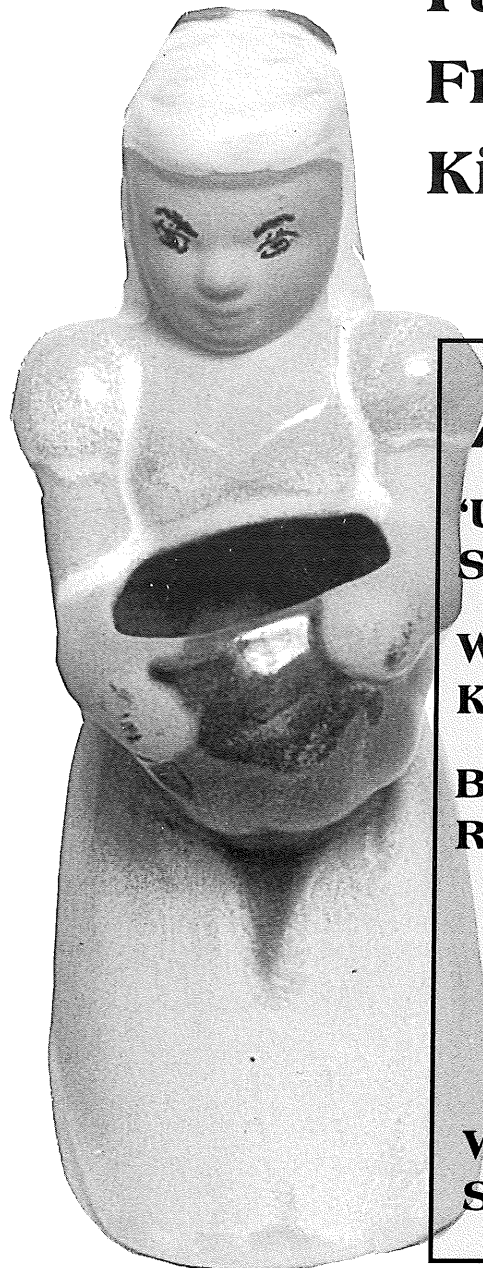


Pot & Puma

WINTER/SPRING 1999

V. 5, No. 1-2 • Published for Members of the Frankoma Family Collectors Association



The Fabulous Frankoma Kids... 14

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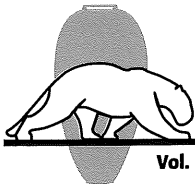
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Broken
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Pot & Puma

Vol. 5, No. 1-2 • Published by the Frankoma Family Collectors Association • Winter/Spring 1999

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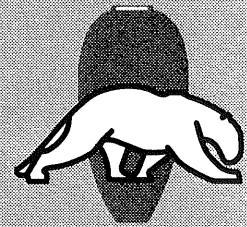
Membership: \$25 (family) per year. Membership includes subscriptions to the *Pot & Puma* and the *Prairie Green Sheet*. Back issues of the *Pot & Puma* are available at \$5 per issue. To order, write FFCA, PO Box 32571, Okla. City, OK 73123-0771.

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Frankoma Family Collectors Association Web Site: www.frankoma.org



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Cowboys
and...



Indians

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: Produced by Frankoma from 1942 through 1952, all were brush glazed by hand. From left: the #702 Gardener Boy 7" (pants) and the #701 Gardener Girl 5-³/₄". This Desert Gold pair with Prairie Green Shirt and Apron have penciled in eyes. (Photography by Steve Littrell)

FROM YOUR FFCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT Deb Oller

Greetings!

Our Board has certainly been active since our last *Pot & Puma* and *Prairie Green Sheet* went out! We will have one more meeting before the reunion, on August 4, to finalize the plans. Be assured that VP Jim Vance has everything under control for the big event!

Again, let me remind you that if you haven't made plans to attend September 15th and 16th, you need to do so now. You'll find everything you need to register included with this issue. Also, be sure to make your reservations for the John Frank Memorial Scholarship Awards Dinner. Joniece has come up with a very original and unique table centerpiece. You're not going to want to miss out on the chance to take one home! And some of you know from experience that if you don't attend the dinner, it's hard to find a place to sit for the auction, and you won't want to miss out on Auction 2000!

By the way, please decide soon as to what items you wish to donate and/or consign this year. Our scholarship fund

Our sincere thanks to each of you who have been good enough to take the time to put on your thinking caps and come up with these great articles, write us such kind letters and e-mails, and place your ads. Know that without your input, our publications would not be possible.

— Deb Oller
FFCA President

is healthy, but we must keep it that way. The good news is that we do have three scholarship winners this year (last year there were only two that qualified). Each has something unique to offer to the Art World, and we're very proud of them. Thanks to the Scholarship Committee who put so much work and thought into locating and choosing these talented people.

As you see, the Frankoma Kids are the stars of this issue! While I still don't have the set I want (maybe Santa will get my letter this year?), I've seen more of the Kids recently in some private collections than I ever knew existed. Believe me—just like our members, each Frankoma Kid is as different and individual as the articles say. Now that this issue is out, I'm going to have an even tougher time getting my own Frankoma Kids. It's a good reminder that we should always grab what we want when we can!

Our sincere thanks to each of you who have been good enough to take the time to put on your thinking caps and come up with these great articles, write us such kind letters and e-mails, and place your ads. You'll see articles coming from some of our newer members, as well as some of our veteran writers. Know that without your input, our publications would not be possible.

I could not be prouder to present to you our newest issues of the *Pot & Puma* and *Prairie Green Sheet*!

With faith in our Frankoma Family,
Deb Oller, FFCA President



FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT James L. (Jim) Vance

Thanks to the Board for having enough confidence in me to appoint me Vice President! Last term I served as Trustee, so they've had a chance to know what I'm made of. This term I've been appointed to serve in Deb Oller's place after she stepped up to President.

You probably know that part of the VP's job is to plan and coordinate the

Reunion 2000 will be the best ever! Joniece is spending many long hours creating a wonderful commemorative. We members of the Board have been shown the prototype, and we think it's out of this world. We've also arranged this year to offer new and unique seminars for you to enjoy and gather knowledge from.

— Jim Vance
FFCA Vice President

annual reunion. I have enjoyed doing this thus far. The volunteers are such great people to work with! They make my job go so smoothly.

Reunion 2000 will be the best ever! Joniece is spending many long hours creating a wonderful commemorative. We members of the Board have been shown the prototype, and we think it's *out of this world*. We've also arranged this year to offer new and unique seminars for you to enjoy and gather knowledge from.

I am thanking everyone now and later for all the work that is volunteered to make REUNION 2000 in this NEW MILLENNIUM a GREAT SUCCESS. See Y'all in September! Love Ya Couzins.



FROM THE SECRETARY Donna Frank

I'm pleased to report that the winners of the John Frank Memorial Scholarship Awards for the year 2000 are Jean Keil and Stuart Asprey from the

University of Oklahoma, students of V'Lou Oliveira, and Shelly Priest from University of Central Oklahoma, student of Gayle Singer. They'll all be at the Awards Banquet in September—so be sure to introduce yourself, shake their hands, congratulate them, and make them feel welcome!

The first two years of the awards, Dr. LaWanda Tyson and Ann C. Kerrick were the heart and soul of the Scholarship Committee. The second year, having had my hands slapped for not having any men on the judging panel, I also asked Phil Haddad to serve. Last year, LaWanda was unable to be there, so Randy McFarlin was chosen to serve in her place. We're sorry to say that this year, both LaWanda and Ann were forced to decline because of illnesses in their families.

No more complaints, folks, as the men now outnumber the ladies three to two! Phil Haddad has been there for us three years, Randy McFarlin two years, and this year we proudly welcomed Dave Greer and Sonya Murphy to the fold. I can tell you with confidence that it doesn't get any better than this! These individuals are wonderfully qualified and ideal for the task they've been asked to perform. If you haven't read about them on FFCA's Web site, here are their abbreviated bios:

Phil Haddad - Former teacher and Assistant School Superintendent, retired

No more complaints, folks, as the men now outnumber the ladies three to two! Phil Haddad has been there for us three years, Randy McFarlin two years, and this year we proudly welcomed Dave Greer and Sonya Murphy to the fold. I can tell you with confidence that it doesn't get any better than this!

— Donna Frank
FFCA Secretary

after 25 years with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, for which he served 8 years as Employment Service Director. Has been on the staff of Oklahoma Boys State for 40 years, its Director for the past nine.

Randy McFarlin - A graduate of Oklahoma State University, is currently Director of Parks and Public Facilities for the City of Ada (OK). An active

Rotarian and former District President, a dedicated collector of Frankoma, he also serves as Head of Security for our annual reunions.

Dave Greer - A successful and well-known artist/potter, widely recognized for his distinctive one-of-a-kind pieces created on the potter's wheel. A former student of Joe Taylor, he has been invited to jury many art shows in his career. Dave will be giving a seminar at this year's reunion, using his wheel.

Sonja Rogers Murphy - A native Oklahoman, proud direct descendant of Sequoyah, and a relative of Will Rogers. She and her husband have been collectors of Southwestern art for many years, which includes an impressive array of Frankoma Pottery. 🐾

CLAY AND CRAFT: THE ART POTTERY OF ILLINOIS

Saturday, August 26, 2000
9:00 a.m - 4:00 p.m.
Madison, Wisconsin

Sponsored by the Wisconsin Pottery Association (WPA). The first of several exhibits planned to showcase the pottery of Wisconsin's neighboring states. Exhibiting more than 300 items of pottery made in Illinois during the last 100+ years, including Abingdon, Anna, Chicago Cribble, Cliftwood, Haeger, Hull-House, Lictonware, Monmouth, Morse, Norweta, Pauline, Pickard and Teco, and the works of studio potters Eugene Deutch and Pollia Pillin. Pottery Show and Sale will feature 75 of America's top pottery dealers, offering many types of antique and collectible pottery.

MADISON MARRIOTT WEST

From I-90, take Exit 142-A,
Highway 12-18, go west about 15
miles to Exit 242, Greenway Blvd.
Admission \$4

For more information, write to:

WPA
PO Box 46
Madison, WI 53701-0046
Or call 608-241-9138

GOOD QUESTION!

I just received the *Pot & Puma*. It looks great in its new magazine format! But I am confused as to why it is dated Summer/Fall 1998 throughout the issue. Most of the "news" looks current, yet other pages read as if they were written in 1998, such as the financials. I looked back through my old issues, and the volume number looked correct, so I'm wondering if some pages were just messed up.

No matter what happened, it is still a great publication, and it will be added to my reference collection that goes back to the first one in 1994.

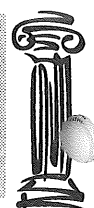
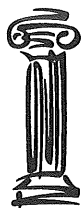
Jane Wiegand

GOOD ANSWER!

I am a Collection Management Specialist for several libraries at large universities, and I specialize in serials.

When it comes to periodicals, this is a very common occurrence. They often stop and start publication, especially when there is a change in editor and publisher. It is customary to continue the volume and numbering after a delay in publication. When I received my issue, I was happy to see the correct format. Good job! I see thousands of journals a month, and it can hold its own against any of them.

Carla Carlson
Painter, Frankoma Collector,
Librarian



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
TOTAL 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

Explanation of Categories For Balance Sheet and Statement of Activities

CASH—Money in the bank account, which is deposited by the Treasurer and requires two signatures on each check written.
SCHOLARSHIP FUND*—Represents the profit from auction and collectibles sold.
OPERATING—Excess (deficit) remaining for operating revenue and expense.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUES

MEMBERSHIP DUES—Dues received and deposited.
REUNION/COLLECTIBLES—Auction and collectible sales.
REUNION DINNER/AUCTION—Registration proceeds for auction dinner.
ADVERTISING—Advertising proceeds for ads in PGS and P&P.

EXPENSES

REUNION/COLLECTIBLES*—Cost of consignments of auction items and collectibles.
REUNION DINNER/AUCTION—Cost of reunion dinner, film, copies and other supplies.
PRINTING—Cost of PGS and P&P.
OFFICE SUPPLIES—Paper, envelopes, etc.
POSTAGE—Self explanatory.
TELEPHONE—Self explanatory. Began reimbursing Secretary and Treasurer their FFCA telephone expense in 1997.
TAXES/INSURANCE/LEGAL—Self explanatory.
SHOWCASE/VISA MACHINE/COMPUTER/SOFTWARE—Various equipment purchased for FFCA operations. Purchased a computer for the Secretary in 1997. (Previously, individuals had been paying FFCA telephone expense and using their own computers, and are still using all their own equipment. The Secretary's computer became obsolete.)



FFCA is classified as a 501 (c)(7) Hobby Club Organization as approved by the IRS. Our previous request for a 501 (c)(3) was denied due to restrictions of possible competition with businesses. We have received a refund for all taxes paid (\$2,581), plus interest (\$252.64), and we gained \$174 on the interest we paid earlier. The appropriate Form 990 EZ for 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998 have been filed. We are exempt from Federal and State income tax, but we must file Form 990 EZ as our annual revenue exceeds \$25,000.

The following is FFCA's financial statement that compares all four years. Our purpose of providing scholarships continued to grow in 1998. The Board approved three scholarships of \$1500, each paying \$750 to the educational institution for the fall semester, and \$750 for the spring semester toward recipients' tuition and supplies only. The second semester is paid to the educational institution only after the student has enrolled for that semester.

