line?

My prayers are with you Board members. I suppose John and Grace Lee Frank also had trials of this sort. What I particularly commend you for is your faith in the Family and your continuing to do all the networking of keeping us together and supporting one another. I'm sure you're tempted at times to just chuck it. But you keep on doing it with such grace and love and dedication.

PW from TN

I have to tell you I am amazed at your fairness in allowing both sides of this fracas over reproductions to vent in the latest *Pot & Puma*, and I am saddened to see what a tremendous amount of dissension there is over this issue. I cannot believe the vitriolic language of some of these folks.

Anne from CA



Frankoma Funnies

The Biliken Twins

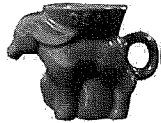


FRANKOMA POTTERY

1998 & Limited Edition Collectables



The "Great White Buffalo"
Limited Edition of 2000
GWB - \$60.00



DKY98 - \$13.00



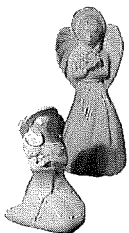
The "Wolf Family"
Limited Edition of 1000
WOLF - \$60.00



GOP98 - \$13.00



The "Bear Family"
Limited Edition of 2000
BEAR - \$60.00



8" Angel w/ Bird
#152 - \$22.00



5" Shepherdess
#147 - \$13.00



"The Lord is with Thee"
CP98 - \$22.00

Angel for all seasons - 6"
#145 - \$13.00



Angel for all seasons - 8"
#146 - \$22.00

Club members receive a 10% discount when they present their PCN at the time they order.

| Item# | Description | QTY | Price | Ext Price |
|-------|-------------|-----|-------|-----------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
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| | | | | |

5% of all sales for collectables will be donated back to the Frankoma Family Collectors Association.

Total all pieces
OK residents add 4.5% tax
S/H - \$5.00 per item
GRAND TOTAL

| Ordered by: | | Ship To | |
|----------------|--|----------------|--|
| Name | | Name | |
| Address | | Address | |
| | | | |
| City/State/Zip | | City/State/Zip | |

Use your Mastercard, Visa, Money Order or Check to make your purchase

Mail to: PO Box 789 Sapulpa, OK 74067 Fax to: (918) 227-3117 or Call (800) 331-3650

Please Be Gentle

**By Gloria Lloyd
North Platte, NE**

BILL, MY HUSBAND FOR 40 years, was a retired lieutenant of the North Platte (NE) Police Department. He passed away this March, a year after coronary bypass surgery. The last two months of his life, our three daughters and I, with the help of home healthcare nurses, cared for him in our home.

Bill was the one who obtained our membership in the Frankoma Family and subscribed to the *Pot & Puma*. I started collecting Frankoma about 10 years ago, my first purchase being a Prairie Green Duck Planter. It was the first piece of Frankoma I can remember seeing. I brought it home and showed it to Bill.

"Isn't it beautiful?" I said.

He took it from me, looked it over, and in his patient, gentle rumble, he asked, "How much did that set you back?"

"Twelve dollars."

"Well, it's pretty, but I don't know if I'd have paid that much for it."

As time went on, I picked up a piece here and there, mostly Prairie Green or Desert Gold. Then one day I discovered a beautiful different color, sort of gray-blue, which we later learned was Woodland Moss. By then, my husband had begun to take an interest in my collection and started bringing home a Frankoma treasure or two for me from his out-of-town hunting trips, gun shows and tepee and black powder rendezvous trips. I'd hear his footsteps on the porch, and he'd have a brown grocery bag with something Frankoma that he'd found. By then, Frankoma was coming in all different colors.

Once he brought home a Prairie Green "Ban-O-Bug," I said, "It's ugly!"

"But," he patiently pointed out, "you don't have one."

Then he decided we needed to get some idea of what "this stuff" was worth, so he ordered Susan Cox's

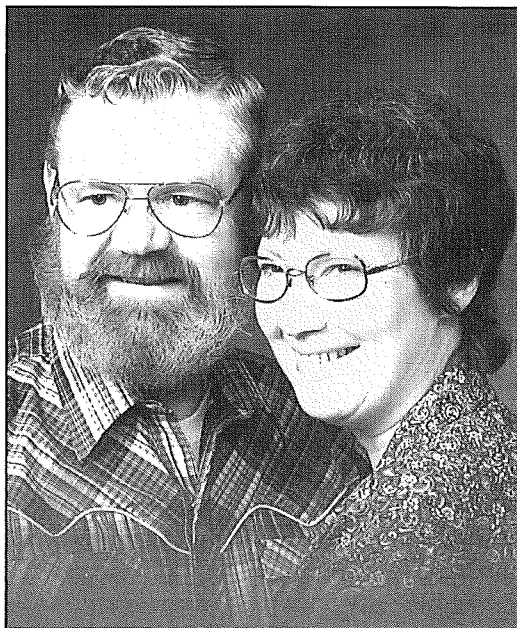
1993 Price Guide, which we've almost worn out. We had a bit of trouble identifying the different glaze colors, so Bill ordered Phyllis and Tom Bess's *Frankoma Treasures and Other Oklahoma Potteries*. And I must tell you that, when the *Prairie Green Sheet* and/or *Pot & Puma* arrived in the mail, he'd get to it first, because I was at work. When I'd finally sit down to read it, he'd sit over on his couch and proceed to tell me all about what was in it!

Bill patiently hand-printed inventory lists of the Political Mugs and Christmas Plates, and carried them in his billfold so he'd know which ones I did not have. On one of our antique shopping trips, I found a Dreamer Girl Bookend in Desert Gold. Bill was always scouting ahead of me to spot things first, then come and get me to show me what he'd found. This time I went to find him. "Isn't it beautiful? But it's \$80!"

That gentle rumble came from over my shoulder. "I really think you should have that."

So we used our credit card and brought it home.

The last trip Bill was able to make with me was in January of 1997. We went to Kansas for the weekend, where



Gloria and Bill Lloyd, February 1997.

I spotted two little vases in Royal Blue. They were such a different color than I'd ever seen, I almost didn't look at the bottom. There was "Frankoma" in tiny little letters in Ada clay. I said to Bill, "I really need one of these. They're only \$12 each."

That gentle rumble again. "I think you ought to have both of them."

For a while, my favorite color was Woodland Moss, because it went so well with my color scheme. Then my sister Judy and her husband, Gene, called while they were on vacation, saying they had found some "kind of pinkish purple" Frankoma—a pitcher and six little glasses for \$40—and should they pick them up for me? (This was before we had the books and color pictures.) Bill said, "Well, I think we should see what that's like." So I got my first Red Bud Frankoma. And now that's mostly what I look for.

While Bill was in the hospital in Milwaukee, our daughter persuaded me, though my heart was heavy, to go shopping. I found a mini Desert Gold Pitcher about 2" tall, with a little folded piece of paper about Frankoma Pottery still inside. I almost missed seeing it, as it was in a display case, about eye level, with just a little bit of the color showing.

By now, I'm sure you've noticed from this account of my memories that my gentle husband progressed over the years from being a skeptic, to being a generous and helpful partner, in our loving adventure of collecting Frankoma.

Only once during the months that we cared for Bill at home did he admonish me. I had scolded him for getting out of bed without waking me to help him, and he had fallen. He said to me in a patient, gentle whisper (the rumble in his voice was now gone), "You mustn't get after me."

It seems to me that maybe this adventure and enjoyment of collecting and appreciating Frankoma's unique beauty should be the focus of our publication. Although there are bound to be differences of opinions, please be gentle. 🐾

The Little One That Almost Got Away

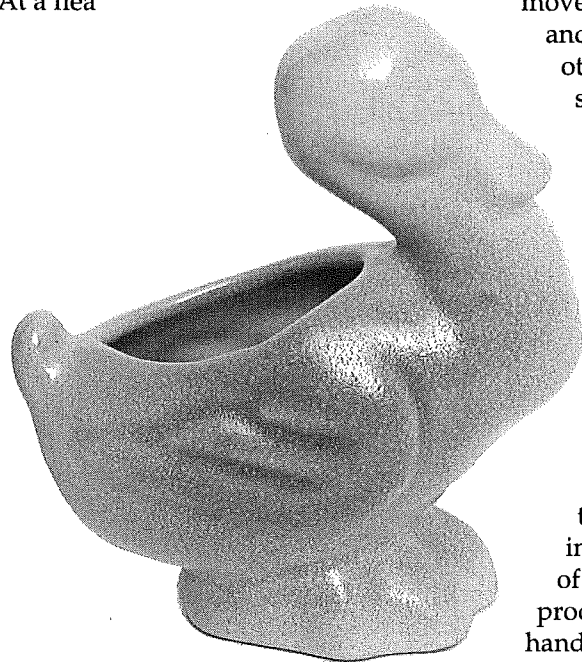
By Michael Montes
Highland Mills, NY

IT WAS A WEEKEND TO remember. With the big flea market at Stormville, New York, my family and I prepared our backpacks and headed to the outdoor market. The sun was hot and relentless that morning, and the vendors were every bit as anxious to sell their treasures as we were excited to find them. There were so many items there to see, touch, feel, smell—more than 75 acres worth!

We split into teams. Team #1 was my sister Laura and my pop, Louie; Team #2 was my wife, Kitty, and me; and Team #3 my brother-in-law Joe. Joe has a special sense about sniffing out Frankoma and has come through for me more than once when I haven't even smelled a Frankie!

As Kitty and I start walking, we're seeing Frankies everywhere. Some vendors only know that Frankoma is a collectible but have no idea of values, like late pieces that they're asking way too much for.

At a flea



Duck Flower Holder #184 (1942)

market, you tend to bring just enough money for that "big one." We see a Shell Tray, the PG glaze sparkling in the sun, clearly hand-stamped "Frankoma." Now I see it has a factory split (fire check) on the side. But with a price tag of only \$6, it's too good to pass up. I pay the man, and we move on.

As we worm our way through the aisles, I point out to Kitty a huge table of salt and pepper shakers. I go right, she goes left. Soon Kitty calls out, "Mike! Look what I found! A perfect pair of Teepees in Silver Sage!" I asked how much. "\$12." I ask the vender if she'd let them go for \$11, and she says, "Sure." (Just the week before I'd purchased a pair in PG on eBay for a whopping \$40!)

Soon we run into Team #3, Joe. He teases me about a mysterious find he has in his backpack, which he won't show me yet. "Mike, I bought two of them, and I'll keep one." I get a rush of excitement and wonder what they can be, and if they're so great, how could I have passed them up? Trying to cover 75 acres, it's easy to miss something here and there, and that's why it's good to have teams. We split up again and move on. Here comes Team #1, Laura and Pop Louie, and we show each other our prizes. Laura right away spots the split on the shell, and we laugh. She's really sharp when it comes to quality control.

We trek on to a table full of glassware, pottery, and S&P's. My eye scans the bright colors and leads me to—hold on! Is this a 1942 Duck Flower Holder? A mirage maybe? Or is the sun getting to me? Nope, I'm actually seeing what I thought I was seeing. It's in perfect condition, in vibrant PG, those metallic speckles glistening in the sun! This is a perfect example of the quality pieces that John Frank produced. I hold that little duck in my hands. The price tag says \$60. I talk to the vender. I try to get the price down to \$45, and he tells me he has \$40 in-

'What am I doing?? I'll never see this piece anywhere else!'

vested in the piece. He won't budge. I turn, I walk away, and I don't look back. Soon I'm saying to myself, "What am I doing?? I'll never see this piece anywhere else!"

As we move on, I can't believe I passed on this rare one. Kitty scoldingly reminds me of my loss, and I miserably agree. An hour passes, and I'm still mentally kicking myself. We're all tired and ready to go. I say to Kitty that I really want that little duck, but we're out of money. Maybe I could ask Pop for a loan. But what if I go back and it's not there? I can't bear to look, so I send Kitty. Maybe he'll sell it to her for \$45. I wait about 100 yards away, pacing my tired legs back and forth. She must be haggling with him. After a long 20 minutes, she returns with a sad face and tells me it sold about half an hour ago. My heart sinks, and I kick myself more.

We rendezvous back at the van, and I ask Kitty again if my little duck is really gone. "Yes, honey, it's gone." Time for us to show one another our prizes. Joe pulls out a beautiful pair of Indian Masks, a really, really big score. When it's Pop's turn to show and tell, I'm still grieving over the loss of my little duck. Silence hovers over us as he pulls out of his pack his one small find, which he reaches out and puts into my hand. There it is. It's the little big one—my little lost duck!

Cousins, take a lesson from me. No matter how small—when the big one finds you, don't be foolish and walk away. When we go Frankoma treasure hunting, we never know what may be waiting for us out there. Avoid the pain. Find a way, but get it. You may never see one like it again! I just got lucky. Thanks, Pop. 🐥

G-Man Discovers Frankoma

FBI Agent Now With Two Families—Frankoma and the Bureau

**By Tom Kuker
Oklahoma City, OK**

MY GRANDMOTHER collected pitchers of all colors and shapes from everywhere. Family members would often return from trips near and far bearing gifts of pitchers purchased around the globe.

As a child, I always enjoyed visiting my grandparents and was taken by the number and styles of the many pitchers on display in their home. Many years later, I was given the collection and it was packed away.

Approximately five years ago, I unpacked the collection and placed numerous pitchers in my home to enjoy them as I had as a child. I then began to notice some of them had similar characteristics of color and shape. Of course, these are the Frankoma miniature pitchers shown in the photo.

Most of the Frankoma pitchers had my grandfather's printing on the bottom indicating the year purchased and to whom the pitcher was presented. I can't ask them now, but I will bet the miniature pitchers came from the downtown

Oklahoma five-and-dime store that my grandfather managed from the 1940s through the 1960s. The name of the store was H. L. Green.

After the discovery of the Frankoma pitchers, my wife, daughters and I, all started looking for more of the unique pottery. Bingo! We discovered Frankoma Pottery items in Seattle, Wash., where we were living. We spent many hours in antique shops across the State of Washington searching for Frankoma. I am sure that the store clerks in Ellensburg, Washington, are still talking about the guy in the cowboy hat who was in their store buying all the Frankoma Pottery.

When we were transferred to Oklahoma City, I was presented with two Frankoma trivets that tie the organization for which I have worked the past 27 years to Frankoma Pottery. I first received a trivet commemorating an FBI Former Special Agent Society Regional Conference held in Oklahoma City in 1985. The society was founded in 1937, and is comprised of former employees, retired or resigned from the ranks of the FBI. The society's primary objectives are



Trivet commemorating FBI agent conference in Oklahoma City

to present the FBI heritage in the spirit of friendship, loyalty and goodwill, and to aid and support the FBI.

Later, I was presented another trivet, this one commemorating a National Academy Conference that was held in Oklahoma City in 1976. The National Academy (NA) was founded by J. Edgar Hoover in 1935. The NA program provides a wide range of leadership and specialized training, as well as opportunity for professional law enforcement officers to share ideas, techniques and experiences. More than 30,000 law enforcement students have been trained there since 1935.

There are four NA sessions held every year at our training facility in Quantico, Virginia, each session consisting of approximately 270 national and international law enforcement officers. Many of Oklahoma's upper and mid-level law enforcement officers have graduated from the FBI's National Academy.

Over the years, the members of both the Society of Special Agents and the National Academy have been elements of our FBI extended family. Now I am proud to be associated with two "family" organizations—the FBI, and recently the Frankoma Family.

Both of these Frankoma trivets occupy a special place on my desk in Oklahoma City. 🐾



The two commemorative trivets occupy a special place on FBI agent Tom Kuker's desk in Oklahoma City.

'What in the World Is It?'

By *Joniece Frank*



and *Donna Frank*

Who's Aladdin?

COUSIN JACK FROM California brought up a puzzler, and he's the first to catch this error. At least he's the first to report having found this error. He also brings up the point of why some of the lamps have advertising or some kind of writing or symbols on them, and others do not. On her page 44 (new), Bess shows the #309 "Aladdin Lamp Candleholder" with the dates of 1968-70. At bottom of her page 50 is shown the "Lamp of Knowledge Candleholder," to which she has given no number or dates.

Schaum's page 71 shows the same piece as Bess page 50 ("Lamp of Knowledge Candleholder"), but he calls it "Aladdin Lamp Candleholder" and dates it 1968-70. Schaum does list and describe the #309 in the stock number index at back, but there is no photo of that larger lamp. It took Joniece and me some time to sort this one out. Here's a

bit of history about these two lamps and how understandable it is to get the two twisted.

The larger lamp (#309) on Bess page 44 was originally made as a fund-raiser for the Sapulpa Public Library. Dad was on the library board and came up with the idea that people who donated a certain dollar figure would receive as a gift one of these pieces. He called both lamps the "Lamp of Knowledge"—which is in both cases what he was trying to represent, not Aladdin's Lamp. But somehow the word "Aladdin" has managed to attach itself to it one way or another. (Notice his thumb or finger prints on it.)

In Joniece's words: We later put it into the catalog for a year or two, just as another new piece. If any of you have ever been a salesman, you know that when you walk in the door, if you have something new in your hand, the buyer

will at least stop and look. And if you can get him to fill the first line of the order blank, you can usually expect him to write some more, because he's thinking about filling in some more lines to get in on his freight allowance, etc.

When Daddy made this piece, I was working only part time at the plant (in process of divorcing my first husband), and Daddy had more irons in the fire than he could keep track of. Not having the time to devote to designing new pieces, this was just used as another piece in the line to sell. (However, it did not sell well at all.)

