

#2

Summer  
1998

# The Medalta Review

(A newsletter for Collectors of Alberta Made Pottery)

Celebrating  
Alberta's  
Ceramic  
History



## HYCROFT'S CHURCH PLATES

Hycroft had a steady history of producing church plates over the years, apparently a practise which they took over from their forerunner the Medicine Hat Potteries. The earliest one which I have seen with a Hycroft stamp on it was dated 1956 while the latest was 1983. So far I have recorded 50 plates but a few others are still likely to show up as I examine more collections and work my way through the Hycroft records.



The definition used here to define a church plate is one that shows a picture of a church or churches and/or one that marks an anniversary, be it 50th, 75th, 100th or even the 1<sup>st</sup> one. The only exception that I am aware of is the 10.5" plate marking "The World's Largest Little Church, seating 10,000 six at a time, "Drumheller, Alberta" but as it was ordered by the Elim Pentecostal Tabernacle in Drumheller, I have included it for the record. It does include a church scene although it does not mark any particular anniversary. This church, as many of you already know, can be found west of the Tyrell Museum of Palaeontology as you drive along the highway going out of Drumheller.

I may have inadvertently included one or two in this list, such as "The United Church of Canada, Ut Omnes Unum Sint" one as I have not yet seen the item to record its specific markings.

Several churches in the Medicine Hat area regularly acquired plates from Hycroft which were awarded to church members for such things as "faithful service" and "wedding anniversaries". These sorts of plates are not included in my definition of church plates.

Upon examination of the listing, you will see that the majority were ordered by Lutheran churches, but the assortment is indeed quite wide.

Lutheran	20
United Church	10
Baptist	5
Evangelical	3
Catholic	2
Others & Unknown	10

Also, most orders came from churches located in Alberta, but a few represented the other three western provinces. None have yet shown up for locations east of Manitoba.

Where I have been able to pick up the actual

number of plates ordered, I have given the quantity. The smallest was 24 plates for the Bindloss United Church while the largest was 600 for St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Edmonton, but keep in mind that these are minimum quantities as I have not yet waded through all of Hycroft's invoice records from where this data is being gleaned.

Most church plates were produced on either the 9.5" or 10.5" diameter plates but at least two are found on the 9" scalloped edge plate. Brown or black images were the norm, although I have seen a couple of blue ones. The scene also was typically in a single colour, likely to keep the cost down, and the edge was usually banded with gold. A few samples have the edge of the plates shaded in various colours, but usually the gold banding is on plain white. The cost of the plates to the churches was about \$1.00 per plate in the early years increasing to \$4.25 by 1978. Any extra colours cost extra money. Some of the prices as listed on Hycroft's invoices for 10.5" plates are given below.

1959	\$1.00
1962	1.50
1970	1.50
1972	1.50
1973	2.25
1974	3.00
1975	3.25
1977	4.00
1978	4.25



These prices clearly show the effect inflation was having upon Hycroft's pricing, particularly after 1972 when we started to see high interest rates and wage increases. But the higher prices did not seem to dampen orders being placed for church plates. They continued to come in on a regular basis, and it was only Hycroft's cessation of production that brought an end to orders being placed.

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What do Hycroft's church plates sell for today? Most dealers are asking in the \$15.00 to \$25.00 range, but you can still pick them up for half that at flea markets and even less at garage sales.

Note: If you visit The Clay Products Interpretive Centre (Hycroft Plant) in Medicine Hat this summer, you can view about 30 different church plates which will be on exhibit this summer. And if you have any duplicates, take them with you to donate to the museum.



## The Medalta Review

Volume 1, Number 2, Summer 1998

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The Medalta Review is published quarterly in the interest of keeping collectors of Alberta made pottery informed on newly found products, current prices, history of the potteries and other aspects relating to the Alberta pottery industry. Each issue includes a Hycroft and Medalta section. Other columns will bring you reports regarding Alberta Potteries (Wyatt and Yuill), Athabasca Potteries, Medicine Hat Potteries (Little Chief), Medalta (1966) Ltd., Provincial Industrial Enterprises (PIE) or Sunburst Ceramics, and our question and answer column will reply to inquiries from our readers and museum visitors.

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## Alphabetical Listing of Hycroft's Church Plates

\* **Augustana Lutheran Church, Edmonton, Alberta, 1929-1979**  
125, 9.5" plates

\* **Bethany Lutheran Church, Tilley, Alberta**  
10.5" plate

\* **Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1897-1963, Bruderheim, Alberta**  
50 plates

\* **Bindloss United Church**  
24, 10.5" plates in 1962

\* **Bruderfeld Moravian Church, 1895-1970**  
200, 10.5" plates

\* **Calvary Lutheran Church, Svea, Water Glen, 1898-1973**  
200, 10.5" plates

\* **Camrose United Church, Camrose, Alberta**  
10" plates

\* **Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Dedication 13-XII-1981, Surrey, B.C.**  
100, 9.5" plates

\* **Christ Our Saviour Catholic Centre, Dedication 1975, Prince George, B.C.**  
150, 10.5" plate

\* **East Olds Baptist Church, Olds, Alberta, 1929-1979**  
200, 9.5" plates

\* **Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 1962-1982, Calgary**  
275, 10.5" plates

\* **Evangelical Free Church, Bow Island, 1947-1972**  
150, 10.5" plates, 1/2 gold trim, 1/2 platinum trim

