

## Round Flat Ashtrays

Thanks to a B.C. collector I can show you two more of the ashtrays that I listed but did not illustrate in Newsletter # 3, Fall 1998, and the Hotel Royal, Calgary one that I mentioned in Follow-Up in issue # 4.

The one advertising the Medalta plant itself and using the stamp designated G.5.d which is boldly placed on the top is still one of a kind. It is unusual in that the rim of the ashtray is glazed in a dark brown. This is the only use of a brown wash that I have noted on the round flat ashtray. (The usual rim colours often found on the Ogilvie ashtrays are green and blue.) It is 5 3/8" in diameter and exhibits the plain style of bottom. Both the size of the ashtray and the plain bottom suggest a date of 1938 or later.



The Stan's Hardware ashtray with the stencilled sailboat decoration on a cane background is made on the ridged bottom variety and it measures 5 3/8" in diameter. The Medalta stamp is the G.33 one, and all this evidence when put together suggests a date of 1938 to 1940. Unfortunately I never ran across this name in any of the Medalta records.



The Hotel Royal ashtray has brown lettering on a cream background and it too has the G.33 stamp and is found on the ridged bottom variety of ashtray. It only measures 5 1/4" in diameter. Letters show that the Hotel Royal in Calgary placed several orders in 1938, but as the surviving Medalta sale summaries end in 1937 we do not know the actual size of the order. •

## A 1200s Vase Shows Up

At long last one of the 1200s numbered vases that was previously known only from a photograph has been found. As a unique piece its value of \$300.00 was realistic considering that other glazed vases such as the Egypto, style no. 61, have sold for around \$400.00.

Unfortunately the vase did not have any impressed markings on the bottom, so we still do not know the style number that was assigned to this piece. It did bear an oxide stamp though, the G.46.a one.

The vase measures 12" in height and it is glazed with a mottled purplish glaze at the top applied over the turquoise base colour.

As you can see, the lower 2/3rds of the vase is turquoise. •



## Auction Notice

I have not been able to confirm whether or not there will be a third Sonntag/Shefernack auction. The prices realized from the second sale were for the most part far lower than what they should have been, many pieces going for less than half of what I would have expected them to bring. It would not surprise me if they decided to retain the rest of the collection for a while, or perhaps even sell it off privately, sell it through ebay or dispose of it by some other means.

All I can suggest is that our readers who are able to do so access Hall's web site ([www.hallsauction.com](http://www.hallsauction.com)) to see if any announcements or postings come up. If you are not into computers drop Hall's Auction a note and let them know that you want to be advised of any Medalta pottery auctions that he may put together. Hall's mailing address is 5240 1A Street S.E., Calgary, Alberta, T2H 1J1 or phone 403-640-1244.

Today, September 26, I heard from Frank Hall that 100 or more pieces from the Sonntag/Shefernack collection will be going under the auction block. I still have no firm date for the auction, or auctions as Frank said he may do it over several, and as the pieces will not be out for viewing for several weeks, I cannot tell you what might there. •

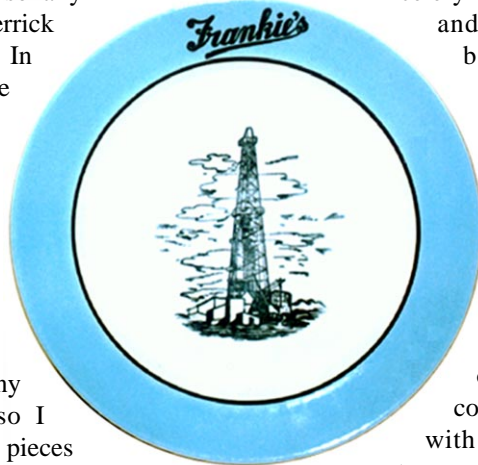
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## Frankie's Restaurant

In a previous issue of the newsletter, issue No. 8, I illustrated the palomino pattern. It is indeed a beautiful rearing horse especially when seen in full colour, but personally I find the Frankie's oil derrick pattern more attractive. In part it may be the blue coloured border that appeals to me as that has always been my favourite colour, but more likely it is the oil derrick itself as that is such a strong symbol of what Alberta is all about.

I have not seen too many pieces in this pattern so I cannot be sure just what pieces



the oil derrick is found on as it definitely is not found on all the products. So far I have recorded side plates, a celery tray, soup bowls and oval vegetable bowls in the Frankie's pattern, but, of these, only the plates and the celery dish had the oil derrick on them. The other pieces were simply decorated in Frankie's colours and marked with the J.J. Supply stamp. For example, the

4"x5" oval vegetable dish has a soft blue around the sides of the interior, separated from the white bottom by a black band. The exterior is plain white.

On the decorated pieces the oil derrick fills the center of the plate. The scene in black sharply stands out against the white center of the plate, and the name "Frankie's" also in black is found on the

bright blue rim of the dishes. The band separating the coloured rim from the white center is also in black.

The Medalta stamp on the bottom was the specialty stamp G.67 used to mark products ordered by the J.J. Supply Co. in Edmonton, and it is likely safe to say that it was only used to mark the Frankie's products as I have yet to see it on any other hotelwares. I do not have an exact date for this order but the range is 1950 to 1954.