I believe most of them say "Sapulpa Public Library" or "Friends of the Library" on the bottom or the side. Daddy was co-chairman of the fundraising committee, and as a result of his determined (and successful) efforts, part of the expansion of the library was named

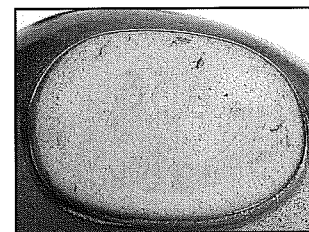
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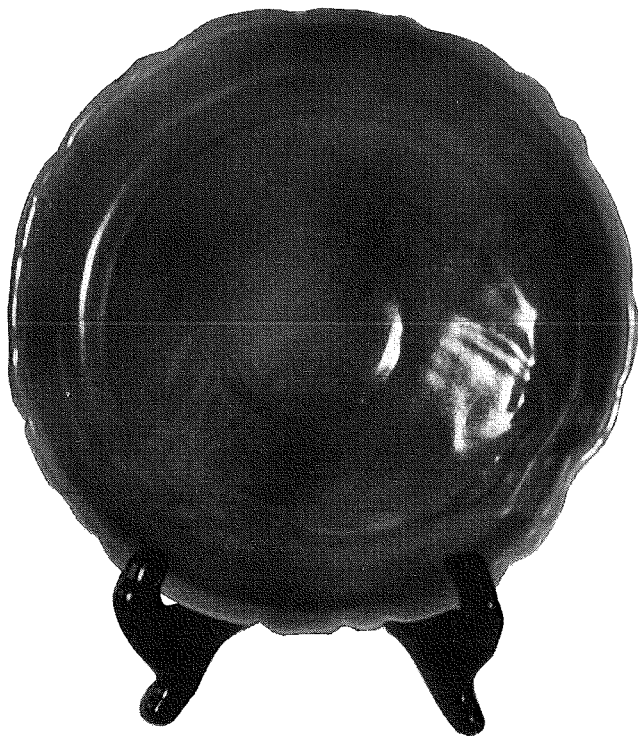


**#309 Lamp of Knowledge
Candleholder—8½" W
(circa 1968-1970)**

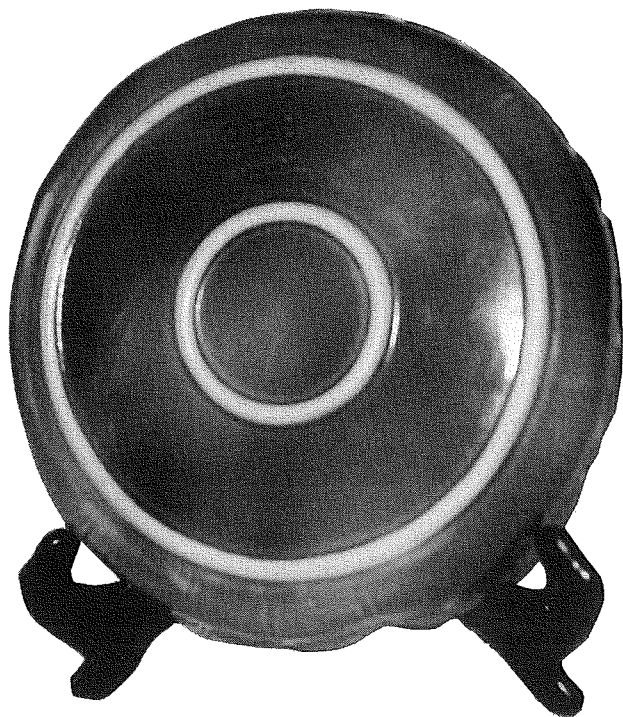


**#308 Lamp of Knowledge
Candleholder—5½" W
(circa 1950s-mid-70s)**





Turquoise glazed saucer base. The piece was made to set the A-series flower pot/planters in. It is a cast piece made before the hydraulic press came in. Both the Frankoma mark and the mold number are under the bottom glaze (shown below). The saucer is 10 inches in diameter and has two-inch sides. The saucer's bottom has two concentric, raised rings.



(from previous page)

"Frank Hall." The other part was named for the Collins Family (who owned Liberty Glass at the time).

The smaller lamp (#308) dates back as far as the early 1950s to about the mid-1970s. As far as I know and can determine at this time, it was never photographed and put into any catalog. It was made on and off as we needed it for various specials, sororities and other occasions. I know Mother used it for table arrangements or for special parties for clubs or organizations that she was involved with, like the Tulsa Garden Club, Delta Kappa Gamma, Oklahoma Federated Women's Clubs, etc. (That small lamp had a solid handle, one of those pieces for which we made the handle separately and "slipped" it on.)

RECAP: The one on Phyllis's page 44 is the #309, and the one made for the Sapulpa Public Library. The one pictured in Gary's book is not the #309, but is the smaller #308, which is on page 50 of Phyllis's book. Gary has described his piece correctly (5-1/4" long), and the color (PG), but the stock number and the years go with the one on Phyllis's page 44. Phyllis is correct in all her data, although the measurements by the two authors vary. I personally don't pay attention to that tiny of an amount. It could mean the difference of a "soft" or a "hard" firing—or the way you measure from tip of spout straight across to handle, or tip of spout to the wide part of the handle.

Definitely no blame here, folks—stuff happens.

Thanks for being picky, Jack!



The Quest for the Holy Grail

DAVID OF DC WRITES . . . As with any hobby, when one begins collecting, one must first learn the history of how the items were created, and the reason for their creation. One of the most exciting and interesting things about collecting is finding an item that is "rare." Even more exciting is when an item is found for which there is no documentation, but there is absolutely no doubt about the origin of the item. This is like finding the "Holy Grail" of collecting!

Since becoming involved in collect-

ing Frankoma Pottery, we have studied to learn the various types of clay and glazes used throughout the years, as well as the different designs that have been created. We recently became aware of a possible Frankoma "Holy Grail." We were told about a possible Frankoma "pie plate/bowl/dish" at one of the local nostalgia shops. When the item was viewed, there was absolutely no doubt it was Frankoma. Even if there had been no Frankoma mark or mold number, just touch alone would have provided an unmistakable "Frankoma feel." However, when it came to re-searching the item, we were unable to find any documentation on it in any available books dealing with Frankoma. It now became an even more exciting find, and we would like to share the information on this item with all our Frankoma Family cousins. If anyone has additional information regarding this item, we would love to hear about it.

The find is made of Ada clay, which has an incised number 223, an incised Frankoma mark with an "oval 0" and the letters are slightly more than 1/16" tall. Both the Frankoma mark and the mold number are under the bottom glaze. The dish is 10" in diameter and has 2" sides. The sides of the dish are irregularly scalloped, with "reeding" on the outside. Interestingly, the scallops around the sides are of different sizes, suggesting that they were produced by hand. There is even what appears to be a thumb/finger mark indentation on the side, suggesting that the dish was picked up while unfired. The bottom of the dish has two concentric raised rings approximately 1/16" high. These two rings are also visible on the inside of the dish because they caused indentations which are a darker color than that of the rest of the bottom glaze. The color of the dish is a beautiful Indian/Peacock Blue.

Available information on #223 identifies it as a Four-Leafed Clover Ashtray, made between 1957-1991, which was produced only in Sapulpa clay. Our guess is the item we found and described above was produced from a mold number previously used but re-located in 1957. Based upon all the information available to us such as color, clay, trademark, etc., we think the dish we found was made no earlier than 1942, nor later than 1950. Was this an experimental piece? Does anyone have

any information regarding this item? Is this really our Frankoma "Holy Grail?"

... What a beautiful, almost reverent, piece you've written, friend! It's very painful for us to burst your bubble on this, but truth is truth, and that's what we always try to offer. This piece is glazed in Turquoise, matching the few pieces of Wagon Wheel dinnerware displayed here at our house on a beam in the dining room, and alongside them we've included a piece just like yours, but a smaller version. These were made to set the A-series flower pot/planters in. (See #A8 on page 162 in Schaum's book.). But the one you have is indeed early, probably one of the first, because it was made before the hydraulic press came in. It is definitely a cast piece. It wasn't in line for long, as it was soon re-designed to be made on the press. No doubt about it, it's a beautiful bowl without the flower pot, and many were sold by themselves for serving, flower arrangements, etc. In the 1950 catalog the saucer is not shown; the 1951 and 1952 catalogs show A4, A5, A6, A7, and A8 "with saucers." Each of those numbers ordered with saucer was called S4, S5, etc. (S for Saucer. The number was it's measurement, like A4 was a 4" pot, A8 was an 8", etc.). In the old master stock number book that barely survived the fire, the S's were never even listed. We cannot find any proof that this many sizes of saucer bases were produced. Joniece believes that probably only three sizes were made, which would go with all five pots. Yes indeed, you do have a beautiful and scarce piece! But we hesitate to crown it the "Holy Grail." However, don't give up the search! With your dedication, determination, and love of Frankoma, if there is one to be found, it will surely be you who discovers it. We're pulling for you!

Joniece and Donna

**#34? #34M?
#34A?**

Those of you who have been wisely learning your Frankoma

stock numbers know that the #34 is the 10-1/2" square Serva-Tray with wrought iron stand. #34M means the stand had a Magazine rack. (Another example of Dad's really "secret code" numbering system—like L for large and S for small!) But someone came up with just the ashtray part marked "34A." What did the A stand for?

After the unit was discontinued (1964-65?), mishaps sometimes occurred, and the ashtray part would get broken and need replacing—just the ashtray. Up until 1991, I made replacements available to such customers, and those were designated "34A."

"A" in dinnerware means it's a creamer. For non-dinnerware items, we often added an "A" to the stock number when we made a change in an item, or for a special recognition so we could tell the difference, such as the one inquired about. #34A means "Serva-Tray only, without stand, for replacement." 🌸



#34M Serva-Tray with Magazine rack

The Biliken: A Lucky Find

Reunion Attendee's Curiosity Turns to Fondness While Researching Origin of Biliken's Name

*By Jack Leslie Kish
Sherman Oaks, CA*

MY INITIAL INTEREST IN the Biliken produced by John Frank had more to do with satisfying my curiosity about the origin of the name than it did for the figure itself. But now, and after a fashion, I admit I have become quite fond of this little fellow.

My curiosity was piqued while in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, for the Frankoma Family Reunion. Donna, Joniece, a few of their good friends and I were sitting around the Frank dining room table relaxing after having spent a productive day enjoying the company of Frankoma collectors, and shopping for that special Frankoma find. Someone mentioned in passing during the conversation that it was strange that the word Biliken was

not in the dictionary. Since I'm always up for solving a word mystery and finding it hard to believe that there was no information on the Biliken, I decided that once I was home, I would do a little digging to see what I could find. What I wasn't prepared for was the direction my search would take.

The first thing I discovered was that the original spelling was Billiken (two l's). The Billiken, as defined by Webster, is " ... a squat smiling comic figure used as a mascot ... popular as a good luck charm in Alaska for decades ... brings good luck as expressed in the following rhyme:



*Rub his belly,
Rub his toes,
Good luck follows
Wherever you goes.*

Well, so much for a complete definition! I would need to dig a little deeper...here are the results of that search.

According to several references, two theories for the origin of the Billiken have been repeated often. The first suggested that the Billiken originated in Egypt (of course, we all know that everything gets its start in Egypt!). Initially researchers were most likely attracted to the similar attributes between the Billiken and that of the Egyptian god Bes. In Egyptian mythology Bes was revered as a deity of household pleasures such as music, good food, and relaxation. As a protector and entertainer of children, Egyptians wore him as an ornament for luck. Unfortunately, this is where the similarities end. While the Billiken is whimsical, smiling, and cute, the god Bes is depicted as an ugly dwarf with a protruding tongue and a face meant to frighten away evil spirits.

The second theory suggested that the Billiken originated with the Alaskan



Figure 1

Eskimos. It was presumed by researchers that early whaling vessels traveling the Alaskan-Siberian coast carried a small Buddha-like image from the Orient which Eskimo carvers copied in ivory and sold as souvenirs to the sailors. The carvings appeared between the turn of the century and 1913. The introduction of the Billiken to Alaska must have been fairly recent since there is no evidence from archaeological excavations to the contrary. Needless to say, the conclusion drawn here was founded on little proof.

Wondering how the Billiken arrived in Alaska, I came across the mention of a magazine article published in September 1960 in the *Alaska Sportsman* by Dorothy Jean Ray. In the article she revealed the origin of the Billiken (an accidental discovery), and its introduction to



Figure 2

Alaska. It seems that on a visit to a shop in Seattle (YE OLDE CURIOSITY SHOP) she happened to discover a Billiken, not one carved in ivory but a large cast iron coin bank with the name Billiken printed in capital letters. (See figure 1.) A U.S. Patent No. D-39603 was revealed and led to the following disclosure.

In 1908 Ms. Florence Pretz of Kansas City, Missouri, was awarded a patent for a new design that was patterned after Joss, the Chinese god of luck and called a "Billiken." On the base of one of the original plaster-of-Paris statuettes the following slogan was placed: "THE GOD OF

THINGS AS THEY OUGHT TO BE," a paraphrase of Kipling's words from "L'Envoi," "Shall draw the things as he sees it of the God of things as they are! (See figure 2.) Before the end of the 1908, a manufacturing company in Chicago took the name Billiken (The Billiken Sales Company) and purchased the rights to the Billiken design and began to produce banks, statuary, and other

items as Billikens. In 1909 the Horseman Company entered into an agreement with Billiken Sales Company for the sole rights to manufacture and sell Billiken dolls in the U.S. and Canada, one of the first copyrighted dolls. (See figure 3.) The Billiken doll (an ugly cuss), like the Cabbage Patch doll, was all the rage for about 6 months, as the sale of 200,000 Billiken dolls would suggest, and then just disappeared.

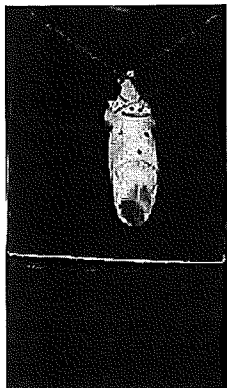


Figure 4

As far as the Billiken's introduction to Alaska, it seems that a storekeeper on Diomed Island gave a Billiken statuette to an Eskimo, Angokwaghuk, nicknamed "Happy Jack." He was considered the most

famous and gifted ivory carver of all times. In turn, he copied the Billiken image in ivory. (See figure 4.) Because of the Billiken's popularity, other ivory carvers diligently and faithfully copied "Happy Jack's" original. In the process the Billiken gained importance and was regarded by the Eskimos as a good luck symbol. Lore suggests that to bring greatness of health, happiness and good fortune, one must rub his belly twice a day, always thinking of others, and wishing for them "good things!"

From about the 1920s to the early 1950s little information about the Billiken can be found. However, two interesting associations with the Billiken should be mentioned. The first is how the Billiken became attached to the Saint Louis University, and the second the mention of the Billiken as an award from Elmendorf AFB Theater Guild.

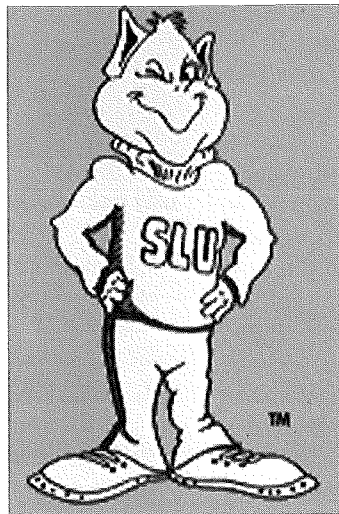


Figure 5

Sometime between 1910 and 1911, at the height of Billikenmania, the St. Louis sports writer William O'Connor decided the SLU football coach John Bender resembled the Billiken. Charles McNamara later drew a cartoon of Bender

in the form of a Billiken and posted it in the window of a drugstore in the area. The football team soon became known as Bender's Billikens. (See figure 5.)

At a recent Auction at the Sheraton-Universal Hotel in Los Angeles, California, two items dated circa 1950-1960 were offered for sale. They were described as a "Billiken" Award, from Elmendorf AFB Theater Guild, and were carved from the tooth of a sperm whale in the shape of a large Billiken. One was 6" tall and awarded to James C. Hancock for the "Caine Mutiny Court Martial," and the other was 5.5" tall and awarded to the same actor for Best Actor, in "Death of a Salesman." Each sold for \$550. Why the Billiken was selected as the subject of an award is not clear, but the popularity of the Billiken is still apparent.

This brings us to the Billiken association with Frankoma Pottery. Most Frankoma publications state that Frankoma produced the Biliken from 1951 to 1955. In a newsletter (*The Ameri-*



Figure 3

can Clay Exchange, Vol. 3, No. 3, April 1983), Susan Cox recounts information given to her by Leona Thomas of Frankoma. In the newsletter it states: "The Biliken was designed by Mr. John Frank (probably from a metal example) [could this have been an original bank?] brought to him by Boots Adams. Boots Adams (now deceased) was president of Phillips Petroleum Company and involved with the Jesters (a fun group affiliated with the Masonic Organization). Mr. Frank designed the Biliken, c. May 1954, and it was produced in Red Bud, Black (Onyx Black), and mostly Green (I assume she meant Prairie Green) and sold wholesale for \$1.75 each. Approximately 475 were made: 200 went to St. Louis, 100 to Clayton (Ohio?), 24 to Tulsa, and 82 to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (69 Bilikens are unaccounted for from the total listed here). On Aug. 14, 1978, St. Louis ordered 12 each of the Bilikens in Black (Onyx Black or Flat Black?), Gold (Desert Gold?), Moss (Woodland Moss), White (White Sand), Brown (Coffee?) and Yellow (Autumn Yellow) at a wholesale cost of \$4.00 each (a total of 72 Bilikens for \$288.00!)."

It seems that the Biliken mold(s) were stored for future orders just as Joniece recounts, "After you complete an order, you store usable molds ready for reorders—which hopefully will be forthcoming."

(Continued next page)

(from previous page)

As far as anyone knows, the Frankoma Biliken was never offered to the general public in any catalog. It is assumed from its design, though it was not stated in the original documentation, that the Biliken was made as a vase to accept a flower arrangement and most likely was used as a table centerpiece.

Collectors are likely to find the following examples (I'm sure there are others): Jester's Day May 7-8, 1954, Host K.S. Boot's Adams; Phillip's Oil, Jester's Day, Bartlesville; Kansas, Wichita court #76 (the number is imprinted on the Biliken's feet—see figures 6 and 7); Tulsa Court No. 47 R.O.J.; Muskogee Court, No. 99; St. Louis Court, No. 81.

Joniece reports that the Frankoma employees loved this little guy, and they always wanted to cast one or two for themselves, their wives, or their kids. Some, she says, were even made with a hole in his belly button for a straw. So it is possible for collectors to find several variations—like perhaps a lamp (!), etc. It should be possible, given the glaze choices below; to find the Biliken in different glazes other than the glazes listed in Susan Cox's newsletter. In Gary Schaum's book, page 77, a Biliken is shown in Onyx Black without any markings and in Ada Clay.

The following glazes were being

produced at the time period listed:

1954 ONLY

Buckskin Tan
Red Bud
Clay Blue
Saddle Brown
Desert Gold
Sorghum Brown
Onyx Black*
White Sand
Prairie Green*

**AVAILABLE
BETWEEN
THE YEARS 1955 AND 1977**

Autumn Yellow
Peach Glow
Brown Satin
Rubbed Bisque*
Coffee
Sunflower
Flame
Terra Cotta Rose
Flat Black
Turquoise
Freedom Red
Woodland Moss

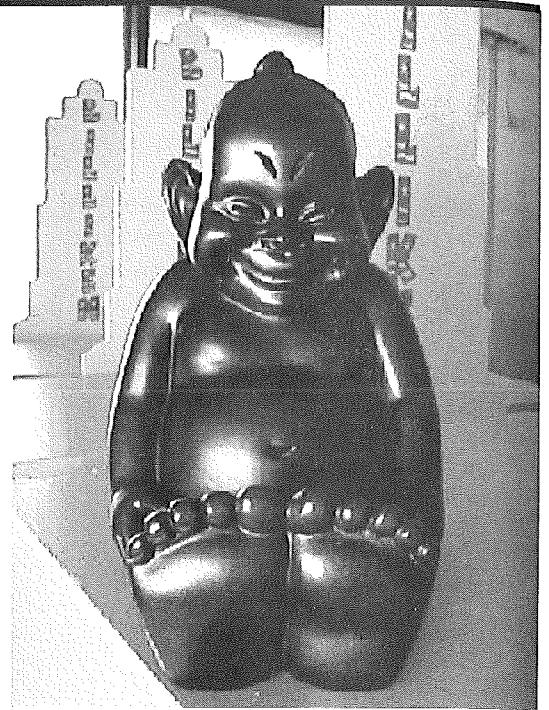


Figure 8

1978 ONLY

Autumn Yellow
Onyx Black
Brown Satin
Prairie Green*
Coffee
Robin Egg Blue
Desert Gold
Rubbed Bisque*
Flame
White Sand
Flat Black
Woodland Moss

*Glazes we have seen.