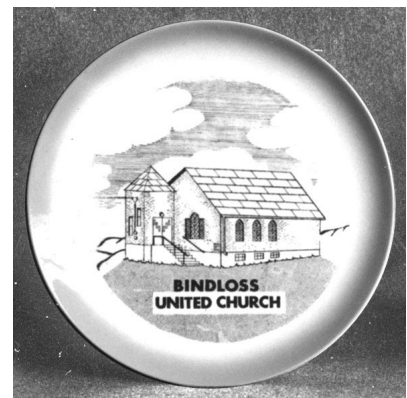
\* **The Evangelical Free Church, Alberta, Golden Jubilee**  
200, 9" scalloped plate invoiced 23 Dec. 1966

\* **Evangelical United Brethren Church, Winnipeg Manitoba, 60th Anniversary**  
208, 10.5" plates May 1959

\* **Graburn United Church, 1970**  
10.5" plate

\* **Grace Lutheran Church, Gnadenthal Alberta, 1902-1977**  
240, 10.5" plates

\* **Holy Spirit Church, Edmonton, Alberta, June 2, 1968**  
300, 10.5" plates



\* Hope [Lutheran Church], Forestburg, Alta., 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1917-1977

100, 9.5" plates

Hughenden United Church, 1916-1966

100, 9.5" plates

\* Immaculate Conception Church, Kelowna, B.C., 1859-1962

500, 9" scalloped plate & 10.5" round plate

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tomahawk, 1910-1970

150, 10.5" plates

\* Peace Lutheran Church, Leduc, Alberta, 1936-1976

100, 10.5" plates

Provost United Church, Provost, Alberta

50 plates Oct. 1963

\* Rabbit Hill Baptist Church, South Edmonton, Alberta, 1892-1967

198, 10.5" plates

\* Raven Union Church, 1926-76, 50th anniversary

500, 10.5" plates

Saint Andrew's Church, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

470, 10" plates Feb. 1956

\* St. Andrew's United Church, Cardston - Alberta, 1975

75, 10.5" plates

\* St. Andrew's United Church, Cardston - Alberta, 1980

9.5" & 10.5" plates; possibly not produced

\* Saints Constantine and Elena Romanian Orthodox Church, Edmonton, 42nd Congress Romanian Orthodox Missionary Episcopate in America July 1973

350, 10.5" plates

\* St. Emerence Church, Riviere Qui Barre, 1902-1967

100, 10.5" plates

\* St. John's Evangelical Lutheran



Church, Edmonton, Alberta, 1903-1978

600, 9.5" plates (400 brown & 200 black)

\* St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, (Pleasant Prairie), Wetaskiwin, Alberta, 1893-1973

220, 10.5" plates

St. John's Lutheran Church, Leader, Sask., 1911-

1961

100, 10.5" plates

\* St. John's Lutheran Church (Heimthal) Leduc, Alta. 1893-1968

225, 10.5" plate

\* St. John's Lutheran Church, New Sarepta, Alberta, 1911-1976

200, 10.5" plates

\* St. John's Presbyterian Church, Medicine Hat, Alberta, 1883-1983

100, 9.5" plate

St. Mary's, Handel, Sask., 1905-1965.

10.5" plate

\* St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (Rosenthal) - Rollyview, Alta., 1896-1971

300, 10.5" plate

\* St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ellerlie, 1896-1971

250, 10.5" plates

St. Paul's United Church, Hardisty, Alberta, 1907-1967

200, 9.5" plates

\* St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Bashaw, Alberta, 1897-1972

250, 10.5" plate

St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Medicine Hat

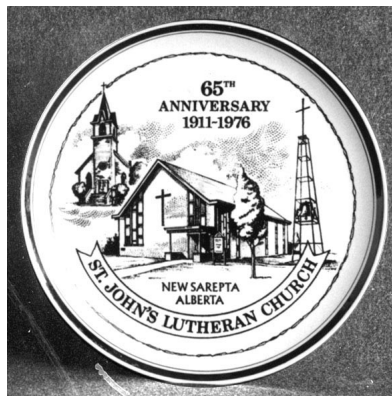
100, 10" plates 1962

"St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Scapa, Alberta, 1921-1971

200, 9.5" plates

"Trinity United Church, Golden Anniversary, March 1963

100, 10.5" plates



\* Trochu Baptist Church, Trochu, Alberta, 1911-1961

125, 10.5" plate

The United Church of Canada, Ut Omnes Unum Sint

9.5" plate

Vang Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, 1899-1974

100, 10.5" plates 1974

\* Victoria First Church Dedication, Church of the Nazarene, January 1978

100, 10.5" plates

W.M.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church, Leduc, 1923-1973

150, 10.5" plates

\* The World's Largest Little Church, seating 10,000 six at a time, Drumheller, Alberta

10.5" plate

\* indicates sample in FOMS collection

## Church Plates made by Medicine Hat Potteries

To date, I have recorded only 3 church plates made by Medicine Hat Potteries. All were produced in 1955, late in the company's history, just before the plant was sold to Marwell Construction of Vancouver and renamed Hycroft China Limited.

All three plates have the border finished in a dark reddish-brown and while the two larger plates have church scenes on them, the smaller 7" plate has the Canadiana scenes around the central lettering. The two larger plates leave much to be desired in quality as the name of the church is often

Cont'd on page 7

## A MEDALTA FACT

Medalta produced no church plates that we know of, although they did make a beer stein in 1950 with a church scene on the side within a decorative border and with the caption "OLD CHURCH GUILFORD" below the scene. Medalta also made a picnic set, consisting of a large platter, salad bowl and eight soup/sandwich plates, which was commonly decorated with the scene called the "Old French Church."



