

MCCOY LIGHT – No Floraline Lamps

By Mal Anderson

I was thinking about an old friend recently that isn't with us anymore, at least physically. He left our world in 2015 and we who knew him can certainly say that if you knew Frank Poolas, you had a friend, especially if you were a collector of McCoy Pottery.

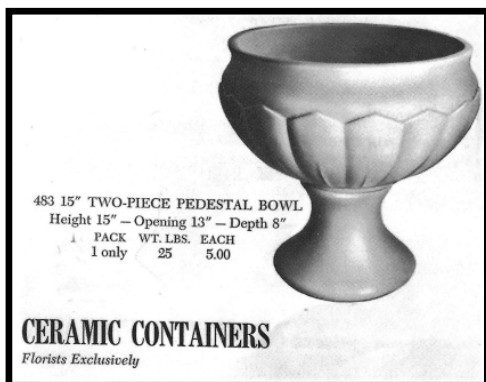
One year, maybe in the late 90s, we were attending The McCoy Pottery Reunion in Zanesville. As usual, we all had a wonderful time and bought and sold some great pieces. Frank always had pieces for sale and for the most part at a reasonable price. He loved Cookie Jars, Roseville Floraline and had great knowledge of both.

Back in the 1990s, it was common for some McCoy Collectors to stay in Zanesville for five days or more. Some stayed for five days but most stayed at least four. All of the hotels were packed with dealers. Once a year, sellers who were trying to make some money on pots from the many potteries they had collected over the past year congregated in Zanesville. If they weren't in our host hotel, they most likely were selling other pottery types. Some always had a mix of McCoy too so you needed to visit all of the rooms in the numerous hotels for their open-door sales.

In the early days of our McCoy group, we had the Mixer/Auction on Tuesday evening and our banquet on Thursday evening. There was always something to do on all of the days of the week because there were so many dealers and shops to visit. Many of our members left on Friday, the morning after our banquet.

Frank and I, along with our wives, decided to leave on Saturday morning and travel back to New Jersey together. We had separate cars but we thought that on the way, we could stop for lunch somewhere along the way to talk about all the fun we had. A great stop along the way was the Pritchard-Laughlin Pottery Show in Cambridge, Ohio. There was a small fee to get in however the show had many dealers and quite a few of them sold McCoy. Dealers were even set up in the entrance lobby.

Well, as we entered, the first booth was a dealer who was selling Hull Pottery. We recognized her from seeing her in Zanesville. When we started to look at her display, I said to Frank, "Don't forget to look at that pot on the very top shelf". It was huge and we had a concern that it was on the very top of the display. Frank recognized it right away as it was a really, really hard to find piece of "Floraline". He spoke to the dealer and she knew that it was a McCoy piece and was selling it at a reasonable price. Of course, Frank had to have it and it went home to New Jersey.



The image right is the piece Frank purchased that day. The image left is a portion of a 1960s catalog page for Floraline.



The upper Bowl section is about 13 inches across the opening and about 8 inches tall. The lower pedestal is just under 7 inches tall to the resting step for the Bowl.



Before Frank Poolas passed, we talked about that cool piece and he knew that I liked it too. So, it made its way to South Jersey where Nancy & I live having made the trip from his North Jersey home.

Your interest in McCoy Pottery may have included the many pieces of Roseville Floraline that they made. As you may know, "Floraline" was made for the florist trade. There were many designs created of course to vary Florist's interest and those pieces were a very profitable line for the company. Some of the initial pieces were very basic in their design with mono coloring of a matte green and matte white. As time went on, more vibrant colors were mixed into the offerings of the "Roseville Floraline Line".

There were many basic designs that were made starting in the 1960s and the line became very popular within the florist trade. It has been previously reported that a profit of at least \$1,000,000 was realized by McCoy from this line.

In the later production times and during the Lancaster Colony era, the "Roseville Fineforms" designs were introduced and were a big hit with the retailers. Beautiful glossy coloring and art deco shapes inspired florists to rethink their retail flower designs and with that change, it also made more profit for them and of course McCoy.

Sadly, and from my prospective and knowledge as a McCoy lamp collector, there were no lamps produced from any of the Roseville Floraline or Fineforms shapes. In perspective, I can understand why in that there was a flood of imported pottery that came into the retail market that undercut profitability. New designs cost money to produce and foreign influence in the market made the choice not to add lamps to the line an obvious one.

The "Fineforms Line" produced shapes that were very inspiring and if any lamps were in the thought process of being made in the later years of the Nelson McCoy Pottery, these shapes would have made some great lamp bases. I'm certain you will agree.

A picture of that wonderful piece of Floraline that Frank Poolas purchased at the Pritchard-Laughlin Show as we made our way home from the very fun week, we spent in Zanesville is included in this article. I hope that showing this inspires you to get out there and look for these not so easily found terrific pieces of the pottery we love. So keep looking, I know more great pieces are out there just waiting to be found. Stay safe and don't forget to think about and promote the McCoy Pottery Collectors Society!