Many years ago a collector in Edmonton told me that Frankie's was a restaurant located near the landmark oil derrick that you drove past at the south end of the city as you entered Edmonton along the Calgary Trail (Highway No. 2). Apparently its address was 7105 104th Street. Personally, I do remember seeing the oil derrick, but I never did stop at Frankie's for a meal.

I have not seen any recent prices but I would suspect that it might sell in the \$125-\$160.00 range based on what the Palomino plate sold for in the Fall of 1999.

•

## The Medalta Review

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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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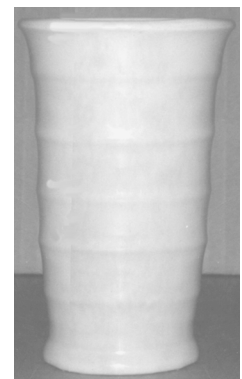
## A New Vase by Medicine Hat Potteries

Some two years ago or so, this vase showed up in one of the stores which I visit every time I make a trip to Medicine Hat, The Triple E. How many times have I stopped there, only to see the same old pieces that have been there for ten years or more? But this time I got lucky, really lucky, as other collectors stop by much more frequently than I. Perhaps others had spotted the vase and not bothered to get it down from the high shelf where the proprietor had placed it as it did not look like anything made by either Medalta or Medicine Hat Potteries.

As you can see from the picture, the vase is generally cylindrical in shape being comprised of six tiers expanding outwards from the bottom to the top. The bottom and the top are both slightly flared. The colour also was not what you commonly see used by Medicine Hat Potteries as it was finished in a light

purplish-grey glaze with subtle light green mottles and streaks on the outside, while the interior was left in plain white. It is fairly small as it is only 5 inches in height and measures 3.75" in diameter across the top. It was marked with the usual Little Chief stamp and thank goodness for that or I too would have passed it by.

I still have not seen or heard of another MHP vase of this shape so I guess the price of \$75.00 (which I thought was high at the time) was not too bad after all.



## Mayor "Hopalong" Harry Veiner

Some time back, perhaps four or five years ago, I received this article from someone but unfortunately I have lost track of who sent it to me. My apologies to you the unknown provider, but my sincerest thanks for it as it is indeed a fun piece about Harry Veiner.

### BACKSTAGE WITH MAYORSMANSHIP

#### Is The Hat's Veiner world champ?

**EVERY MAYOR** in Canada likes to picture himself, publicly and probably privately, as a working dynamo, tirelessly slugging for the municipal weal in every minute he can squeeze from his own affairs. More often than not, that picture's pure election fodder. But one man comes astoundingly close to fitting it.

He's Mayor "Hopalong" Harry Veiner of Medicine Hat, Alta., who may just be the world's most strenuous mayor. Occasionally, as when he dipped into his own pocket to give every Toronto Maple Leaf \$100 for beating Boston in the Stanley Cup semi-finals ("Why not? I'm a fan") or when he presented the mayor of Moscow with a red Stetson, Veiner bursts into the national news. But his daily schedule, which never makes headlines, is just as amazing.

By rising at 4 a.m. and working till close to midnight, he runs, at 55, half a dozen huge Alberta

ranches, a china factory, a hardware store and three wholesale outlets as well as the city's business.

At the drop of a Stetson, he scoots off on periodic trips—at his own expense—to boost Medicine Hat wherever in the world he thinks there's an ear to bend.

Between times, he passionately pursues new quarry for his favorite pastime: physical competition. In eight years as mayor, 6-foot, 230-pound, non-drinker, non-smoker Veiner has:

- ✓ outraced the mayors of Brandon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Pincher Creek and Lethbridge over various distances and once—at a Brooks, Alta., picnic—won by 10 yards a 25-yard sprint against a thoroughbred horse;
- ✓ outpulled the best cowboys around Taber, Alta., in a wild cow milking contest;
- ✓ outplowed all the mayors of Western Canada at a Portage La Prairie convention contest;

To me it would have been substantial as at my first real job in 1964, at a chicken hatchery in Lethbridge, I was earning \$250.00 per month.

This gift to the Maple Leaf players be it for publicity or out of the kindness of his heart

daughter in tow to pick up a few items that she needed. When she went to the counter to pay for her purchases, Harry looked at her with a twinkle in his eye and a smile on his face and said "Did you know that the Bank of Nova Scotia just down the street has a savings account in your daughter's

name?" Of course she did not know what Harry was talking about as no one in their family had an account at that bank. Harry quickly went on to tell her that all she had to do was take her daughter to the bank, ask for the manager and tell her that Mr. Veiner had sent her to open an account in her daughter's name.

Most people would have simply walked out of the store and done nothing about it, but B.A.'s interest must have been peeked as she went to the bank a few days later and indeed found that it was true. Apparently what Harry Veiner had done was to set up a fund for the bank to draw upon to start a savings account for any child that he sent down to the bank. All the family had to do was tell the bank that Harry had told them to come in to register, and a savings

account was then set up in the child's name with \$5.00 to start them on their way.