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1995</u>
Reunion/Collectibles Revenue:	\$28,658	\$26,429	\$12,943	\$3,878
Reunion/Collectibles Expense	\$24,841	\$19,206	\$ 7,690	\$1,637
Profit for Scholarship Fund	\$ 3,817	\$ 7,223	\$ 5,253	\$2,241
Carried to Next Year	\$14,717	\$ 7,494	\$ 2,241	
Cumulative Profit	\$18,534	\$14,717	\$ 7,494	

Auction 98 was the best ever and continues to grow. Members seem to enjoy it, as indicated by the gross proceeds:

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

FFCA also continues to grow in other ways. Our *Prairie Green Sheet, Pot & Puma*, FFCA Web site and members' advertising are making it well known and are generating new members. You can see the value of your collections growing every day—just

look at the prices on eBay (the Internet auction house)! Frankoma is now the 15th most popular collectible in the U.S.! (Disney is 20th.)

New Frankoma Website @ WWW.FRANKOMA.NET
Buy Frankoma • Sell Frankoma • Trade Frankoma

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.

Let us hear from you. Send your letters to:

Letters to the Editors
1300 Luker Lane
Sapulpa, OK 74066-6024
ffca4donna@aol.com

Letters to the Editors



RED LETTER DAY

OH BOY!! It's wonderful!! Tom and I have been sitting glued to our new Pot & Puma, reading ever since it arrived. Our favorite? That Sebastian!!! How Adorable!!! How we've laughed at his pictures with those captions! I hope we have others contributing similar pictures and stories. Simply divine!

The story about Tom and me is very well done. I feel it's much more than I deserve. I really feel the Lord deserves more of the Glory. (He told me Jesus would.)

I haven't finished reading the other articles, I just had to stop and e-mail you. You have done a great job! And don't be modest. I hope you get the praises you deserve from all over the country. It's a wonderful issue! Thank God you have the tenacity of bulldogs!

Phyllis and Tom Bess, OK



SEBASTIAN LIKES IT!

Thanks for letting us know what the response was. We thought the article turned out absolutely WONDERFUL!! Thanks for doing so much work on it. We had the easy part. Sebastian is a natural born ham! I have shown the article to anyone who would look at it! We will have to take a few more pictures to send to you.

We really loved this issue of the Pot & Puma. Your best ever! Really worth the wait. It got us inspired again and ready to go out hunting!

Can't wait to get to this year's reunion! If there's anything Denis and I can do to help, PLEASE let us know!!

Denis and Janice Spillane, KS
(Sebastian sends his love!)



AUTHOR SPEAKS

I received your letter and note with the package yesterday. The

Pot & Puma's new look is fabulous! I feel so privileged to find my modest attempt at writing to be showcased so prominently, and to share that privilege with such well know individuals. I can't begin to tell you how that feels! Thank you for sending the extra copies. I can hardly wait to hear the feedback you receive about this new look. I sincerely hope that the Frankoma Family feels the wait was worth it. I know I do. Thank you for taking such wonderful care of my prose.

I enjoyed doing the research for this article quite a lot, but did not expect it to be received with such enthusiasm. I have been collecting Frankoma pottery for only about four years, so my depth of knowledge on the subject is far from encyclopedic.

To answer your question as to the research end of things, I believe it has a lot to do with my background. I have a degree in Middle Eastern Archaeology from the University of Texas and did graduate work in Egyptology at the University of Chicago. Much of my education has dealt with research in the field (I worked for several months in Israel on an archaeological dig), in the laboratory (I was a Lab Assistant at Balconies Research Center in Austin, Texas), or in the library.

I do have a few ideas about future articles, but I need to let them simmer a while until my creative muse kicks in. I am interested in exploring more than the pottery itself, and wish to look at "connections" similar to the subject of the Billiken article.

I believe it is important to look at Frankoma Pottery not just for its own worth (I truly believe it has tremendous worth), but to explore how this fantastic pottery fits into the grander scheme of art as history; society, its influence; and art for art's sake. I believe the more you understand about origins and influences, the greater respect you have for the art and, in turn, the greater its value (not just monetary). I believe these connections I speak of may prove to be of interest to others. In any event, I hope to have the opportunity to submit another article.

Jack Kish, CA



(Letters continued next page)

DELIGHTED!

I so enjoy receiving the Pot & Puma, and was delighted to find it in my mailbox yesterday. When I saw the date of publication, I first thought that maybe this was one of those cases where someone suddenly receives a letter that was mailed years before! However, I see in your Web site that this issue is indeed the most recent. I had wondered why I hadn't seen one in such a long time. Anyway, I'm glad you are still publishing the Pot & Puma. Keep up the good work!

Also, your Web site is very nice! I remember just four years ago when I first "discovered" Frankoma and tried to look into it on the Internet. At that time, I could find only vague references and small mentions. It made it all the more intriguing for me. Your organization has really grown now. It was really neat to see Frankoma featured in Martha Stewart. I am so glad that recognition is being given to such a wonderful and unique American treasure!

Claudia Anderson, CO



NEW COUSIN KUDOS

I waited in anticipation for my first issue of the Pot & Puma. I certainly was not disappointed. Not only was it informative, but entertaining as well. I read the entire issue in one sitting. Kudos to you all for a job well done! I'll be looking forward to the next issue.

Tina "Ree" Ferguson, NC



BILIKENINFATUATION

I loved the article in the last issue about the Bilikens! I had just recently become infatuated with them and had been asking the same questions the author (Jack Kish) had. I was really wondering about the "Boots" Adams Jester's Day Biliken. It truly enlightened me! Thanks! Will be looking for more Biliken news in the future.

Karen Scott, OK



THANKS FOR NEW ISSUE

I just had to write and tell you folks how happy I am that you are still going! I was getting worried when my membership renewal check hadn't been cashed. About the time I received my Pot & Puma, I also knew my membership had been renewed. I know it must be frustrating! I certainly appreciate your work and struggles.

I loved the Sebastian article! My ruddy Somali (cat) Kiva likes to mess with my smaller Frankoma objects when she thinks I'm not paying proper attention to her. I have 3 small juice glasses, 2 mini pitchers, and a set of Wagon Wheel S&P's on a very small shelf inside a low shelving unit. Kiva sits on top of the shelf and deftly paws the smaller items below.

Kiva's predecessor Cody, a ruddy Abyssinian, drove me mad when he would put his long paw into a pitcher or bud vase to make certain there was nothing of interest inside, just wanting to make sure I was watching his antics.

I had a little time off last week and went to two antique malls. I spotted some Frankoma, but not in my colors (Red Bud and Wisteria).

Peggy Mueller, Austin, TX

Frankoma Funnies



'Unusual Mark'—Sold!

Texas Couple Find 'Pre-Frankoma' Bargain Antique Shop

By Sylvia Clegg
Eules, TX

IN JANUARY OF 1999 WE WERE ON our way home from Oklahoma City. We stopped in Ardmore, Oklahoma, to shop the local antique malls.

Our search for Frankoma in the first mall was fruitless. We went to the second mall and slowly made our way through the aisles, thoroughly checking each booth for Frankoma. About halfway through the mall, for some reason my husband Scott stopped in a very "junky" booth—you know the kind that has stuff crammed into every possible space, where you're afraid to touch anything for fear something might tumble to the floor and break? Why would he be looking in such a ratty booth?

There was a "sea foam green" pottery bowl that sat on a shelf with all kinds of things piled on top of it and all

around it. The bowl itself didn't particularly stand out, as it certainly didn't appear to be Frankoma. However, the paper tag on the bowl drew Scott's attention. It said, "Unusual Mark." What kind of unusual mark? Scott's curiosity was piqued.

He began meticulously and gently removing items and finally got to the bowl, which was heavy for its size. Then he turned it over. What he discovered on the bottom of the bowl was an OU Teepee mark!

He hurried over to show me his great find. We couldn't believe it! We were both shaking with excitement! It was then that we dared look at the price tag. It said \$3.

We didn't bother to look for anymore Frankoma there. We paid as fast as we could, hurried out the door, and were in a daze all the way back to Texas.

Our wonderful "pre-Frankoma" bowl with an OU Teepee mark and JNF 1928 is now proudly displayed in our

We couldn't believe it! We were both shaking with excitement! It was then that we dared look at the price tag. It said \$3. We didn't bother to look for anymore Frankoma there. We paid as fast as we could, hurried out the door, and were in a daze all the way back to Texas.

curio cabinet.

And they say there are no more bargains to be found out there? Don't you believe it! 🐾

**3 1/8" tall, diameter 8-1/2"
OU Teepee Mark
Signed JNF 1928**



OUCH! Take It Easy, Cousins!

**By Henry & Karen Johns
Lawrence, KS**

MANY OF US FRANKOMA collectors have also become dealers in vintage Frankoma. Some of us do the Show & Sell at the reunions, have booths in antique malls or small shops, and some use the *Prairie Green Sheet* regularly. There are those who sell on eBay, use web pages, and have made it a full-time business by taking advantage of all of the above.

As we all know, many of the simplest of John Frank's creations can be a joy to look at or use. We could not begin to pick an absolute favorite color, but the deep richness of those rutile glazes on dark brick red clay are certainly high on our list.

Our story is about a beautiful set of eight #5LTumblers with a #80 Pitcher, all in deep rich Brown Satin on brick red clay. I know that you all own, or have at least seen, items with that combination of clay and glaze. After we had been collecting for a few years, it became apparent that we had to sell some of our Frankoma—or get a bigger house! (We did consider building another barn.)

So we got a showcase in an antique mall, and later a booth. We've learned a lot with our hobby business about dealing in antiques. But the one lesson that has eluded us for the past three years is—**breakage!** I guess it just happens, but you really hate it when something is damaged or broken. It's not just the monetary loss, but the fact that once it's broken, it's gone forever. It will never be made again and cannot be replaced.

We had two of these perfect Pitcher and Tumbler Sets in Brown Satin, so we put one set in our booth to sell. It was in brand new, mint, never-used condition, just as it came from the factory so many years ago.

One weekend a group of people came into our booth and were looking over what we had. The mall staff reported that they were just pushing aside the things they were not interested in. They told us they could hear the

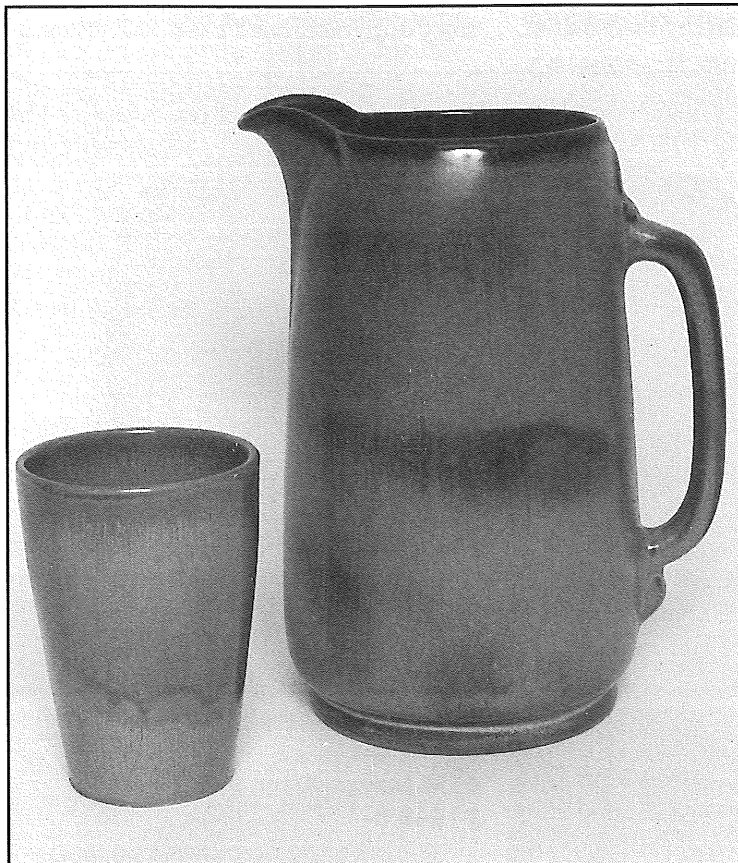
distinctive sounds of Frankoma being "banged together."

The shoppers made their selections and left. The staff then went to our booth and moved the items back to their rightful places, among them the Pitcher and Tumbler Set. Then they saw that two of the Tumblers had been bumped together and had chipped each other around the rims. Things happen, of course. But, cousins, the mall staff remembers those shoppers because, when they made their purchases, they asked for an FFCA member discount—which they were given!

We don't normally think of Frankoma as being very "fragile." John and Grace Lee Frank always advertised it as being "durable," even guaranteed it to be ovenware. But pottery is still pottery, and it has its limits. So when you're out looking for that one special piece of Frankoma, do be considerate and careful. What seems commonplace to

But pottery is still pottery, and it has its limits. So when you're out looking for that one special piece of Frankoma, do be considerate and careful. What seems commonplace to you may be a treasure for someone else, and Frankoma can at times be oh-so-fragile!

you may be a treasure for someone else, and Frankoma can at times be oh-so-fragile! Remember that it will never again be produced. 🐼



**#80 Pitcher 1/2 gal.
I-1936 D-1996
#5L Plainsman
Tumbler 12-oz.
I-1952 D-1992**

What I Got That Donna Forgot

Longed-For Mayan-Aztec Platter Finds Its Way to Admirer in Unexpected Way

Shelley Feinman
Hollywood, CA

DONNA FRANK AND I MET IN Hollywood more than 30 years ago. We "clicked" right away, and we've been best friends ever since. When she moved to Palm Springs in 1991, we still made trips back and forth for visits. I've never forgotten those wonderful steamed veggies she prepared, topped with a delicious dill sauce, and always served on her little Mayan-Aztec platters (#7PS).