## RECENT PRICES

Just over a year ago at a Hall's auction in Calgary a globe shaped lamp decorated with the fuzzy owl pattern sold for about \$900.00. What's happened since then? Shortly after that sale another fuzzy owl lamp sold for about \$1200.00 but it was indeed a prize as it was against a blue background and was well marked with both a Medalta stamp and a decoration code. So far this is the only blue owl lamp that I have ever heard of. More recently a couple of other owl lamps appeared on the market. The fuzzy owl in the usual



browns and marked with a Medalta sticker on the bottom went for \$500.00.

The second owl lamp which had no

Medalta stamp on it went for the same price, but it was unusual in that it was the black silhouette owl

variety. I have only seen a couple of the silhouette owls so far as opposed to six of the fuzzy owl variety.

1 pt. tankard pitcher with cottage design,  
A. Donias, Rabbit Lake, Sask. .... ca. \$210.00  
6" trivet, hand painted cottage ..... 150.00  
6" trivet, hand painted mill scene ..... 150.00  
Hotel Wales teapot ..... 40.00  
1.5 pt. Tankard pitcher with owls ..... 125.00  
twist cord cookie jar, bluebell decoration 160.00  
twist cord cookie jar, cornflower on pink . 90.00

•

## TOP HATS

## Medicine Hat Potteries' Top Hat

So far I have only seen one sample of the top hat made by Medicine Hat Potteries (1938-1955). It is finished in a white glaze, stands 4.5" high and measures 9.0" x 6.25" across the brim. The stamp is the plain "Little Chief" rather than one of the



fancy Canadiana types, and it was placed in the centre of the top of the top hat as I have accented in the photograph. This placement of the stamp might suggest that the hat was



used with the open or brim side up, perhaps as a flower, candy or nut holder.

Other than this brief description, I can tell you nothing about it as I have yet to see any production or sales records of the Medicine Hat Potteries. I would of course appreciate hearing from any collectors that have sample(s) of the top hat in their collection in order to see what the colour range was and if it was made in more than one size.

## Medalta's Top Hat

But did you know that Medalta also made a top

hat? As you can see from the letter reproduced here, Medalta made its top hat from a sample sent to them by B.

Cunliffe. Cunliffe was Medalta's agent in the Vancouver area, and he was constantly sending samples to the factory which he thought would be popular sales items. We know that the top hat went into production for sure as several other letters from Cunliffe mention it, one asking about when all the back orders will be filled and a later one, dated 18 October 1941,

stating "There is also the balance of the Top Hats ... and we are urgently in need of these."

But, to date, a top hat with a Medalta stamping on it has not surfaced, although several collectors have picked up samples of a top hat which they believe to be Medalta's due to the colour of the clay and the glazes. Recently the Friends of Medalta Society acquired a top hat which I believe shows the best evidence yet of being a Medalta product. It too is unstamped but it is typically made of the yellow burning clay and it is finished in coloured lacquers, both on the interior and exterior. The base colour is a bright sky blue covered with white speckling, and on each side is found a small stencilled 5-petal, orange flower with a few green and orange leaves around. It has a raised hat band leading to a forked end after passing through a buckle. It stands just under 4" high and meas-

ures 5.25" from front to back and 5.5" across. The diameter across the top of the hat is 3 5/8 to 3 3/4".



Medicine Hat, Alberta,  
March 11th, 1941.

Mr. B. A. Cunliffe,  
321 - Water Street,  
VANCOUVER, B. C.

Dear Sir:

We are just in receipt of an advice from Calgary stating that you wish the Top Hat made twice the size of the original sample.

This is to advise you that we are doing so.

Yours very truly,

MEDALTA POTTERIES LIMITED.

Per:

MJP/V

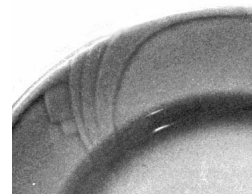
## SOME RARELY SEEN MEDALTA POTTERIES' PRODUCTS



## A New Plate Pattern

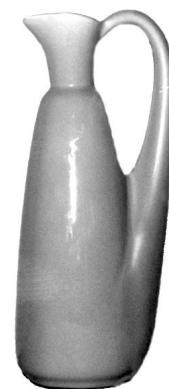
Recently a new MHP plate pattern showed up. Perhaps more than one sample exists in collections, but until a few months ago I had never before seen or recorded this pattern in my travels.

The piece observed was a dinner plate, yellow in colour and 10.25" in diameter, and it was back stamped with the usual small sized "Little Chief" stamp. The plate exhibits a raised/shallowly grooved sweeping pattern that repeats itself three times around the broad, relatively flat rim. The rim itself is the reinforced, rolled type, so typically found on Medalta's hotelwares but rarely seen on Medicine Hat Potteries' products. Where there is a dinner plate, one would expect to find a side plate, a soup/cereal bowl and a cup/saucer and perhaps even other pieces. Do any of our readers have other pieces that match this pattern? Please let me know.