I wish I knew how many kids established their first savings accounts thanks to Harry's generosity. Undoubtedly it was quite a few as, according to Harry's longtime bookkeeper, he told every kid that came into the hardware store that they had

a savings account just down the street in their name. I would bet that the number of \$5.00 savings accounts that were opened would add up to more than the total amount of dollars given to the Maple Leaf players! •



- ✓ almost out-gobbled (they tied at 40 each) the official flapjack-eating champion of Lethbridge;
  - ✓ outwrestled, greased-pig-caught, bundle-pitched and stock-car-driven almost anyone who'd take him on.
- Probably Veiner's greatest political disappointment was during the '54 Empire Games at Vancouver when he challenged every mayor in the Commonwealth to a foot-race and got no takers.

The Hat voters lap it up; Veiner clobbered his last opponent by a 3-to-1 majority. But his popularity doesn't stem solely from his flamboyant showmanship. Under Veiner's regime, the city has:

- ✓ rung up the country's greatest safety record — over four years without a fatal accident;
- ✓ not raised its taxes or, until this year, needed to borrow money;
- ✓ begun a co-operative bus system (Veiner bought the buses with his own money) that's earning a wide reputation for the courtesy of its shareholder-drivers;
- ✓ more than doubled the salaries of its eight aldermen.

But Veiner won't take a raise. And he sets aside about a third of his \$3,000 a year as a special fund for The Hat's aged and needy.—  
EDDIE OLYNUK

The article appeared in MacLeans magazine dated August 15, 1959. At that time MacLeans was larger than it is today as the page on which it was printed measured 14x 10.5 inches.

I had heard the story about Harry beating a thoroughbred horse in a short race as my wife was born and raised in the Brooks area, and it seems that the story of the horse race is a favourite of many of the locals. The other comment in this article that particularly caught my eye was the story of Harry giving every Maple Leaf player a \$100.00 gift for simply beating Boston in the Stanley cup semi-finals. With the million dollar salaries which the players get today, \$100.00 would not even be noticed but perhaps back then it was a fair amount.

may never be known, but I believe it was the latter. A couple of years ago I was told a story by a woman from Medicine Hat and just recently Audrey Malek was able to confirm it from a second source. While I do not have the precise details it generally went like this.

One of the many businesses that Harry Veiner owned in Medicine Hat was the Hat Hardware located in the main downtown business district, and it may well have been his favourite business as he seemed to spend a lot of time there. One day when Harry was in the hardware store Mrs. B.A. walked in with her young



## Medalta's Gourd Shaped Ashtrays

I had been studying Medalta's products for three or four years before I actually saw a gourd shaped ashtray. At the time, around 1980, I was working for the Glenbow Museum in Calgary and surprisingly the museum did not have such an ashtray in its collection. About the only other collection that I had recorded up to that time was the Richard and Jean Symonds collection held by the National Museum in Ottawa, and it too contained no gourd shaped ashtray.

I knew that Medalta made a product which they referred to as the "Gurd ashtray" as it was listed along with other named wares including Gurd's ginger beer bottles in the Medalta sales ledger covering the period 1928-1936. I mistakenly assumed that this reference was to the round flat ashtray as it was the only ashtray shown in the 1930 and 1931 trade show photographs, and that the name Gurd simply referred to the beverage company.

Finally when I had the pleasure of viewing Vicki Douglas' collection I saw a round squat ashtray that one could say was in the shape of a gourd (the shape reminds me of those miniature pumpkins that appear in stores at halloween). And the clincher came just a bit later when I actually saw my first Gurd ashtray in the Enid Yates/Sid Dawes collection in Montreal. They actually had several gourd shaped ashtrays and on each end below the butt holder they bore the advertising "Drink Gurd's Dry".

In part what had been confusing me was the spelling of the word gourd. Medalta always used the word Gurd rather than gourd in reference



to this style of ashtray, and while it did take some time to sort the whole thing out in my mind, I at least had the satisfaction of knowing that the references to the Gurd ashtray in the 1930s records was indeed for an advertising ashtray, albeit one also in the shape of a gourd.

When all of the facts were in, it turned out that Medalta made two styles of gourd shaped ashtrays. Just when one replaced

the other is not readily apparent in the surviving Medalta records but gourd ashtrays were available right through to at least 1940. At present there is no evidence that any were made during or after WW II.

It appears that the early two butt style was made throughout the whole date range while the newer three butt style was likely introduced in 1937 judging by the single invoice record that can be matched to this product. In November 1937 the Saint Regis Hotel, Calgary, was billed \$21.50 for its order. In 1937 the cost of a gross (144) of round flat ashtrays was \$21.50 so it appears that the cost of this ashtray was the same or about 15 cents each.

The first gourd shaped ashtray was designed while Jesse Wyatt was still with Medalta and in all likelihood he actually designed it himself. As was typical for the Medalta marks used in Wyatt's time, the lettering of the impressed stamp has the curving lines and flowing tails, particularly on the first M and the ending A. The impressed marking on the early gourd ashtray is the M.3.b but often it is either very hard to read or not present at all.

The ashtray is basically disc shaped about 4 inches maximum diameter by 1 5/8 inches high. The sides are gently rounded as is the rim and the area below the butt holders is somewhat flattened off to take naming/advertising. The two butt holders are opposite one another. While the rounded rim is not ideal for advertising, it was wide enough and flat enough to permit such use

as shown in the photographs included herein.