When I flew to Oklahoma to visit her and Joniece in 1997, I was again served food on those great little platters. I wanted one. Not two, not four, not six, but just one. My apartment is very small, with a kitchen the size of a postage stamp and not a lot of cabinet room, so I need to wash my dishes after

every meal. While we were shopping around Oklahoma, we looked high and low for my one platter, but had no luck, although I was not picky about the color.

Time went on, and I'm sure Donna forgot my request, as I never received it and was too polite to remind her. Last August, while taking friends to a private garden in the Hollywood Hills, there was a lady showing her mother around the city. They had happened onto the garden and asked if they could come in. Although it was private, I had been entrusted with a key, and they were so nice I allowed them to enter and enjoy the unique beauty of it.

As we talked, I learned the visiting lady was from Oklahoma, and of course our conversation immediately turned to Frankoma Pottery and my friendship with Donna. I laughingly told her my story and mentioned I was still looking

Once again I am reminded that sometimes, in order to get what you want, you have to wait for a serendipitous event to drop it in your lap—this one bringing with it a bonus of new friends that I would never have met, had it not been for Frankoma and our friendship.

for that one Mayan-Aztec platter that I never got. I was able to suggest to her and her daughters some especially nice places in the area to go and see. She was very appreciative, and we said goodbye.

New Years Day, 2000. Out of the blue I got a call from the Oklahoma lady saying she was back in town visiting her daughters for the holidays. She had found the little platter I wanted, plus a large Mayan-Aztec mug to go with it. So we arranged to meet at the same garden that afternoon, and she presented me with these two wonderful and perfect pieces. She would not allow me to pay her, insisting it was a thank-you for all the places they enjoyed that they would never have known about if I hadn't recommended them.

So I finally have what Donna herself didn't, couldn't, or forgot to send me. I still love you, Donna, and I forgive you. Once again I am reminded that sometimes, in order to get what you want, you have to wait for a serendipitous event to drop it in your lap—this one bringing with it a bonus of new friends that I would never have met, had it not been for Frankoma and our friendship.

But, as I've told you again and again, Donna—you really should start writing things down! 🐾



**#7PS Mayan-Aztec Platter 9"
I-1962 D-
#7M Mayan-Aztec Mug 14-oz.
I-1948 D-**

What in the World Is It?

By Joniece Frank



and Donna Frank

A Frankoma Medallion?

ONE OF OUR MEMBERS recently e-mailed about a piece he was trying to capture on eBay. No doubt many of you saw it there. He asked us to look at it and tell us what it was. It had Dad's "initials" signature, and there was no doubt that it was his hand. It was personally signed to "Faye" in what looked to be black grease pencil.

The photos were good. We had no problem getting a good clear look at it, the seller had photographed it nicely from all sides and angles. We recognized the design almost immediately, but we were very surprised that Dad had done it in pottery. We each had a logical, believable scenario, and the more we talked, the more obvious it was that we had both used the same logic and come to the same conclusion. Here's how it went.

In 1962-63, Dad was preparing to do

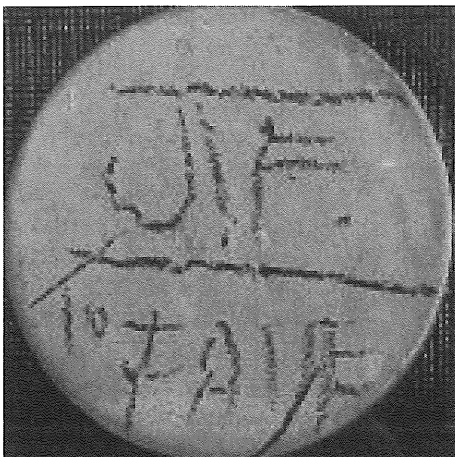
a bronze medallion to honor Oklahoma's Gov. Henry Bellmon, the state's first Republican governor. He completed the medallion, and it was struck, in 1963. We know that he did a lot of prep work and practice in order to learn the limits and problems he would encounter. As always, he wanted it done perfectly, and he was one to "do his homework."

For many long years, Dad was a subscriber to Sculpture Review magazine, and through that publication was also a member of the Society of Medalists. As a member of the latter, he received four bronze medals each year by various artists, and we still have a few that survived the 1983 fire. Although somewhat blackened, the exquisite detail and quality of craftsmanship, as well as the fine artistry, still remains. Joniece and I occasionally

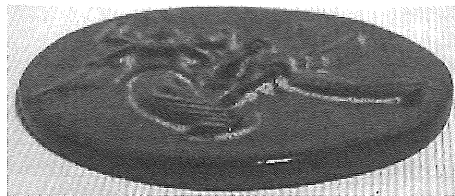
If an employee walked in and saw his experiment on his desk and said, "Oh, Mr. Frank, that's beautiful!"—he would probably have said, 'If you like it that much, it's yours' and signed it to them. In this instance, of course, it would be a one-of-a-kind.

bring them out to look at and appreciate their beauty.

In Dad's research, these are the medals he used to learn about medal
(Continued next page)



Medallion back signed "JNF TO FAYE"
Size: 2-1/2" diameter



Circa 1962-63; Side view of medallion
approx. 1/4" deep

Medallion inscription: "THE HEAVENS
DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD"



(From previous page)

making in preparation for work on the Bellmon medal. From the photos, we could not tell if he glazed it or not, but it looks like it *could* be glazed in DG.

It would have been very much like him to make a clay impression of this medal and fire it, checking for shrinkage, warpage, and whatever else he could learn. It tells us that he most likely wanted to do the medallion in pottery, if for no other reason than cost, because he footed the bill himself. It was not done for profit, but a tribute of love and respect for Mr. Bellmon. When he saw what a headache it would have been to do in clay, he opted for the crisp clean lines that only an art medal can produce.

If an employee walked in and saw the experiment on his desk and said, "Oh, Mr. Frank, that's beautiful!"—he would probably have said, "If you like it that much, it's yours" and signed it to them. In this instance, of course, it would be a one-of-a-kind. This is what we suspect happened. *Especially since it is one-sided.* If it were a "finished" piece to be given to all the employees, or for sale, it would have been finished on both sides, but it's quite rough. This piece, we feel, was simply one of his "playthings" to learn from. We know that this is not Dad's artwork. It's much

too "classic." He was simply not that kind of artist. The moment Joniece and I saw it, we both recognized it to be one of the bronze medals he collected over the years from the Society of Medallists.

At that time, there were two employees named Faye. We've tried to reach them both to inquire as to what really did happen, but have so far failed. We'll keep trying, so stay tuned. Whatever we learn we'll report to you next time.



#195 Wall Pocket

OUR COUSINS David and Georgia (AR) have found a Wall Vase we've never seen before! They tell us they bought it at an estate auction in Pierce City, Missouri. The bidding started at 9:00 a.m. and lasted through midnight. There were several interested bidders rifling through Frankoma reference books for hours, looking for that Wall Pocket to no avail, so perhaps they thought it was a counterfeit. Anyway, they were able to get it cheap. How wise they were!

The clay is deep brick red, glazed in Onyx Black, with the stock number clearly marked 195—a number that did find its way into the master stock list (retrieved from the 1983 fire). Being in the same design genre as the #196 and

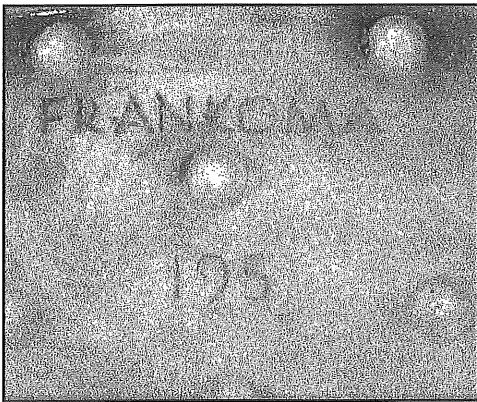
#197 (Schaum p. 82), we can logically place it 1964-1966 with the other two.

Dad would have almost had to design it during that same time period. He was obviously in his "let's-see-how-big-a-wall-pocket-we-can-make" period. It's about as large as the #196 (13" tall x 10-1/2" wide), except the #195 is wider than it is tall (7-1/2" tall x 13-1/2" wide).

We can only speculate that—since we've never seen this one or another like it—it was a prototype he made to show at one of the gift shows. It most likely did not sell, and he made no more. With pieces like this, we often scratch our heads and wonder, "Why not?" It's beautifully designed and (unlike the Acorn and Rams Head Wall Pockets) those knobs were put on the back to keep it away from the wall to spare the wallpaper.

Why did this piece not appeal to the public? Was it too big and bulky? Did people not know what to do with it? As we've mentioned before, he designed several items that nobody knew what to do with until Mother made an arrangement in it, and then the cash register would ring! But this one apparently went by the wayside and wasn't given the chance it deserved.

In our eyes, we feel this one is the best of the three. If anyone out there finds another like it—for goodness' sake, get on the horn! 📞



Photos by David Vaughan

#195 Wall Pocket • 7-1/2" tall x 13-1/2" wide • I-1964 D-1966
Deep brick red clay, glazed in Onyx Black

The Plainsman Dinnerware— Plain and Fancy

**Gibb Green
Windsor, CO**

WHILE TOURING THE GARAGE sales, flea markets and antique malls of America, pottery fanciers will find many pieces marked FRANKOMA with a variety of stock numbers beginning with the number "5." The Plainsman pattern has been identified!

Borrowing from the beauty of the Great Plains of the American Southwest, Frankoma Pottery created its second dinnerware pattern, "Oklahoma," in 1948. The next year the name became "Oklahoma Plainsman," and nine years later the name of the state was dropped to make the "Plainsman" pattern central to the pottery's vernacular. The simple, flowing, circular lines of the pieces, along with the four equally spaced indentations on the Plates and Saucers, make Plainsman one of the most distinctive of the Frankoma patterns. (Mr. Frank described the design as being based on a "round square.")

Four Plates were part of the dinnerware line—a 10" diameter #5F, a 9" #5FS, a 7" #5G and a 6" #5GS. The smaller sizes were of course to be used for breakfast, luncheon and salad purposes. Two different sets of Cups and Saucers were offered—the #5CC 5-oz. Tea Cup, the #5C 8-oz. Coffee Mug, the #5E 5" Tea Saucer, and the #5E Saucer (or the short-lived #5EL welled Saucer) for the Coffee Mug. And there was also that wonderful, healthy, man-sized 12-oz. Coffee Mug, #5CL, with no saucer. The #5A&B Cream and lidded Sugar complete the set.

The Plainsman pattern also included some miniature pieces, or a demitasse line. The Demi Cream and Sugar were each 6-oz. and were numbered #5DA and #5DB. The small Cups and Saucers were the #5DC and #5DE.

A wide variety of serving pieces were also offered. The #5D 3-qt. Pitcher has been very popular for its capacity and distinctive beauty. A 15" Chop Plate (#5FC), looking just like a giant dinner plate, is really handy for serving a

whole meal on one big platter. Salt and Peppers, often likened to the barrel cactus, came in two sizes, the 4" #5H and the 3" #5HS.

Tumblers were also available—the 12-oz. #5L for water or milk, and the 6-oz. #5LC for juice. The #5M 16-oz. handled Mug was a double coffee, or a vase. Six different Bowls were part of the line—the 5-qt. #5N huge Salad or Mixing Bowl, the #5NL 9-qt. monster to bathe the baby in, the 2-qt. #5NS for serving vegetables, the #5X 14-oz. for Cereal or Soup, the 20-oz. #5XL Chili Bowl, or for the teenage boy who loves cereal or ice cream, and the #5XS 9-oz. for desserts and individual salads. All of the Tumblers and Bowls are basically round with vertical lines that square out their shape.

Frankoma made two Chip-and-Dip sets as well. The #5NC/D was a regular 5-qt. #5N with a wire frame that hung on the rim to hold a #5X (or sometimes a Westwind #6X) for the dip. The smaller Chip-and-Dip was a #5NS with a little square bowl (made only for this piece), which was "slipped" onto the bottom center for dip, and it was #5NC.

A Plainsman piece that is seldom seen, as few were made (1958-1960), is the #5PT which Mr. Frank called a "TV Palletray." It was a shallow dinner platter with a slightly raised curvy design that divided the bottom into four sections to separate meat, a couple of vegetables and a place to set a cup. Designed to take to the living room and eat from while watching TV, the raised sections kept the foods from spilling into each other, and the cup would not slide.

There were two deep rectangular Serving/Baking Platters—a 17" (#5P), and a 13" (#5Q). A center divider was put into the #5Q Platter, which created the #5QD, a two-Vegetable Server. There was also a 17" shallow oval Platter, the #TP Turkey Platter, which was added in the late 1960's. A 9" rectangular Sandwich Platter (#5PS), and a 13" rectangular Steak Platter (#5QS) added to the variety of the line of accessory pieces.