## A Spouted &amp; Handled Vase

One collector has two samples of Medicine Hat Potteries' C-60 vase. Perhaps it had some other use such as a vinegar dispenser, but for now I am calling it a vase as many of the style numbers used by MHP starting with the prefix C were assigned to vases. The samples he had were 8.5 inches high at the spout, and one was a medium to dark blue while the other was a light turquoise blue. So far only this size has appeared which has the "Little Chief" stamp on it. A larger size standing 11 5/8" high at the spout, also in the darker blue, was not stamped.



## MEDALTA'S MINIATURES



lies one of these little miniatures!

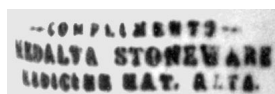
In total, Medalta made seven different miniatures. All but the miniature Fez were used to promote the plant, while the story for the fez is that it was

made to give to the delegates of a Shrine convention held in Medicine Hat in 1949.

The seven different pieces are listed below, along with their size and the approximate number of each recorded so far.

Item	size	# seen
churn	3.5 to 3.75" high	8
chamber pot	1.38 to 1.5" high	13
butter crock	1.5" high	1
crock	2.5" high	14
shouldered jug	3.75 to 4.0" high	54
round top jug	3.38" high	1
saki cup	1.5" high	1
fez	1.13 high	5

Before looking at each of the miniatures, just a brief comment on the stamp shown here. The pieces with the Compliments of Medalta Stoneware Ltd., stamp likely date from about 1920 to 1924.



Included are the churn, butter crock and chamber pot. While I have yet to see the miniature crock with the compliments stamp on it, you can find it with the oval Medalta Stoneware Ltd. stamp on it (G.4.a in the stamp book). What I find interesting is that no miniature jug has ever shown up dating to the Medalta Stoneware period; the earliest recorded piece so far dates to 1925.

## Churn

The churn is perhaps the most prized of the miniatures, not only because it is early and hard to find, but also because of its graceful shape. The one shown here with stamp G.12 on it sold in Calgary about a year ago for \$400.00 and at the same sale an unmarked one went for about \$250.00. As to its date range, it is my guess that it was not made for many years, probably no later than 1930.



Medalta had a long history of producing miniatures, starting at least in the early 1920's and going right through until the plant closed in 1954. Some have claimed that the miniatures were salesmen's samples but, if so, there is no mention of the practise in any of the Medalta papers. We do know that Medalta used its miniatures to promote the plant, giving them away to people visiting the plant and selling them as souvenirs to those that wished them. Many of the miniatures are marked with a Medalta stamp on the side or with the phrase "Compliments of..."

It just might be that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Devonshire and Governor General Lord Bunge of Vimmy all received a miniature crock or churn when they visited the plant in 1919. Perhaps somewhere in an English museum, or perhaps even the Royal collection itself,

### Chamber Pot

The chamber pot appears to have had a fairly lengthy period of production from about 1920 to at least the war but even so it is fairly hard to find. The advertizing samples which have been seen include ones named to the Grand Council - U.C.T. (also found on a jug), Marshall's Books (located in Medicine Hat) and the Belleville Pottery Company in Ontario. I do not know the date of the Marshall's miniature but the other three were ordered in the second half of the 1920s. The reason for extending the production date to the war years is that a letter dated April 1940 mentions the miniature chamber referring to it as a "pispot."

### Butter Crock

Regretfully, I have no picture of this item to show you. The piece I recorded was owned by the daughter of Ulysses Sherman Grant who was one of Medalta's owners in the early 1920s. It effectively looks like the regular miniature crock except it is only 1 1/2" high. Due to only one example showing up so far, its production date range cannot be determined.

### Crock

The miniature crock also had a long period of production. It was originally made by Medalta Stoneware Ltd. as you can find samples with the G.4.a stamp on the side. During the Medalta Potteries period three or four different souvenir crocks were available; one with the G.12 stamp on the side, one with a maple leaf, one with a souvenir stamp and another as a Royalty commemorative dating to 1939.

### Shouldered Jug

After the pottery changed hands in 1924, with the name changing to Medalta Potteries Ltd., miniatures started to be



produced for anyone requesting them. You can find orders for jugs placed by the I.O.O.F, National Hotel, Charles Baker, Grand Council - U.C.T. and the Athabasca Hotel (2 varieties - Get the Broom & a bear design).

Some of the largest orders for miniature jugs during the mid to late 1920's were placed by the Medicine Hat Pottery Company in Toronto. They were the agents/distributors for Medalta's products in the Toronto area from around 1925 to 1938. The similarity in name to the pottery located in Medicine Hat led many collectors to pass on the opportunity of acquiring one of these jugs as they did not realize they were made by Medalta. You can find the Medicine Hat Pottery Co. jugs with 2 different Toronto addresses and a variety of different layouts. So far I have recorded at least four different varieties.

I have reproduced a couple of letters from the Medicine Hat Pottery Company ordering its souvenir jugs. Wouldn't it be fun to find one of the specially holed ones that they ordered?

There is not much evidence of jug orders from 1934 to 1947, but in the late

1940s and early 1950s Medalta started making them again. By this time Medalta was using its white burning clay rather than its grey stoneware clay. The samples you can find include the Never Drink Water scene (a boy urinating into a pond) and the Cattle Country (saddle) and Mountain Trails

(white-tailed deer) series. In these series dating to the early 1950s, the miniature jugs were used as vinegar holders.

### Round Top Jug

This piece is known from a single specimen in the collections of The Medicine Hat Museum and Archives. Since it is neither marked with a Medalta stamp nor mentioned



MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY  
FOOT OF BATHURST ST.  
NEAR FLEET ST.