The two butt holder gourd ashtray is the commonest one of the two styles. The advertising ashtrays are usually solid brown lettering on cane, and they sell in the \$135-\$200.00 range. You can also find this ashtray in variegated and solid glazes, both glossy and satina.

The newer gourd ashtray is about the same size measuring about 1 1/2 inches high by 4 1/4 inches in diameter. As you can see from the illustration its sides are straighter with vertically oriented ribbing below the butt holder. The three segments lend

themselves nicely for the application of the naming, permitting it to be larger than what you find on the two butt gourd ashtray.

I have only seen a few samples of this style of gourd ashtray and all have been advertising pieces with brown lettering on cane. Price wise, I have not heard of any recent sales, but due to its rarity I would think that pieces in good condition would sell in the \$150-\$250.00 range.



### Two Butt Style

- "BRUNSWICK HOTEL & MOOSEJAW, SASK." solid brown lettering on cane, slightly arced on each side, on cane, stamp no. G.33l

- "COURTENAY HOTEL & COURTENAY B.C." in solid lettering, slightly arced on each side of the ashtray, stamp no. G.24+M.3.b

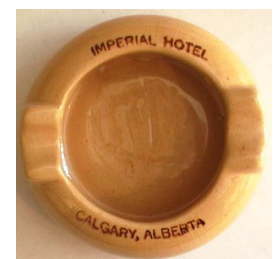


- "GOLDEN/ARROW" with an arrow to the left through "Golden" and to the right through "Arrow", slightly arced on the rim, stamp no. G.33

- "DRINK/Gurd's/DRY" solid open lettering, on each side below the butt holders, stamp no. M.3.b+G.20

- "IMPERIAL HOTEL & CALGARY, ALBERTA" both slightly arced on rim in solid lettering, mentioned in stock ledger 1936 and billed \$1.75 for rubber stamp and \$39.92 for order February 1937, stamp no. G.30.a+M.3.b

- "MAC'S [larger letters]/Medicine Hat solid lettering, Mac's Cigar Store billed \$.70 for rubber stamp and \$12.00 for order December 1935, stamp no. G.30.a+M.3.b



• QUEENS HOTEL top rim & SASKATOON on bottom rim in solid brown lettering, both slightly arced, billed \$1.00 for rubber stamp and \$7.28 for order December 1936, stamp no. M.3.b

• C. RIVARD, ROUYN, QUE. arced on top and Coal & Wood, Grocery, Beer & Porter arced on bottom rim, all in solid lettering, stamp no. G.30.a

• ROYAL HOTEL/G.E. Cook, Prop. and on opposite rim PEACERIVER, ALTA. all in solid lettering, slightly arced text, stamps no. G.26.b and G.27

• WESTERN HOTEL top rim & SASKATOON on bottom rim in solid lettering, both slightly arced, billed \$1.00 for rubber stamp and \$8.56 for order December 1936, stamp no. M.3.b



### Three Butt Style

• ST. REGIS | HOTEL | CALGARY open lettering, billed \$21.50 for order November 1937, stamp no. G.33

• YORK | HOTEL | CALGARY open style lettering, stamp no. G.33 •



## Backstamps: Compliments of Harry Veiner

Collectors of Hycroft's products every once in a while run across pieces that have a second backstamp on them, ones that says something to the effect of Compliments of Harry Veiner. Sometimes the Veiner stamp is the only one, but usually there is a second one giving Hycroft as the maker of the piece.



Herein I have illustrated the various stamps that I have recorded so far, but I would not be surprised to hear about other ones from some of our readers. In the listing that follows of the pieces which I have recorded to date, I have included the stamp code numbers that I have assigned to the various markings found on Hycroft products. Eventually I will refine the numbering of those stamps to reflect their date order, but for now the numbers are presented as I assigned them on an 'as found' basis. I still have not seen enough examples of the Veiner stamps to be sure of their date order, so please do not presume that G.5 is earlier than G.7 and so on.

The common stamp found in association with the Veiner stamps is the G.2A one illustrated here.

There is also one piece, a 10.5" calendar plate for the year 1963, which says "'Harry Veiner'/Mayor of/ MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA [arced]" on the front. The only stamp on the back is the G.2A one, but in all likelihood this plate too was a giveaway. I have not designated this marking as a stamp because it does not say "Compliments of" and it has not been



recorded as a marking on the bottom of a piece as yet.