The latter two items, along with the TV Palletray, were Mr. and Mrs. Frank's introduction of the concept they called

(Continued next page)

"PLAINSMAN" PATTERN

5F—10" Plate—
5FS—9" Plate—
5G—7" Plate—

*5D—Demitasse Cup—
*5DE—Demitasse Saucer—

*5A—12 Oz. Creamer—

*5CL—12 Oz. Mug—

*5C—2 Qt. Baker/
Bean Pot—

*5B—Sugar With Lid—

*5NS—9" Vegetable—

*5HS—Salt &
Pepper—

*5W—3 Qt. Baker/
Bean Pot—

5FC—15" Chop Plate—

*5C—5 Oz. Teapot—

5C—Cup—
5E—5½" Saucer—

5P—17" Platter—
5Q—13" Platter—

*5L—12 Oz.
Tumbler—

*5N—4½ Qt. Bowl—

*5QD—13" Divided Bowl—

*5DB—6 Oz. Sugar—

5XL—20 Oz. Bowl—
5X—14 Oz. Cereal—
5XS—9 Oz. Fruit—

*5Q—13" Platter—
*5PS—9" Tray—

*5DA—
Creamer—

*5A—12 Cup
Teapot—

*5E—12 Cup
Teapot—

*5B—6 Cup Teapot—

*5M—16 Oz. Mug—

5S—20 Oz. Gravy Boat—

5D—3 Qt. Pitcher—

THIS PATTERN AVAILABLE IN
Woodland Moss, Desert Gold, Brown Satin and Prairie Green
*AVAILABLE ALL COLORS Add 50% for Flame
Sizes are approximate and may vary slightly

FRANKOMA POTTERY, INC.
SAPULPA, OKLA. 74066

Print ad for Plainsman pattern

(From previous page)

"Platter Dining." Substituting rectangular plates for round ones gave a whole new look to the individual place settings, as well as to the entire table. The smaller Platter, #5PS, they used as a breakfast plate, and also for a luncheon plate. The #4SC (Lazybones) Soup Cup sits nicely on one side of the #5PS, leaving room for crackers or bread. I'm told that Mrs. Frank preferred serving with platters because they took up less depth space leaving more room above for a bread plate, salad plate, drink glass or coffee cup. She also pointed out that foods on a flat platter surface do not run together as on a round plate that has sides tilting toward the middle.

The #6P (Westwind 11" Steak Platter) was then added to the line to complete the ensemble of "Platter Dining." So then there were three Dining Platters—9", 11" and 13" Steak Plate.

Two Teapots were offered—an individual 6-cupper (#5T) and the larger 12-cup (#5TL). The #6J Individual 2-cup Teapot from the Westwind pattern was also often shown and sold with the Plainsman set, a perfect fill-in.

The #5S Gravy Boat was an enlarged and elongated version of the Plainsman Creamer. No Butter Dish was made solely for Plainsman, but rather the Lazybones #4K or the Westwind #6K were crossed over. There were three sizes

One of the great blessings of Frankoma tableware is the option of using pieces from the Mayan-Aztec, Westwind, Lazybones, or even Wagon Wheels patterns to fill out a Plainsman table setting. The designs are interchangeable, according to your style of living and preferences.

of Bakers or Covered Casseroles—the #5U Individual; the #5V 2-qt.; and the #5W 3-qt.

In 1961, Mr. Frank added to each of the four existing patterns a monster 5-qt. Baker or Casserole (also shown in the 1962 and 1963 catalogs)—the #5WL (Plainsman), #94WL (Wagon Wheel), #4WL (Lazybones), and #7WL (Mayan-Aztec). As with many of the extra large items, these were all production headaches, prone to warping and frequent cracking, and they were discontinued sometime in 1963. These are almost non-

existent in today's market, as few passed the selection test and were put out for sale.

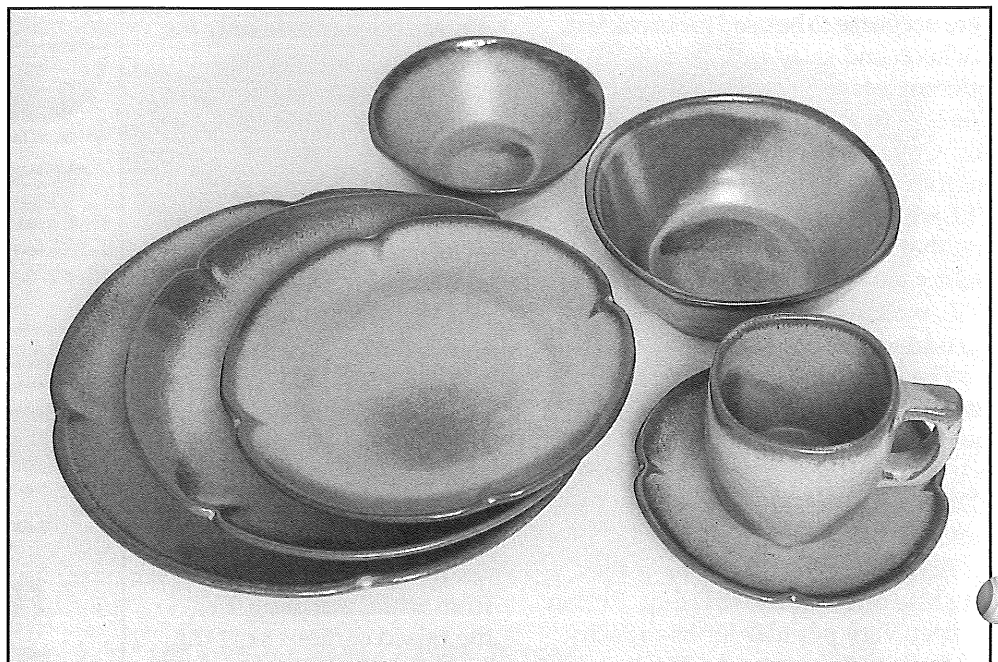
Frankoma made an extraordinary number of accessory items and offered them in the color of your pattern. There were also the Relish Dish (#83), the small Cream and Sugar (#553 and #504), and even the Fondue (#FD).

Stock numbers 5LS, 5TS and 5PTS were used for the Plainsman sold in sets—the 45-piece Service for Eight; the 20-piece Starter Set; and the 25-piece Deluxe Starter Set, respectively.

One of the great blessings of Frankoma tableware is the option of using pieces from the Mayan-Aztec, Westwind, Lazybones, or even Wagon Wheels patterns to fill out a Plainsman table setting. The designs are interchangeable, according to your style of living and preferences. Each piece was individually priced so that you could make choices and "build your own set." If you especially liked one certain item better than another, it did not necessarily have to belong to your specific pattern, because they all blended in harmony.

Especially in the 1990's, when many are acquiring their sets one or two pieces at a time, the mixing of patterns is a great benefit. Individual creativity adds even more to the wonder and charm of Frankoma. 🌿

**Oklahoma Plainsman
dinnerware set**



Those Fabulous Frankoma Kids Many the Same, No Two Alike

**James "Jim" Vance
Joplin, MO**

IT WAS ABOUT FOUR YEARS AGO that our brother-in-law got us interested in collecting this wonderful Frankoma Pottery. My wife Sharon started with the Trivets and some of the Vases, and I was drawn to the Political Mugs and Indian Masks. Before we knew what had happened, we were full-fledged, card-carrying Frankomaholics! We were driving all over the four-state area to flea markets, auctions, yard sales, and any other place we thought we might possibly come across that illusive "big find."

Sharon was immediately taken with the Frankoma Kids. Being a lover of dolls, and a porcelain doll maker herself, these Kids were each very special to her—no two alike, each with its own unique personality.

The Frankoma Kids were produced for 10 years, 1942 through 1952, and

only three were ever offered. There was the #700 Flower Girl wearing a bandanna on her head and carrying a brown basket, the #701 Gardener Girl with an apron and wearing a bow ribbon in her hair, and the #702 Gardener Boy had belted pants and a shirt. It was in 1950 that the Gardener Boy changed clothes and began wearing bib overalls with crossed straps over his shirt. The Flower Girl was produced in Prairie Green and Desert Gold. The Gardener Girl and Gardener Boy were also produced in Prairie Green, Desert Gold, along with several shades of blue.

The first Frankoma Kid in our family was a Prairie Green Flower Girl, whom we discovered in a quaint little shop in Jenks, Oklahoma. The owner told us she had been in that case for over a year. We offered \$50, and she was carefully wrapped and prepared for the trip to her new home in Joplin. She was placed in a special spot in our curio cabinet, and we named her Phyllis—for our special friend Phyllis Bess.

We soon noticed our Phyllis seemed

lonesome, as if she needed a friend. About a week later we heard of a lady in Rockaway Beach, Missouri, who had a Flower Girl with a Desert Gold dress. So the next day we got into the car and headed for Rockaway Beach to find Phyllis a playmate. We named her Rosie after her previous owner. Rosie was so pretty! Not only was her dress a different color, her skin was darker. Although both were Flower Girls, Phyllis and Rosie were very different in character and personality, and they got along well together. But after a while we thought they needed more friends, so we continued to search for more playmates.

Early one Saturday morning at the Tulsa Flea Market, we met a man named Henry who had a matching Gardener Boy and Flower Girl in Desert Gold. We were again proud parents, now with four Frankoma Kids to romp around together in our curio cabinet. Their names, naturally, were Henry and Henrietta. Our obsession was growing, and the fun had just begun.

In August of 1997, I joined the computer world and began searching the Internet for Frankoma Kids with different colors of clothes. Wouldn't blue be nice, and there were oh so many different shades! They were showing up everywhere and, if the price was right, they were adopted and came to live with us. There was a pair from Flanders Auction in Okemah, Oklahoma. Then we adopted 10 from a lady in Coyle, Oklahoma (the largest group we've ever found).

So now our little family of Frankoma Kids has grown to over 50! They fill three large shelves in our cabinet and, as unique and different as they all are from one another, they're all happy and thriving. But be assured that we'll always be ready to welcome a new Kid to our family.

Each individual one of our Frankoma Kids is special to us. Just like God's little children—red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world. And so do we. 🌱



Jim Vance with the Vance's "Little Family" of more than 50 Frankoma Kids. (Photo by Sharon Vance)

Those Fabulous Frankoma Kids And Then There Were Four

**Phyllis Bess
Tulsa, OK**

THESE GIRLS AND BOYS HAVE really caused a stir among Frankoma collectors! Every collector wants at least one of each, being a total of four, not three, as one might first believe. These were all hand-glazed before firing and will be found in many different color combinations.

When the Frankoma Kids were first introduced in 1942, only three were offered. There were the #700 Flower Girl wearing a bandana on her head and carrying a basket, the #701 Gardener Girl with an apron and wearing a bow ribbon in her hair, and the #702 Gardener Boy wearing belted pants and a

shirt.

In 1950 a slight change was made to the Gardener Boy's clothing so that he began wearing bib overalls with back crossed straps over his shirt. Therefore, in 1950 through 1952, there were still only three kids offered, but now the Gardener Boy was wearing bib overalls and a shirt.

A rare find is a Gardener Boy made from the original belted pants and shirt mold, but painted as wearing bib overalls with back crossed straps—where the outline of his belted pants can still be seen.

Gardener Boy's clothing is usually found in color combinations of blue. The more unusual color is Desert Gold and a Prairie Green Gardener Boy wearing the

(Continued next page)

... so many times the Frankoma name was removed, or partially removed, when the trimming was done to enable level setting. Because of this, many of them appear to be unmarked. However, on close examination, many times a letter or two can faintly be seen.



#702 Gardener Boy 7"
I-1942 D-1949
Wearing belted pants
\$150-\$200*

#701 Gardener Girl 5-3/4"
I-1942 D-1952
\$125-\$175*

#702 Gardener Boy 7"
I-1950 D-1952
Wearing bibbed overalls
\$150-\$200*

#700 Flower Girl 5-1/2"
I-1942 D-1952
\$100-\$125*

*= Values taken from the current price guide in "Frankoma and Other Oklahoma Potteries" by Phyllis and Tom Bess, p. 21.



#702 Gardener Boy 7"
I-1950 D-1952
Wearing bibbed overalls
\$150-\$200*



#702 Gardener Boy 7"
I-1942 D-1949
Wearing belted pants
\$150-\$200*



(From previous page)

bib overalls would be a rare find indeed.

Gardener Girl is wearing an apron, which is gathered up to form an open bowl for gathering fruit or vegetables in the garden. This opening makes the Gardener Girl a vase. Her neckline varies from square, oval to scalloped, and is usually trimmed in white. The bow she wears in her long hair is usually glazed in a color to match her dress. Occasionally it was glazed to match her apron. The color of her clothing is almost always coordinated with Gardener Boy's, being Sky Blue, Royal Blue or Desert Gold. An unusual find is the Gardener Girl wearing a Prairie Green colored dress. One was found wearing a Terra Cotta Rose dress!

Flower Girl is wearing a bandana (usually Ivory) and carrying a brown basket. The opening of the basket makes the Flower Girl a vase. Her dress is found mostly in Patina (Prairie Green). Several have been found with a Desert Gold dress and a brown bandana. Another had a Prairie Green bandana, which is most unusual. As yet, we have not heard of a Flower Girl wearing blue clothing. If one is found, we would certainly like to hear about it.

All these children were usually marked with the mold number and the Frankoma stamp in block letters. But so many times the Frankoma name was removed, or partially removed, when the trimming was done to enable level setting. Because of this, many of them appear to be unmarked. However, on close examination, many times a letter or two can faintly be seen. 🌱

Below shows Gardener Girls different necklines: Square, Oval and Scalloped
#701 Gardener Girl 5-3/4"
I-1942 D-1952
\$125-\$175*



Those Fabulous Frankoma Kids Works of the Creators

**Joniece Frank
Sapulpa, OK**

I MOST CERTAINLY AGREE WITH Jim and Sharon that each Frankoma Kid is unique and different, just as we humans all have the same basic form, but we are each truly different. As far as I know, these three were the only pieces produced by Frankoma that were glazed by hand with a brush. All others were sprayed.