TORONTO, 2  
CANADA

October 19th, 1927.

Medalta Potteries Ltd.,  
Medicine Hat, Alta.

Gentlemen:

We find that one of the best advertising mediums which we have is the small souvenir jug, and we would ask you to make up 500 of these for us, stamped with our name, and we are mailing you a stamp for same.

We would like the handles made a little heavier than formerly, as they were easily broken.

Yours very truly,

MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY

*[Signature]*  
Mgr.

AWP/R

Medalta Potteries Ltd.,  
Medicine Hat, Alta.

Gentlemen:-

Would you please make us one hundred souvenir jugs, additional to our present order, with a hole in the bottom centre, so that a bolt may pass through from the top of the jug, down through the bottom. These are to be used as mascots on Motor truck, the hole on the bottom to be the same size as the hole on the top.

Yours very truly,

MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY



in the Medalta letters, I cannot date it. A larger version of this type of jug was reportedly used as a vinegar server, so perhaps this was the individual size of such a server.



# Saki Cup or Unhandled Chamber Pot

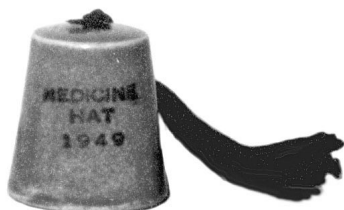


Once again I have recorded only one sample so therefore I cannot say much about it. It was marked on the bottom with stamp no. G.14 and it was a dark wine in colour. It likely dates around 1940 and perhaps it was intended to be used as a saki or Chinese tea cup.

## Fez

The miniature fez or Shriner's hat was likely a special order made only for the 1949 Shrine convention held in Medicine Hat.

It was chosen as a memento of that occasion due to one of Medalta's senior staff members being an active Shriner.



## Medalta Stamps Found on Miniatures

Referring to the booklet *Know Your Medalta: Stamps & Other Markings*, the following stamps are found on items given away at the plant or sold as souvenirs.

churn .....	compliments, G.12
butter crock .....	compliments
crock .....	G.4.a, G.12, G.24, G.26.b, G.29 & G.30.b
regular jug .....	G.15, G.19 & G.21
round shouldered jug .....	none
chamber pot .....	compliments, G.15, G.19 & G.21
unhandled chamber .....	G.14.b
fez .....	none

## Continued from page 3

blurred and difficult to make out. I cannot provide any production quantities as I have not yet run across the business records for the Medicine Hat Potteries.

I would not be surprised to find that other church plates exist, and if readers of this newsletter bring them to my attention, I will include the names in a future issue.

**First Baptist Church, Medicine Hat, 1890-1955 7" plate**

**Westminster United Church, Edmonton, 1955 9" plate**

**Fifth Avenue United Church, Medicine Hat, 1955 10" plate •**



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Phone enquiry

*I live on the West Coast and a while ago, when diving up near Port Hardy, I came up with a cup and saucer and some side plates made by Medalta for the Union Steamship Estates. Can you tell me what they may be worth?*

L.M., Vancouver Island

Dear L.M.

The Medalta papers from April to July, 1941, make several references to badged ware being made for the Union Steamship Estates. Ovide cups, cereal bowls & Chicago tall teapots are specifically mentioned, indicating that the order was for hotel china. Medalta was having production problems at the time and fell several months behind in filing their order. Also, due to the wartime restrictions on commercial production, Medalta may not have received the subsequent orders that they hoped to get. The letters do not indicate the extent of the order, but due to the fact that I have never seen this pattern in any of the collections which I have examined, I suspect it was quite small.

At present, I do not know anything about the Union Steamship Estates as I have never tried to obtain any history concerning them. One Medalta letter refers to them as having "fifteen boats and resort hotels" but I have no idea where they were located or operated out of.

You have come up with some rare pieces, but I use the word rare guardedly as you never know when several boxes of the pieces may be found in a warehouse or basement of someone's store or home. As to price, I can only compare it to other badged items, so I would place the cup/saucer set in the \$45-70 range and the side plates \$40-60.

Please send me a picture of the crest as I would appreciate it for my research notes.

### Phone enquiry

*I recently picked up a number 5 vase with the "MEDALTA" and "HAND MADE" stamps on the bottom. I have your vase book and did not find any hand made vases listed for this particular style number. I thought you would like to know about this find. Also I have two Dutch kids vases, both style no. 103, one with the decoration number 1100 on it and the other with 1150.*

B.C., Ontario

Dear B.C.

Thank you for the interesting information. I had not previously recorded the 1150 decoration (Dutch kids on cream background) on the 103 vase, but since it is found on many of the other early vases, it was bound to show up sooner or later. The 1100 decoration (a yellow or straw background) is found far more commonly, likely because it was so much brighter.