### G.5 Stamp

• large safety ashtray, "LUELLA & MILLARD MOHLER" hand-lettered in gold, all on a white ashtray with gold on the rim and butt ring, stamp no. G.2A+G.5



• large safety ashtray, "ED. & RAYE PHILLIPSON" all on a white ashtray with gold on the rim and butt ring, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• large safety ashtray, "VIRGINIA & LLOYD BUCKLAND" at top, with multicoloured leaves in centre, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• 9.5" plate, likely part of a 20 or 32 piece dish set, "J.A." in gold at the top of an all pink plate with gold banding, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• 9.5" plate, likely part of a 20 or 32 piece dish set, "J.J." in gold at the top of an all pink plate with gold banding, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• 9.5" plate, in the centre a blue oval-shaped crest with an X behind with the motto "NEC TAMEN CONSUMEBATUR" on a belt around a tree with the initials "WMS" below, above the crest "Alberta Synodical[arced]/ April 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 1963" and arced below "Riverside Presbyterian Church, MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA" all the lettering in black on a white plate with thick/thin gold banding around the rim and with another gold stripe within, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• large beer stein, on one side the Kiwanis logo, "KIWANIS" arced over and "INTERNATIONAL" arced under a large central "K" all within a rope-style circle, on the other side a scene of a cowboy roping a calf with other cowboys in the background (3 cowboys beside a fire), all in black on a white stein with thick/thin gold rim banding and with 3 other gold stripes around the side, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• block style hat ashtray, "175th Battalion, 50th Reunion" arced at back of hat in old English style lettering with "1916" & "1966" respectively on each side of peak and "C. WRIGHT" in open script style lettering arced at front of hat, stamp no. G.2A+G.5

• 14" platter, Hycroft China Ltd., at the top "Four Outstanding Men [slightly arced]/of/ Medicine Hat" in gold old English style

lettering, in the central area of the platter the head and shoulders of four men in brown, each identified below in gold block style lettering, from the top left going clockwise they are "Senator/Dr. F.W. Gershaw", "Dr. D.N. MacCharles", "R.C. Black" and "A.P. Burns", all on a white platter with thick/thin gold banding around the rim and with another broken gold stripe within, stamp no. G.2A+G.5+SPECIALMADE

## G.6 Stamp

MERRY CHRISTMAS  
May the Centennial Year  
bring you Health and Prosperity  
with Compliments of  
*Harry Veiner*

- 9" scalloped plate, the Canadian Centennial maple leaf logo with "1867" & "1967" split by the leaf's stem and "CANADA-CONFEDERATION" in blue below, stamp no. G.2A+G.6



## G.7 Stamp

- 14" platter, slightly arced at top in gold "BOB & DOROTHY" (the first letters of name larger than others) and slightly arced at bottom "XMAS" 1960" in gold and in centre in a circle format various Canadiana scenes including Canada geese, grain elevator, cattle, antelope, oil derrick, mounted cowboy, wheat and berries in black, all on a white platter with a blue wash at the rim and tk/t/t gold banding, stamp no. G.3(no22K)+G.7

COMPLIMENTS OF  
**HARRY VEINER**  
MAYOR OF MEDICINE HAT

[arced upwards]/ALBERTA [straight and smaller letters]" in log style lettering at back of hat and "Roy Ells/M.L.A." at the front of hat. Gold lettering on blue with gold hatband and rim outlined in gold, stamp no. G.2A+G.7. (I have highlighted the name Roy Ells to try to make it readable. It is not normally with a lighter oval patch.)



- block style hat ashtray, "SENATOR/JAMES GLADSTONE/CARDSTON" gold lettering on white at front and "MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA" at back, stamp no. G.2A+G.7+M.1
- 10.5" calendar plate, "HATHARDWARE" arced above and "MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA" arced below a central floral decal, with the months for the year 1963 around the border, all on a white plate with gold banding, stamp no. G.2A+G.7



- 12" calendar platter, "HATHARDWARE" arced above and "MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA" arced below a central floral decal, with the months for the year 1963 around the border, all on a white platter with thick/thin gold banding, stamp no. G.2A+G.7
- large safety ashtray, "MEDICINE HAT, CWR HAY [in script]" stagecoach decal, stamp no. G.7
- 12" platter, "Bill Noble" & "1964" at bottom. In the centre a bull within a lariat

with the brand "HI" over half diamond on the bull. Plate is brown on white with gold trim, stamp no. G.2A+G.7

- block style hat ashtray, "MEDICINE HAT [arced upwards]/ALBERTA [straight and smaller letters]" in log style lettering at back of hat and "CORNELIA R. WOOD/M.L.A." in script style lettering at the front, lettering is in gold on a pink hat trimmed with gold and with a gold hatband, stamp no. G.2A+G.7+M.1

## G.13 Stamp

- large beer stein, no named pieces seen as yet, but decorated pieces included the game bird decals of Canada geese, Hungarian partridge and pheasants and the floral decoration known as the Spray Rose, all were on white with gold banding

COMPLIMENTS  
OF  
*Harry Veiner*

## G.14 Stamp

- large safety ashtray, "Rodney Duncalfe" in gold arced above a central decal of a flushing grouse with yellow, red and green leaves below, all on a white ashtray with gold around the rim, a gold butt ring and with 3 gold stripes around the grouse, stamp no. G.2A+G.14
- large safety ashtray, "Ben Entz" in gold arced above a central decal of a flushing grouse with yellow, red and green leaves below, all on a white ashtray with gold around the rim, a gold butt ring and with 3 gold stripes around the grouse, stamp no. G.2A+G.14

COMPLIMENTS of  
*H. Veiner*  
Medicine Hat

## G.14A Stamp

- small safety ashtray, in the centre arced over the left-hand side of a feathered headress "THE GAS CITY OF THE WEST" and below "MEDICINE HAT/ALBERTA CANADA [smaller letters]" all in dark brown on a white ashtray trimmed with gold at the rim and with a gold butt ring, stamp no. G.9A+G.14A •

COMPLIMENTS of  
*H. Veiner*

## Medalta's Ovide Cup

In the last issue, we looked at the hotelware cups and coffee mugs that Medalta made from 1938 onward. What I did not have space for, or for that matter illustrations, was to show you some of the named patterns that you can find in the marketplace. Starting with this issue I will continue to show the names found on other styles of cups in future issues.