As a very young child of 4, 5 and 6, I remember watching the "Dolls" (as we called them then) being glazed with a brush. They were never assembly-line pieces—meaning one person did not do only bandannas, while another glazed only hats, and another only skirts. The person who glazed that piece completed all aspects of it from start to finish. This involved some individual creativity, choosing which color to glaze which part, and Daddy happily gave them that freedom.

The one glazer I remember most of all was Maggie Watkins (now deceased). At that age, I had trouble saying "Watkins," so I called her "Mama Watten." She and her husband, Charlie, would often take me home to their little farm to care for me when Mother and Daddy went to gift shows or were otherwise occupied. Maggie was without question the very best of all at brush glazing the Dolls. She also glazed some of the Indian Chiefs with those many-colored feathers shown in some of the collector books. (However, it was not a production piece, as such, so we can't count that.)

Quick history lesson: Mama Watten's son was Charles Henry Watkins (my big brother "Cha Hitten") who worked at the plant after school before WWII began. He soon enlisted in the Army Air Corps, then returned to Frankoma (after I had finally learned to talk) and worked until about 1972. He then started a little pottery company called the "Mud Daubers" located just a few miles from Frankoma on Highway

66. His wife was the former Jean Steeples, whose brother was Ted Steeples, whom many of you have heard me speak of as being my right hand and best friend for so many years. Ted Steeples' son Terry also worked at Frankoma, thus a third generation of Frankoma employees—and he married Kandy who is still there, being of great service to our collectors. Many of you met Jean Watkins, along with Ted Steeples' wife, Dorothy, at the second reunion held at the Creek County Fair Grounds.

I remember so well sitting and looking at all the rows and rows of glazed Dolls waiting to be fired—and wanting to give them all special names. Because they were still virtually colorless, they did not have all the individuality that showed up after firing. But yet, even as young as I was, I could still gaze admiringly at them, one by one, and intuit their "individualness." That very emotion I felt then is probably the same sensation that people today have when they pick up a piece of Frankoma. Those vibrations were put there for us by the artist (and particularly the glazer in the case of the Kids) and the other good people involved in its manufacture.

It's true that many different shades of blue showed up on these Frankoma Kids. But it's also true that the greens and golds and yellows and browns, and all the colors used on these pieces, produced many different shades and tones. Why? The first reason that comes to mind is that it's a result of the application of the glaze using a *brush*—when the glaze was actually made to be *sprayed on!*

Some of the variations of colors might have been because the glaze was a bit thick that day, or maybe a little

But it really all boils down to this—Frankoma represents the artist, and the persons who complete the artist's concept, the many variables in the glazes, the mood of the person that day as to how thick or thin the glaze is applied, what part of the hill the clay came from, or what God the Creator had in mind for the weather that day. You see, God is also the Creator of Variables.

thin, caused by the humidity factor (consider summer in Oklahoma). If it was late in the day and a person was almost out of white glaze, but had plenty of blue, she might have dumped the last couple of tablespoons of white into the blue and then be able to finish that piece before quitting time. So the first Gardener Boy of the following morning had a lighter blue shirt than the last one of yesterday. Did that really happen? It could have.

But it really all boils down to this—Frankoma represents the artist, and the persons who complete the artist's concept, the many variables in the glazes, the mood of the person that day as to how thick or thin the glaze is applied, what part of the hill the clay came from, or what God the Creator had in mind for the weather that day. You see, God is also the Creator of Variables.

So I truly believe that, of all the Frankoma pieces ever produced, it's these Frankoma Kids that especially represent the work of the creators and the Creator. It's so heartwarming to know collectors give each of their Frankoma Kids a special and meaningful name. Because there's no question about it—many may be the same, but no two are alike. 🐾

What John Frank Knew

**Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK**

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO HOLD IN your hand something that is alive with life? Must it have a beating heart and breathe in and out to be alive? It's one thing to feel life in a little bird you've found that has a broken wing and cannot fly. You cradle it in your hands and know that there is a life there inside. You can pet an animal, and it will respond with appreciation and trust.

But there's also life that can be felt in other things that do not breathe or cannot move so quickly. Does a plant

not have life? We who enjoy gardening know the pleasure of touching the leaves of a plant and sensing the life and spirit in it.

And so we can touch and hold a piece of clay and know with certainty that it's not just a piece of dead material. It has life! It has a spirit! It has character and personality! And more than that, it has the potential to become much more than it is, as do all living things, as do each of us.

Why do we seek out these works of John Frank? Why do they seem so special to us and make us want to own them? John Frank knew his clay. He caressed it. He talked to it. He loved his clay. The clay recognized him as a

master and surrendered its will to him, so he could make of it whatever he wished. He felt responsible to his clay to make it better and more beautiful than when he found it. And he wanted to share it with as many people as possible.

Do we not forever carry with us the kind, as well as the unkind, projections of all those who have ever touched us? And so it is with all living things, especially clay. Clay forever holds the vibrations, good and bad, of everyone who has ever handled it. This is the reason that John Frank never kept any employee who did not love to do what he or she did in the process of an item's growth toward what it was destined to become.

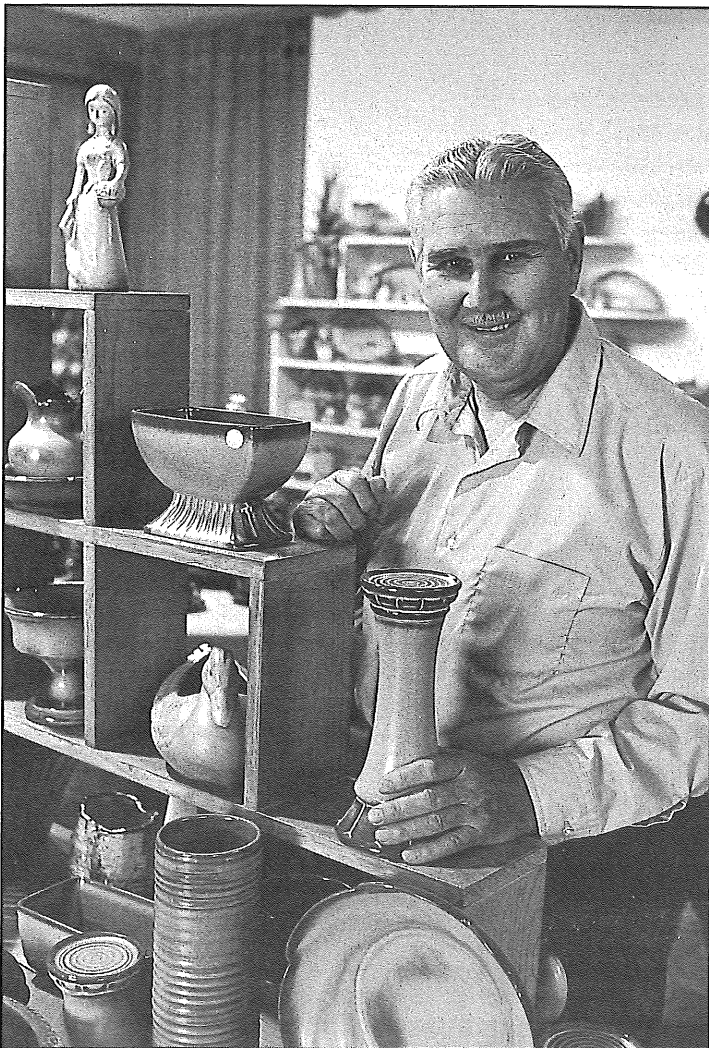
And so it is with all living things, especially clay. Clay forever holds the vibrations, good and bad, of everyone who has ever handled it.

He encouraged his people to smile and enjoy themselves while they worked, because work should be fun. As each piece went from hand to hand in the many processes it must undergo before reaching its destined shape and color, many people held it, caressed it and smiled at it. And all the while it gathered and absorbed their pleasant and loving thoughts to hold for all time.

The Indians knew about clay and pottery. But how did John Frank, a kid from the city, know? Did he learn it at some point, or was he born with the knowledge? To those who knew him, it seemed John Frank was destined to become the artist and humanitarian that he was. He was a kind and a gentle man who loved to love people, whether they loved him back or not. It was just what he did, because it made him feel good. If people failed to be their best, he always allowed them a second chance—just as when clay failed in the process of becoming all that it could be, it went back into the vat for another chance to try again.

If you should ask a hundred collectors how they started collecting Frankoma Pottery, and why they do so, you may hear a hundred different versions of virtually the same story. It goes something like, "I found this little vase at a yard sale (or flea market, or antique mall), and I was drawn to it. I had to pick it up. And when I did, I thought it spoke to me. It felt like it loved me, and it begged me to take it home. What could I do? That was more than 500 pieces of Frankoma ago."

Some folks don't consciously know why they love Frankoma. But you know, and it pleases us to know that you know. 🐾



Master of Clay. John Frank, shown here in 1972 in the Frankoma showroom, felt responsible to his clay to make it better and more beautiful than when he found it.

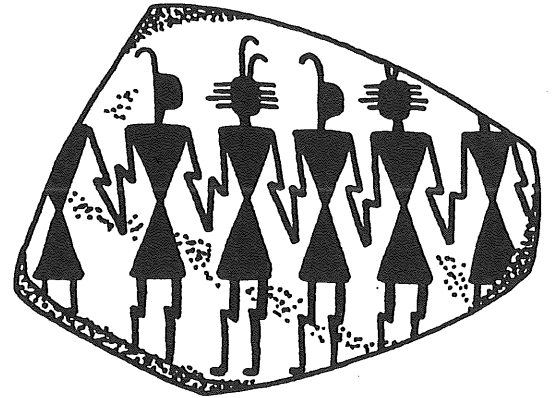
When Clay Sings

Indians who find
this pottery today
say
that everything
has its own
spirit—
even a broken pot.

They say
the clay
remembers
the hands
that made it.

Does it remember
the cornfields too?
And the
summer rains?
And the ceremonies
that held
life together?

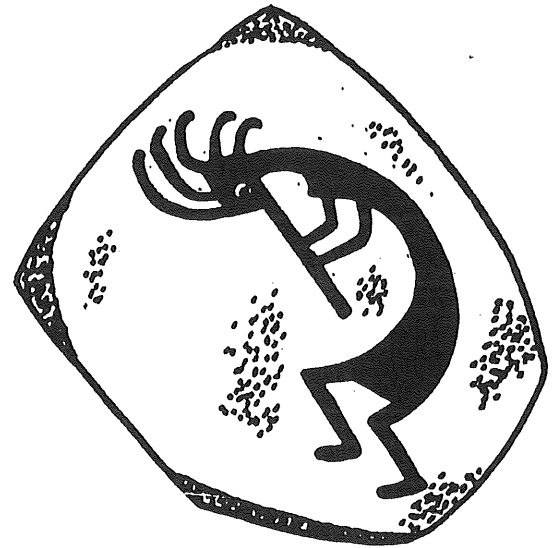
Here are
the masks
and the
costumes



and the
great
dancing
figures.

Here is the
flute player

bent low
over his
song.



They say
that even now
the wind sometimes
finds
one of those songs
still in the clay
and lifts it out
and carries it
down the canyon
and across
the hills.

It is a small sound
and always far away

but
they say
sometimes
they hear it. 🐾

Joniece's **Believe It or Not**



Joniece tells the stories

Donna writes them down



Handle With Good Sense!

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN AN adventure for me to watch how people handle pottery and other valuable items. It's often both amazing—and scary!

On the FX TV collector's show, I simply gasped every time the host of the show (or sometimes even an appraiser!) picked up a teapot or some other valuable piece by the handle, the spout, or a thin edge, the most critical and fragile parts. I'm of the school of "better safe than sorry." How do they know that the handle or spout or edge does

not have a hidden hairline crack? I'm sort of waiting for the day that a \$2,000 teapot or a \$500 vase falls to pieces in their hands. That was not the way my Dad taught me to handle china, pottery, or any other ceramic work!

So listen up, cousins! Today the subject of this part will be some of the basic DOs, DON'Ts, ALWAYS, and NEVERs of handling your Frankoma, especially the early valuable ones, the ones you prize so highly—if indeed you DO wish to preserve them.

At the convention last year, particularly at the auction, I saw pieces being handed from person to person either by a handle, or a spout, or with a thumb inside the rim and passing it around. I could hardly refrain from jumping up and giving a "no-no" lecture on the subject! Fortunately, there were no mishaps—this time.

Then the next day at *Show & Sell*, a friend and new collector came over to show me a Phoebe Head she had just bought. She handed it to me with her hand on the back of the head and a thumb inside. As she did so, she remarked that the seller said it had a hairline crack in it—"somewhere." I practically dropped to my knees and lunged forward to catch it, knowing it would probably fall into pieces any second. It shocked her, and I shocked myself, but it was lucky it didn't break. Being my good friend, I didn't hesitate to give her my "no-no" lecture right then and there!

Something very similar happened with an experienced collector who was showing me a rare wall vase, handing it to me with his thumb inside the rim. I tried to diplomatically explain to him that you should NEVER handle things that way. Then soon afterward, when the crowd had begun to thin, I was wandering around the room looking. A couple of exhibitors called me over. "Oh, Joniece, we want you to see one of our prized pieces! Let us show you!" The lady picked up a beautiful little



All three of these pieces have something in common—hollow handles. Left, #5D Plainsman Pitcher 3-qt.; center, #6T Westwind Teapot 6-cup; right, #80 Tall Pitcher 1/2-gal.

creamer by its tiny delicate handle as if to pour from it and handed it to me. Again, I gasped and instinctively thrust both hands beneath it to take it from her.