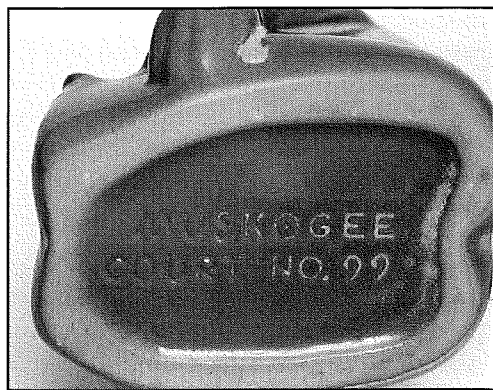


Figure 6 & 7



It is unclear whether the original Frankoma Biliken was made with a hole for hanging on the wall. Examples recently offered for sale on eBay (an internet auction house) are described with such a hole. This may be another example where a modification of design added flexibly to an item's use. The Boot Vase and Boot Wall Pocket are examples of such a design change. A hole was added to the Boot Vase to convert it to a wall pocket. Even with a hole the Boot Wall Pocket could be used as a vase. Realizing this, the Boot Vase was eventually discontinued.

I am sure there are readers who would like to have some idea how difficult or rare the Frankoma Biliken is to find. Unfortunately documentation is incomplete (due to loss of files in the fire

of September 1983) and with the limited information available, we could only guess. However, there are some clues to help in this area.

First and foremost, the Frankoma Biliken was only produced as a limited commission unavailable to the general public. This would suggest some scarcity. I would also suggest that since the Biliken was produced primarily in Prairie Green, a Biliken in any other glaze would command a slightly higher premium (let's keep our eyes open for that find in Red Bud!), as would any variation (I've got my straw ready!). If the information I have is correct, the Biliken was only made in Ada Clay for one year (1954). 1954 was a year of transition from Ada to Sapulpa Clay (according to most publications). Since the Frankoma Biliken was made in May of 1954, it occurs to me that this information adds to the evidence that the change in clay had not occurred before the end of 1954. Leona's letter (referenced by Susan Cox) states that only 72 Bilikens were made with Sapulpa Clay in 1978. This fact suggests that a Biliken in Sapulpa Clay should be much more difficult to find than one made in Ada Clay.

Records show that fewer than 550 Bilikens were produced in total. From 1954 to 1978, no other information on Biliken orders is available. We can't assume that additional Bilikens were

made without evidence. The only way to add to the production information is for collectors to locate Bilikens in a glaze (Brown Satin, Peach Glow, Sunflower, Terra Cotta Rose, or Turquoise) that was only available during this production period, or for additional records to come to light.

By late 1978, interest in the Frankoma Billiken had passed. It was time for Frankoma to move on to other things.

However, the Billiken continued to find a niche elsewhere. It remains the mascot for St. Louis University. In addition the name also became attached to a toy company, a Japanese movie company, a comic book character, and has become all the rage as a symbol of luck and prosperity in Japan in 1998. (See figures 8 & 9.)

With all of its history, I find it interesting that the image of the Billiken, from its origin in 1908 through today, has remained the same, and as luck would have it, I have the opportunity to



Figure 9

share this story with you.

In closing, I would like to invite all members who have information to add to material presented here to forward their valued input and knowledge to FFCA. 🐼

A Post Script to the Billiken Story

By Jack Leslie Kish
Sherman Oaks, CA

SOON AFTER I COMPLETED THE ABOVE ARTICLE, MY friend and I went to a large flea market in Pasadena and discovered a ceramic Billiken Bank. I told her, "They say if you rub the belly and toes of the Billiken and wish good luck to a friend, luck is sure to be with you."

We laughed as I rubbed his belly and toes and put him back for some "lucky" person to find. No sooner had I walked away when I spotted a wonderful Frankoma Find! There sitting on a blanket was a matching pair of #44 Barrel Shakers in Silver Sage with fabulous peppering. And what was the asking? Only \$5. Unbelievable!

To top off this beautiful day, as we were leaving, we turned a corner, and there on the ground was a crisp \$1 bill. By then I had thoughts of returning to purchase the Billiken, but decided against it. Why not leave him to someone else and share my good fortune? We left for

home smiling.

Soon afterward I received in the mail a cast iron Billiken that I had purchased through eBay. It is about 4" tall, and every bit the image of the Frankoma Billiken. I could just picture Mr. Frank holding this very bank and deciding how to transfer the image into clay.

Inside the package was a note from the seller. "I hope you are happy with the Billiken Bank. By the way, what is a Billiken?" (Everyone in the office heard me laughing!) He continued, "An old penny for an old bank (attached was a 1946 wheat penny). My grandmother always said never to give a wallet, purse, bank, or anything to hold money without a penny or you would be giving away poor luck with your money. Of course she never had too much money to worry over anyhow." Needless to say, I placed the penny in the Billiken Bank and smiled knowingly.

I couldn't resist adding these two stories to the article as I sit here smiling at my Billiken Bank, and he's smiling back at me.

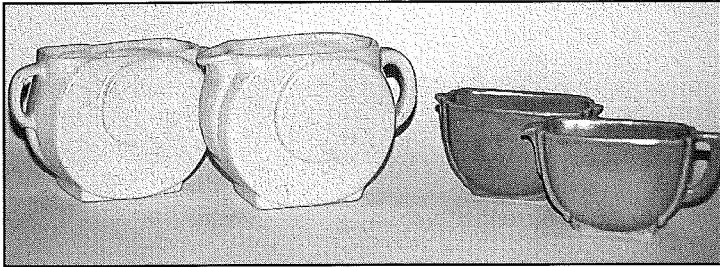
Sugars and Creamers

Utilitarian Tableware Now Among the Most Interesting Frankoma Collectibles

**By Gibb Green
Windsor, CO**

AMONG THE MOST INTERESTING COLLECTIBLES ever made by Frankoma are the sugar and creamer sets. I doubt if John and Grace Lee ever thought of the creamers and sugars as anything more than utilitarian tableware. But, in our era, they have become classic, highly collectible art pottery.

The creamers and sugar legacy began in the Frank Potter-



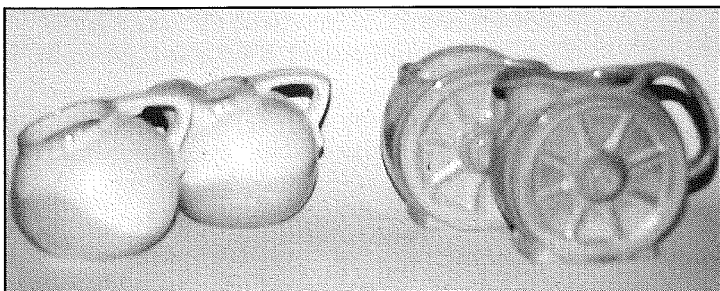
#91 A&B (93) Swirl (1936-1942); #42 and 42A Bridge Set (1934-1942)



#18A&B Ringed (1934-1942); #33, #33A (1936-1938)



#92A&B Tea Set (1942); #93A&B (1942)



#87A&B Batter Set (1942-1954)

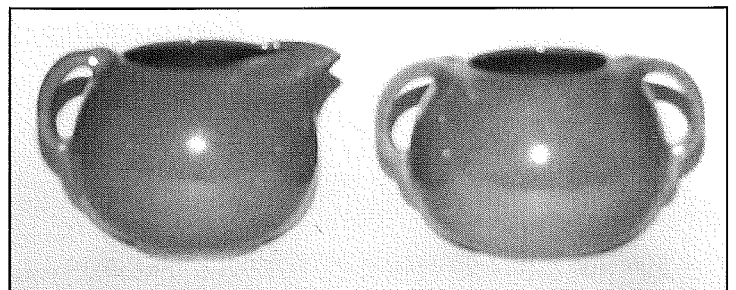
ies era with the introduction of two large sets. The first, the #80A & B, are 5" tall and are scaled down replicas of the #80 water pitcher which is still being produced. The sugar looks like a two-handled coffee mug. Both are very hard to find. Occasionally one is found with either a black rubber stamp Frankoma mark or a small round 'o' mark. The only #80 A & B's I have ever seen are in Royal Blue and Prairie Green.

The second Frank Potteries pair is the large round #23 A & B. They are quite stylish and the two-handled sugar can easily double as a vase. I have only seen them in Prairie Green, Texas or Osage Brown and Royal Blue. This pair is quite rare, and could end up as the missing link in your complete set. They can also be found with small round 'o' and Pot & Puma marks. The sugar bowls on these two Frank Potteries pairs had no lids.

The 1936 Frankoma catalog introduced four more creamers and sugars to the Frank family collection. The first pair, the #42 and #42A is a small rectangular, lidless cutie often called the bridge set, presumably for coffee during the card game. Produced from 1936 to 1942, it is found in a multitude of glazes, with all three Norman era marks, as well as the oblong "o" from 1942. The second pair is the very rare #33 & #33A. They are oval and have similar styling to the nut and mint bowls of the same era. A matched pair of these is a real treasure. I have seen four colors: Prairie Green, Old Gold (early Desert Gold), Jade Green and Ivory. They have either a small round "o" or a cat mark.

Also shown in the 1936 catalog are the ringed #18 and #18A. About 3" tall, they are similar to the two ringed vases of the same era. They have been found in all Norman era colors, with all the Norman marks, as well as the 1942 oblong "o." The last 1936 pair is the #91 and #91A C-side or swirl creamer and sugar. In the 1938 catalog they were given mold number #93. By 1942, they were back to #91. A matched pair is a real treasure. Frequently, a creamer is found, and then you pray for years for the sugar. None of the sugar bowls in the 1936 catalog had covers.

The 1942 catalog ushered in four new sets of creamers and sugars, as well as two new miniature creamers. Produced in 1942 only, the #92A & B were round and stylish and



#23 and #23A (1933-1938)

matched the #92 tea set. The sugar bowl came with a cover only if you special ordered it. The #87 A & B were brought in to accompany the batter set. The sugar is the famous 2" round open spout, that is just a cut-out of the creamer. Funny looking critter. This set was made until 1954. The #93 A & B were modeled after the Golden Guernsey Dairy pieces of the Norman era. The creamer and sugar was only made in 1942. A matched pair is quite rare, seldom seen in a glaze other than Prairie Green. The little sugar bowl was made first in the late 1930s as a table favor for a ladies' Masonic order. The last set of 1942 is the Wagon Wheel, #94 A & B, undoubtedly the easiest to find of all Frankoma creamers and sugars, almost always though in Prairie Green or Desert Gold. An Ada clay set in any other glaze would be really choice. The sugar bowl remained uncovered until 1958. The two mini creamers that were added in '42 were the #560 Wagon Wheel and the #553 Batter. Their sugar bowls came along much later. The #510 Wagon Wheel creamer hit the streets as a Christmas card in 1947. The tiny #504 cup creamer for the batter set first appeared in 1951. The mini pairs continued being made into the 1980s.

Two dinnerware patterns debuted with their creamer and sugars in 1948. The Oklahoma Plainsman pattern #5 A & B came in the same colors as the dinnerware. The two-handled sugar was lidded. The "Oklahoma" designation was dropped in 1958. The #7 A & B Mayan-Aztec came along with one of the most interesting sugar bowls. For three years it looked like a two-handled coffee mug with no lid. In 1951, the sugar bowl was given the ram's head nubs (from the vase) for handles. Still no cover. In the mid-1950s the pair was shrunk from 4 to 3 and a half inches, and two handles and a lid appeared on the sugar.

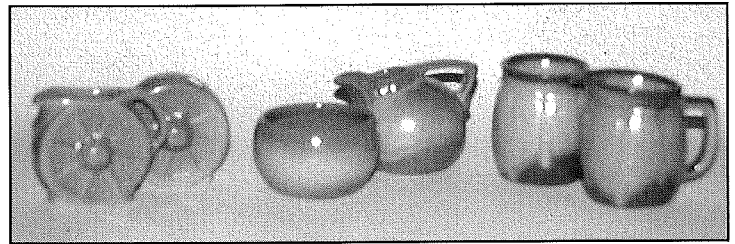
In the 1951 catalog, the 3" #5 DA & DB creamer and sugar were added to the Plainsman line to compliment the demitasse size cups and saucers. In 1953, Grace Lee's Lazybones dinnerware hit America's tables. The unusual creamer and sugar (#4 A & B) with pinched sides fits the styles of the era. The sugar was lidded. In 1962 the Westwind (#6 A & B) pattern was introduced, with plain but elegant concentric circle lines. The sugar was also lidded.

Two pairs of miniature sugar and creamers came in the 1965 catalog. The #8 A & B are barrel-shaped and were only produced two years. A matched pair in any glaze is quite rare, especially in Peach Glow, Woodland Moss or Flame. The #1 A & B was manufactured until 1978. It is a simple cylindrical shape. They are found in many colors. Both mini pairs are a real cute addition to any collection.

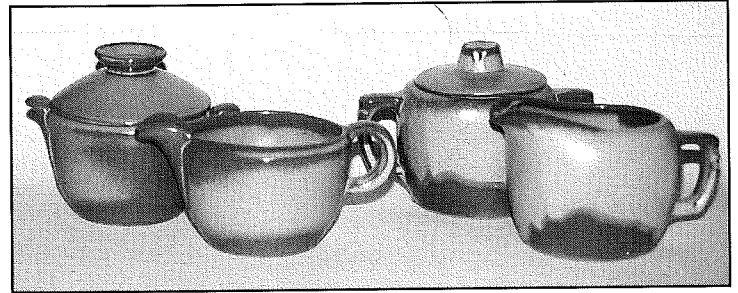
And, lastly, no Frankoma Family creamer and sugar collection would be complete without the Gracetone Orbit dinnerware pair, produced in Muskogee from about 1959 to 1962. Its mold number is #2 A & B. They are found in three colors: Cinnamon Toast, Champagne and Aqua. A pair in Charcoal or Beaver Brown would be a true rarity.

One piece of advice in collecting creamers and sugars: Don't hesitate to buy singles and hope to find the matchers in the future. Many creamers have been preserved for us by folks who collected only the pitchers in the 1930s to the 1960s era. The sugar bowls are a tougher find, but the matcher for you is out there somewhere with your name on it.

Happy hunting! 🐾



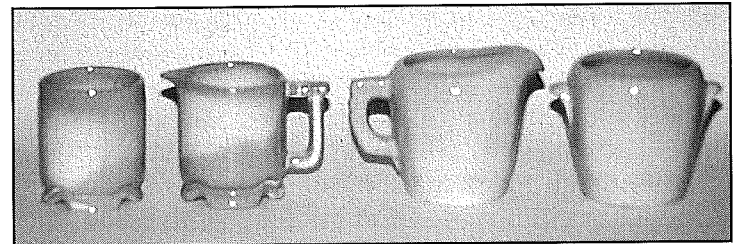
#560 (1942-1964) and #510 (1947-1964) ; #504 (1951-1990) and #553 (1942-1990) ; #8A&B (1965-1966)



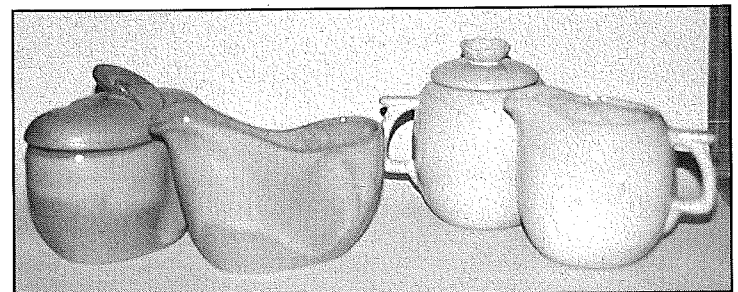
#6A,B Westwind (1962-1990); #5A&B Plainsman (1948-present)



#7A,B Mayan Aztec (1954-present); Taller (1948-1953)



#1A&B (1965-1978); #5DA&DA (1951-1969)



#4A,B Lazybones (1953-1978); #2A, B Gracetone Orbit (1959-1962) Muskogee

Joniece's **Believe It** **or Not'**



Joniece tells the stories

Donna writes them down



Pottery Records History

WHEN ARCHAEOLOGISTS uncover past civilizations, more important than anything else they may unearth are the pottery shards that tell us about the people who lived there.

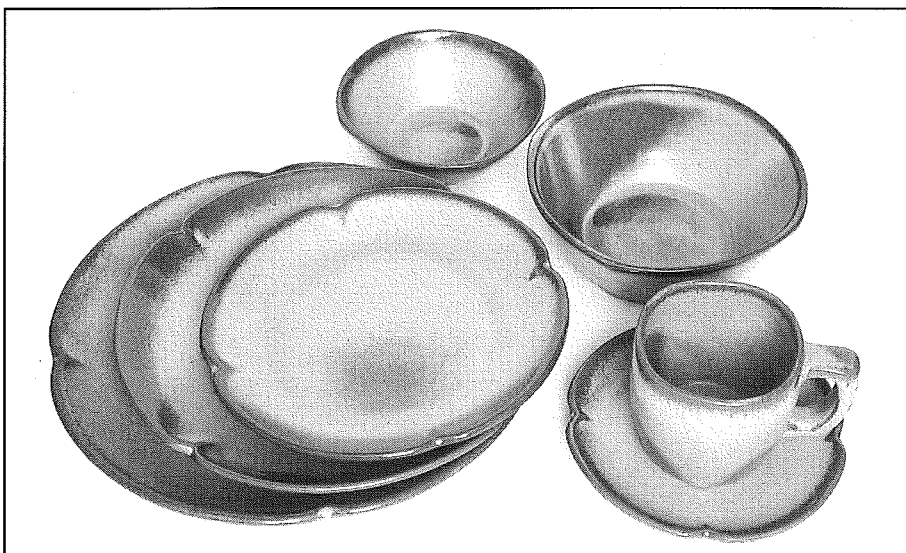
From the pottery used by that culture, we learn how advanced the culture was, what crops they grew, what foods they ate, how they processed and cooked those foods, their family life, their interests, their religious beliefs and practices, how advanced they were in art and their appreciation of beauty—all this and more is told by how the pottery was decorated, and with what tools.