A s  
usual I  
would  
welcome  
hearing  
f r o m



our readers as to other named pieces that are not listed or illustrated here. Please send me a photograph if possible but even a quick phone call to tell me about your pieces would be appreciated. If you are like me, the last thing you have time for is to sit down and write a letter, but perhaps you can take the time to call me at 403-273-1132. The best time to call is from 6:00-10:00 P.M. Mountain Standard Time or anytime weekends and holidays.

In review, the Ovide style of cup was listed as a 6 1/2 ounce cup and it appears to have been available from about 1938 right through to 1954. Basically it is bowl shaped with a looped handle added to one side. While I did not measure too many of them the height is about 2 3/8" and the diameter across the top 3 7/8", both measurements plus or minus 1/8". When left unhandled, the Ovide cup could be used as a small soup bowl as was the case with the Rosh Pina cups shown here.

In addition to the named pieces listed and shown below, I have recorded it in plain white, the two patterns of green band, red band and in various other colours and bands. One banded sample was decorated with a thin black stripe on each side of a reddish-orange band. Cups with coloured exteriors and white interiors include yellow, greyish-green, pink, beige with a bright green line at the rim and beige with a blue rim line. I am not sure if the one with black speckling on royal blue and with gold around the rim was white lined or not.

In advance let me ask you to forgive my shortcomings in the listing given below. In making my notes I was inconsistent in

recording the naming on a piece be it solid or open lettering, the colour of the lettering, its placement, underlining and so on. Sometimes I did not even note the colour of the banding, presuming that I could see that in my photographs which was not always the case, and perhaps I have listed it wrong as the colours were not always clear. And other times I did not record if the piece was white on the interior or the same as on the outside of the piece.

### Named or Crested Wares: Handled Cups

- B & J in black on the left and right-hand sides of a Star of David, on a dark pink/white lined cup with a black band around the rim, Years ago I was advised that this may have been BI for Beth Israel now I believe it to be B J for B e t h J a c o b due to similar lettering o n Hycroft pieces, only stamp found on items is G.61.a



- BIC in black on a dark pink/white lined cup with a black band around the rim (BIC reportedly stands for Beth Israel Congregation, only stamp found on items is G.55



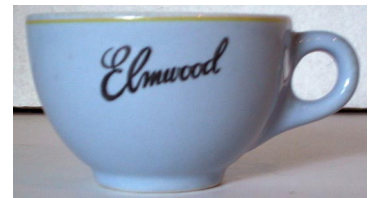
- British Columbia's coat of arms in green, the provincial crest with a lion on a crown at the top, a rampant stag and a ram at the sides and on the ribbon below the provincial motto

"SPLENDOR SINE OCCASU", all on white with a thin/thick/thin green band just below the rim, only recorded stamp is G.38.a. The B.C. provincial crest is mentioned in Medalta



letters dated January 10, 1941 and October 10, 1941.

- CANADIAN/NATIONAL in solid lettering on a brown maple leaf, the whole on a yellow/white lined cup with a brown rim line, only recorded stamp is G.51 (no IN)
- Elmwood in solid black lettering on a blue white lined cup with a yellow band around the rim, the only recorded stamp is G.51



- Foodcraft in solid heavy lettering on a yellow/white lined cup with a black band around the rim, stamps found on pieces include G.52.b, G.56 and G.57



- FRY'S/HOT CHOCOLATE" solid brown lettering on yellow, letter dated June 13, 1941, says sample Ovide cups and saucers sent to Fry-Cadbury Ltd. and on August 21, 1941, 600 cups/saucers were shipped to them, only stamp seen on pieces is G.33



- O.O.R.P. in solid black lettering on white with yellow banding, stands for Order of the Royal Purple, the ladies auxiliary to the B.P.O.E., only stamp seen on pieces is G.59



- crest of THE RANCHMEN'S CLUB in gold on a greyish-green/white lined cup with a gold band around the rim, only stamp seen on pieces is G.51



- crested with a red cross within a shield and with a X behind the shield, around the border of the shield "ST. GEORGE [at the top] S.S. CLUB [at the left] WESTMOUNT [at the right]", all on white with a red band and green stripe around the rim and with another green stripe around the middle, only stamp seen on pieces is no. G.33s



- Scott's in solid lettering on a fawn/white lined cup with a red band around the rim, only stamp seen on pieces is G.51
- Seven Seas in dark green on a greyish-green/white lined cup with a dark green band around the rim, only stamp seen on pieces is G.51
- image of a Top Hat in black on a light tan/white lined cup with a maroon band around the rim, only stamps seen on pieces are G.47.a and G.51