NEVER depend on a handle—especially on those older pieces—to hold the full weight of the piece. Naturally, handles and spouts and other prominent parts will be the first things to be knocked and jarred as time goes by, and these will more likely be the parts of the piece to have hairline cracks or be broken off and invisibly repaired. Any protruding part is vulnerable to be hit and knocked about during its lifetime. They cannot be expected to be as strong as the body of the piece.

But! Those are not the only points that may be undetectably damaged or weak. There are those fragile rims and edges as well. When you handle a piece by putting your thumb inside, **this creates a stress point, putting all the weight of the piece on that one spot.** You cannot expect gravity to go away and let you have your way for that moment. Whether you like it or not, architectural stress points will follow God's laws of physics, and one day your luck just may run out.

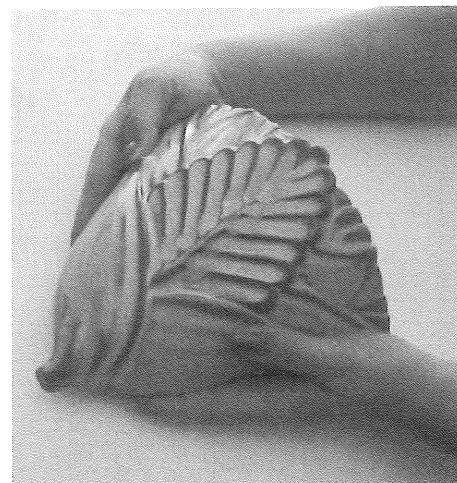
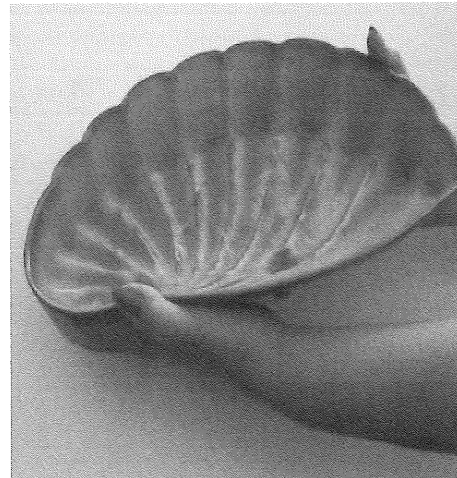
A good rule, especially on the larger pieces, is **ALWAYS** handle them with both hands. **DON'T** ever pick up a large piece by the side, by the rim, the edge, or the handle. Surely none of you would ever in your wildest thoughts pick up the large teapot (or even the medium), just by the handle and pour hot tea into someone's cup—without your other hand beneath it for support. Remember that it has the extra weight of the liquid it's holding, and it's simply a **MUST DO!**

Look at the #6T Teapot, the tall #80 Pitcher, and the 3-qt. #5D. All three of those pieces have something in common—their handles are hollow, not solid. So beware! I hope I **NEVER** have to say, "I told you so" as you're sitting there with a lap full of ice, or dancing about the room soaked in scalding hot tea.

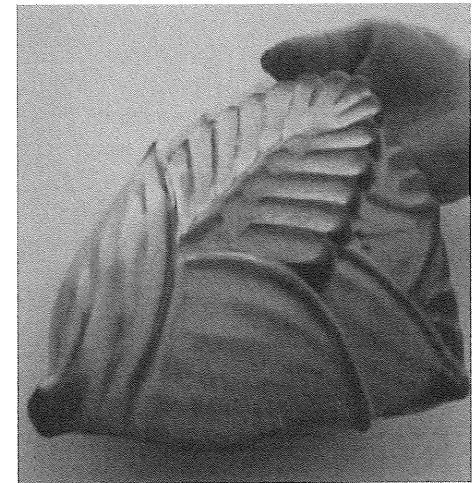
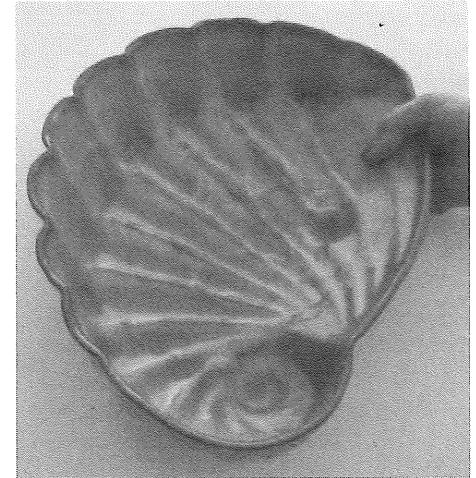
Sometime while you're sitting at your table drinking a cup of coffee, pretend you're a design engineer, or a bridge builder, and analyze the weight that that handle is supporting. True, dropping a cup of coffee is not the same

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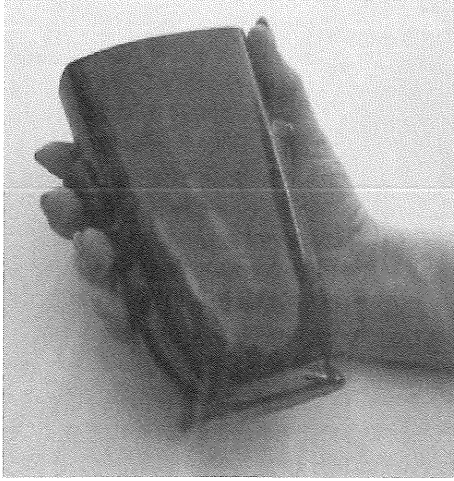
DO



DON'T



DO



DON'T



(From previous page)

as dropping a rare collector's piece. But when it comes to items that have endured for more than 40 or 50 years or more, **DO** remember to handle it with more care than you do your everyday coffee cup which, probably being a newer piece, and small, will be safe to hold by only the handle. It's almost unheard of for one of those to break in your hand.

We have the #25 canister set in Clay Blue (hardly replaceable!). Because I don't cook a lot, I have them sitting on a low decorative shelf area, and usually when I need some flour or sugar, I lift up the canister by its rim with one hand. And the second I catch myself doing it, I just know it's going to break off in my hand and fall to the floor, so I instantly grab for the bottom. And each time, I swear I'll never do that again. But then, all I want is just a little sugar or a bit of flour. No excuses, Joniece! Shame, shame! Maybe I should practice what I preach and make that my New Year's resolution right now.

Pottery may tell the story of man's history throughout the ages, but keep in mind that it usually talks to us when it is in pieces.

THE STAR MYSTERY

LAST CHRISTMAS, COUSIN Larry's lovely wife Cindy gave him a gift of a 1965 Christmas Card (the Star), which was the year of his birth. Larry is a native Oklahoman, Cindy is from South Carolina, and the couple now resides in North Carolina. (On January 6, 1999, she also gave him a 7-lb., 7-oz. baby girl, Kelly Marie. Congratulations, cousins!)

They've been somewhat perplexed about the apparent discrepancy in stock numbers. The bottom of their 1965 Christmas Card is plainly marked 480. But both Bess books and Schaum's book all list this as 481. Saddler lists it as 481 in one section and 480 under the "Christmas Miniatures" section.

What's going on here? "Is this just a matter of the Christmas Card being renumbered when it went into the 'regular line,' and some of the books not reflecting this?" asks Larry. "Or do I have something extra special?"

Larry and Cindy, to my knowledge, you're the only ones ever to ask this question. Or perhaps others have

noticed and were not bothered enough to ask. But we're glad you brought it up.

As many of you must be aware of by now, there are several Frankoma items that have carried the same stock number. And you must also be aware that, in Frankoma's earlier days, record keeping was not very high on Daddy's list of priorities. In fact, I don't believe it ever even made the list.

By 1965, Jean Collins, a very valuable employee in our office, took it on as a personal project to compile and keep a complete and accurate record of all stock numbers from 1933 on, along with their descriptions—one of the purposes being to avoid duplicating numbers. Bless you, Jean! It's one of the few books that managed to survive the 1983 fire, though slightly scorched, and we still refer to it often, almost daily.

Jean Collins and J.C. Taylor worked very closely together in many of the production aspects. I'm sure that, months after the Christmas Card was produced, one or both of them noticed that the Star Miniature carried a number that was already in use (an 8" Round Ashtray, 1965 catalog, Page 18). So a year later, when we were putting

together the 1966 catalog, the photo of the little Star happened to be added to Page 18. Well, it was suddenly noticed there were two pictures on the same page with the number 480, so it was changed to 481.

I'm sure that J.C. and Jean approached Daddy with sheepish grins and said, "Uh—Mr. Frank, we need to change the number on that little Star Miniature."

But realize that my Dad was a person of almost pure spontaneity, and I can see him now putting that "480" on the bottom of the 1965 Christmas Card and saying, "I don't think we have a 480—let's use it!" And by the time the words were out of his mouth, the number was in the mold, and he was off and running to another project.

Now please don't anyone ask me to take an oath as to the detailed truth of this story. But knowing him as well as I did, and seeing him boldly do so many similar kinds of things before my very eyes—I can tell you that it's not only possible, but highly probable, that it happened just this way.

So let's call this "Another Frankoma Mystery Solved!"

WARM, WARMER, WARMEST

LARRY AND CINDY ALSO ASK WHY the WA-1 and WA-3 Warmers are so common, and the WA-2 "Fondue Warmer" is so awfully scarce.

Excellent question! That WA-2 Fondue Warmer was made for the FD 1- $\frac{3}{4}$ qt. Covered Fondue Pot. The reason you don't see many WA-2's around is that the design of the Fondue Pot and lid were truly production disasters! The reason I say this is that this large 4-sided circular pot, with that wonderful handle, warped miserably!

Once again we're going to talk in terms of basic engineering and architectural principles. The Pot *without* the handle would not have warped to excess. But when you add a handle of that length and thickness onto the side, you create a multitude of problems, like warping and cracking. Daddy, knowing that it was going to warp some, designed a beautiful lid to hide minor warpage. However, once again, you get into putting together a *cast* lid fitting

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#480
1965 Christmas Card
Front and Back

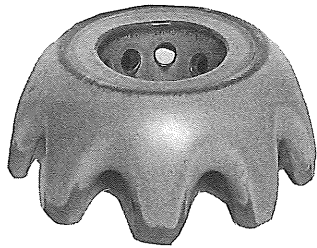


#481
Star Miniature
Front and Back

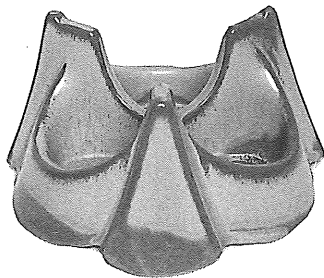




#82 Carafe with #WA-3 Carafe Warmer or #82S Carafe Set



#FD Covered Fondue Pot 1-1/2 qt. with #WA-2 Fondue Warmer



(From previous page) onto a *pressed* bottom. There are more variables in the shrinking aspect of a cast piece than there is a pressed piece. Very simply stated, the cast piece starts as a liquid and goes to a solid—where the clay on a pressed piece is half dry when it starts, so the variables are much less.

Even when the bottom doesn't warp so much, the top often doesn't shrink enough. Or the top shrinks enough, and the bottom is too warped. To shorten a long story, we had boxes and boxes of lids, with shelves and shelves full of Fondue Pots, and we couldn't make a match. *Nothing fit!* It was simply a nightmare trying to produce a few decent units to sell. And of course without the Pot, the Warmer was of no use.

Another thing people were often doing was absent-mindedly putting the Fondue Pot on an electric range top or open flame, perhaps because of its similarity to a saucepan. Not a good idea. And after the Pot was broken, people naturally discarded the Warmer. Frankoma has always been guaranteed ovenware, but it was never made for stove top cooking.

I would like to add this final word about that WA-2. To my mind, it was one of the most beautifully designed pieces that Daddy ever did. It's a positively gorgeous piece! I wish we owned one, just so it could sit around and let me admire the man's genius.

And while we're on the subject of Warmers, let's talk about the other Frankoma Warmers. Of course it's obvious that the WA-3 is just a smaller version of the WA-1. But the #82W Carafe Warmer really deserves some special attention, and some discussion on its evolution.

In designing the #82 Carafe, Daddy had thought ahead enough to scallop the base to allow enough air for the candle to burn. The Carafe was cast, and it was lovely, and equally lovely was the lid. The base was pressed, and it was beautiful as well.

Then the day of truth arrived, the day to put it all to the test—the candle

lighting ceremony. The Warmer candle was lit, and it burned brightly. We cheered. Daddy set the Carafe atop the Warmer, and the flame died. The candle was re-lit, and again Dad set the Carafe on the Warmer, and again the flame went "pfooff." Even with the deep scallops to allow air for the candle to burn, it wasn't enough. Back to the drawing board!

Daddy came up with the idea of using a drill press to drill holes into the area that held the candle. Over many objections from Ted and Charlie and J.C., holes were drilled. But then the candle wax poured out of the holes. So the holes were drilled higher. If you have an #82 Carafe set, look at it and see that the holes are actually drilled at an angle between the legs, and seldom evenly, because it was done by hand, and sometimes not so well.

How many, many times I've had customers bring from the seconds room to the sales counter a #6U Individual Baker, or even one of the 2-qt. Bakers, along with the #82W Warmer. We would always try to explain to the customer that it was designed *only* for the Carafe, and if they used a flat-bottomed piece on it, the candle will not stay lit because there's simply not enough air provided by the holes in that Warmer for the candle to burn. (Remember that the #82 Coffee Carafe has a scalloped foot to allow just enough air for the flame to burn.)

