

BELL FAMILY REPRODUCTIONS

The Nicodemus Center for Ceramic Studies will be offering the third piece in its annual series of Bell family reproductions this fall. The series features one reproduction per year in a limited edition of 250. The reproductions are created by ceramist Lynette King of Orrtanna, PA and will be available to Nic. Center members for preordering between August 21 and September 21, 2002.

Orders may be placed by using the enclosed order card. After September 21, orders for the reproductions will be available to the general public. The cost to Nic. Center members is \$70 per piece with a limit of five per individual.

This year's reproduction is a slip and copper decorated earthenware bowl. The original is attributed to John Bell, Waynesboro, and came from the collection of the Seventh Day Baptist Monastical Society of Snow Hill (also known as the Snow Hill Cloister or the Snow Hill Nunnery), Quincy Township, PA. The bowl is now owned by the Nic. Center and is part of our permanent collection. It was purchased at auction when the Snow Hill collections were sold in 1997.

The Seventh Day Baptist congregation at Snow Hill was formed prior to 1790. By 1834, the congregation had established and incorporated a Monastical Society for individual members who wished to retire from the secular world for a life of religious duties and labor and as a means of providing communal security for widows, widowers and unmarried members with all goods and possessions held in common. The slip decorated bowl was one of a set of similar bowls owned by the Society.

Based on the oral tradition of the Snow Hill congregation and nearby Quincy residents, it is held that the bowls were brought out from storage for the Society's love feasts and, on at least one occasion, used to serve apple butter to those who participated in the meal.



The original Snow Hill bowl, shown above, measures 2.75 inches in height and 10.75 inches in diameter. The interior is decorated with white clay slip and copper, covered by a clear lead glaze. It features slip and copper banding on the rim and side walls above a centered eight-point star – a common element found in many forms of PA German folk art. Slip decorated wares were produced in the Cumberland/Shenandoah Valley region from the late 1700s through the 1880s, though even before the Civil War they had lost popularity as PA German cultural identity declined in favor of a more national identity. Photo: J. M. Smith

Bell Reproduction Sale

A number of the small earthenware jugs remain from a previous Bell family reproduction sale. The original was made by John Bell's son, Charles Frederick. It is dated on the base, "Sept. 19, 1884" and signed "C. F. Bell." Charles Frederick (1846–1899) was the fourth of five sons of John and Elizabeth Bell. If you are interested in purchasing one or more of the jugs at the member's reduced price of \$45, please contact the Nic. Center by email, jms48@psu.edu, or by mail, NCCS, P.O. Box 533, Mont Alto, PA 17237.



C.F. Bell Jug

Photo: William H. Gelbach, III