- Union Steamships Estates, resort hotel with 15 fishing boats I believe located on Vancouver Island, sample cups made up April 24, 1941, no actual pieces seen

as yet

- 'The' in the fork of a Y in black on a pale olive/white lined cup with a maroon line at the rim, my guess is that this cup was made for the Y.M.H.A. or Young Men's Hebrew Association due to the Medalta stamp on the bottom, stamps seen on pieces include G.51 (noN) and G.71.a (KOSHER/For Meat/Use Only)



- 'The' in the fork of a Y in black on a light blue/white lined cup with a yellow line at the rim, only stamp seen on pieces is G.71.b (KOSHER/For Milk/Use Only)

## Named or Crested Wares: Unhandled Cups

So far I have only seen one named pattern using the handleless Ovide cup, it being the RP pattern mentioned below. The others include: plain white, red band, t/tk/t green band and beige white lined with a green band around the rim.



- crest with "RP" (the P overlapping the extended right arm of the letter R) on a torah (scroll), all in black on a yellow/white lined cup with a black stripe around the rim and another around the middle, only stamp seen on pieces is G.57
- crest with "RP" (the P overlapping the extended right arm of the letter R) on a torah (scroll), all in black on a pink/white lined cup with a black stripe around the rim and another around the middle, only stamp seen on pieces is G.57 •

## Stop the Presses

It has been confirmed that the Andy Anderson heads stamped Medalta/Hand Made are phony. Thank goodness we now know for sure, and hopefully word will spread rapidly to prevent other collectors from buying these pieces thinking that they are original.

The following article about these heads was written before I got this news, but rather than making changes to it or deleting it, I am going to leave it as is. If nothing else it shows my thoughts on the whole matter and perhaps it will help in evaluating other suspect pieces in the future.

As I heard it, confirmation came about something like this: One of the collectors on the west coast that I had been communicating with about these heads acquired his head some six months ago. He then heard of several others and finally about two months ago he saw another one himself, and then just a week ago, about September 15, 2000 still another one. Two of these three heads were being sold by the same lower mainland dealer and this last time the collector took the direct route with the conversation going something like this:

"We know these heads are fakes."

"What do you mean?"

"We know that these heads were not made by Medalta. The colour is wrong, the size is wrong and the Medalta stamp is not right."

"The Medalta stamp is not right. How do you know that?"

"The genuine Medalta Hand Made marks were made by two separate stamps not one stamp as found on these heads."

"Is that right? I didn't know that they were two stamps."

Surprisingly, he went on to say that he knew they were not original Medalta pieces and that he was acquiring them from someone in Chilliwack, B.C. He also added that some of the pieces which he got were so badly painted that he had to repaint them.

I wish there was a way to stop activities like this.

I never heard that the dealer in question actually lied to people about the origin of these pieces, but in all probability he was never asked any questions about



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them. If I saw such a piece at \$50.00 I too would want to buy it before someone grabbed it out of my hands. I might be afraid to say too much to the dealer for fear of loosing it.

It may not be legally wrong to not tell buyers what you know about a piece, but in my view it is certainly morally wrong. What can we do about dealers like this? Perhaps nothing other than to let them know that we do not approve of such activities and refuse to do business with them. It may be buyer beware but sellers should be open about what they are selling.

As a postscript to this, I heard from another collector that I had been in conversation with about these heads. He too picked one up, and after he heard of my concerns, he took a closer look at his and confirmed the same Medalta stamping and size as best as possible for irregularly shaped pieces. What he noticed that I had not picked up on before was that the piece still had a freshly painted smell to it.

How about that, we'll have to add the smell test in helping to evaluate whether a piece is fake or not. It will certainly raise a flag if you can smell anything as most certainly pieces painted by Medalta almost seventy years ago will have no odor to them.

## An Andy Anderson Indian Head Wall Plaque

Over the past eight months at least six of these heads signed by Andy and stamped on the back "MEDALTA/HAND MADE" have come to my attention. Each time I have asked the owner or the vendor where they acquired the head and at what price. It seems that all of them first surfaced in the lower mainland of British Columbia at various antique shows and most were quite reasonably priced at \$50.00 or less. I was advised by one person that the price he paid was only \$10.00 but others have paid over \$200.00 for a head after it passed through the hands of one or more dealers.



Are the heads truly Medalta products or are they the product of a forger? I really do not know but these are the facts, and perhaps you can help to find the truth by taking a close look at any of these heads which you run across.

I have an Andy head in my possession which has to be 100% original as it was given to me by a descendent of Jack Fuller who got it from his granddad who, in turn, got it from Andy himself. Jack Fuller and Andy Anderson reportedly were good friends and both did wood carvings that were used to make moulds for producing plaster copies of the originals.

I do not really know anything about Andy Anderson at present



and perhaps that is much of the problem in deciding if these pieces are genuine or clever forgeries. I have been told that Andy was a Warden at Banff National Park and that could well be where he and Jack

Fuller met as Jack was a guide in the park. Other than being a warden, and I have not even tried to confirm that as fact as yet, I do not know when he was at the park, when he was born or anything else about him. The most critical question to have the answer for might be did he take up wood carving and the subsequent making of moulds of those carvings before, after or at the same time as Jack Fuller? Did Jack pick the idea up from Andy or was it vice versa?