The hand made no. 5 vase is a real catch. One other example has been seen but I ran across it after writing the vase book. Yours is different though as it also has the style number 5 impressed or incised into the bottom. One does not usually find the style number on a hand made vase unless it is penned on with oxide. The fact that it also has the decoration number "2001" on the bottom in oxide makes it even more interesting. For \$100.00, in my opinion a real bargain, you have picked up a real gem. Please send me a photograph of the whole bottom for my research notes. •

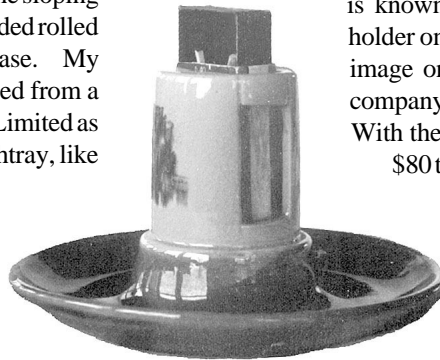
## RARE MEDALTA ASHTRAYS



The first ashtray, now in the FOMS collections, is one that I picked up about 15 months ago at the Blue Mountain Antiques Show in Calgary. Hundreds of collectors had walked by this relatively plain flat-style ashtray and turned it down due to its plainness and to being cracked. When I first saw it, I almost completely passed right by it, but then I turned and took another look as its colour, a deep maroon, struck me as being Medalta's. Indeed it was a Medalta piece, bearing the G.33 stamp variety which dates it to 1940 or later.

Round in shape, the ashtray measures 5 1/8" across the base, stands 1" high and has three butt holders evenly spaced around the 5/8" wide brim. What sets this ashtray apart from other Medalta ones is the sloping sides and the extended rolled edge around the base. My

guess is that this ashtray may have been produced from a mould obtained from Wyatt's Alberta Potteries Limited as it is similar in form to one of his ashtrays. His ashtray, like this one, has the wide upper rim, sloping sides and three butt holders; it differs in being 1/4" smaller in diameter, in not having the reinforced roll around the base and in having an embossed buffalo design in the bottom of the ash trough.



The second ashtray is unlike anything known to have been made by any of the other potteries in the Medicine Hat area, but I have seen British equivalents. It is a matchbox holder ashtray as opposed to the match booklet style of holder. It has a central cylindrical stem mounted in the centre of a round dish-shaped ashtray. The central piece in turn has a rectangular opening at the top into which the matchbox fits. As the matchbox is slid into place a rectangular block at the bottom of the stem opens the box to expose the matches. The central stem also has an opening on each side to expose the rough striking strip of the matchbox.

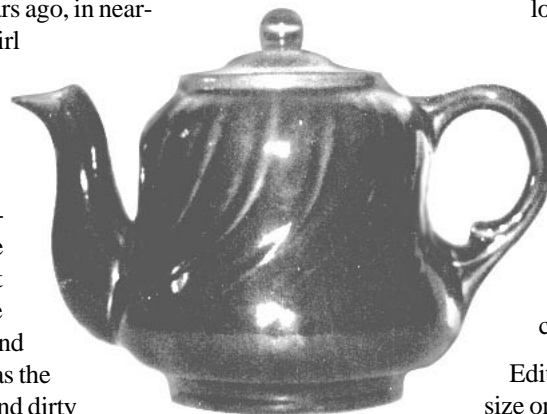
The ashtray is 6 1/8" in diameter across the base and stands 3 1/2" high. In the photo shown here it looks a bit higher as it has a matchbox mounted in the well. The base is glazed in dark green while the central cylinder is cane or yellow. The dark oxide design on the side has run so badly that you cannot make out any details. To me it looks like it may be a building such as a hotel or brewery, but that is more a guess than fact due to the poor image. The stamp on the bottom of the ashtray is G.23 (the small maple leaf). The colours of dark green and cane suggest a date to the early 1930's but once again that is largely a guess as the small maple leaf was still in use as late as 1942.

I have not been able to find a reference to either of these ashtrays in Medalta's records. As to their value I only can suggest the range where I would expect to find them as so far each is known by only a single example. The matchbox holder one, especially if a sample shows up with a clear image on it, or better yet advertising for a particular company, would likely fall in the \$125 to \$250.00 range. With the runny image one would expect it to be about \$80 to \$125. The round, low ashtray would be much less due to its simplicity in style, in the \$40.00 to \$60.00 range.

## THE SEARCH CONTINUES

"I found a Medalta teapot a couple of years ago, in near-mint condition, wine colored in the swirl pattern but, unfortunately, without the lid. Normally I would move on, but the price was right, and I just might find a lid some day, or win the lottery.

Two years later, we stopped off at a southern B.C. town for lunch. And while there dropped into a second-hand store that advertised antiques, etc., expecting to see the usual assortment of Medalta crocks and old bean pots. Up on the highest shelf was the worst-looking, cracked, chipped, worn and dirty teapot I have ever seen, and it was yellow in the swirl pattern, but it had a nice wine lid! Of course, the price was right, after all, who wants a mismatched teapot. Anyway, I'm now



looking for a lid, yellow in the swirl pattern. Doesn't matter if it comes with a teapot that doesn't match — I'm on a roll."

Don Pollock

Thanks for the story Don; just goes to show that you never know when you'll luck-out. Hope you find the matching yellow lid, one that's cracked, chipped, worn and dirty. Perhaps one of our readers can help you.

Editor's Note: The swirl pattern teapot, in one size only, along with a matching cream and sugar bowl, was introduced in early 1941 to go with Medalta's newly introduced swirl or whorl pattern dinnerware sold for home or domestic use.



## A DIFFERENTLY MARKED ASHTRAY

Recently a collector had the good fortune of picking up the hat ashtray made for The Arctic Oil Company. It is the usual brownish-yellow colour with the advertising being in brown. What is different about it is that it is the first example of the Stetson hat where the advertising has been placed around the base where the hat band would be found. Typically the hats are stamped on the back and front sides of the brim. The price was where one would expect it to be at \$125.00.

