



# FRANCISCAN NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, No. 2

October, November, December 1994

## Editorial

Time has flown by this year. The hunt for Franciscan has been fruitful. Back in 1982, I collected eight place settings of Franciscan Fruit (aka small fruit) with platters, bowls & a gravy boat. A woman was referred to me; as this was "precollecting" days of hand-painted Franciscan. She wanted desperately to fill in her set of Small Fruit. Nowhere was it to be found. After meeting her, and selling her my set, I have reflected often on my adventure in acquiring it.

I remember clearly driving like a bat out of hell through country roads on a rainy fall day. The store where I saw some dinnerplates was out in the back woods of Seattle. Actually it was in a barn. I rushed out before the store closed because I had made the last minute decision to add a new set to my collection of Franciscan Ivy. The small fruit was perfect. I could tell at the time the workmanship that went into every detail. Well, I did arrive at the barn and swoop up four dinnerplates. Prior to this year I had vowed that I would not collect small fruit again.

My vow did last 11 years, but was broken early this year. I think the hardest piece for me to buy again was the gravy boat. Considering I sold the set for \$50, I paid \$95 for the gravy boat. Hindsight is perfect. However, I've never regretted selling a set to someone who so wanted to find her favorite dishes. Pottery comes and goes. It is the process I find fascinating.

Thank you to Steve Kormanyos for his wonderful article in this issue, to George James for all the great information he is sharing with us, and to Shel Izen, for once again providing professional photographs. A photograph truly is worth a thousand words. Also, thank you Harvey Duke for your support.

*James Elliot, Editor*



## Franciscan Contours

*Photographed above is the George James' designed Franciscan Contours line. Made of fine china, the line was introduced in 1954.*

## July, 1951

### **Shows Will Feature Franciscan Coronado**

By popular demand Franciscan Coronado will receive special emphasis during the Summer Show season. One of the oldest Franciscan dinnerware patterns, the graceful swirling lines of Coronado capture all the romance and beauty of the Dons. Reminiscent of Early California's formal Spanish architecture, the delightful contours of the shapes and the delicacy of the modeling make the setting of a beautiful table an easy matter. The beautiful gloss glazes in Turquoise and Maroon are again being offered in Franciscan Coronado in response to demands of homemakers from coast to coast. Table settings in Coronado will be featured at the New York, Los Angeles San Francisco and Dallas Shows. In addition to the colors in the gloss glazes, Coronado is offered in satin glazes in Ivory, Turquoise, Yellow and Coral.

## COLLECTORS ON COLLECTING

*Stephen Kormanyos, MD.*

When James asked me to write an article for the Franciscan Newsletter, I was thrilled. He asked me to share my experience with Franciscan Ware, what it means to me, and also to talk a bit about Franciscan Poppy.

I became interested in Franciscan rather circuitously. I was a second-year medical student in Seattle, and walked into an antique bookstore, I'm not sure why, but it substantially changed my life ever after. There, under the glass case, I found an Oz-book, Speedy in Oz. I had read the Oz books as a child, and this was a title I had not read. It was "collectible." At that time I did not realize what a "collectible" is. However, I scoured the greater Seattle area for more Oz books. I eventually stumbled into a store in Seattle that sold both rare books as well as American dinnerware and art pottery. Soon I was spending more time with the dishes than the books! I knew I was hooked when I traded an Oz book for some pottery!

My first Franciscan Ware pattern was Autumn, the decaled pottery from the 1950's. I was enticed by the interesting shape of the line, as well as the numerous accessory pieces available. I gradually became aware of the other Franciscan Ware patterns, and their collectibility. As a medical student, funds were tight. I was able to support my newly developing taste for pottery by recognizing rarer objects at shops around town and at flea markets and shows, and trading them for other objects I wanted. Oh, the things I would trade away for Autumn!

As I became more familiar with Franciscan Ware, I discovered I had a taste for the hand-painted lines. My favorite pattern is Franciscan Poppy. The brilliant yellow poppy, bright purple lupine, and the bold green leaves, combined on a coupe shape make the line irresistible. One again I went to work, scouring the countryside, this time for Franciscan Poppy. I will never forget the first time I found a small stack. I was so excited, I remember my hands shaking. It took a year, but soon I had service for 20 with all the serving pieces.

Half-way through accruing the Poppy set, I noticed Franciscan Fruit (also known as "old fruit"). Again I was captivated. I decided I would start a breakfast set. The breakfast set has grown to a service for sixteen, missing only are the covered ramekins and the turkey platter.

