



The word is spreading about a recently discovered Red Wing dinnerware pattern. Dennis Nygaard, fellow RWCS member and noted Red Wing dump digger, found shards from a previously unknown dinnerware pattern in the dinnerware section of the Red Wing pottery dump. Dennis brought the shards to the 2012 RWCS MidWinter GetTogether and showed them to a group of dinnerware collectors. Only a new Hotel or Restaurant pattern, Regal, had been found since Wreath and Ivanhoe were identified in the middle 1980s. Like Wreath, no documentation on this pattern has yet been found. Based on the raised relief flowers seen in the pattern, collectors have been calling the pattern "Pansy". Wreath and Pansy shards were found together in the same area of the dump and in the same three colors: light green, light yellow and ivory. Some of the intact items are a blue green color instead of the light green of Wreath. Pansy and Wreath were most likely made during the same period, believed to be the late 1920s or early 1930s and thus prior to the introduction of Gypsy Trail in 1935.

INTRODUCING THE PANSY DINNERWARE PATTERN

*Story & photos by RWCS Members
Terry Moe and Larry Roschen*

Collectors who viewed the Pansy shards at MidWinter began the search for whole pieces. Within a month, a dinnerware collector discovered a pale yellow pitcher from the pattern in the Twin Cities area. Soon afterwards, a 9-inch mixing bowl was found in Iowa and two casseroles were found in Wisconsin - one 7-incher complete with cover and one 8-incher with no cover. The bowl and the casseroles were bottom marked with the size in the same fashion as Wreath. None of the items were marked with company identification.

When we presented our "Dinnerware Mysteries" educational seminar at the 2012 RWCS Convention, a collector who had heard of this new pattern brought in another pale yellow Pansy pitcher - this one larger than the first we saw. Ironically he found the pitcher in a shop on his way to Convention. Another collector purchased the nest of Pansy mixing bowls pictured on the cover of this issue at an antique shop in Red Wing.

The Pansy items found so far match items made in the Wreath pattern. Ultimately it seems likely the Pansy lineup will include creamers, sugar bowls, teapots and plates - just like Wreath. The dimensions of the known Pansy items are almost identical to those of Wreath. The nest of bowls shown directly at left includes a 10-inch ivory Wreath, a 9-inch light green Pansy and a royal blue 8-inch Wreath. The fit is exactly the same if a 9-inch Wreath bowl is substituted for the 9-inch Pansy bowl.



Above, starting at top of page:

- Large light yellow Pansy water pitcher.
- 7-inch (covered) and 8-inch blue green Pansy casseroles.
- 9-inch blue green Pansy bowl and 9-inch ivory Wreath bowl.

At right: 10-inch ivory Wreath, 9-inch light green Pansy and royal blue 8-inch Wreath bowls nested together, showing the two patterns' similar dimensions.

Pansy items known at this time include:

- Mixing bowls in 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 inch sizes
- Covered casseroles in 7 and 8 inch sizes
- Water pitcher in two sizes

As we searched for information about the Pansy pattern, we learned that Homer Laughlin China Company (HLC) produced a nest of mixing bowls nearly identical to Pansy. The HLC pattern was named Appletree (also known as Orange Tree) and consists of bowls made in five or six sizes. Light turquoise was the most common color although light green, pumpkin and ivory bowls were also made. Some of the ivory bowls have a red rim. Homer Laughlin made only bowls, no casseroles, pitchers or other items; these are bottom-marked with an embossed interlocking HLC logo or a Homer Laughlin ink stamp. Unlike the Red Wing Pansy, the HLC bowls are not marked with a size indicator.



Above & below: Close-ups of pumpkin and light turquoise Homer Laughlin China bowls.



Above: a nesting of light green HLC bowls.

There are slight but discernible differences in the Pansy and the HLC patterns. The petals on the HLC design are more clearly defined and have a distinct straight line down the middle of each petal. Petals on Pansy items are "fuzzier" and do not have a strong dividing line.

Which company copied the other? We do not know. The HLC bowls were introduced in 1932. Production dates for Pansy are unknown, but we are quite certain Pansy was made prior to 1935. To further complicate matters, a Homer Laughlin collector has told us an Asian company also produced similar bowls during the same time period.

We are pleased to see new Pansy items coming to light and encourage our fellow collectors to report any additional finds to *RWCS Newsletter* Editor Rick Natynski. Surely there are collectors out there who have had Pansy items in their collections for many years, but never knew they were made by Red Wing. Thanks to Dennis' discovery, they now can be accurately attributed to our favorite pottery. ■

Digging the New Dinnerware Line

I was happy to get back to Pottery Road. Pottery Road is literally a road made up of Red Wing pottery from the 1930s. We have found nothing in this road yet that dates beyond 1938. Access to digging this road is dependent on rainfall. For two years the water level in this area was too high for digging. Finally, the dry spell in the fall of 2011 made digging possible again. I was eager to get back to digging here. My digging supplies in hand, I headed down pottery road. My first surprise was that I would not be digging alone. Fellow RWCS Member John Tremble was already there. I was happy to have a digging companion. John was already pulling up a rainbow of colors.

I went a short ways beyond John, and began working an area I had dug in a couple of years earlier. Depending on where you dig in this road, you can dig stoneware, art pottery, dinnerware, or any combination of the above. The spot I chose had a lot of art pottery and dinnerware. The dinnerware was various Gypsy Trail patterns with a fair amount of wreath mixed in it. The shards often come out muddy.

About 1 foot down I was hitting the water level. I continued digging into the water. I was pulling out a fair amount of wreath shards when I noticed a yellow pitcher shard that did not look right. I assumed it was wreath, but the flowers were too big. I started paying closer attention to the patterns. I was putting the art pottery shards and the wreath shards into a bucket to be brought home and washed. After more digging, I came up with a turquoise lid shard of this unknown flower. Then I found a white shard to a bowl with this pattern. At this time I was not sure what to make of these discoveries.

In the succeeding weeks I spent hours washing all the shards when I had time. I enjoy the meditative time this washing brings, as well as revealing all the colors and shapes. I set aside the shards with the new pattern. The colors were matching those of wreath. Even the shapes were similar to wreath. I began to wonder if I had discovered a new dinnerware pattern that was sold as a parallel pattern with wreath. I began showing the shards to other collectors, especially getting their opinion on what the flower looked like. The most common response was "Pansy", which wasn't exactly the exotic response I was hoping for.

I decided to bring the shards to MidWinter. Terry Moe and Larry Roschen kindly allowed me to unveil the "new line" in their seminar. I was hoping to get some good suggestions on naming this pattern. So far "Pansy" seems to be sticking. Before MidWinter I had gone through all the shops in Red Wing hoping to find examples of Pansy. I found none. At MidWinter I had decided to get many more eyes looking for this pattern. I am enjoying the results of this almost as much as I enjoyed finding this new line.



At right: Dennis Nygaard (right) presents his shards alongside Larry Roschen at MidWinter.