Pottery also helps the archeologists date the civilization, telling us when in time those people lived. It is the broken pottery they find and piece together that teach us all these things, and much more, about lost civilizations, and what life was like in their days on the planet we now occupy.

There is a permanence to pottery. Even if it's shattered into bits and pieces, it can still serve as an accurate record of our history. What could be more permanent than baked earth—known as pottery—made into imaginative and colorful images!

Many thousands of years from

Imagine the thrill some young archaeologist will have when he finds a Frankoma honey jug, with the honey still sealed inside, as fresh as the day it was packed!



Oklahoma Plainsman dinnerware set

now—after the foretold “Great Quake” and changes in Earth’s surfaces—what will those who come after us find? In the area of the United States, they’re bound to find lots and lots of Frankoma Pottery. Think about it. What are these finds going to tell them about this particular period of America’s history—about us, its inhabitants?

First of all, they’re going to know that we liked to live with good art. They’ll find artistic shapes of containers that we used to arrange our flowers. There are also bound to be items unbroken by time. Imagine the thrill some young archaeologist will have when he finds a Frankoma honey jug, with the honey still sealed inside, as fresh as the day it was packed!

They’ll find nice pieces of sculpture that we used to enhance the decor of our



Charger Horse Bookend

homes. They'll find that we ate from tableware that was practical, as well as beautiful, that made food look appetizing. They'll learn about our tastes and styles of living—like Wagon Wheels, Mayan-Aztec, Oklahoma Plainsman, Westwind, and Lazybones. Not only will the designs of dishes we ate from speak to them, but the colors we chose on which to serve our food. All these will say how diverse we were as a people in the 20th Century in the United States.

How did all this evolve? Here in the Southwest, as the crude early prairie homes became more than a place to protect and warm a man and his family, these dwellings soon became a place of comfort and the center of an enjoyable family life, and a trend became wall pockets and plaques. Why was it important to put something decorative on the walls? At that time, the few pieces of furniture people owned were in practical use, like the table was used only for eating. But still they wanted some beauty and color around them. The walls weren't being used, so they hung things like plaques and pictures and wall pockets to hold a few wild flowers from the fields.

As the Southwestern states evolved from "frontier states," the economy changed, and "houses" became "homes." As homes started to be the

center of life's activities, the furnishings became more important—the decor, the books—oh, yes, the books. Books represented education, knowledge, wealth, a taste for the finer things of life. And as people began to invite friends into their homes, and they were invited to visit friends, appearances became increasingly important. "How will our friends see us? What will they think?"

People started putting up shelves. And they needed something pretty to put on those shelves besides books, so they used bookends to hold those books upright. Frankoma made bookends in the form of horses, fish and other animals, some with human forms, and in many colors to go with the color of

As the Southwestern states evolved from "frontier states," the economy changed, and "houses" became "homes." As homes started to be the center of life's activities, the furnishings became more important ...



Bucking Bronco Bookend #423

walls in the homes we built and lived in. Frankoma made lots of bookends!

In the early days, Frankoma manufactured lots of animals found in our Southwestern environment that its people were familiar with. There were horses—Clydesdales, charger horses, circus ponies, colts—because horses played an very important role in our pioneering days. Frankoma also made all kinds of dogs, ducks, coyote pups, fish, swans, and let's not forget the cats! Frankoma made many of the wild variety. Joe Taylor was a lover of cats, and particularly wild ones like tigers, pumas, ocelots and leopards. He even had a South American ocelot as a pet in his home in order to study and use as a model. So there was a whole series of wild felines, not all found in the region.

Frankoma depicted the Southwest's history with Indian figures, too. There was the Indian Bowl Maker, an Indian dancer with feathered headdress, the thunderbird, and we made trivets with the Sequoia Indian alphabet. There were cowboys and the boots they wore, and cattle brands appeared on a lot of pieces. All these things will tell future generations about who we were and why.

Let's talk candle holders! Why not just stick a candle onto a piece of wood and let it burn? Other than the fact that

(Continued next page)

(from previous page)

it got dark every evening and people needed light—again, people wanted something nice to live with. Some people didn't have electricity yet, and others simply couldn't afford an electric bill. So they continued to use candles, and Frankoma made candle holders to hold them. And we made them in all kinds of shapes and colors that they could relate to in their daily lives.

Then later came an era when people were starting to be more romantic when it came to dining, and dining evolved to "an occasion." Candlelight was very romantic, and especially if it was in a beautiful holder. And we all know that there's not a woman alive who doesn't look perfectly gorgeous in candlelight!

Then came the need for dinnerware that was something besides practical. Daddy often said, "If you just want something to eat off of, go buy a pie tin! It'll hold all the food you can eat, and it won't even leak. Aaah, but use one of my Frankoma plates, and eating be-

comes a delightful and delicious experience." So the need for beautiful tableware was met.

Frankoma made dinnerware with several themes depicting Southwestern flavors—Westwind, Oklahoma Plainsman, Wagon Wheels, Mayan-Aztec, Lazybones, etc. And the colors also said "THIS IS THE SOUTHWEST" with Prairie Green, Desert Gold, White Sand, Onyx Black, Red Bud, Woodland Moss, Mountain Haze, Clay Blue, Turquoise, and so on.

All these things say in so many ways who we are and the things we like. And in years to come, Frankoma shards will give archaeologists irrefutable evidence—both objective and subjective—of what kinds of people we are. The pottery we now love and collect will give those generations who follow us many millennia into the future all the answers to the questions they'll be looking for. Fragments of Frankoma will tell them that there was a time that eating was not just a matter of "taking in nourishment," but that eating had evolved to a form of "entertainment." Eating was a "social event," and tin plates simply would no longer fit the need, but would be replaced with something more beautiful and meaningful from which to eat our food.

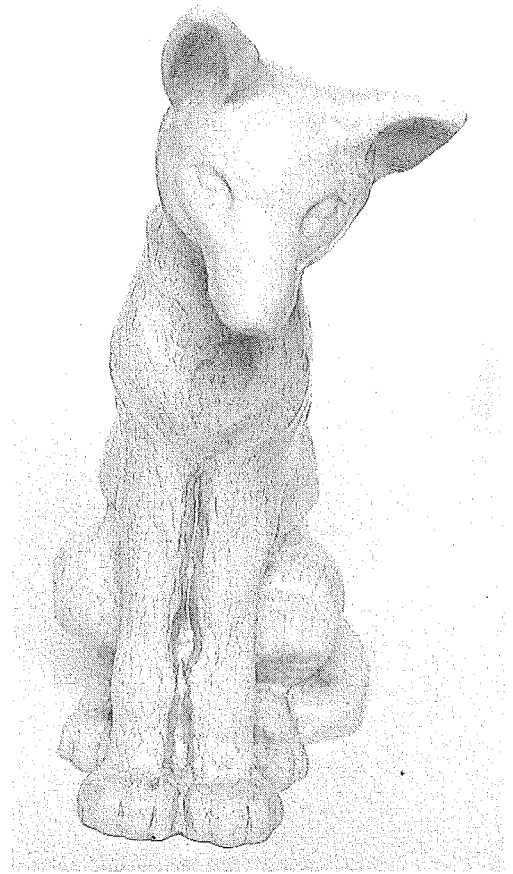
There was a time in our history when tea sets became almost a necessity in every household. And Frankoma made tea sets.

Does anybody remember using "flower frogs" in the bottom of a vase or bowl to arrange flowers?

That, of course, was before the era of plastics and the birth of Styrofoam and Oasis. Frankoma made lots of flower frogs.

There was a time that men went out into the field all day, and they sweat a lot, and salt was an absolute necessity to keep them going. So salt and pepper shakers evolved to be decorative and pleasant additions to the dining table.

Frankoma made them in all colors—in the shape of cats, bulls, oil derricks,



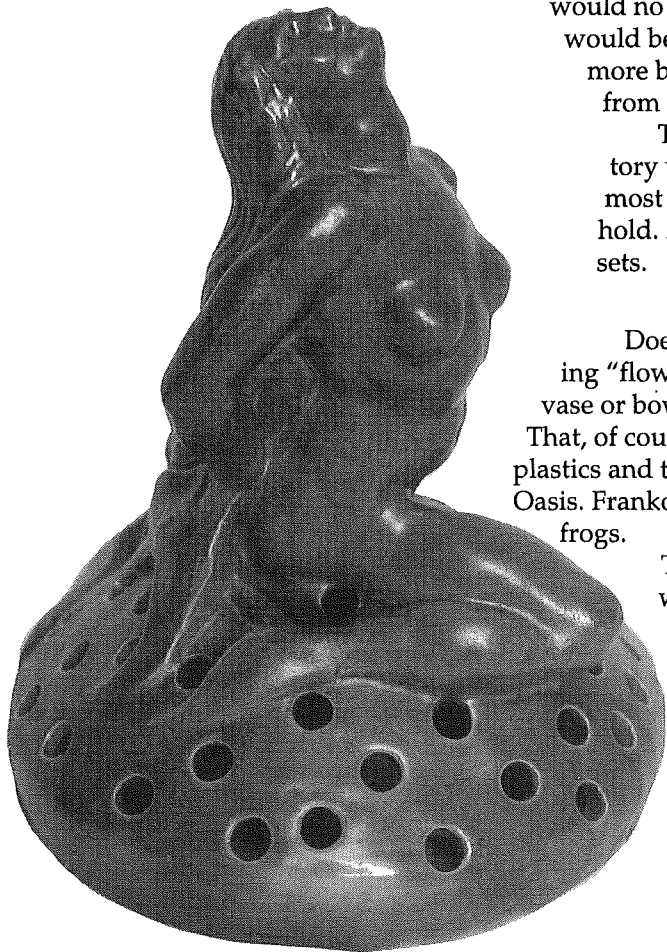
Coyote Pup #150

wagon wheels, and big tall ones with handles that a man could easily get hold of. But today, of course, salt is almost a no-no, so it follows that the popularity of salt and pepper shakers has waned. It seems their importance on the table is mostly for decorative purposes these days.

Frankoma was also a pioneer in bringing into the home the beauty of the human figure—the nude female figure. Frankoma made the lovely Fan Dancer and the Mermaid, both completely nude. And there was the partially nude Dreamer Girl, and the Mountain Girl. And there were the classic figures of the Harlem Hooper and the Torch Singer, recognizing the black music and dancers in 1930s Harlem.

And what of today? What is the most popular theme now? It's still the Western theme. The cattle brands, the cowboys, boots, the thunderbird and other representations of Indian lore—all things Western.

And why Western? I believe it's because people everywhere are searching for their roots, and all those things that have to do with a return to family and



Mermaid Flower Frog #399

family values. People need that security of knowing where they came from, and who they came from. And in the Southwest, we look to the pioneers who came here when it was wild and uncharted, and only the strongest and most resourceful survived. It was from those courageous ones that we came to be here. We like to think that we have that same strong and willful blood in our veins as those who came and broke ground and tamed the land for us.

I also believe that, because my father spent his boyhood in a home that lacked beauty and love, he was inspired and motivated as an artist (and perhaps influenced by the Chicago Art Institute) to create beautiful things that people would want to bring into their homes and live with—that they could afford. All that he did in his lifetime seemed to be backed by the desire to make people happier, and to make their lives richer and more enjoyable. And this, it seems to me, he accomplished, as the fruits of his love for people are now loved throughout the world. And because he used only Oklahoma clay, you might say that a little bit of Oklahoma earth can be found in almost every corner of the globe—from private collectors in California to Rhode Island, Minnesota to Texas, to European museums. And the reason it's so loved and held onto is that there's something about it that makes people feel good when they look at it, and when they hold it in their hands.

It's interesting to us to know just who does collect Frankoma. Of course there are those of the older generations who were here when it began, and they watched it grow to a product recognized almost everywhere. But an interesting thing has happened here. The children of those people who grew up with it seemed to have pretty much taken it for granted, not really appreciating it as an art form or something of value.

However, with *their* children, it's a different story. This third generation remembers going to Grandma's house and seeing and using all that Frankoma that their grandparents treasured, and they're very sentimental about those old, early pieces. We've heard so many, many stories about those grandchildren now requesting of their grandparents that they will to them those pieces they

We take great pride in the fact that not just senior citizens collect Frankoma, but a new generation of collectors is acquiring a hunger for knowledge about its history and all the information they can gather about Frankoma.

remember with such fondness. This generation of young people are becoming more passionate collectors than any of those before them!

We take great pride in the fact that not just senior citizens collect Frankoma, but a new generation of collectors is acquiring a hunger for knowledge about its history and all the information they can gather about Frankoma. And the Frankoma Family Collectors Association is here to provide them with just that. This journal is geared to tell the stories and educate them about their Frankoma collections, how to identify them, how to put values on them, etc.

As my sister said in the last chapter of *Clay in the Master's Hands*, "You can be assured that

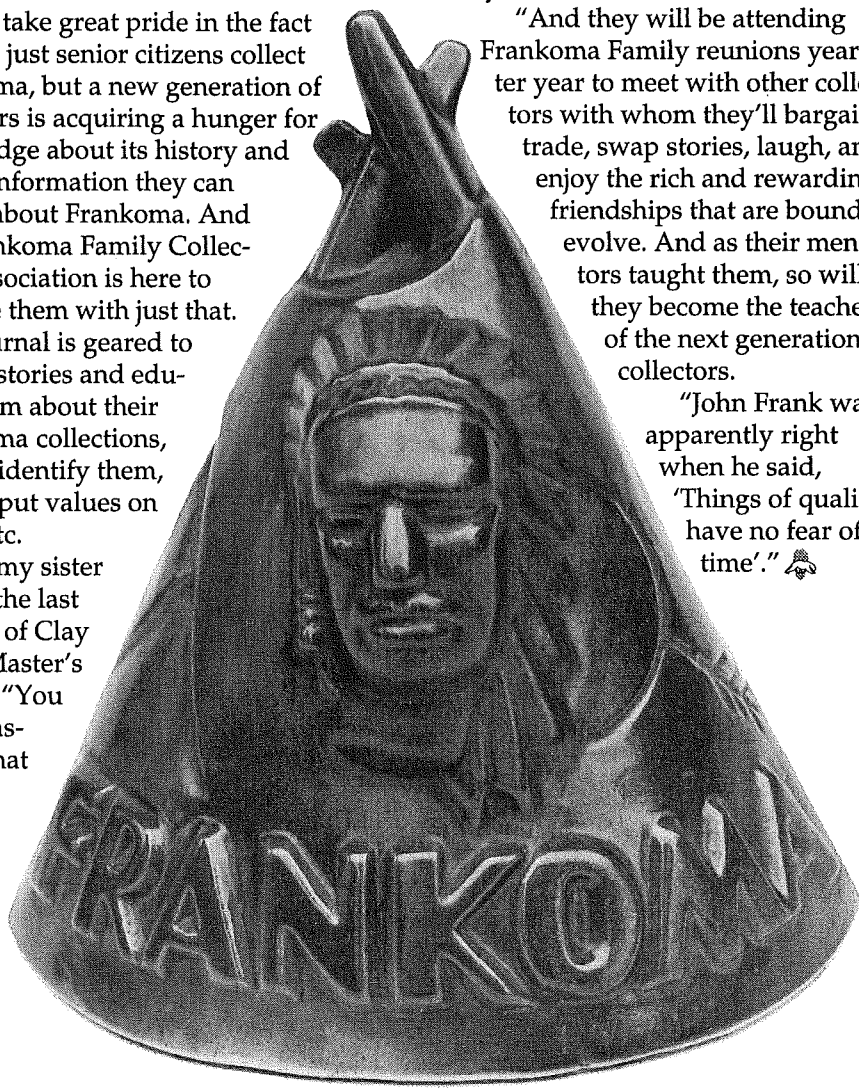
the Frankoma Pottery of John and Grace Lee and Joniece Frank is very much alive today, thanks to the devoted members of the new Frankoma Family Collectors Association. The earlier works of these artists are now enjoying a rich afterlife that will allow them to be treasured for lifetimes, as they are handed down from present to future generations.

"It is true that many of the current collectors are in their senior years. But how very satisfying it is to look around and see the many young people who are becoming avid collectors as well. And their children will be educated to the beauty and value of the Frankoma that will one day be theirs.

"If flea markets and antique malls and yard sales still exist when those children become adults, surely they'll be out there on weekends doing precisely what their ancestors did—looking for rare pieces of Frankoma that were once mere clay in one of these masters' hands.

"And they will be attending Frankoma Family reunions year after year to meet with other collectors with whom they'll bargain, trade, swap stories, laugh, and enjoy the rich and rewarding friendships that are bound to evolve. And as their mentors taught them, so will they become the teachers of the next generation of collectors.

"John Frank was apparently right when he said, 'Things of quality have no fear of time.'" 🐾



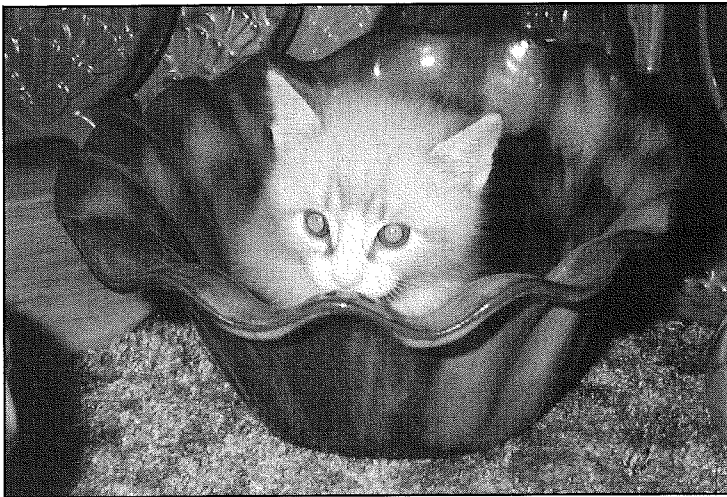
Oklahoma Tepee Bookend #428


Sebastian—The Cat

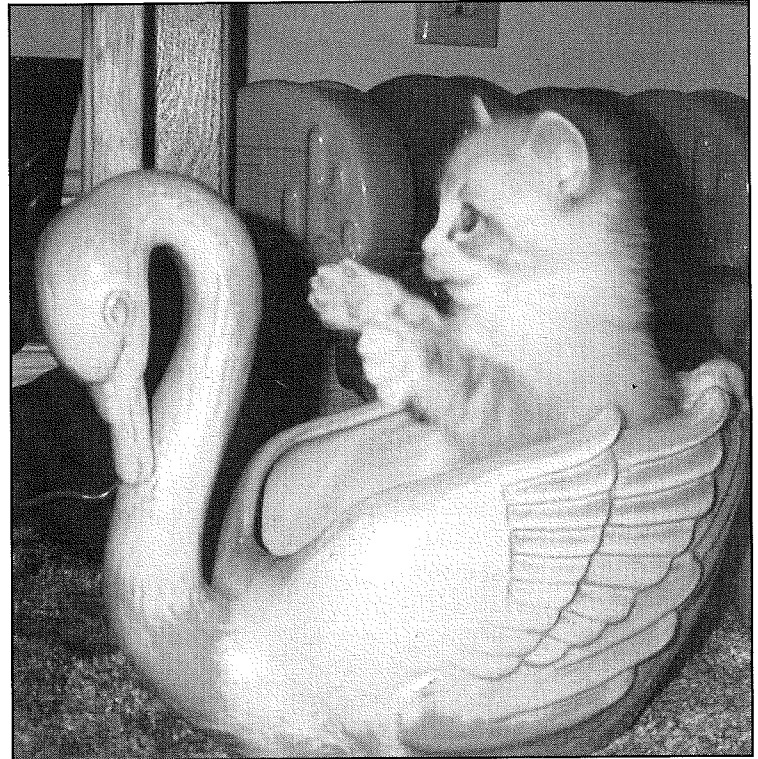
Who Loves Frankoma

Feline Frankomaniac Sebastian, Owner of Janis and Denis Spillane of Abilene, KS, Tells His Story in His Own Words

THOSE TWO SUBJECTS OF MINE FOUND ME abandoned before I could even open my eyes. So when I could see, the first thing I saw was Frankoma. Well, it was love at first sight, which many of you cousins can relate to. Who wouldn't love to live in their very own theme park, with endless places to play and hide? In the two years I've been around, my Frankoma collection has grown and grown, and it keeps growing. Here are a few of my favorites. These first two were taken when I was just a kid ...