The front reads "THE ARCTIC OIL CO."

and on the back

side is found

"PHONE E

5214". All we

know about

this order comes

from a letter dated 14

May 1938, and I am not ex-

actly sure just what they are discussing. •



There are five sample Hat Ash Trays, to be shown to Mr E.G. Clark of the Arctic Oil Co, phone No E.5214. This Man wanted to have the printing as shown on the Glazed Hats put on the Matt Glaze. Our tests have shown that this is impossible to apply on Matt Glaze. If stamping is to be done it will have to be on the Gloss Glaze. Printing can be done on Matt glazes, but not on the crown on the hat, as shown on other samples, as the stamping interferes with the finish of the Matt Glaze on the brim.

## A MEDALTA FACT

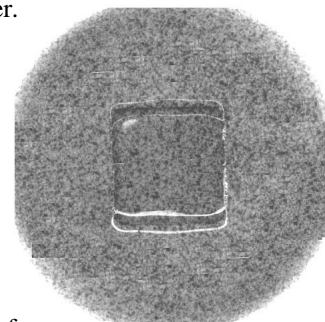
Did you know that Medalta made at least 18 different ashtrays? Presently, that many have been recorded, but I would not be surprised if one or two new ones still show up. Types include: the Stetson hat, the 5 1/2" round flat (2 distinct sizes & minor bottom difference), horseshoe with solid base, horseshoe with open base, hexagonal shape, gourd with 2 butt holders, gourd with 3 butt holders, the 8" round Jiffy Dinner style (Caribou Brand), 8" round style (No. 132 & HPS stamps on bottom), the two piece ashtray (top removable for cleaning), 3 1/2" round safety ashtray (inner butt ring), 7" round safety style, 4 1/2" round match box holder type, 3 5/8" round match booklet holder type (Harrison's Hot Springs), 6 7/8" round match booklet holder style, 5 3/8" round double match booklet style, and the two rare ones shown in this issue. How many different styles do you have in your collection?

## WANT ADS

**Wanted:** The right home for a Medalta saucer.

It is the Confetti pattern (stamped G.70 on bottom), roundish in shape with the four sides slightly flattened & with a square cup ring in the centre. The top is a bright lime green on a cream background while the bottom is plain white. It has a short, lightly stained hair-line crack running from the rim & showing mainly on the bottom. Anyone with a square-based cup to match but missing the saucer can have this one for the cost of sending it to you, perhaps in the \$5.00 - \$8.00 range.

Please contact the editor within two weeks of receiving your newsletter. If more than one request is received a draw will be held.



**Wanted:** Made in Alberta Pottery, especially Medalta & Medicine Hat Potteries advertising items (pitchers & ashtrays), miniatures and artwares such as vases & decorative figurines. Will buy or trade: top prices offered. Phone Tony Schlachter at (403) 545-6985, E Mail schlacht@telusplanet.net or send letter to P.O. Box 448, Bow Island, AB, T0K 0G0

**Wanted:** Medalta hotelware with crests (smaller the better), advertising items and unusually glazed pieces. Contact Herb Hlady, R.R. 1, Chemainus, B.C., V0R 1K0

**Wanted:** Medalta trivets and pitchers, especially hand-painted items in windmill, cottage and sailboat scenes. Contact Don Pollock at 306-584-9774 or E Mail dpollock@dlcwest.com

**For Sale:** Packet containing two 8 1/2

x 11" sheets of letterhead & two envelopes (each about 6" long by 3 1/2" high) one for letters & the other to hold a packing slip. \$30.00 plus shipping, handling & GST for the set of 4 items while supplies last. Due to the limited quantities on hand, we are limiting sales to two sets per order as we want as many collectors as possible to be able to obtain a set. Order from the Friends of Medalta Gift Shop

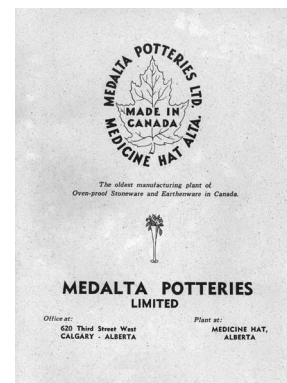
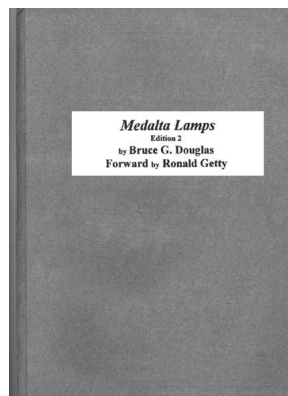
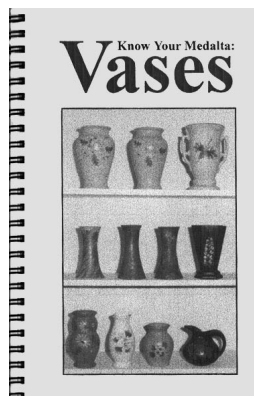
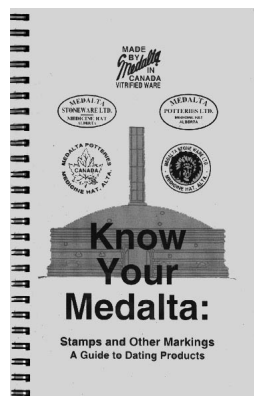
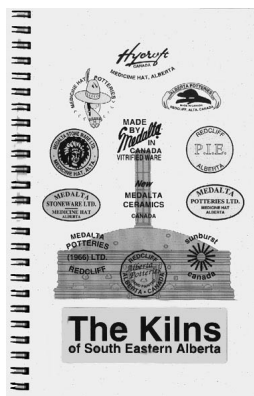
**Readers:** Please send me your stories for future issues of the newsletter. Please see the first issue of the newsletter for ideas for stories that may be of interest to other collectors.