If Andy's carvings followed Jack's then these pieces would be forgeries as Jack Fuller was not making plaster figurines at the time that Medalta's HAND MADE stamp (M.6) was in use (1930-1932 at the latest).

The piece that I have with Andy's name on it is not marked with the Medalta stamps. It is also just a little bit smaller than the one stamped with Medalta's name, and in comparing the sharpness of the two, you find that the Medalta stamped ones have sharper lines.

So far I have only been able to see two of

the Medalta ones up close, one firsthand and the other from a series of close-up photographic shots. The Medalta stamps are not in the mould as they are found with different orientations on the back. One sample was more or less horizontally aligned (the one shown here) while the other was at an oblique angle. This clearly indicates that the Medalta marking was applied after the piece came out of the mould.

Besides the differences in size and sharpness which indicates that at least two separate moulds were present, the Medalta stamp causes me the most problem in accepting these pieces as



genuine. Both of the Medalta stamps that I have seen are not what I have observed on genuine MEDALTA/HAND MADE pieces. Those markings are clearly two separate stamps on the hand made pieces as they are found in different orientations to one another; sometimes they are close together and other times they are far apart.

On the Andy pieces, the orientation of both stamps was identical, not only the same distance

apart but also with the two stamps curving slightly together at the right-hand side. My conclusion based on the two specimens seen is that the Medalta stamps which are usually two separate stamps was in this case made as a single stamp, either that or the two stamps have been firmly tied together.



Anyway, those are the facts as I know them at present. They appear to have a common origin all showing up in the lower mainland area. The Medalta stamped ones are both different in size and sharpness of the features from the unstamped Andy heads, and the Medalta markings themselves appear to be one stamp rather than two as

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on other HAND MADE pieces. I have not seen enough examples of both types to know if there are differences in the painting of each or the type of hanging attachment. If there was a difference in the type of plaster used, it was not readily apparent.

On the other hand, some of the facts may argue that these are original pieces. It is hard to believe that anyone would go to the trouble to make up moulds and a Medalta stamp to produce pieces that start life in the \$50.00 range. If you are going to fake a piece, why pick an obscure piece made by Andy Anderson? Few Medalta collectors would have heard of or even know about Andy. And why plaster, other than being able to make copies quickly and cheaply, as surely one would know that other plaster pieces were not made or stamped with the Medalta name?

If not forgeries then why are they all showing up in one place and over a fairly narrow time span at a low price? The only explanation that comes to mind is that someone found a cache of heads, does not know that Medalta pieces, especially HAND MADE ones are highly collectable, and is selling them off only one or two at a time.

Perhaps seeing more samples would help to answer the question of forgery or not, but I suspect that only a chemical analysis of the plaster or paint would tell for sure. Hopefully there has been compositional changes in those areas from then to now.

Would I buy one of these heads? Yes I would, but only as a reference piece and if the price was quite reasonable, as I think there is a good chance they are not original Medalta pieces. •

## Questions & Answers

### Medalta's Animal Planters

*Phone call from A.M., southeastern Alberta, July 2000*

Hello: I have picked up your book on "Medalta's Stamps and Other Markings" and enjoyed it very much. It is helping to date most of the pieces in my collection but I have a question regarding the pink elephant in my collection. The elephant only has the name MEDALTA (the M.15 stamp) and the number "125" on it. You give the date range for the M.15 stamp as 1932-1954 but I was wondering if you can date it better than that? I also have a white swan with the M.28 stamp on it, and on page 102 of the book you mention that it was first made in 1938. Can it be dated more precisely?



*Dear A.M.*

First of all, regarding the swan planter, no I can not date it any better than the range unless it has an oxide stamp on it. So far the only oxide stamp that I have recorded on the swan in addition to the impressed one is the G.33 mark, and it too can not be pinned down more narrowly at present unless it is marked with what I call the G.33 large variant (the one shown on the right in the stamp book). That stamp appears to have been used only from 1938-1941 when it was replaced by the one with the smaller sized lettering shown at the left.

MEDALTA  
POTTERIES  
Medicine Hat  
Canada

MEDALTA  
POTTERIES  
Medicine Hat  
Canada

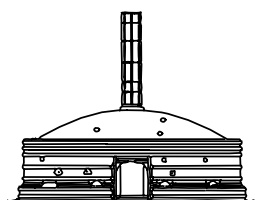
The same holds true for the elephant shaped planter as the only oxide stamp found on it is the G.33 stamp as well. In checking my notes I found that the only variant which I have recorded is the small lettering one, but admittedly I did not make any notes on the size for about half of the samples that I recorded. I would not be surprised to find that all were the small variety as the Medalta papers show that the animal shaped planters were introduced in late 1940/early 1941.



May I also suggest that you pick up a copy of "Know Your Medalta: Vases" as Appendix I (page 107) in the back of that booklet gives a full listing of Medalta's assigned style numbers and the dates when they were assigned.

And thanks for the question. It reminded me that others have asked about the figurine planters, so I will try to get pictures of all of them to write a special article about them to include in the Medalta Newsletter, hopefully the next issue.

Ron Getty



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