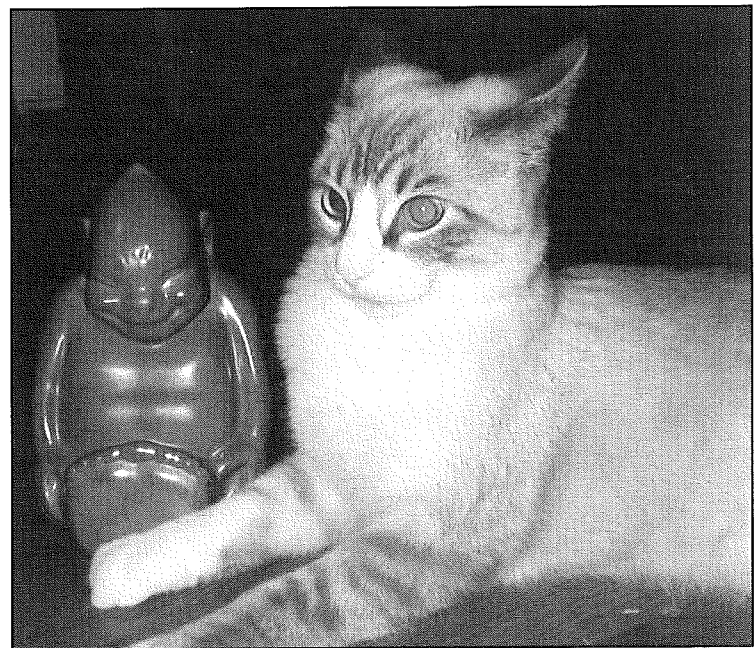
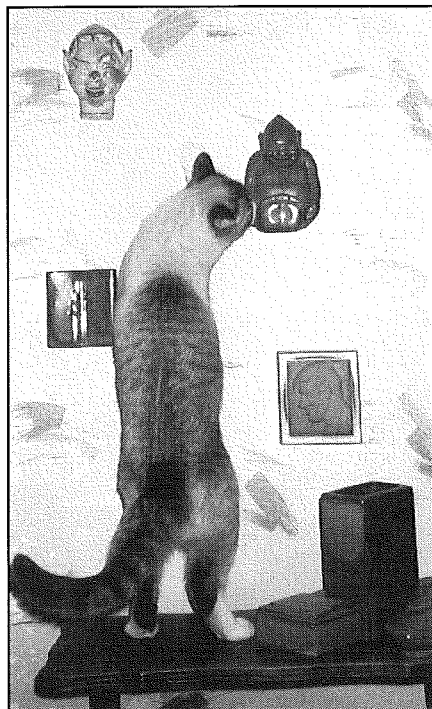
'They'll never think of looking for me here!'



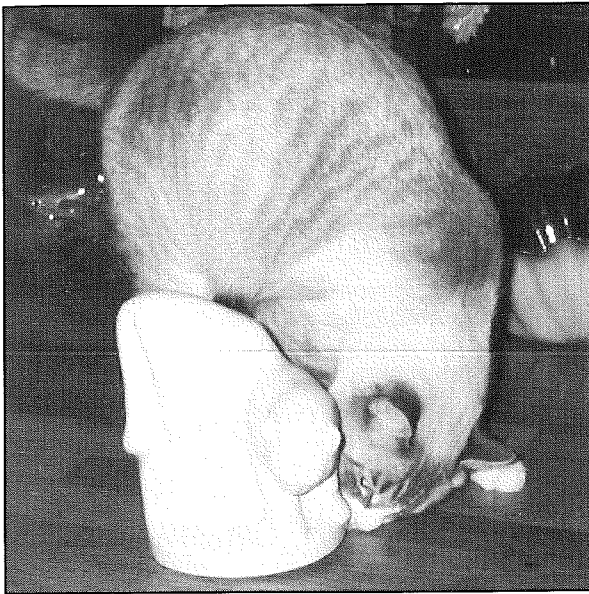
'Giddyup, Big Bird, giddyup!'

... 'Then I grew up real fast and left the kid stuff in the dust.'

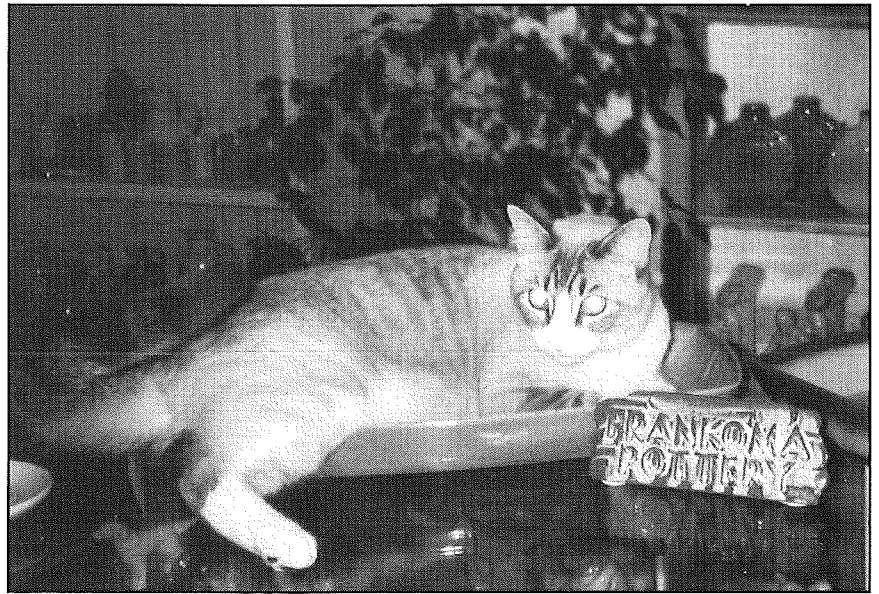
'Come on down, Billy, they wanna take our picture.'



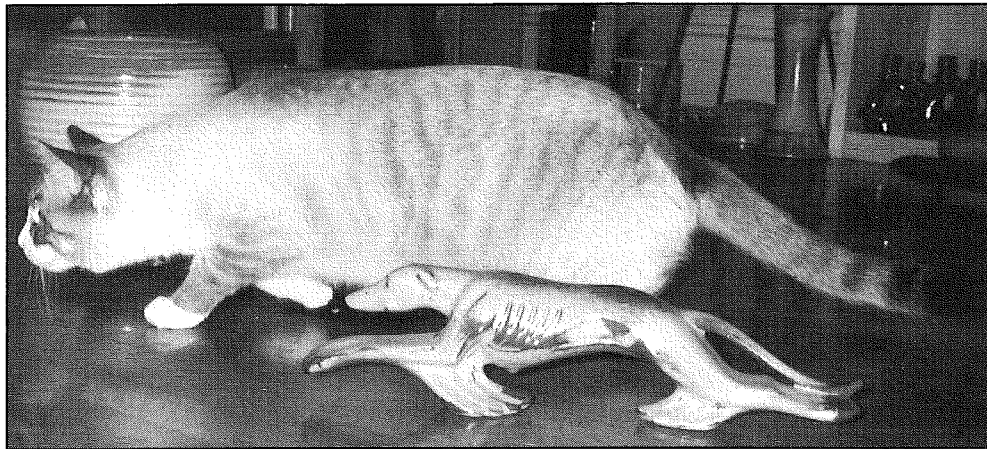
'And here comes my famous Biliken imitation. Ta-dah!'



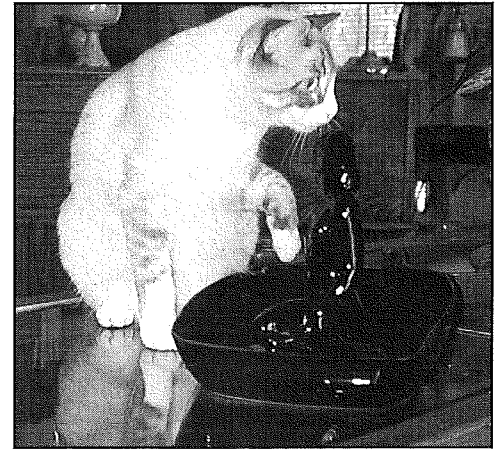
'I call this one Puma on the Rocks Times Two!'



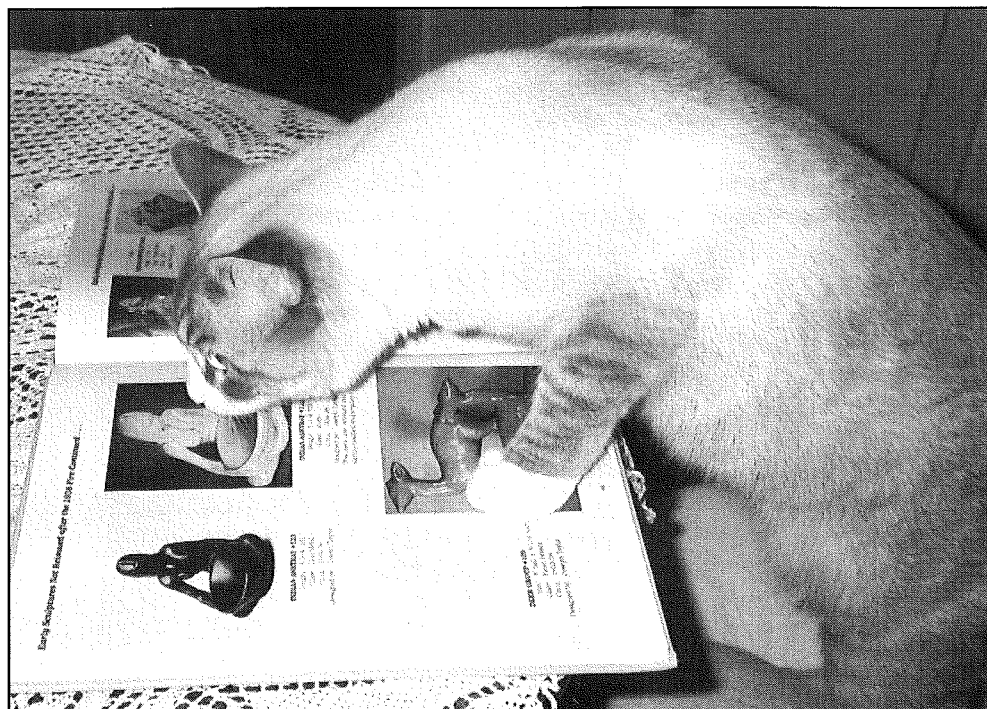
'Scuse me now—time for my "5p" m. nap.'



'You gotta hold your tail like this, doggie, if you ever want to get up to speed!'



'OK, pretty lady, here's your kiss. Now get some clothes on!'



'It always pays to bone up on the facts just before you go out on a Frankoma hunting trip.'

FFCA Reunion 1998

Frankoma Reunions—Then and Now

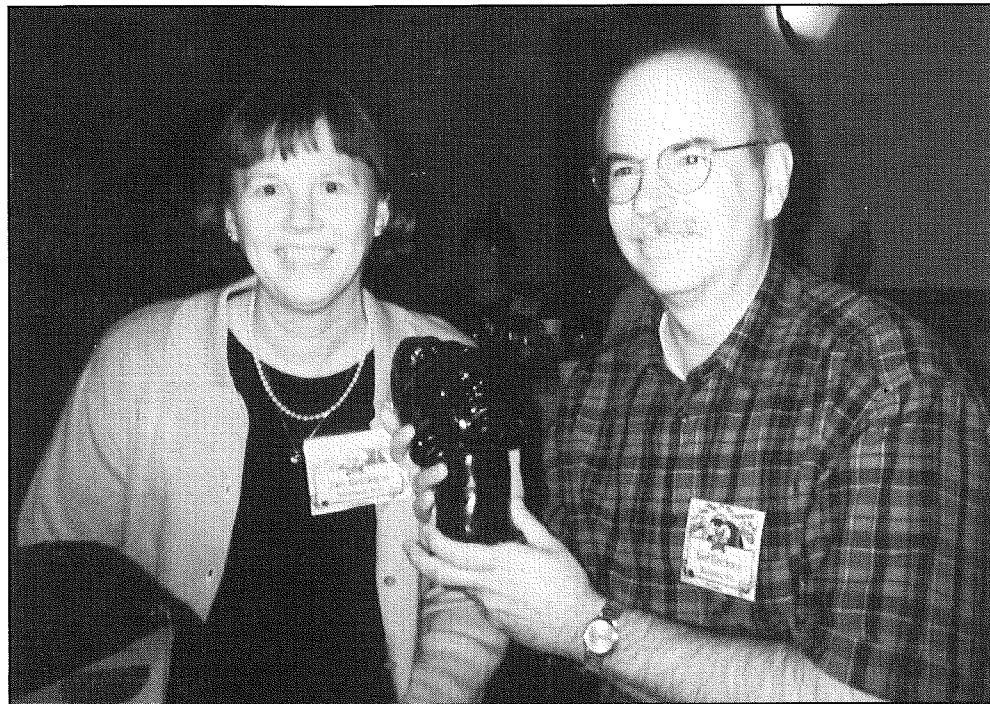
Washington Couple Relate Their First Four Trips to Sapulpa Meeting and Making Friends—and Buying Frankoma!

**By Leif Erickson
Richland, WA**

MY WIFE JAN AND I bought our first Frankoma and became part of the Frankoma Family in the spring of 1995. Since then, a lot has changed. Three and a half years and four reunions later, we have six display cases, 40 feet of shelving, an entertainment center and a dining room hutch filled with Frankoma. Every room in our home has Frankoma in it! Every chance we get, we travel to antique shows, visit shops and malls, and almost every day we check the auctions on eBay.

En route to our first reunion in 1995, we didn't know what to expect. What a treat it was to see all that Frankoma we'd seen only in books! We toured the factory, visited the Frank home, and met the Frank ladies—Grace Lee, Joniece and Donna. Among many others, we met Frankoma author Phyllis Bess, and then-author-to-be Gary Schaum. The last event that year, the auction, left us with a dilemma on how to ship everything home, as no "Mail Boxes, Etc." was open that late on weekends. That was when Brenda and Darrel Rogers taught us the meaning of "Family trust." We had just become acquainted during the auction, but we entrusted to them some of our cherished new purchases to ship home for us.

The next two years surprised us with pleasant changes in the reunion, rearrangements at the Frank Home for improved visibility of rare items of Frankoma and other potteries, and many more friends to make. In 1996 the auction was moved up to the first night of the reunion. The highlights of the 1996 and 1997 auctions were "artist's proofs" of Joniece's latest creations for Frankoma Industries—the Bear Family



Expensive nose scratch. The Ericksons show their new #128 Head of a Black Woman, which they purchased at an auction during the festivities. Their purchase was the top item auctioned at the 1998 reunion.

and the Wolf Family. We instantly fell in love with these pieces, and I surprised Jan by bidding up to the last minute. We were disappointed to be second highest bidders.

The year 1998 brought more changes. More and more Frankomaniacs went on-line, and the e-mails started coming—some exciting, some discouraging. We joined the bidding frenzy for rare Frankoma items on eBay (user name "dawncat"), and have encountered many FFCA members as fellow bidders and sellers.

As we headed to the airport for this year's Reunion 98, Jan and I asked each other if this might be our last reunion. The club had experienced some disturbing events among the membership. And Joniece was no longer with Frankoma, so there would be no new artist's proof for us to bid on at the auction. With all

the items being sold on the Internet, would there be any of the items we would want at the Show & Sell? We went anyway. And was this trip worth it? DEFINITELY!

After visiting a few antique malls in Tulsa, we arrived at the Super 8 just as the Littrells, the Tarvers and others were closing up early registration at Freddie's Pavilion. We ate an early dinner at Freddie's, and the Littrells and others stopped by to say hello. As a member of this year's Election Committee, I spent a late night Thursday with others of the committee counting election ballots.

We rose early Friday morning (and we were still on Pacific Coast Time!) for the breakfast at Frankoma Industries. There we met up with the Stolls, the Greens, and many of our other friends. We took in the factory's display of historical Frankoma and the showroom.

FFCA Reunion 1998

Acting president Ray Stoll chaired the business meeting that morning back at Freddie's, and Elections Committee chairman Steve Oller announced the results of the election. Deputy treasurer Joe Smith presented his financial report and explained some of the intricacies of non-profit tax regulations. After lunch, members went off to seminars by Gary Schaum and Gibb Green, the Frank home tour, and shopping in and around Sapulpa and Jenks.

One of our favorite activities during our Oklahoma trips is visiting the Frank home. This year we waited until late in the day, allowing us time to visit at length with Joniece and Donna after the crowds had left. These ladies delighted us (and many others) with what they have done to display their wonderful Frankoma. We were excited also to see Donna's new creations, the Frank ladies' experiments with glazes, and their personal studio in which they now produce pottery under the name FRANK X 2. On behalf of FFCA members from all over the country, we thank the Frank ladies for graciously opening their home and their hearts to all of us.

Once again, Freddie's did a great job with the Friday night grand banquet. We were then introduced to the re-



Ready for the bidding. The #128 Head of a Black Woman is shown as it was displayed with other Frankoma collectibles at the auction. This purchase was not the last one made by the Ericksons during their stay.