### Place Your Ad Here

One ad per year, up to three lines long, free with your subscription. Other ads \$1.00 per line, or partial line. Pictures with your add extra at \$1.00 each.

Advertise for wanted items, items for sale, items for trade, requests for information or any other matters related to the collecting/documenting of pottery. •



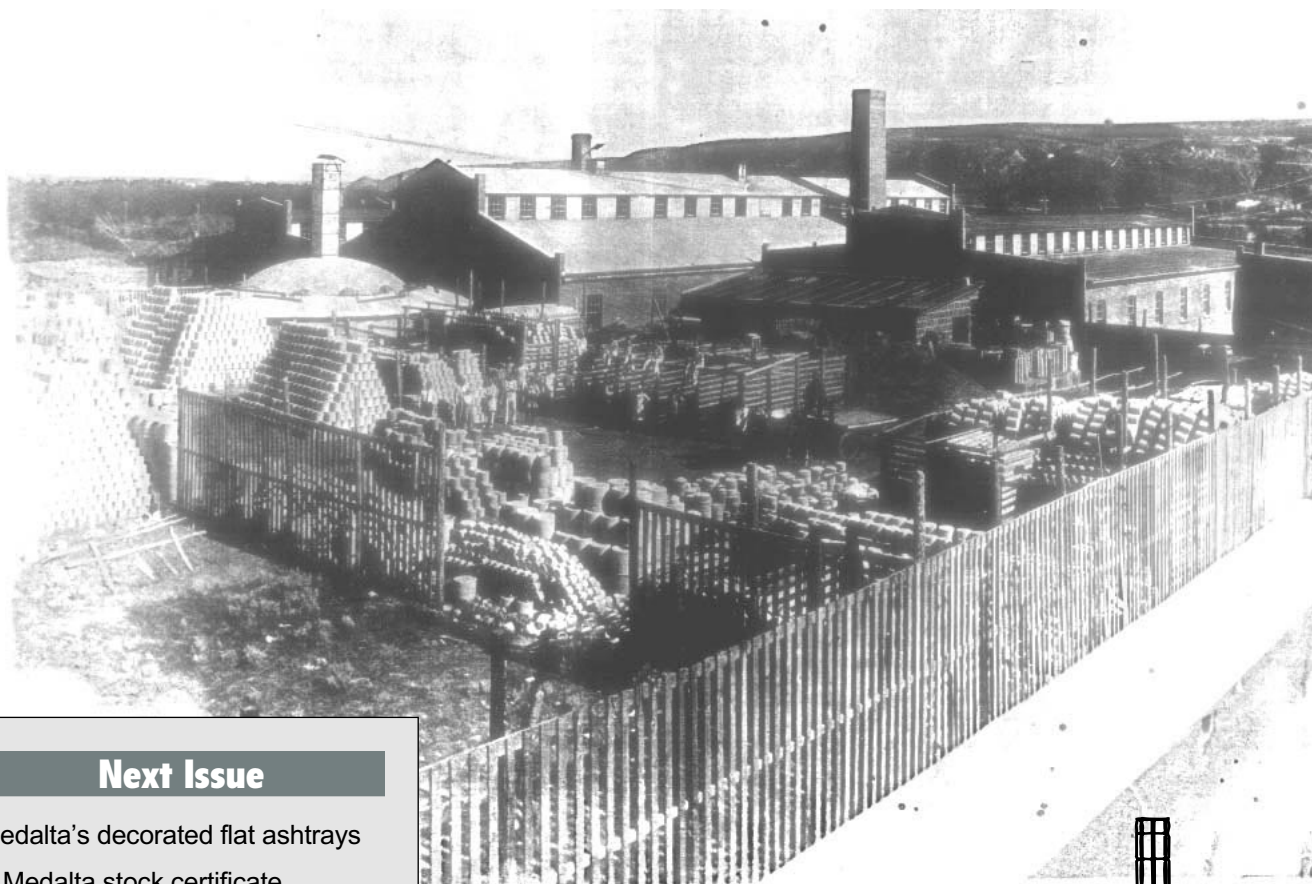


## Reference Books for Collectors

All of the books illustrated above are available from the Gift Shop operated by the Friends of Medalta. Please write for more information on prices and other titles.

*Medalta Potteries ca. 1916*

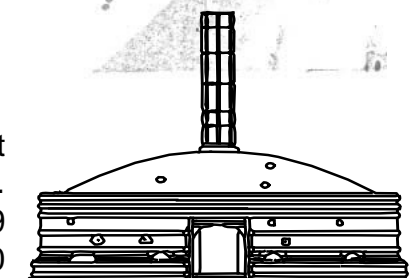
If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter or become a member of the Friends of Medalta society please contact us at the above address, FAX, or Website.



### Next Issue

Medalta's decorated flat ashtrays  
A Medalta stock certificate  
A different kind of humidor  
Some P.I.E. products  
A phony Medalta marking shows up  
Hycroft's Futurity Stake plates

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