More recently, I had been noticing Franciscan Wildflower. I had long ignored this pattern, as the competition was just too fierce for so little available. Fortunately (or unfortunately!), a set became available, and once again trading stock became very important. This time tempered by more experience, my trade was more equitable. My most current fascination is with Polynesia, a vase ware line produced in 1942. The variegated nature of the shapes and south sea floral designs unified by a single color scheme (the colors of Desert Rose) are delightful. I have placed several vases in the large low bowl, and the combination is a stunning centerpiece, brilliantly offsetting the Franciscan Poppy and Wildflower services. Along the way have come the odd and unusual piece of Desert Rose, the Ivy soup tureen, a little Apple

and Meadow Rose, as well as (forgive me "made in California" purists) a wonderful set of Tulip (made in England).

Those who don't know me ask what I do with all these sets of dishes. My friends are familiar with the large brunches and dinner parties full sets of dishes allow. There is nothing more spectacular than an early summer brunch on the deck, the sun streaming down on Franciscan Poppy, or a harvest-time feast--cranberries and apple pie--served on old Fruit. I change dishes with the season. Tulip in the spring, florals for summer, Apple for Thanksgiving, and Ivy for Christmas. I save the Wildflower for mid-winter when my spirits need raising.

Using these masterpieces daily can be risky, we lost three old Fruit cups to Spanish coffee when we doused the flaming brandy (they shattered!), but I believe these objects were made to be enjoyed. I cringe to think of my dinnerware locked up in some case, or packed away in a box, it needs to live and breath!

Franciscan Poppy was produced in 1950 with a length of production limited to only three years. When compared to Desert Rose, which was in production from 1941 until the plant closure in 1984, the maddening explanation for the the scarcity of Franciscan Poppy becomes apparent.

Franciscan Poppy is the only hand-painted embossed Franciscan dinnerware line produced on a coupe shape. All other hand-painted embossed lines are produced on a rim shape. On a rim shape decoration is applied to a shoulder, separated from the eating surface. Daisy is an intaglio shape rather than embossed. The coupe shape lends itself to a less formal service and allows a larger eating surface for larger portions! The poppy and lupine of Franciscan Poppy are the same that appear on Wildflower, a pattern produced eight years earlier in 1942. The poppy on the two patterns is similar, while the lupine on Poppy is purple, and appears blue on Wildflower. This sometimes leads to confusion between the two patterns. I have bought Wildflower dinner plates labeled by the seller as "Poppy," and have heard of a Wildflower jam jar sold from a set of Franciscan Poppy. Poppy does not have a jam jar. In addition to the yellow poppy and blue lupine, Wildflower is also decorated with a purple star flower and a reddish-orange mariposa lily. The shapes offered in Franciscan Poppy are somewhat limited. There are dinner, salad and bread & butter plates, as well as tea cups and saucers, fruit and cereal bowls. Nice place setting bonuses are tumblers and ash trays. Serving pieces include a vegetable and salad bowl, an oval platter, covered butter dish, gravy boat with unattached underplate, pitcher, chop plate, creamer, sugar, tea pot and salt & pepper shakers. I have never found a gravy boat with an attached underplate and would be delighted to know if other collectors can confirm its existence.

Although limited in overall shapes available, I have found other uses for pieces which increase Franciscan Poppy's versatility. Salad plates, of course, can be used in addition for

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Catalina Artware



Franciscan artware began in 1934, however saw it's greatest production during 1939-42. Pictured above are the Peasant Lady's Head vase. The vase was offered in satin white, satin coral, and satin turquoise. The vase was also manufactured in the terra cotta line with gloss turquoise scarf on a terra cotta background. The vase was also offered in a hand painted version. The scarf was gaily painted with geometric forms, the eyes, brows, lips and cheeks painted. Reported so far are a predominately blue detailed scarf and a maroon detailed scarf. The terra cotta vase may have come in a marron gloss scarf. This vase is considered a crossover collectible. A crossover collectible is one in which many groups of collectors collect. Lady heads collectors are tough competition for the GMcB collector. The Ivory vase is the most common. The hardest to find are the hand-painted vases.

## The Hermosa Tiles "Animals"



Pictured to the left is one of the tiles in the Hermosa brush outline inserts Animal Tile series. This tile is the Monkey with the mirror (no formal name was associated with the individual tiles). Other tiles in the series included: Clown (frying fish on a stick over an open fire), Rabbit (dancing), Dog (with a stop sign, policeman's hat & badge), and Bear (with alphabet blocks). Hermosa tile was manufactured by Gladding, McBean & Co. These tiles were pictured in a sales catalogue from November 1945. On the cover is the following:

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....TO CONSTANTLY IMPROVE AN ALREADY PROVEN PRODUCT AS AGELESS AS THE ROCK FROM WHICH IT IS MADE.....TO PERIODICALLY INVOLVE NEW SHAPES AND COLORS WITH CONSERVATIVE STYLING SO THAT THE MATERIAL MAY BE AS MODERN AS TOMORROW YET NEVER DATED IN DESIGN....TO WARRANT THE CONFIDENCE PLACED IN US BY THOSE WHO CONSTANTLY USE OUR PRODUCTS.