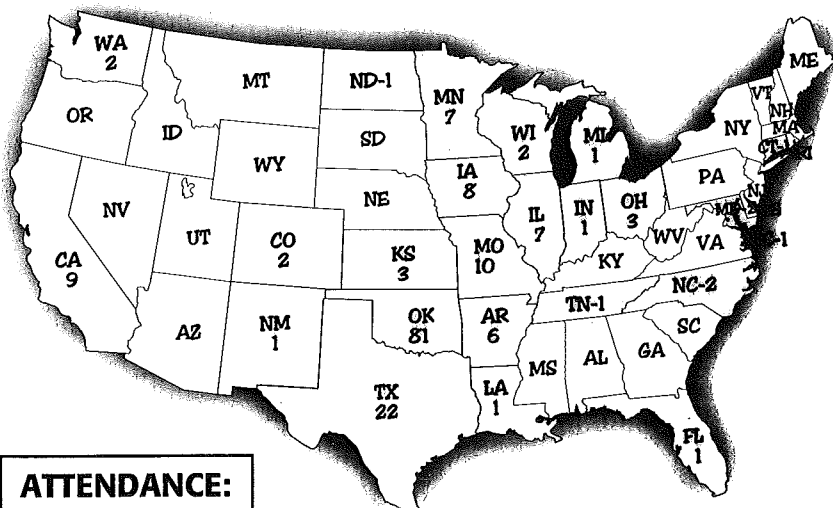
ipients of this year's John Frank Memorial Scholarship Awards. We were also introduced to, and touched by, the Grahams and the Huddlestons, former Frankoma employees, recognized for their many years of service in produc-

tion and sales of this pottery we love so much. Our fellow members, the Flanders family, again this year delighted everyone by conducting a rambunctious and entertaining auction, always a reunion highlight! The top item auctioned this year was a #128 Head of a Black Woman. (Jan jokes that it was an expensive nose scratch that brought that lady home with us to Washington State!)

Still in shock from our major purchase the previous evening, Jan said we could afford no more Frankoma for a while. However, when we walked into Show & Sell on Saturday morning, she was off and running! Among other things, we brought home a Fan Dancer and a Seated Puma, both in Onyx Black, both Ada Clay.

Even if we had not made those major purchases, we still consider our trip very worthwhile, and most certainly worth going again. Even though it was material things brought us to Sapulpa the first time, it's the wonderful people of the Frankoma Family who will always keep us coming back again and again! Super 8 has our room waiting for us next September. How about you? 🐾

REUNION 98



ATTENDANCE:
176 Members
From 23 States

FFCA Honors Those Who Made History

**By Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK**

EACH YEAR, THREE HONORARY Memberships are given to persons who played significant roles in the history and success of our cherished Frankoma Pottery. At this year's Reunion 98, the Frankoma Family Collectors Association was proud to present this year's Honorary Memberships to Chester Graham and Otis Huddleston, both of Sapulpa, and J. W. "Bill" Daugherty of Tulsa.

Chester Graham was Frankoma's top salesman for more than 32 years. "As long as Chester was on the road selling, we had orders for pottery to produce and ship," said Joniece Frank, president and CEO for two decades after her father's passing. "Chester was sending in orders when times were really hard and almost no one else could make a sale. I think he must have single-handedly kept us in business through several difficult periods of our history." Chester Graham worked all those years on commission only, calling on the small gift shops, hardware and drug stores in Oklahoma, Arkansas and parts of Texas.

After their children were grown, his wife Lavena traveled with him, accompanying him and working by his side at all the Dallas wholesale gift shows. The Grahams retired from Frankoma Pottery in 1988.

Their children, Jane Graham of Dallas and Joe Graham of Sapulpa, were in attendance to see their parents honored.

Otis Huddleston was a faithful employee of Frankoma for 34 years. He started as a young man, wedging clay and jiggering plates, and rose to being the hydraulic press production manager. His wife Alta also worked at the plant for a time in the retail showroom and at other times in bookkeeping.

"Dad depended upon Otis so much," said Joniece, "and so did I. I could go to him at any hour of the day and ask how many plates, bowls or trays he had pressed that day, and I didn't have to wait more than a few seconds for an accurate account. When we had a rush order that demanded increased production, Otis and his crew never failed to meet the deadline. He was absolutely indispensable to us!"

J. W. "Bill" Daugherty served as ceramic engineer and vice president of the company. He retired in 1983 after 38 years of service. Daugherty was responsible for developing colors and glazes, along with the constant monitoring of the quality of the clay used in the production of Frankoma Pottery.

Honorees in years past have been John and Grace Lee Frank, Joniece Frank, sculptor Joseph R. Taylor, Ted Steeples, J. C. Taylor, Leona Ray Thomas, A. C. "Hank" Perkins, and Junior Lucas.

The Frankoma Family is grateful to each of these persons for their faith in, and loyalty to, Frankoma and the Frank

***Thank you, gentlemen,
for making and
marketing for all those
many years the fine
pottery we now love to
live with.***

family. The attitudes of these gentlemen were always like that of the fabled brick mason who, when asked what he was doing, answered not that he was putting bricks together, but said with a smile, "I'm building a beautiful cathedral." Even when they were doing the most menial of tasks, tired and covered with clay dust, their response to that question would have been, "I'm making pottery that's beautiful and useful."

Thank you, gentlemen, for making and marketing for all those many years the fine pottery we now love to live with. 🙏

Show and Sell Committee Report

**By Brenda and Darrel Rogers
Harrisonville, MO**

WE WISH TO THANK EVERYONE for responding like you did for the Show & Sell. There were a total of 37 exhibitors from more than 20 states!

A very big thank you goes to Randy McFarlin and others who helped with security, as well as the Harris family who were such a tremendous help to the exhibitors in unloading and loading all that great Frankoma for the event.

And of course we must express thanks to all you members who did the buying and the trading on that Saturday. All of us enjoyed seeing all that beautiful Frankoma Pottery. Every year we see a few things we've never seen before. What a fantastic display it was in Frankoma Heaven!

Hopefully we will again be your chairmen of Show & Sell in 1999. Start gathering up your wares for the event now—and be sure to save some of those bargains you run across this year for the auction, folks!

FFCA Commemorative 99



FFCA's 1999 COMMEMORATIVE

The Walking Ocelot—is a slightly smaller (6-1/2") version of one of Joe Taylor's early Norman pieces. JONIECE has ensured that our 1999 Commemorative is one that we will treasure for its uniqueness and beauty. The base will be inscribed with—"19 FFCA 99"—in HDI. The Walking Ocelot is offered in Prairie Green, Desert Gold, White and Onyx Black. Produced by Frankoma exclusively for FFCA.

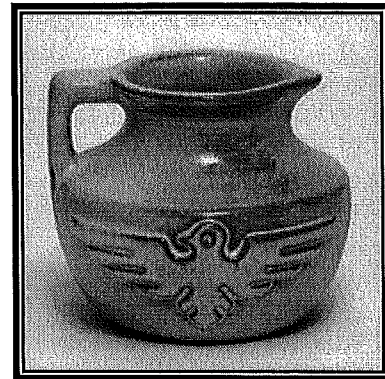
\$40 each, \$100 for set of 3, or \$130 for set of 4

TRULY OUR FINEST OFFERINGS TO DATE!

FFCA's MINI 99

President Gibb Green has commissioned a *special* Limited Edition (600) series of Frankoma Mini's. MINI 99 begins this special series with the #555 Eagle Pitcher, offered in Prairie Green, Desert Gold, Butter Yellow, Spring Green, Cornflower Blue and Lavender—with the F/P mark and FFCA 99 on the bottom. Produced by Frankoma exclusively for FFCA.

\$20 each, 2 for \$35, or set of 6 for \$100



Mail Orders to: **FFCA Collectibles ♦ PO Box 32571 ♦ OKC, OK , 73123-0771 ♦ 405-728-3332 ♦ ffca4nancy@aol.com**

| | | QTY. | COMMEMORATIVE | COLOR | PRICE | TOTAL |
|--|--|---|--------------------------|---|----------|-------|
| | | | 1999 Walking Ocelot | Prairie Green | \$40.00 | |
| | | | 1999 Walking Ocelot | Desert Gold | \$40.00 | |
| | | | 1999 Walking Ocelot | White | \$40.00 | |
| | | | 1999 Walking Ocelot | Onyx Black | \$40.00 | |
| | | | Walking Ocelot 3/Set | * | \$100.00 | |
| | | | Walking Ocelot 4/Set | * | \$130.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle | Prairie Green | \$20.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle | Desert Gold | \$20.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle | Butter Yellow | \$20.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle | Cornflower Blue | \$20.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle | Lavender | \$20.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle | Spring Green | \$20.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle 2/set | * | \$35.00 | |
| | | | MINI 99 #555 Eagle 6/set | * | \$100.00 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my order of \$ _____ Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Signature: _____ | | SHIPPING & HANDLING: UP TO \$50 = \$3.20 \$50 TO \$100 = \$5.40 \$100 TO \$200 = \$7.75 | | * = indicate colors Subtotal OK Res. add 8% sales tax SHIPPING/HANDLING GRAND TOTAL | | |
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— OFFER GOOD FOR FFCA MEMBERS ONLY —

AWARDING The John Frank Memorial Scholarships

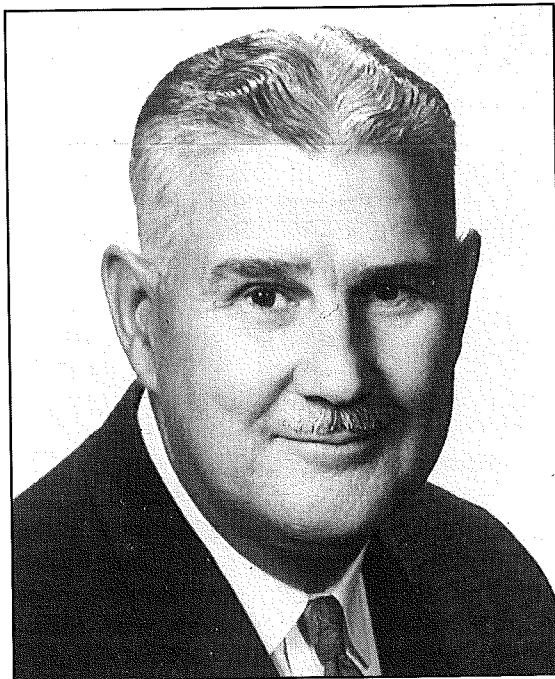
**By Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK**

OUR AMBITIONS OF years ago for FFCA were about one day establishing an art scholarship program. Perhaps we could start with one in the year 2000, we thought. We dreamed big, didn't we? John Frank said, "If you can dream it, you can do it!"

The scholarship fund began as soon as FFCA was incorporated in 1995. Little did we know that the generosity of the Frankoma Family would be so overwhelming! The first two years our auctions were so successful, we had enough in the fund to award three scholarships of \$1,000 each! All the auction items were donated from your own collections. You gave in abundance, you came to the reunions, and you bid and bought till the last item was out the door.

The Scholarship Committee was formed the following spring, in 1997, consisting of Mrs. Ann C. Kerrick of Lawton, Oklahoma; Dr. LaWanda Tyson of Atlanta, Texas; and me, appointed chair by the Board of Directors. We created parameters and set guidelines for the candidates. Applicants would be college juniors, seniors or graduate students, for which there was a good reason. We believed that, once a student had reached that level, a serious commitment to a career in art would have by then become a firm one.

With the example of John Frank to guide us, we would not award a scholarship to a student who had adequate resources to pay his or her way. Regardless of the promise shown—despite talent, imagination, creativity, excellence in craftsmanship, originality, or ability to move us—in addition to all those qualities, there had to be a need for assistance in order to complete their education.



John Frank

John Frank sought out those he felt were destined to make a positive contribution to the field of art in one way or another—as a commercial artist, curator, administrator or teacher—and he

The John Frank Memorial Scholarships

helped them in this way to reach their goals. Like him, we do not wish to see an outstanding artist be forced to leave school for lack of money and end up parking cars or pumping gas. It happens.

There were times that the committee had to make decisions, choices, or judgments that caused us anguish, while looking to do the right thing for all the right reasons. But we soon found that all we had to do was stop and ask ourselves, "What would Mr. Frank have done? How would he have felt about this? Who would he choose?" And our dilemma was soon over. We became

confident. We knew.

In 1998 Mr. Phil Haddad of Oklahoma City was asked to join the committee in our search for qualified candidates. And by now the fund had accumulated enough that we were able to raise the awards to \$1,500, giving our students \$750 for each of two semesters. In 1999 Dr. Tyson was unable to serve, and Mr. Randy McFarlin of Ada, Oklahoma, took her place. This year, 2000, both Mrs. Kerrick and Dr. Tyson have been forced to resign due to family obligations. Coming on board to fill those vacancies are Dave Greer of Prague, Oklahoma, and Mrs. Sonya Murphy of Grove, Oklahoma.

It is now becoming traditional for each of the scholarship recipients to donate one of their works to the following year's auction, thereby contributing to the support of some of their fellow students. Each year, those are the only items auctioned other than Frankoma, and the hammer prices have been a handsome addition to the next year's scholarship fund.

We know that John Frank is pleased with the work that we carry on in his name. In today's world of "instant" products, good artists, potters and craftsmen of every

kind are becoming fewer and farther between. What kind of world would we be living in without the beauty of all kinds of art to nourish our spirits? Realize that without the young ambitious artists of today, there will be no art culture in the world that will belong to our children and our children's children.

We must not let the dreams and ambitions of our future artists fade away for lack of our support and encouragement and assistance. They are the ones who will teach the generations that will come after us to know the passion and joy of art—long after many of us are gone. 🌱

ANNETTE SINESIO

Graduate Student
University of
Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

By Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK

ANNETTE IS shown here with her expressive "Peace Song Singers," which can be lit by a candle from within each of the bases. The flickering candlelight softly frames the faces of her singers and outlines the designs on their garments. She is now beginning her final year of graduate school on her way to a master's degree. She has been down a long, long road to get this close.

Born in Detroit, Annette and her mother lived for a time in a poor neighborhood of Chicago, much like the one in which John Frank grew up. When she was eight years old, she and her mother moved to Tahlequah, Oklahoma, to be near family members. In her late teens, she found herself alone and on her own. She moved east and got a job doing renovation work for the City of New York. "I was doing what amounted to construction work, which was very demanding physically, while I attended New York City Technical College. I had no idea in what direction I'd go."

After several years, she finally quit the job in New York, got an office job, and enrolled at Jersey State College. By now she had a little boy to raise, and still didn't know her life's direction, but thought she might become a commercial artist. At Jersey State, she elected to take a pottery class. "Well, that was it," laughs Annette. "I was hooked the moment I picked up that clay! Suddenly I was turned 180 degrees, and from that point forward, I never wanted to see a drawing pen or drafting tool again."



Annette with her "Peace Song Singers"

In 1992, the lady made the decision to move back to Oklahoma, to Norman, and attend OU. She got a job and began slowly and steadily chipping away at her remaining degree credits, finally earning her BFA in December of 1995. She also held workshops and taught children's art classes. Weary of getting her education in bits and pieces, and

The John Frank Memorial Scholarships

yearning to focus on her goal, she gathered her courage and applied for all the student loans she could get to support her and her 14-year-old son Daniel—and last fall began graduate studies full time. She and Daniel live quite frugally, but they manage. "I read Donna's book, and I feel this scholarship is a gift from Mr. Frank himself. Now I can see myself getting that MFA diploma this time next year."

We're confident that a college or university will recognize her talent, her vision, and her abilities as a teacher, and allow her to fulfill her ambition of introducing young minds and hands to the magic and excitement of clay.

Annette has a small studio in her garage, where she creates the work that she takes to galleries for exhibit and sale, like the Tribes Gallery and Prairie Moon in Norman. John Brandenburg, artist and art critic for the Daily Oklahoman, critiqued the student show last year at the Fred Jones Museum of Art. Brandenburg was so taken with her work that he invited her to do a two-person show along with him at the prestigious Kirkpatrick Gallery at the Omniplex in Oklahoma City. This was a recognized and welcome confirmation of the quality of work inspired by the spirit of Annette. Certain of her works have moved some to say, "She makes you look with your heart."

Working almost exclusively in red clay, occasionally she uses the slab and coil methods, and sometimes employs the raku technique of firing. However, with the latter, she says it is the glaze designs and colors that speak the loudest, while in traditional potting, it's the definitive shapes of her pieces that do the talking. "A lot of what goes into making pottery is hot, sweaty, dirty work, but I love every bit of it!"

Daniel is beginning to understand his mother's passion for her work. In practical terms, he explains it this way—"If we sell a pot, we eat. If we don't, we don't." He doesn't hesitate to evaluate her artwork, often with full-blown critiques. And she listens to him, because he's usually right.

"I suppose I'm somewhat of a 'pioneer woman.' I have this strong need to learn to use

primitive methods of pottery making, like having a kiln that burns wood, and knowing about those early glaze combinations with ingredients taken purely from nature." She laughs, "I want to be able to continue my work if the lights go out."

Annette feels she has been stumbling through a lot of her life, always struggling to find herself. The obstacles have been many, and the paths often winding. Says Annette, "After reading about John Frank and his trials, I feel I've been given the 'missing ingredient.' I've come to know who I am. I am a potter—and I am the clay. I'm no longer afraid. I know now that I cannot fail." 🌿

HEATHER OATMAN
Undergraduate Student
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

By Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK

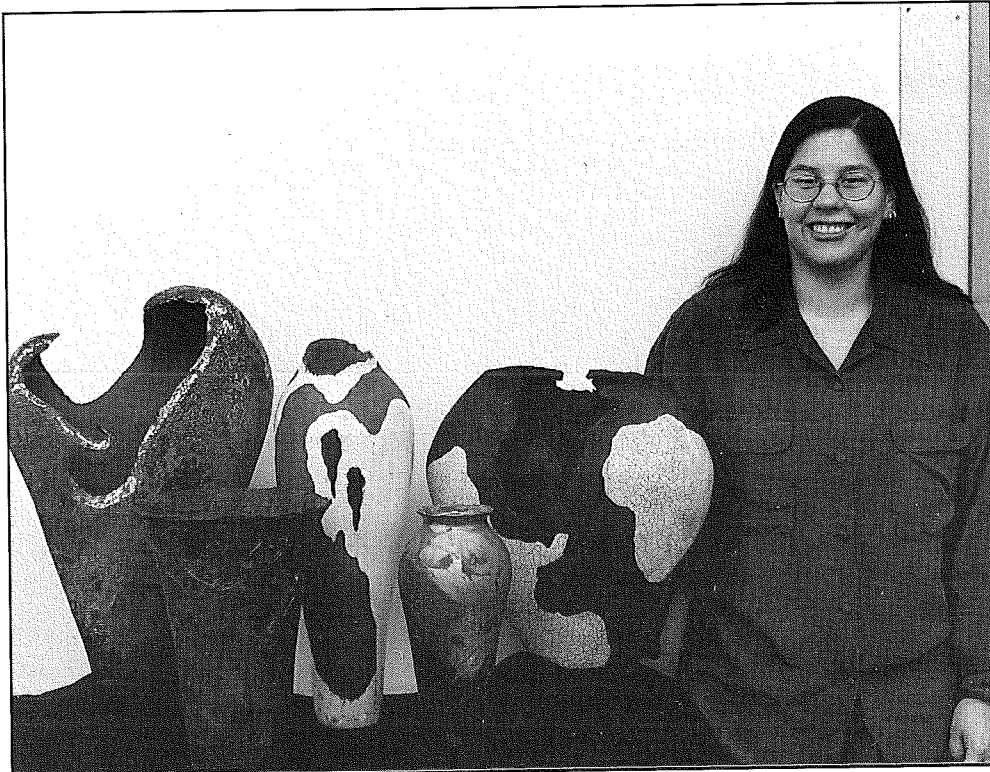
HEATHER WAS BORN IN Oklahoma City and grew up in nearby Yukon. Her heritage includes both Quapaw and Peoria Indian, in which she takes great pride. She begins her senior year this fall. Her husband is in his third year of medical school through the Air Force Reserve, and their active young son, Austen, is getting ready to start kindergarten.