Time and time again I've shown them by lighting the candle, setting their piece on it, then stand there with them to watch the flame die! Despite my insistence that it won't work—and even demonstrating that it won't work—some have argued with me that it's probably a bad candle, or the candle needs to melt down a bit, or this one is just like the one they have at home that they've been using for years and years without any problem—and they *STILL* buy the darn thing!

Oh well, we know the customer is always right. And as a Frankoma collector, you know there are no hard and fast rules. So if *you* have an #82W and *you* can put a #6U or a #5XL bowl or any other flat bottom on it, and the candle continues to burn, it'll be just one more instance that confirms what we've all come to learn so well—*there are no rules when it comes to Frankoma!*

Joe Smith—FFCA Deputy Treasurer

● *Association Staff Member has Long History of Handling Finances*

**Donna Frank
Sapulpa, OK**

JOE AND HIS WIFE, SUE, WERE both born in North Carolina. They were even delivered by the same doctor, Sue's uncle. Sue's family moved to Florida when she was a child, but they returned to the same town in North Carolina when she was in high school. And that's where Joe and Sue met and fell in love. Sue was a year ahead of Joe in school, so when she had graduated, he was beginning his senior year. Nat King Cole could have been singing to this couple when he recorded "They Tried to Tell Us We're Too Young." But of course, like all young people in love, they didn't listen, and in Joe's senior year they were married and Sue was off to nursing school. That was almost 48 years, three children and four grandchildren ago.

As one might suspect, the names "Joe and Sue Smith" on hotel registers from coast to coast have caused many a suspicious eyebrow to be raised, especially when they were younger. "With names like ours," says Joe, "it helps to have a sense of humor. We get a kick out of it."

Joe's first job was cash clerk at Wilson Meat Packers in North Carolina. Increasing responsibility resulted in transfers to Atlanta, Chicago, Oklahoma City, Iowa and back to Oklahoma City headquarters. A third downsizing resulted in Joe's layoff after 29 years. He then became a real estate broker for a time (still licensed), but accounting kept calling him back. So for the last 11 years, he has been comptroller for Bishop McGuinness High School, from which he will retire at the end of 1999.

Joe has a history of positions as Treasurer, a job that brings with it great trust. He was treasurer of his high school senior class, treasurer for bowling leagues and an investment club, treasurer of his church for many years, and is currently treasurer of the Dewey F. Bartlett Center, Inc., in Oklahoma City and trustee of a friend's estate.



Buying and selling. Joe and Sue Smith, shown here at the June 1999 Oklahoma City Pottery Show, have more than 700 pieces of Frankoma in their personal collection. (Photo by David Vaughan)

How was FFCA fortunate enough to get Joe Smith as Deputy Treasurer? Joe and Sue had been collecting Frankoma for only about a year, when they learned of the Frankoma Family and came to their first reunion in 1996. They loved what they saw and the people they met, had a wonderful time, and at the close introduced themselves to Nancy Littrell. Joe volunteered to help with the accounting, and overworked Nancy hurried to enlist him before he could change his mind.

Joe is also a lapidist—a stone cutter—which is another hobby. "I naturally relate to Frankoma's clay and glazes," he says. "I appreciate the design factor of course, but I get an especially pleasing sensation when I hold my Frankoma. The blending of those earthy textures and colors are so wonderful."

The Smiths travel about 20,000 miles a year looking for Frankoma at estate sales, auctions, flea markets, and antique malls. Their collection now

includes over 700 pieces, which they've accumulated in just over three years. They confess to having bought any and all Frankoma they saw at first, but have since slimmed down their collection to primarily rare and "high end" pieces. "Whenever we travel, to Iowa and Florida to see our kids, one main objective is always looking for and finding Frankoma."

"We've had wonderful luck," says Joe. "Sue is so good at being at the right place at the right time. She is the real collector. For instance, one day about two years ago, she was at a local mall and saw a man coming in holding a pre-1970 Woodland Moss Fan Dancer. She followed him to his booth, and before he could place it on the shelf, she stopped him and asked what he wanted for it. She made him an offer he couldn't refuse." Another time, they went to an auction to buy three certain plates they

(Please see SMITH on page 29)

Safe Journeys for Our Frankoma Treasures

Carson & Bonnie Patterson
Houston, TX

WE HAVE BEEN COLLECTING Frankoma treasures from all over the country for several years now and, for the most part, it's been lots of fun and very rewarding. But on several occasions, we have been the unhappy recipients of a treasure that didn't survive the trip to our house. And let us tell you, the sight of a long-awaited treasure lying broken to pieces in a poorly wrapped, inadequately insulated shipping box is enough to make you first cry, and then want to wring someone's thoughtless and negligent neck!

Oh, the extremely unpleasant, trying and very time-taking hassles we've had to go through to process claims with the Post Office! Getting your money, if that ever happens, usually takes many months. And all the while, we're thinking this whole painful situation could have been avoided, if

only the seller had just taken a little more time and effort to pack our treasure correctly in the first place.

So, in an attempt to save you other Frankoma treasure hunters from enduring the sight of those sad packages like some we've seen, we offer the following packing tips and information. Granted, this method may cost you a dollar or two more. But if it saves one broken treasure out of twenty, it will have more than paid for itself in time, money, hassles, and certainly in heart-breaks.

1. **Insurance**—no matter how well you pack an item, we always recommend that insurance be bought for any shipment one cannot absorb the loss of. Beyond insurance, the following are the minimal requirements that we've learned are necessary to ship pottery with at least a 95% comfort level of it arriving safely.

2. **We begin with the item of pottery itself.** All sellers or traders

should begin by both cleaning the item and closely inspecting it for any damage or flaws that would conflict with their disclosed description. A simple magnifying glass can guarantee in a minute that the item is as described. Additionally, a light fingertip massage of the item will usually yield any imperfections that may have been overlooked by the eye.

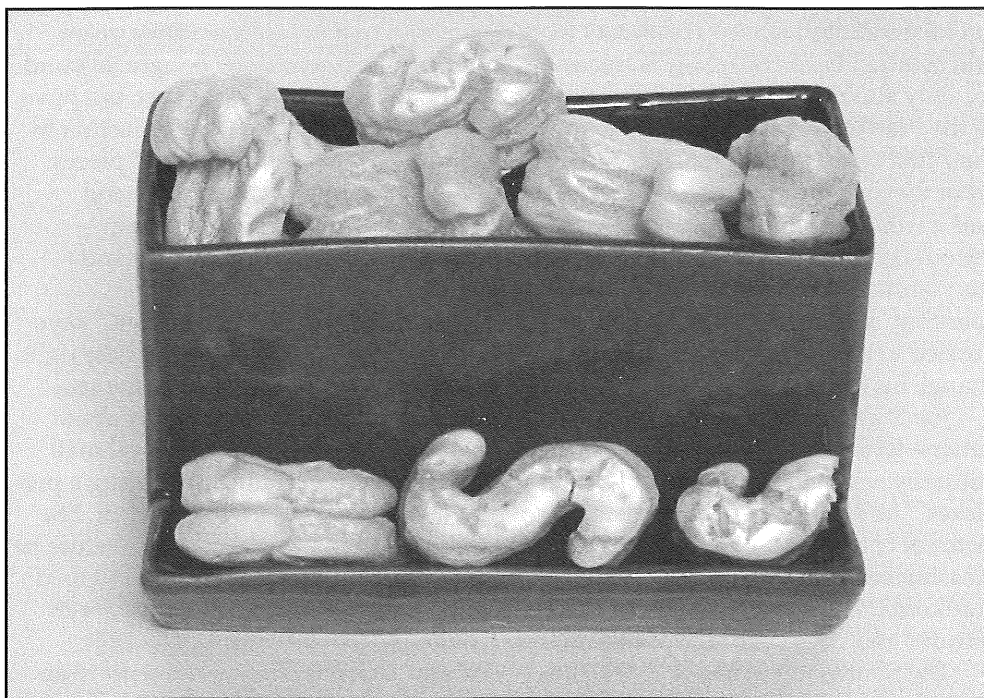
Another test that can yield elusive hairline cracks is to gently thump the pottery with your thumb and finger. An uncracked piece will have a sharp sound, almost a clear ringing sound. A cracked piece will give off a duller sound, as the vibration of the thump will be muted by a crack. A little practice will enable you to instantly distinguish the difference.

The ultimate test used by the most experienced of collectors and professionals is the use of a black light. The black light will almost always reveal even the best repair job! This method may be even further revealing by dusting the piece with a light layer of baby powder (or equivalent), then putting it under the black light. These quick and simple checks should always be done immediately prior to shipping—or upon receiving—any pottery piece.

3. **Packing should always start with the item's shape.** If the item has a hollow space of any significant size (1" or larger), it should be filled with an insulating material (discussed later) to prevent shock vibrations from passing through the pottery.

4. **Next, the pottery piece should be covered with insulating material**—to a degree that the item itself can no longer be felt when firmly pressing on the insulation. Be sure the insulation is securely bound in place with tape, string, or rubber bands!

5. **Now choose a sturdy box, large enough that further insulating materials**



Shock absorbers. The above #A1 Window Pot with Waterer (4-1/2") has Styrofoam insulation filling its hollow spaces to prevent shock from passing through.

can be added to all six sides (four sides plus top and bottom). The wrapped pottery should not be touching the sides of the box at any point. Be sure to over-stuff the insulating materials, to prevent the pottery from shifting during transport, and to compensate for any compacting and shrinkage of certain insulating materials that can occur with vibration and temperature changes.

6. Place a "From and To" destination slip *inside* the box, then seal the box securely with packing tape.

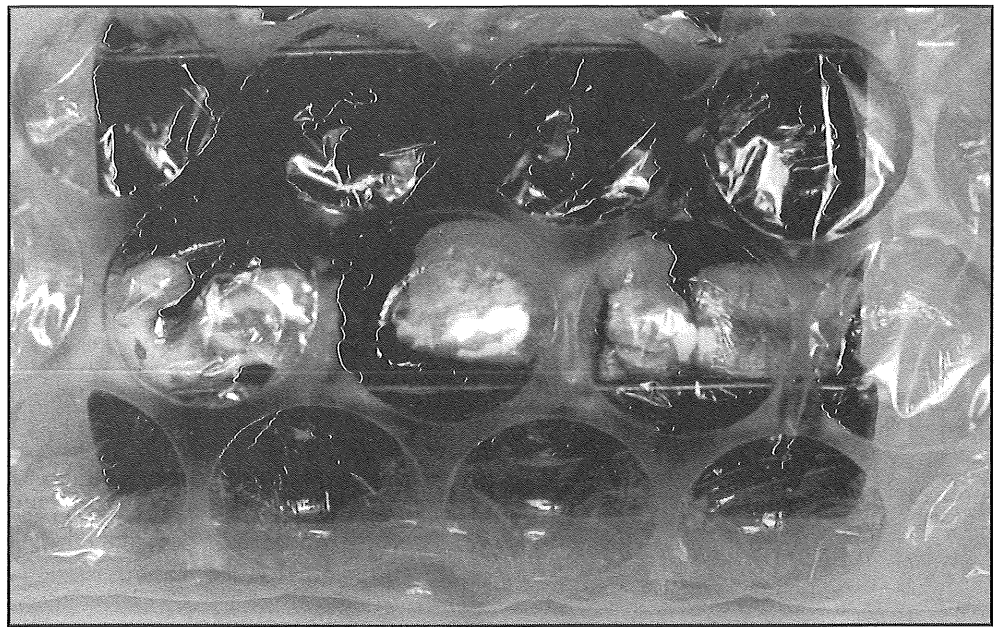
A lot of novices (and previously lucky shippers) think that the above is adequate for shipping all pottery. Unfortunately, however, experience has shown us that it really isn't adequate for anything except very small, simple, lightweight pieces. Bear in mind that each of these packages will be submitted to being tossed into distant routing bins and onto airplanes. Also, other packages *weighing several times more* will likely be thrown on top of your special box of pottery! This is why double boxing is so critical, and the only way to truly protect your Frankoma treasures as they travel across the country to their new home!

7. Double boxing is like a sacrificial, outer enclosure to protect everything just packed against any of the multitudes of shipping hazards that your package could and will most likely encounter. And, just as with the first box, this outer box should be large enough to completely contain the inner box, allowing for more insulating materials to be packed around all six sides. The inner box should not rest directly against the outer box at any point! And again—this outer box should be firmly packed with enough insulating materials to prevent the inner box from shifting during handling, even after

SMITH (from page 27)

wanted. "But they would only sell the whole lot, so to get what we wanted, we came home with 300 plates!"

When asked how he feels about FFCA, Joe is quick to respond. "FFCA is such a wonderful club! What we appreciate so much is what we've learned since we've been members, something we couldn't have gotten anywhere else.



Pottery protection. The pottery should be covered with insulating material like the piece shown above protected by bubble wrap.

the packing material may settle. This sacrificial outer box is the only way your Frankoma treasure can have a chance of surviving when a 50-100 pound box is thrown on top of it by the shippers. And you must trust us here—it does happen!

Which Packing Materials Are Best?

THIS BRINGS US TO THE discussion of the packing/insulating materials themselves, of which there are a multitude of choices available. *Within the pottery piece itself*, and in the inner box, sponge foam or extra thick bubble wrap is best. *Between the boxes*, Styrofoam sheets or additional cardboard provide the greatest strength. Styrofoam peanuts may be used, but one must really over-pack these peanuts *firmly*, to allow for settling and shrinkage due to vibration and temperature changes.

Newspaper, shredded or wadded, is the most likely to cause problems! Items will settle through newspaper and end

up in contact with the sides of the box, which will most surely allow shock transference during shipping.

