

Member Spotlight

Written by Tess Erickson Cain

Russ Carlson



Russ is a newly elected NDPCS board member and lives in Watertown, South Dakota.

What first interested you in pottery and collecting?

"My sister and I were attending a family reunion in 2019 and we stopped at an antique store in Redfield, SD. I saw a pair of pheasant salt and pepper shakers, and my sister said that they were Rosemeade. She shared with me her brief knowledge of Rosemeade and that it was produced in Wahpeton, ND. My sister at that time lived in Breckenridge, MN, and her father-in-law, Russel Jacobs, collected Rosemeade. I purchased those pheasant salt and pepper shakers and a pair of Prairie Rose salt and pepper shakers that day. After researching Rosemeade pottery and learning more of Laura Taylor, I was hooked."

What brought you to NDPCS? How long have you been a NDPCS member?

"In my research on Rosemeade, I learned about North Dakota clay and other North Dakota pottery. I ran across some links to the NDPCS and looked at the website. I purchased some Rosemeade pieces online from Dick Berg who, through emails and conversations, led me to becoming a member in 2021."

What do you enjoy most about collecting North Dakota pottery?

"I enjoy collecting individual pieces of Rosemeade in various colors and completing sets. For example, the tulip motif creamer/sugar bowl (regular and miniature sizes), salt and pepper shakers, and spoon rest. I have completed sets of all the colors (wine, blue, yellow, pink, and lavender) except for the lavender miniature creamer and sugar bowl. I still need to find those two pieces! As my collection has expanded greatly, I now focus on acquiring rarer pieces of Rosemeade and other North Dakota pottery products."

What is a fun memory you have about a NDPCS convention?

"The bus trip to the Richland County Museum and visiting with several of the NDPCS members. Learning about all the different ND pottery and what grabs the interest of different NDPCS is awesome!"

What is your favorite piece in your collection?

"Oh, that is a tough question! I have a brown alligator that is special. I also have an Icelandic pitcher and 8 tumblers in harvest gold that are absolutely beautiful. But the cutest ones are the Chihuahua salt and pepper shakers. They are just so darling!"

What do you wish people knew about you, your collection, and/or NDPCS?

"I love to display all my Rosemeade pieces in themes. For example, all the Roosevelt pieces I have collected are displayed together and the 13 dog salt and pepper shakers are all together."

The NDPCS and the members are a wealth of knowledge in North Dakota pottery, and the need to maintain that knowledge using modern technology has been recognized and is being developed. Recording that knowledge using modern tools can help expose younger generations to the joys of collecting and preserving North Dakota pottery."

Do you have any words of advice or wisdom for new collectors?

"Seek the knowledge of long-term collectors and engage them as mentors. Share your intentions and interests as a new collector with others so they can share their experiences and expose you to alternatives that you may not have even considered."