She currently serves as treasurer for The University of Oklahoma's Red Clay Faction, an organization that raises funds for needed art supplies, along with travel expenses to send students each year to the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts. NCEA conventions in the past have been held in various U.S. cities, but in the year 2000 it will be hosted in Amsterdam.

Heather has been drawing pictures since she was a tot, always knowing she would be doing something in the arts, although she didn't know what. She initially enrolled in OU's film program. But when she took her first pottery class, she dropped everything else.

"The thing I love most about pottery making is that, even if you try to make two things alike, they never turn out to be twins. All you can do is guide your works along and coax them to become what you think you want them to be. But clay and glazes have minds of their own. I find it very exciting, because sometimes a piece will turn out far better than I ever envisioned. But for better or for worse—it's always a surprise when I take my pieces out of the kiln!"

In 1997, OU's Art Department held a student competition titled "Coffee, Tea and Me," designed to stir and stretch the imagination. Heather won the



"I do things that please me, and I'm happy to take the jeers with the cheers."

Grand Prize with her extra large coffee cup, glittering gold like a sacred idol, with three figures kneeling in homage to the world's most popular brew.

Examples of her work seen by the committee were all imaginative in their varied shapes, exhibiting a lot of originality and thought. Some almost begged

sees herself in five years, she tells us she first wants to earn her master's, then apply for a position as artist in residence. That means she'll be given short-term assignments to some of the smaller schools, perhaps in rural areas around the state, that don't have art teachers. In this way she'll have opportunities to introduce many young people to art in many forms.

"My long term goal is to open a non-profit art studio for young people, at little or no cost to the students," she

says. "I want to offer them creative opportunities I didn't have. It's so rewarding to see a child's eyes light up when he realizes that he himself can actually create something out of almost nothing. In a way, it sets them free. It can give a normally timid child the confidence he or she needs. They're almost always changed in some way."

Heather very much looks forward to the day they can live in a house large enough for a studio and kiln of her own. "I have in my mind so many ideas for pieces I want to do. I've just got to get them into clay. I have so much fun work ahead of me." 🍵

The John Frank
Memorial Scholarships

to be touched and held for their tactile values. While some were smooth, others were very textured, but all appealing to the eye and touch.

Here is an artist who works mostly to please herself. "Many artists have an agenda, you know, like they think they need to be political, or they need to make some statement that everyone has to love. That's not me. I don't feel it's necessary to try and create art to please everyone. I do things that please me, and I'm happy to take the jeers with the cheers. I can always learn from criticism."

When we asked Heather where she

CHARLES JEFFERSON "JEFF" WELLS

Graduate Student

Tulsa University • Tulsa, Oklahoma

By Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK

JEFF WAS BORN IN FLORIDA, although his family moved to Houston when he was just a kid. His father owned a hardware store, where Jeff worked summers and after school while he was growing up.

It was in 1977 that he started college in Houston, and two years later transferred to Steven F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas. He got a job at the college mixing clay and firing kilns.

Drawn to the clay, and fascinated by the potter's wheel, Jeff often stayed late and learned to throw by watching others. "That clay and I developed a relationship, and it was exciting. We responded to each other. It sure gave me a different feeling than sorting nails and screws in my dad's store!"

Jeff quit school and worked for the next few years, during which time he scarcely touched a piece of clay. In 1992 he enrolled at Tulsa University as an English major to finish the credits needed for a degree. Having decided that he would minor in art, but never having studied it, he enrolled in print making and beginning ceramics classes. There he met Prof. Tom Manhart, with whom he became good friends.

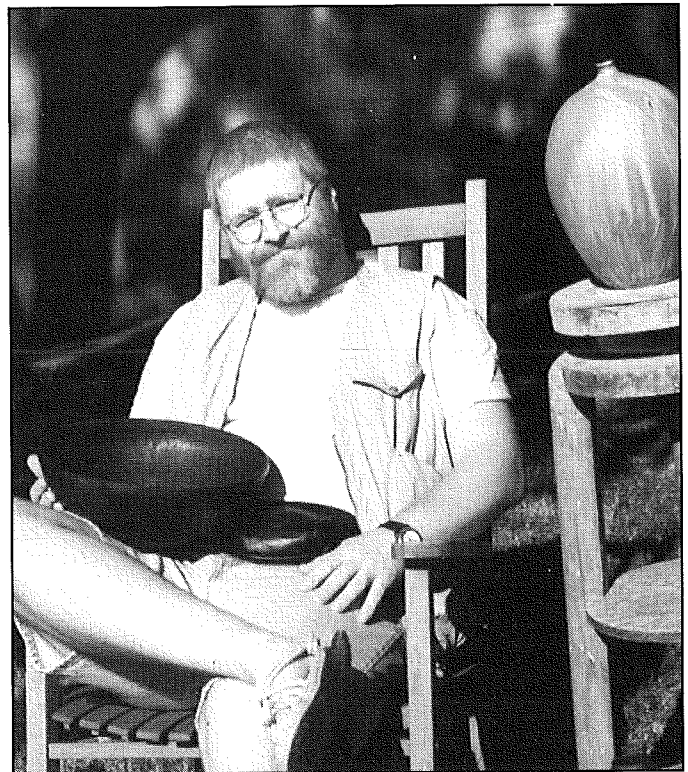
Just before Jeff was to receive his degree in English, Manhart encouraged him to enter graduate school in art, not English. There was little resistance, because by this time he was good and hooked.

Needing help with finances, he applied for a teaching assistantship. He was accepted, and held that position for three and a half years, until this May. "I probably could have pushed it and graduated this spring," says Jeff, "but I needed to do some more thesis work. So I'll finish my master's in May of next year."

Jeff currently teaches classes at the Floyd Museum School of Art at Philbrook Art Museum. He is represented in Tulsa by the M. A. Doran Gal-

lery, at which many of his award winning works are sold. He has exhibited in five Gussman juried shows at TU, in which he has won both undergraduate and graduate awards. He also showed at the 1995 Texas National Art Show, in the last two Mayfest juried shows, in VisionMakers 98, sponsored by the Oklahoma Visual Artists Coalition, and numerous other shows. He has been chosen this year's Honorary Chairman of the Empty Bowl Auction, to which celebrities nationwide contribute a bowl with their signature. Funds raised by the auction go to the Tulsa Community Food Bank that distributes food to families in need.

Jeff freely credits much of his development as an artist to the entire staff of the TU Art Department, who accepted and encouraged him when he arrived



"Poetry and pottery are very much related. One builds images in clay, the other builds images in words—and both are nourishment for the soul."

craftsmanship. "Self criticism is so necessary. Why does it work? Why doesn't it work? We artists should ask these questions, or we can end up putting things out there that lack the craftsmanship that goes into the creation of good art."

Jeff is devoted to keeping the art of the potter's wheel alive, which he feels

is all too neglected by many schools today. (Would John Frank have loved him for those words!) "I firmly believe one learns more about form from wheel work

than any other method. I'll always be teaching the potter's wheel as the essential, fundamental element of working with clay."

An unconfirmed bachelor, Jeff lives with his two cat friends, Tailgate and Leo. He also loves to write poetry and prose, and has been published in many college and professional literary journals since 1984. "Poetry and pottery are very much related. One builds images in clay, the other builds images in words—and both are nourishment for the soul." 🐾

The John Frank Memorial Scholarships

with little more than a desire to learn. "Especially Tom Manhart," he points out. "Tom has been my mentor, my friend, my teacher, and certainly my best critic all these years. I'll never forget one of his first critiques of my work. He said, 'Wells, as one of my profs once told me—that's just too ugly to be that big!' Needless to say, that one I trashed." While he also uses the coil and slab methods for certain works, Jeff prefers the potter's wheel. "Some people say the wheel is limiting, but I don't think it has to be." He also stresses

Bid Quick or Get Sniped!

A New Look at Internet Auction Prices

By Robert McBain
Le Grand, IA

WELL, THERE HAS BEEN A lot of activity since our last update! eBay has grown bigger than ever—and the Frankoma category has grown just as much. It's not uncommon to find between 900 and 1,000 items of Frankoma on eBay at any one time. There have been some really nice and rare items for sale lately. More about these later.

It's definitely a seller's market at this time for the finer collectible Frankoma items. There are very few bargains to be had in this area, meaning unusual items such as miniatures, the old colors, and the early pieces. When it comes to these, you can throw away the price guides, as people really want them and are willing to pay for them. Some of these items are going for 10-20 percent more than guide prices, and others are going for 100 percent more and higher! Other items on the auction seem to be going for guide prices, if anyone is looking for the more common types of items.

One thing to be aware of is that there are plenty of people putting Frankoma up for auction that have no idea what they're selling! Some are putting new Frankoma on the auction and describing them as "old" or "Ada

clay," when in reality they're new, pink clay. So it really pays for us to know when the piece was made, and in what colors it was produced.

There are also other Web auctions that have Frankoma listed on them. One is Yahoo, which has around 100-125 pieces, but primarily dinnerware and the newer, more common items. That's not to say it's not worth a look once in a while. Another one is www.advantage-auction.com. However, we've found very little at this site. www.viabid.com is another Web auction. Again, very little here in terms of Frankoma. Still another one is www.uaction.com. (This is not a misprint!) It does have some Frankoma, but not a whole lot, and mostly dinnerware and common items. We know there are other Web auctions out there, but eBay seems to be the biggest (and best) at this point in time.

One item that had us confused for a while was the Frank Lloyd Wright Trivet. The prices they're bringing are out of sight. It's not uncommon to see them go for \$40-50 dollars, and when they first appeared, \$80-90. We recently learned that these are new items made special in the last year or so for the Wright Foundation. Our hunch is one can purchase them at considerably more reasonable prices at one of the Wright gift shops than on the Web.

Hot items. There have certainly been some extraordinary and beautiful pieces going out on the auction these days! Not all of them have sold, as some of the reserves weren't met, but most of them have found new homes. Sometimes the reserve was way too high, and we believe it's because the seller didn't really want

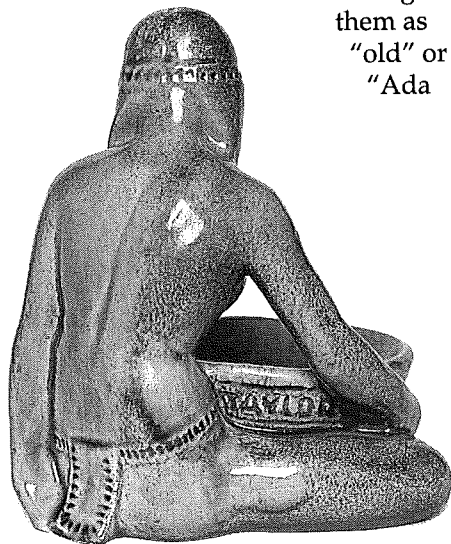


#117 Prancing Colt

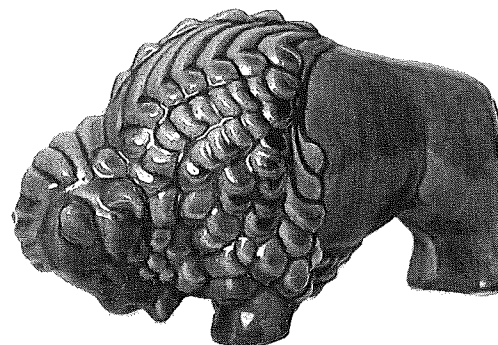
to sell. But if someone really, really wanted it, the seller was willing to part with it. (This is just our feeling.) Up for auction were the coveted Harlem Hoofer and Torch Singer. We did not get the final prices on these. However, at the time the bids were nearing \$3,000, the reserves had not yet been met.

On the next page are some items and the prices they've gone for. Items with an asterisk (*) are those that did not meet reserve.

(Continued next page)



#123 Bowl Maker



#119 Buffalo

Listing of Recently Auctioned Items With Prices

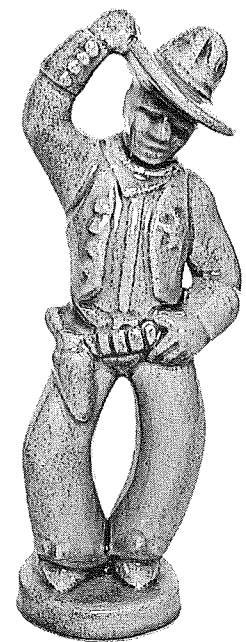
| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| #118 - Gannet | \$5,383.00 |
| #105 - Coyote Pup (Ivory) | 1,850.00 |
| #123 - Bowl Maker (Taylor mark) | 2,025.00 |
| #104 - Walking Ocelot | 1,991.00 |
| #149 - Cowboy | 1,613.88 |
| #119 - Buffalo | 1,334.29 |
| #308 - Monks (pair) | 1,025.00 |
| #135WP - Indian Wall Pocket | 1000.00 |
| #117 - Prancing Colt | 860.52 |
| #426 - Seahorse Bookends* | 838.95 |
| #308 - Monk (1) | 790.50 |
| Nixon-Ford GOP Mug | 722.05 |
| Vase - Silver Overlay | 710.00 |
| "Frank Potteries" Vase | 709.99 |
| #700 & 702 Kids (boy belted) | 676.66 |
| #138 Circus Horse* (special) | 610.01 |
| "Frank Potteries" Vase | 610.00 |
| 1947 Hamm's Beer Mugs (8) | 600.00 |
| #164 - Donkey | 531.25 |
| #T5 - Tiki S&P | 356.00 |
| Dreamer Girl Lamp Base | 300.00 |
| Vase - Silver Overlay | 291.00 |
| #T5 - Tiki S&P | 239.50 |
| Widow Maker Pitcher | 202.50 |
| Boot Lamp Base (Special)* | 202.50 |
| Patio Susan - Prototype* | 152.50 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| #113 - Fan Dancer | 423.88 |
| #113 - Fan Dancer* | 455.00 |
| #113 - Fan Dancer* | 275.00 |
| #113 - Fan Dancer* | 182.49 |
| #113 - Fan Dancer* | 149.99 |
| #121 - Bucking Bronco | 216.00 |
| #124 - Afro Mask-Woman | 115.00 |
| #125 - Afro Mask-Man | 113.61 |
| #135WP - Indian Wall Pocket* | 307.50 |
| #138 - Circus Horse | 167.50 |
| #138 - Circus Horse | 147.50 |
| #138 - Circus Horse | 125.00 |
| #138 - Circus Horse (Ivory) | 130.15 |
| #141 - English Setter | 353.65 |
| #141 - English Setter | 300.00 |
| #141 - English Setter (Red Bud) | 305.00 |
| #160 - Mini Elephant | 182.29 |
| #160 - Mini Elephant (Ivory) | 460.00 |
| #160H - Elephant S&P (Old Gold) | 385.00 |
| #160H - Elephant S&P (Dusty Rose) | 233.50 |
| #160H - Elephant S&P | 187.50 |
| #160H - Elephant S&P | 161.01 |
| #160H - Elephant S&P | 122.50 |
| #162 - Trojan Horse | 160.00 |
| #162 - Trojan Horse | 112.50 |
| #162 - Trojan Horse | 105.50 |
| #165 - Mini Puma | 133.10 |
| #165 - Mini Puma | 110.09 |
| #165 - Mini Puma | 91.00 |
| #165H - Puma S&P | 185.00 |
| #165H - Puma S&P | 163.50 |
| #165H - Puma S&P* | 100.51 |
| #166 - Mini Bull (Royal Blue) | 150.60 |
| #166H - Bull S&P | 331.00 |
| #168 - Mini Swan | 122.50 |
| #168 - Mini Swan (Turquoise) | 131.00 |
| #182 - Hobby Horse | 380.00 |
| #187 - Biliken | 162.50 |
| #187 - Biliken | 135.66 |
| #187 - Biliken | 105.25 |
| #303 - Snail Candleholder | 134.27 |
| #309 - Aladdin Cdle Hldrs | 132.50 |
| #427 - Dreamer Girl Bkends (cracked) | 125.00 |
| #430 - Setter Bookends | 177.50 |
| #430 - Setter Bookends | 172.00 |
| #459 - Elephant Ashtray | 233.50 |
| #459 - Elephant Ashtray (repaired) | 142.25 |
| #45H - Modern S&P | 178.50 |
| #460 - Spaniel Ashtray | 132.50 |
| #460 - Spaniel Ashtray | 128.50 |
| #460 - Spaniel Ashtray | 103.13 |
| #500 - Vase (Red Bud) | 126.01 |
| #501 - Vase | 108.36 |
| #501 - Vase (Dusty Rose) | 106.35 |
| #502 - Vase | 284.99 |
| #502 - Vase | 178.51 |
| #502 - Vase | 108.50 |
| #503 - Vase | 212.50 |
| #505 - Vase (Dusty Rose) | 132.50 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| #506 - Thunderbird Vase | 182.35 |
| #554 - Pipe Rest* | 157.50 |
| #554 - Pitcher (Indian Blue) | 110.25 |
| #555 - T-Bird (Fawn Brown) | 105.05 |
| #559 - Mini Jug Set | 152.51 |
| #700 - Flower Girl | 155.75 |
| #700 - Flower Girl* | 102.50 |
| #701 - Gardener Girl | 201.11 |
| #701 - Gardener Girl | 198.51 |
| #701 - Gardener Girl | 177.50 |
| #701 - Gardener Girl | 162.50 |
| #701 - Gardener Girl | 150.00 |
| #701 Gardener Girl (cracked) | 96.32 |
| #702 - Gardener Boy | 266.01 |
| #702 - Gardener Boy | 209.43 |
| #702 - Gardener Boy | 187.85 |
| #730 - Phoebe Head | 128.00 |
| #730 - Phoebe Head | 111.11 |
| #827 - Greyhound | 285.00 |
| #827 - Greyhound | 273.75 |
| #827 - Greyhound | 257.89 |
| #827 - Greyhound | 202.50 |
| #827 - Greyhound | 127.50 |
| 1965 Christmas Plate | 181.73 |
| 1965 Christmas Plate | 175.00 |
| 1965 Christmas Plate | 122.50 |
| 1965 Christmas Plate | 102.50 |
| 1965 Christmas Plate* | 117.50 |
| 48 Christmas Card | 127.50 |
| 51 Christmas Card | 130.00 |
| 52 Christmas Card | 82.56 |
| 68-87 GOP Mugs | 280.00 |
| 68-98 GOP Mugs* | 333.37 |
| Iowa Sunshine Jug | 177.50 |
| Frankoma Pottery Award | 76.11 |
| Wildlife Plates (all) | 360.00 |
| V Vases (All Years) | \$50-\$60 |

Here are some other items you may be interested in and the prices they're bringing. Again, this is just a sampling. Items with a "*" are those that did not meet reserve. Keep in mind that there are more than we can begin to list, but these are examples of what some of the nicer, more desirable items are going for. And of course condition, color and mark make a big difference in the final price.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| #18 - Creamer, P&P mark | \$ 128.50 |
| #23A - Creamer | 103.50 |
| #29 - Bud Vase (Dove Gray) | 141.45 |
| #31 - Snail Bud Vase (RBlue) | 101.00 |
| #34 - Mint Bowl* | 104.86 |
| #40H - S&P | 153.50 |
| #55 - Ball Vase (Lunch Box Special) | 120.00 |
| #58 - Flowerabrum | 177.50 |
| #70 - Carved Vase (Turquoise) | 117.50 |
| #71 - Vase (Indian Blue) | 153.50 |
| #72 - Stove Pipe Vase* | 133.02 |
| #74 - Ram's Head Vase | 160.50 |
| #77 - Fireside Vase | 93.50 |
| #85 - Bird Handled Vase | 361.00 |
| #85 - Bird Handled Vase | 155.00 |
| #87H - Ball S&P | 103.51 |
| #89 - Jug "Baker Hotel" | 255.66 |
| #100 - Peter Pan Mask | 128.00 |
| #100 - Peter Pan Mask | 125.00 |
| #112 - Panther Bookend | 271.00 |



#149 Cowboy



A TRIBUTE to Phyllis 'Frankoma' Bess

**By Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK**

PHYLLIS BESS IS OFTEN known by this name, and a well-deserved one it is! She and her husband Tom have authored two major books on collecting Frankoma—"Frankoma Treasures" (which includes regular updated values) and "Frankoma and Other Oklahoma Potteries," a colorful, visual delight.

