



E-NEWS FROM TILE HERITAGE

January



February 2008



(Available each month to Tile Heritage members who e-mail the Foundation from the address they would like E-News sent to. Contact: foundation@tileheritage.org)

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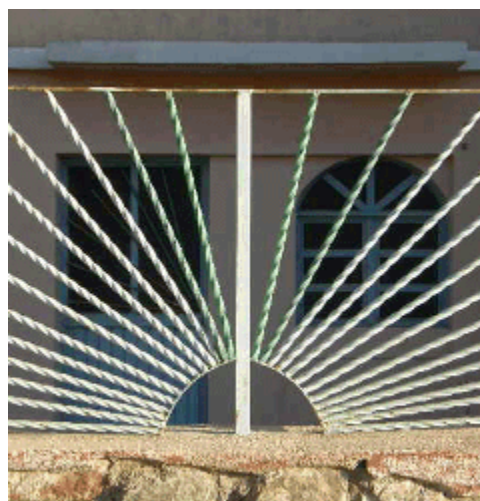
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Next month we open the gates to
Todos Artes, a developing art center
in Todos Santos, Baja California Sur.



Brechelle Ware at work in the Tile Heritage Library

Where Would We Be!

Don't ask! Know only that our Collections Manager, **Brechelle Ware**, is on task, providing Tile Heritage with an untold variety of services essential to the longterm strength and viability of the organization. A native of Washington State, she currently resides in Twisp, about a 4-hour drive from Sea-Tac, in the north country where it is truly COLD, like Fargo cold. We believe it's the warmer temperatures in northern California that serve as the allure for her trip south each month. And while she is here, usually for a week's duration, she is principally responsible for cataloguing the Foundation's collections: the historic and contemporary tiles that continue to be donated, the hundreds of tile catalogs, artists' materials, photography, periodicals and related ephemera. Thanks Brechelle; you're the best!

Paragon Prairie: Tower of Excellence

THF member, **David Dahlquist** of **RDG Planning & Design Dahlquist Art Studio** in Des Moines, has recently completed the **R&R Paragon Prairie Tower** featuring nearly **1.8 million Italian glass mosaic tiles** with terra cotta relief and cast GFRC (Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete) relief tiles in a frieze at the base.

Located in **Urbandale** this major icon and cultural landmark for the State of Iowa, **120 feet tall and 16 feet in diameter**, tells of the accomplishments and aspirations of the people of Iowa and the Midwest. **It is the largest Italian glass mosaic tile mural in the United States**. The dynamic symbol pays homage to the history of the native Iowa prairie.



Artist David Dahlquist provides the tower with its final inspection

Photo courtesy RDG Planning & Design
Dahlquist Art Studio



**R&R Paragon Prairie Tower
Urbandale, Iowa**

Photo courtesy RDG Planning & Design
Dahlquist Art Studio

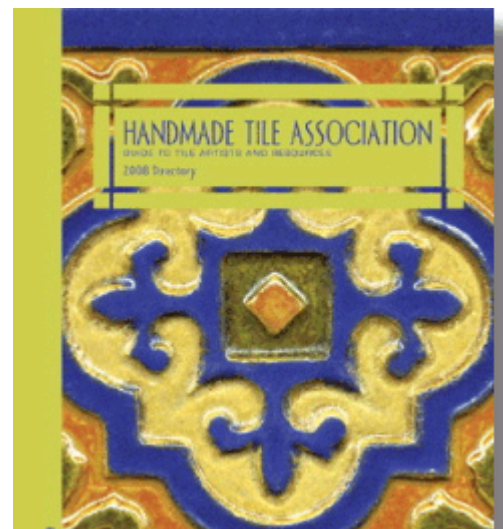
The main elements of the concept include the tower constructed of precast concrete panels. The image is one of the prairie—big bluestem grass, black-eyed Susans, and other colors found in the landscape of field and sky. The image was then transferred to tiles, affixed to a mesh material in Ravenna, Italy, following a computer-generated pattern, then shipped to the site for installation. Lighting also plays a key role in the project; lights are positioned on the surrounding plaza to shine up and evenly illuminate the mosaic at night. The tower is topped off with a light in a blue drum, silhouetted against the sky.

Congratulations to R&R Realty Group, Sunderland Brothers Company, Sicis North America, Laticrete, Des Moines

Marble & Mantel as well as **RDG Planning & Design Dahlquist Art Studio** for their participation in this magnificent project. For more details click on <http://www.rdgusa.com/index.php>.

HTA Directory 2008

The **Handmade Tile Association (HTA)**, a group of independent and diverse tile makers and mosaicists who work in studios throughout the **Upper Midwest**, has published its annual directory, now in its ninth edition. The **2008 HTA directory**, featuring 33 handmade tile and mosaic artists in full color, is a **free**, comprehensive guide that offers architects, designers, contractors and the public direct access to a wide variety of creative and original handmade tiles, mosaic artists and tile-related resources. Order your directory online at www.handmadetileassociation.org or write to HTA, 34 Thirteenth Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413. Ph: 612 781-6409. Tile Heritage also maintains a supply of directories, and you may email us for a copy. **Remember, it's FREE!**



CERF Deserves Your Support!

The **Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF)** is committed to supporting the careers of craft artists throughout the United States. Through business and career-strengthening programs, emergency relief support, advocacy and research **CERF** helps professional craft artists strengthen and sustain their careers so that they can thrive and, thus, contribute to the quality of life in our communities. At **CERF**, it's all about people—the people who support the organization through their generous contributions of time and resources, the artists whose creativity adds so much to our lives, the board and staff members who ensure that **CERF** fulfills its mission and delivers quality programs and services.