We've seen several additional types of insulating materials used, such as baby diapers (clean, of course!), wadded up plastic grocery bags, empty cereal boxes, and factory packaging from other product boxes. All of these can work-if enough is used to fully fill the voids in the boxes to allow for settling and shifting.

If you will take the extra time, effort, and probably a small extra expense, to follow these shipping guidelines carefully (and ask those who ship to you to do the same), you may never again have to endure the miserable process of filing insurance claims for damaged treasures.

And then, once again—just like the sight of an approaching Wells Fargo stage in earlier times—watching a mail truck or a UPS truck pull into your driveway can be the signal of impending pleasure and excitement, as it always has been and always should be! 🐾

We've received such an education from the *Pot & Puma* and the *Prairie Green Sheet*, as well as from the Frank ladies, the Littrells, the Stolls, Pat Warner and many other collectors. They have all been so generous to let us come and view some of those rare pieces that we may never be able to own. We have felt so welcome in their homes to look,

handle, feel, talk about, and appreciate the beauty and significance of our common love—Frankoma.

"Being a member of the Frankoma Family could only be better if everyone enjoyed being a part of it as much as we do. All the work I do for FFCA is little enough to give back for what we receive." 🐾

Broken Romances—Love 'Em or Leave 'Em!

Robert McBain
LeGrand, IA

"Frankoma vase for sale, small chip on lip."

"Frankoma pitcher for sale, small ding on base, small crack on lip."

"Fan Dancer for sale, leg broken and re-glued."

"Frankoma miniature donkey for sale, ear broken off and lost."

Do any of these sound familiar? If you're a Frankoma collector and bidding on Internet auctions, I'm sure they do. What do you do with these kinds of pieces? Do you pass on them? Do you try to get them for minimum bid? Or do you bid on them like any other piece of Frankoma Pottery?

This is often a very tough question—and usually without a good answer. It really depends on how special the piece is, how scarce it is (I hate the word "rare"), the color, and what's wrong with it. I've purchased items like this, which I would not part with! And then, at other times, I've

purchased them just to have and enjoy until I can find a better one.

What should one pay for an item like this? I think we can all agree that we would not pay "book price." But what then? I would say in the 50-75% range, again depending on the item and extent of damage. I would not pay anything for a common item that you could get almost anywhere at an online auction or flea market. For instance, a Lazybones Salt and Pepper. But then, if someone advertised a Fan Dancer in Ada clay that had the leg broken and re-glued (not professionally), this item should probably bring a price of 50-75% of a non-damaged item. The potential of the Fan Dancer is there, as you might one day want it repaired professionally, which would most likely make the investment worth the while.

The first item I purchased on eBay was a #23A Creamer in Blue Gray Jade. When I received it, the person had thrown in the matching #23 Sugar. But the Sugar had a crack in it that started down one side, went through the bottom and started up the other side.

Just like our Frankoma is not always perfect, neither are we Frankoma collectors flawless. We all have dings, chips and small imperfections (some readily visible, some hidden). But they don't make us less valuable.

The person from whom I bought it didn't have the heart to throw it away, and I don't blame her. It is a beautiful set, and it shows very nicely. Someday I'll sell this set, as I've since acquired a set in Royal Blue. But it will be sold as a set, as it is so nice. It's one that, even though cracked, you can't help but love! This is the good side of buying something that is damaged.

I have also purchased other items that were not so good. I bought a #91



Broken head—broken romance. What would you pay for the above #427 Dreamer Girl Bookend 5-3/8" Jade Green, circa 1934-1938, with a re-glued broken head.

Pitcher in Dusty Rose. The description said that it had a ding on the side of it, and from the photo it didn't look that bad. I bought it for "book," and when I received it, it was in beautiful condition—except that someone had tried to fix the ding by painting it! This had more or less ruined the item, and I would not even try to resell it. If I had it to do over, I would definitely not purchase it. I would leave that one.

I bought a #75 Carved Vase in Silver Sage with a small ding in the rim. You can see it if you really look for it, but it does not distract from the item, as it is such a lovely piece! I didn't pay "book" for it, but was in the 75% range, and for that price I would certainly do it again.



#78 Tall Round Vase 8-3/4"
Pot & Puma mark
I-1934 D-1942
Broken into several large
pieces and glued
together.

Another example would be my #42 Grease/Sugar in Prairie Green. I got it really cheap, and rightly so. It has seen a lot of better days. It has a stress crack in one corner, the body is chipped in three places, and the lid is chipped and cracked. So why did I purchase it? I wanted one for my collection and, until I can come up with one that's better, it'll do. Again, it didn't cost me much, and I wouldn't have paid any more than I did.

So what's a person to do? Each of us has to answer that for himself or herself. What is the item? How bad is the damage? How scarce is it (what clay, what color, etc.)? Are you trying to fill in a collection? Are you collecting that particular color? This is all going to

determine what your decision will be. But again, I would never pay full price for an item that has some noticeable damage.

Stress cracks (sometimes called "fire checks"), however, have to be one of the toughest ones to deal with. Those were created during firing. Most of the time they do not distract from the item. They can be part of the personality of the item—but they need to be taken into consideration. (According to Joniece, an item with this fault was never sold as a "first.") So if an item is for sale, and it has a stress crack, will I pay "book?" I might, depending on the piece, and where the crack is located (readily visible or hidden).

You're right—this sounds a bit like a politician's double talk. But you have to make up your own mind when dealing with items that have some sort of imperfection. And each of us has to define "imperfection" for ourselves.

Just like our Frankoma is not always perfect, neither are we Frankoma collectors flawless. We all have dings, chips and small imperfections (some readily visible, some hidden). But they don't make us less valuable. Like our Frankoma treasures, they just give us charm and character.

Love 'em or Leave 'em,
a Frankoma Romance . . . 🐾



#116 Reclining Puma 10-1/4"
Jade Green, "O,"
circa 1934-1938
Broken feet and tail, reglued.

Amana Plates

First Produced in 1971 for the Amana Society in Iowa, the Plates Were Brought Back Into Line in 1981 and 1988

Ray Stoll
Oklahoma City, OK

FRANKOMA POTTERY FIRST produced the Amana Plates in the fall of 1971, and Mr. Frank was the designer. Although some of the records were destroyed in the fire of 1983, it is believed that 100 were produced in each of three glazes—Prairie Green, Desert Gold and White Sand. They were specially designed for the Amana Society located in Williamsburg, Iowa, for the Amana General Store located in Amana, Iowa. We are reasonably certain that they were never sold anywhere other than the Amana General Store.

It is believed that in 1981, the Amana Society again ordered the same number and colors as the 1971 edition.

However, a few have been discovered in a color described as what might have been the light gray-blue of the Conestoga Wagon Plate. So Joniece then began digging a little deeper and found in the files of Frankoma Industries an

invoice for a later order, which tells us the Amana Society ordered 200 more plates in March of 1988—100 in Desert Gold, and 100 in Mountain Haze. Could the ones we discovered that appeared to be Conestoga Blue in fact be Mountain Haze?

For the second and third orders (1981 and 1988), Joniece underlined the name "Amana" on the back of the plate in two places, which she says was a direct influence of Phyllis Bess. Phyllis explained to her the importance of the collector and what it would mean as a re-issue, urging her to do so in the belief that Frankoma would one day become a major collectible.

From that time on, with anything Joniece brought back into line, she did attempt in some way to change the piece slightly, or change the stock number, so that we as collectors would always be able to differentiate. For the same reason, she changed the second issue of the Greyhound—subtle, but to the collector, there is no question as to

(Continued next page)

From that time on, with anything Joniece brought back into line, she did attempt in some way to change the piece slightly, or change the stock number, so that we as collectors would always be able to differentiate. For the same reason, she changed the second issue of the Greyhound—subtle, but to the collector, there is no question as to whether it was a first or second issue.

The Amana Plate 1971
Back view
AMANA is not underlined



(From previous page)

whether it was a first or second issue.

I have also recently seen Amana plates in a glaze that Joniece refers to as "Rotary Blue." Mr. Frank originally created this particular color for his beloved Rotary Club, in which he was very active most of his life, and served for a time as president. This is the

reason this particular shade was always called Rotary Blue. Some of you may have seen the little miniature bowl with the Rotary International symbol in White Sand and this dark blue on the back. It is my understanding that variations of this blue also appeared on other pieces over the years, such as the Oral Roberts Trivet (white on top and a

lighter blue on bottom). And the secret is finally out, folks—the blue on the Uncle Sam Toby Mug is Rotary Blue!

Because the first two invoices are not available to us, I went back to Joniece and asked how these plates in Rotary Blue could be accounted for. She explained that sometimes, when the customer was in the process of deciding what colors would be most appropriate for their special piece, Frankoma would offer to make a few in another color to let them see how they sold. So the first invoice could very well have read something like "100 DG, 100 WS, 75 PG, 25 RBlue." This was not uncommon for a first order on a special item such as this, and it was most likely what happened here. (The Amana Plate was certainly never sold in the retail showroom by Frankoma, because they were sold only to the customer ordering the special piece.)

If you find one of these plates, check on the bottom to see if "Amana" is underlined or not. If it is not, you'll know it was from the first order in 1971. If it is, it was from either the 1981 or 1988 orders.

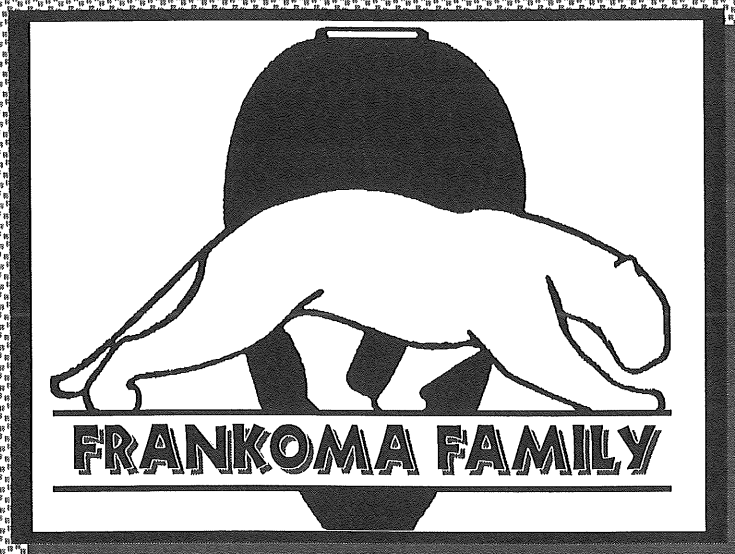
Additionally, both the Prairie Green (of the first two issues) and the Desert Gold glazes (of all three issues) are noticeably slightly different, namely due to the differences in clay colors (brick red versus pink). Although the differences in clay colors has been discussed from time to time, Joniece tells me she will again talk about color variables in the next issue, and offer the reasons one cannot always just look at the clay and determine for sure its date of manufacture!

From time to time, one can find examples of all three editions of the Amana Plate on eBay, usually at a reasonable price, around \$25 to \$35. 🐼



The Amana Plate 1981 and 1988 (8-1/2")

Front view at top. Back view at bottom, AMANA is underlined in two places.

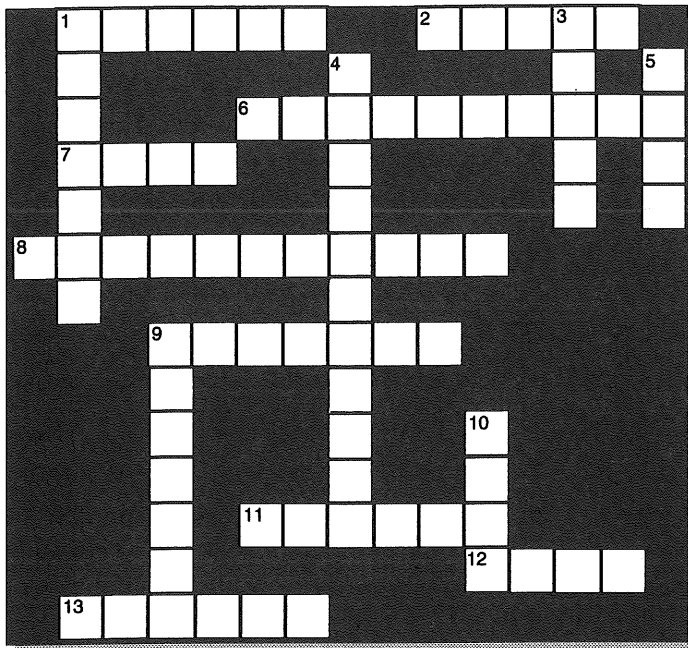


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FRANKOMA FUZZLE FUN

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. #164 Miniature Animal | 9. #803 Honey Jar |
| 2. #558 Shakers | 11. #396 Planter |
| 6. #700 "Kid" | 12. #184 Flower Holder |
| 7. #433 Bookends | 13. #730 Wall Pocket |
| 8. #142 Sculpture | |

Down

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. #385 Puppy | 5. #FLTR Trivet |
| 3. #604 Toby | 9. #119 Murray Design |
| 4. #126 Taylor Design | 10. #61 Vase |

More of Those Stock #'s

 Clip out or photocopy and mail

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Winter	January 31
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INVASION OF THE BILIKENS!

Just after the last issue of the *Pot & Puma* went to press, with Jack Kish's Biliken article, Joniece found this in a storage box of water-damaged photos salvaged from the 1983 fire. We could not resist showing it to you, even if after the fact. These smiling darlings were just emerging from the kiln sometime in the 1950's.