A long-considered authority on Frankoma Pottery and its values, Phyllis has served as an FFCA Trustee since the organization's beginning, a position from which she retires at the end of 1999. There's no doubt in anyone's mind that the Besses have been a major influence in placing Frankoma Pottery among America's current top 20 most popular and sought-after collectibles (according to Internet statistics).

Phyllis is a native Oklahoman, and Tulsa has been her home since she was a wee lass of only three. The extraordinary team of Phyllis and Tom Bess happily celebrates its 35th anniversary in November.

Phyllis became a collector at age 10, thanks to her grandmother, who at that time started a hope chest for her. It contained a four-place setting of Japanese Blue Willow and a four-place setting of hand painted Rooster Dishes, along

'... I naturally turned to Grace Lee for a lot of information. She and I sat and talked for hours at a time, while my tape machine recorded story after story.'

with other miscellaneous items. Grandmother loved to shop at Good Will, and when young Phyllis visited her, they often spent a whole day there, discovering many wonderful treasures.

When Phyllis was a little older she collected Fiesta and Jewel Tea dinnerware. In the mid-1970s, she turned to something closer to home and a bit easier to find—Frankoma miniature animals. She had no idea how many there were, as no Frankoma guidebooks were around then to tell her. She recalls buying many little pottery animals, only to learn that not all were Frankoma. But the more Frankoma pieces she discovered, the more she found to love about it, and it soon became an obsession. Tom's interest was then also piqued, and he joined her in the quest.

About 2 a.m. one morning, Phyllis woke up quite suddenly to hear a voice telling her that she would write a book about Frankoma Pottery. "I knew God was directing me," she says. Thereafter she and Tom spent weekends and all their spare time going out looking for Frankoma. Phyllis went to see Joniece to get her approval and ask for help in their research, and brought with her a long list of questions. To many of those questions, Joniece often responded, "My goodness, I don't know, I was just a



Phyllis Bess displays the plaque she received from the Frankoma Family Collectors Association for her years of service as a trustee and for her contributions to Frankoma Pottery collectors worldwide.

baby then!" But she did have many answers, and she told Phyllis lots of stories about many Frankoma items.

Joniece was surprised and shocked when Phyllis showed her some buttons she had found that "looked like Frankoma." Joniece laughed aloud, then turned them over to point out her initials on the backs of them. She told her the story about going to Europe in 1960 and finding some beautiful Italian cloth,

(Continued next page)

(from previous page)

which she brought back and made into a dress, then made those pottery buttons to go on it.

"I told her I wanted to write a book," remembers Phyllis, "and she said she'd help me all she could. Well, she opened up everything to me, allowing me to go through all the catalogs and make copies of everything I needed. She even gave me some of her extra catalogs. She began talking to me about the collectible series pieces like the Christmas Plates, the Political Mugs, V-Vases, etc., and said that Sue Cox was writing a book covering all of those current series items—at that time the only items that were being called collectibles."

But that's not where Phyllis's passion lay. She wanted to go back long before that and photograph things from the beginning when John and Grace Lee Frank were starting the business in Norman. Phyllis explained that she felt very strongly that Frankoma Pottery would soon become a major American collectible. She kept returning to the idea of going back to the beginning and focusing on the really old vintage pieces from the Norman era. Joniece often shook her head in disbelief. "Frankoma Pottery—a collectible?" She could hardly conceive of it.

Said Phyllis, "Joniece continued to be a great help to me. But because she wasn't born until several years after the birth of Frankoma, I naturally turned to Grace Lee for a lot of information. She and I sat and talked for hours at a time, while my tape machine recorded story after story. What Tom and I accomplished could never have been possible without these two ladies."

How did the title of her first book come about? When Grace Lee asked what she planned to call it, Phyllis described to her a vision she'd had of the cover—a treasure chest filled to overflowing with Frankoma items, with the title *The Frankoma Treasure Chest*. Grace Lee smiled and said, "If you just call it *Frankoma Treasures*, you won't have to bother with the chest." Phyllis says, "Well, of course that was it. She had given me the perfect title."

When relatives and friends of Phyllis and Tom learned they were working on a book about collecting Frankoma Pottery, a common response was, "That ugly old green Wagon Wheel stuff?"

What's there to write a book about?" Perhaps it was a common image back then, but it is one that has long since been put into its grave.

After three years of exhaustive research and organization of material, Phyllis and Tom were ready to publish their *Frankoma Treasures*. They began shopping for a publisher, but were devastated that no one would even talk to them. They heard time and again, "Frankoma? What's that? Never heard of it!" In the end, they had to resort to publishing it themselves, and at great personal expense.

"*Frankoma Treasures*" was published in 1983, and it is now in its third printing. There was another updating of the price guide in 1998, and another planned for 2000.

By 1995, Phyllis and Tom Bess had also finished preparing their second

book titled "*Frankoma and Other Oklahoma Potteries*." And this time of course there was no problem getting a publisher. After viewing the track record of their first book, realizing the popular collectible that Frankoma had become, and recognizing its future potential, Schiffer was more than happy to accept their work. Having been disappointed in the professional photos for the first book, Phyllis opted this time to do the photography herself. She bought an appropriate camera and studied photography, and the book was published with very beautiful and professional quality photos.

For all these reasons and many more, we the Frankoma Family of collectors join in a chorus of heart-felt thanks. Thank you for helping us recognize, appreciate, and identify our Frankoma Pottery! 🍄

Bess Book in Third Edition

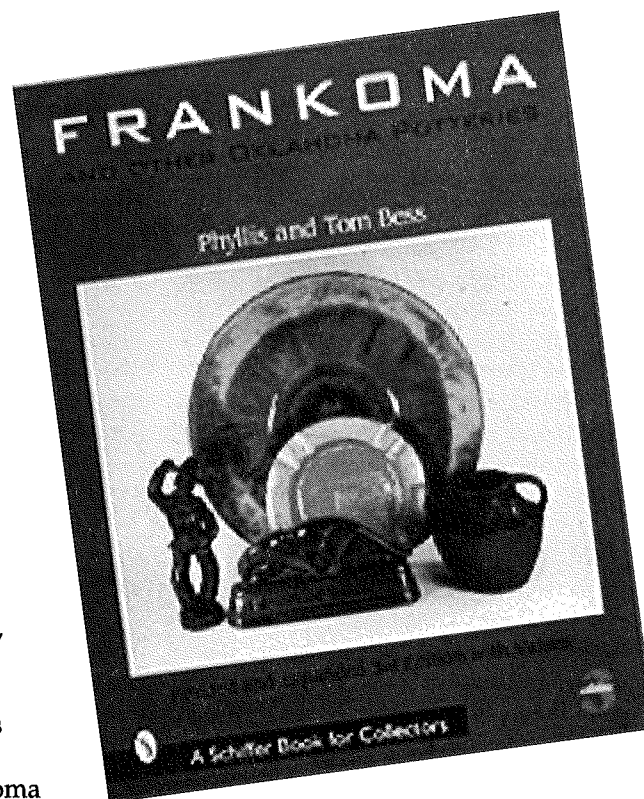
Frankoma and Other Oklahoma Potteries

Revised
and expanded,
3rd Edition

By *Phyllis
and Tom Bess*

NOW IN ITS third edition, this immensely popular reference book about Frankoma Pottery features nearly 100 new photos! Beginning with the Frankoma Pottery, Phyllis and Tom

present the histories of many Oklahoma Potteries, including Tamac, Sequoyah, Cherokee, and Winart, the clays, glazes, and trademarks by which each pottery may be identified, and the variety of pottery they produced. The ceramics range from sculptures, masks, and limited edition series to vases, planters, and dinnerware available all over America. The new photographs and up-to-date 2000 price guide make this book required reading for all Frankoma enthusiasts. \$24.95 (Oklahoma residents add 8% tax) + s/h of \$3.00.



Let's Eat

**By Donna Frank (with Joniece)
Sapulpa, OK**

I FREQUENTLY GET E-MAILS AND letters from people asking if Frankoma Pottery dishes are "safe to eat off of." I guess I've answered at least a hundred of them!

The latest was from a woman who was delighted to receive from a neighbor a huge set of Frankoma dinnerware. The reason the man dumped them is—he went down to WalMart and bought a metal tester and was alarmed that his cheap little testing device told him that his Frankoma was 600 percent over the required limit for titanium. Well! This lady loved her dishes, but naturally she wrote to us to get the story from the horse's mouth.

Folks, Frankoma Pottery dinnerware and artware are entirely safe from any kind of metal poisoning! Never in the history of Frankoma, from 1933-1991, has there ever been a proven claim concerning the safety of its products.

In fact, John Frank was a leader in the voluntary testing of glazed American-made dinnerware by established, authoritative testing laboratories. He was one of the founders of the U.S. Potters Association, which was a voluntary membership group that was formed with the blessing of the prestigious American Ceramic Society in testing their individual products.

As far back as the late 1940s and early 1950s, many imports—especially from the South American countries—were being brought into the American market and were not food safe. They usually consisted of a very high-talc clay body, with very low-fired, brilliantly-colored glazes. For instance, a plate would have bright yellow flowers with green leaves, and possibly some bright red colors in the pattern on the face of the plate. I'm sure you've all seen pieces like this. These were the kinds of items that could possibly create a lead poison situation for the consumer.

The U.S. Potters Association was independently formed in order to have their wares tested-effectively and efficiently—to assure the consumer that those companies' products were safe to use in the home. This all took place long before there were any government standards, back in those "asbestos-and-lead-based-paint" scare days.

The government slowly became involved, and they moved to set standards. And with time, those standards have continued to become more and more rigid, and stricter and stricter. Even *before* those government stan-

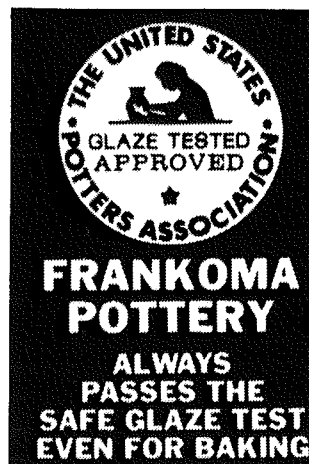
dards were set, Frankoma Pottery was *far* below the levels the government required.

There has been so much hype about the dangers of pottery glazes, that the consumer has naturally become paranoid. All kinds of little test kits can now be purchased to test your dinnerware. But let me assure you that they're not worth your effort to carry them home! This is a long and complicated testing procedure that must be done, under controlled conditions, by a professional testing laboratory, such as U.S. Testing Labs.

Actually, you can feel pretty safe with any American-made product in this respect. Please remember that it's the low-fired, bright-colored glazes that can create this kind of problem. *Before* glaze is fired to a temperature of around 2,000 degrees F., the materials in glaze are *not* safe. But, like some uncooked meats, once you cook it, there's a chemical change in the analysis. *Af-*

ter glaze is fired to maturity and is bonded to the clay, rest assured there is no longer *any* lead release—or *any* other metal—that could be dangerous to humans or animals.

Do I hear the dinner bell? Then let's all sit down and eat! 🍴



Bess Book: New and Updated

THE LONG-AWAITED NEW BOOK by Phyllis and Tom Bess is now available to collectors.

The title, "Frankoma and Other Oklahoma Potteries," will remain the same. The front cover photos will be the same as the first book, but the color will be a striking turquoise. The back cover, however, will have different photos than those found on the first edition.

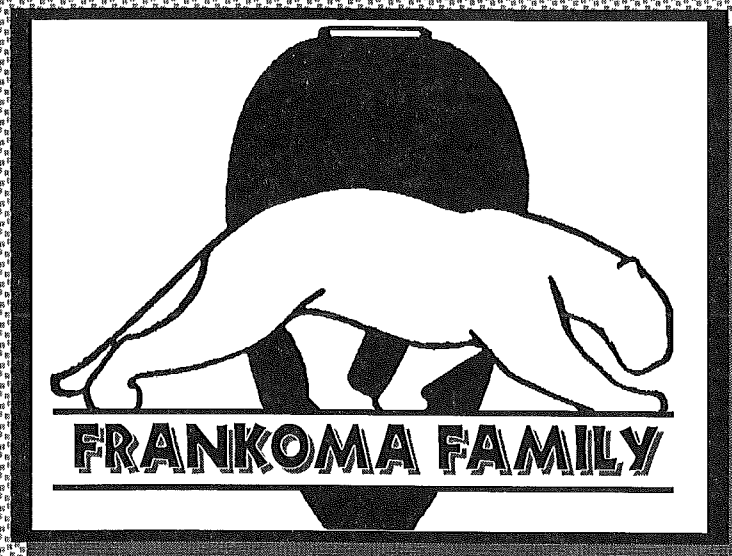
While the first edition offered around 400 color photos, the new book will have close to 500. New information in almost every category

has been added, as well as photos and information of another Oklahoma pottery. Few collectors know of a pottery manufactured in Frederick, Oklahoma, a town in the southwest corner of the state near Altus. The name is Permian Pottery, in production from the late 1940s to the late 1950s.

About 30 pages have been added to the new book as well, making a total of approximately 170 pages. It goes without saying that it will include an updated value guide for the year 2000, and those values are now given below each photo.

With all these additions, we would have expected that the new augmented edition would have risen in cost. However the price happily remains the same—\$24.95 (Oklahoma adds 8% tax) plus \$3.20 (USPS Priority Mail). Check or money order may be mailed to them at 14535 East 13th Street, Tulsa, OK 74108-4527.

Once again, our thanks to Phyllis and Tom Bess for another valuable book for us collectors to enjoy—and for helping to make our Frankoma Pottery one of America's most popular collectibles!

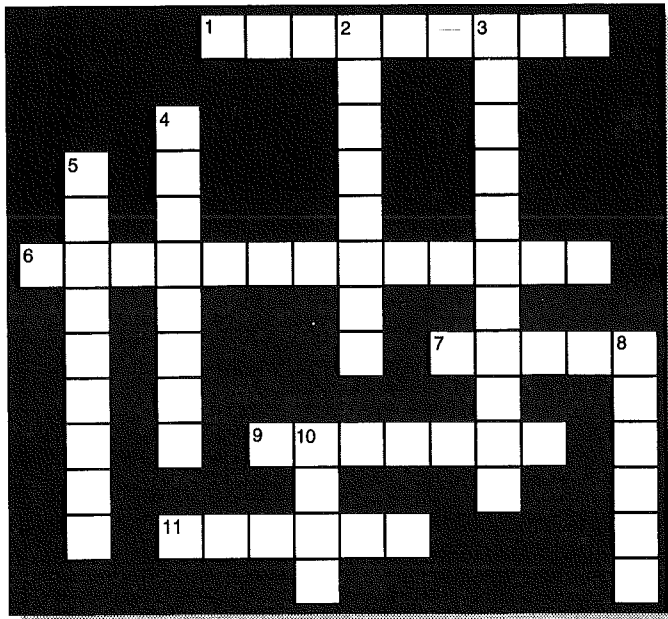


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FRANKOMA FUZZLE FUN

BY ALAN STOLTZ AND CECE WINCHESTER STOLTZ



Can you complete this Frankoma Crossword Puzzle? Collecting Frankoma is like putting pieces of a puzzle together. How many can you answer? (Solution to puzzle will be in the next issue of *Pot & Puma*.)


Across

- 1. Formerly Synar
- 6. Popular color
- 7. Dinnerware
- 9. Rubbed bisque plates
- 11. 1981 Christmas card

Down

- 2. Warm Earthen Brown
- 3. #110 design
- 4. Home of Gracetone
- 8. Gracetone manager
- 10. Rich blue tone
- 5. Christmas Card color

Salute to Grace Lee

 Clip out or photocopy and mail

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| 1/2 page 7.75"X4.75" | 55 | 50 |
| Full page 7.75"X10" | 100 | 90 |

Publication Schedule

| Issue | Close Date |
|--------|------------|
| Winter | January 31 |
| Spring | April 30 |
| Summer | July 31 |
| Fall | October 31 |

Frank X 2

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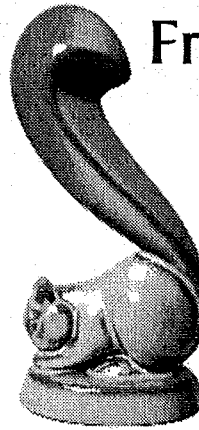
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