Make your contribution—click

<http://craftemergency.org/support/contribute>



From the left to right,
**Brian Nettles, sculptor and former resident potter
at the Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art;**
Lana Wilson, ceramic artist and CERF promoter;
Cornelia Carey, Executive Director of CERF,
gather in Del Mar, California.

Photo courtesy Irene de Watterville.



**The Pods designed by architect Frank Gehry,
part of the new Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art
being built on the Mississippi Sound in Biloxi.**

Photo courtesy of the
Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art.

The Frank Gehry-designed **Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art** in Biloxi, Mississippi remains under construction; the museum is expected to open in phases over the next few years. The collections were undamaged during Hurricane Katrina as the objects were removed from the area in time for safe-keeping. Exhibits and educational events are ongoing at the Swetman House, a transitional location at 1596 Glenn L. Swetman Drive. As we await the Grand Opening, join with the Tile Heritage Foundation by participating in the **Brick Campaign**, purchasing a personalized, inscribed brick for the new museum! How? Go to <http://www.ohrbricks.org> and find out!



Claycraft Potteries mantel in Oak Park, Illinois
Photo courtesy Scott Michalak

Claycraft Lives in Illinois

Scott Michalak, a realty consultant in Illinois, was hoping we might know the origin of this fireplace mantel in a home recently purchased by his clients in Oak Park.

The fireplace tiles were made by Claycraft Potteries in Los Angeles, a company that got underway in 1921 and survived through the Depression until the late '30s. The superintendent of the plant was Fred Robertson, who with his son George designed the Claycraft tiles. Fred was a fourth generation ceramist whose family came from Scotland. Claycraft tiles are found throughout the U.S. and are among the most revered of the California tiles of this period.

WACO Brings Down the House

We are very excited to be fervently engaged in correspondence with Wendy Budge, who with her husband Bill purchased a tiled house in Spokane some years ago. Turns out the house was built in 1923 by Victor E. Piollet, then vice president and general sales manager of the Washington Brick Lime and Sewer Pipe Company, known among tile collectors as WACO. Imagine an entire house covered with tiles! Probably tiled to demonstrate the versatility of the company's products, the house is on its way to being listed on the Historic Register.

The company got its start in 1888 when brick maker J. T. Davie sold out to Henry Brook, a Methodist minister in Spokane who soon joined forces with Joseph Spear in 1892 to form the Washington Brick & Lime Co. The company expanded and prospered as the city rebuilt itself after a disastrous fire leveled a 32-block area in 1889. By 1911 the company had \$1.2 million in resources. Its factory in Clayton was the primary source for terra cotta, firebrick, and facebrick. In 1919 Arthur Fosseen took over followed by his son Neal in the early '30s. At that time the company was producing about 20 million brick a year. Production of terra cotta ended in 1948, and the company merged with Gladding, McBean in 1957, after which the plant was dismantled.



Piollet house in Spokane completely clad in tiles from the Washington Brick Lime & Sewer Pipe Co.
Photo courtesy Wendy Budge



From the left: Joe Taylor, home owner Sarah Rowan, historian Mike Sims, and Sheila Menzies admiring a Moravian fireplace in Ashland, Ohio.

Courtesy Ashland Tiles-Gazette. Photo by Duane Martin.

Back to Ashland, Ohio

Betty Plank, a writer for the *Ashland Times-Gazette*, was kind enough to join us on our recent house tour in Ashland, Ohio. Her “Tiles draw crowd to Center St. Historic District” appeared in the local paper on October 27, 2007 along with this photograph. We would like to thank Betty for her well-written article, our host **Dotty Tennis** (now a THF member), and home owner Sarah Rowan for inviting our group to see firsthand her two beautifully maintained Moravian fireplace mantels!

Viktor, We Thought You'd Live Forever

According to the Associated Press, **Viktor Schreckengost**, artist and prolific industrial designer whose works ranged from familiar toys and White House porcelain to innovative trucks and even lawn mowers, died on January 26th while visiting family in Tallahassee. He was 101.

Brother of the late tile designer and muralist **Don Schreckengost**, who ran the art department at Summitville Tiles for many years, Viktor attended our “Tiles of Ohio” symposium in Zanesville in 1993 when we honored Don with a “This is Your Life” lecture and special tribute. Sheila Menzies recalls dancing with Viktor, at the time a spry 87-year-old, and he certainly kept up the pace!

Artist and scholar **Nancy McCroskey** interviewed Viktor in 1996, forty years after he completed the sculptural work at the Cleveland Zoo (see “E-News” December 2007). He reflected on his working with the crew at the Federal Seaboard Terra Cotta Corp. in Perth Amboy, marveling at the size capabilities as well as the brilliance of the glaze colors employed. He remembered the elephants (both a mammoth and a mastodon) weighing in at 32 tons, enough to nearly collapse an entire wall at the zoo! “It scared me!” he said. “We got great big steel rods to tighten up and bring the wall back in and on the outside they took telephone poles to help hold the wall up. The wall was never made to hold 32 tons of clay!”

For a written copy of the interview send \$5 to **Friends of Terra Cotta**, c/o Tunick, 771 West End Ave., #10E, New York, NY 10025



Detail of Viktor Schreckengost's elephant sculptures at the Cleveland Zoo, 1955.