## The Desert Rose Breakfast Set



*The Desert Rose breakfast set was offered in 1951 and came complete as shown above. Included in the set (left to right), were 1 teacup, 2 salad plates, 1 bread & butter, toast cover, demi coffee pot, demi sugar, demi creamer, 1 cereal bowl, and eggcup. The demi sugar never came with a lid. The rarest items are the toast cover, demi coffee pot, demi-sugar & demi creamer. Yet to be confirmed is the packaging GMCB sold the set in. This special was one of many specials offered throughout each year.*

## The Child's Set



*Also offered in 1951 was the child's set. Composed of a salad plate, footed cereal bowl, and 10 oz mug (aka chocolate mug, or a child's mug). The set was offered in Desert Rose, Apple, and Ivy (pictured left). It is not known whether the bottom of the mug was marked "My First Piece of Franciscan." The 10oz mug was replaced in later years with the 7oz mug in Desert Rose and Apple. Since there was not another 7oz mug in Ivy to replace the 10oz mug, we could assume that the child's set was not offered in Ivy in later years. The child's set in Desert Rose was packaged in later years with the 7oz mug, coupe desert plate, and the porringer. There does not seem to be a child's set offered in Apple or Ivy as no packaging or porringers have been discovered.*

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## Show Reports

### ORANGE COUNTY SHOW - MAY 1994 Buena Park, California

Hand-painted embossed Franciscan ware was evident at the show. Ivy, Desert Rose, and Apple were among the rare and fine American Pottery at one of the best pottery shows on the west coast. Next to Roseville, Rookwood, Bauer, Fulper, sat a Desert Rose cookie jar for \$225. Prices seemed reasonable and the Dealers are very knowledgeable. Unusual pieces found at the show were an advertising tile featuring Hermosa tile for \$35, a pair of Oxblood Lamps, and a french pheasant vase for \$225. No rare or unusual pieces of hand-painted dinnerware.

Delleen Enge was promoting her book Hand-Painted Embossed Franciscan Ware, with a wonderful display of all the hand-painted dinnerwares in her book. This show was a great opportunity to meet Delleen.

Sales were brisk as this is only a one day show on Saturday. No time to hesitate. This show is a must for serious American pottery collectors.

### PORTLAND EXPO - JULY 1994 Portland, Oregon

The Portland show is a must for all west coast collectors. Said to be the largest show on the west coast. Many dealers bring their Franciscan to sell and many also specialize in selling Franciscan. The hunt is on as the collectors compete for the best finds. Prices are retail, not like many shows on the flea market circuit. A poppy teapot sold for \$165, a pair of wheat candleholders sold for \$45, saw a poppy chop plate for \$125. There was a lot of standard and common pieces available in the hand-painted embossed dinnerware lines. Missing were the more uncommon lines. Rumors: a set of Wildflower was uncovered by a dealer at the show only to be snapped up instantly for a bargain. There was a dealer sign for the fine china that went unsold for \$225. This is a great time to meet fellow Franciscan collectors and share notes, of course after the frantic hunt.

### PORTLAND EXPO - OCTOBER 1994 Portland, Oregon

The fall Portland expo is the most anticipated as it is the last show of the season until next March for the Northwest. Franciscan was hard to locate. There was a Desert Rose long and narrow available. Prices were normal, no high prices at this show. Shopping was brisk as many of the items disappeared on my second round. One usually shops this show by walking up and down the isles numerous times as the dealers set up on Friday. It is advisable to pay the \$30 fee to get in on Friday. However, Saturday morning, many dealers bring out their best wares. Can't seem to get up with the birds, so I always hear of the wonderful "deal" and finds. Well worth attending.



## Letters to the Editor

*To Annette Mainz, Boerne, Texas:*

The photograph above is a picture of the Daisy Wreath pattern. Lehner's Book of Marks lists it as Crown Daisy, however in the Franciscan brochure from 1975, the pattern is listed as Daisy Wreath.

Pictured also, left to right, are a Dogwood, 1975 (trimmed in lime green with green leaves, white flowers) bread & butter plate, a Toffee, year unknown (flowers are different shades of brown) cup, and a Daisy Wreath, 1975 (flowers are orange/yellow with yellow trim) salad plate. All of these patterns were done by the method known as "hand bulbging." The design was painted on by using a rubber bulb with paint in it and squeezing the paint by drops onto the greenware (dry but unfired clay body).

At this time, these patterns are not in the collectible category. Rather, they are in the dinnerware matching category. The difference is that the market price determined for dinnerware matching is completely different from the collectible market. Price is determined from a common set of values. Such as earthenware plates for Franciscan are \$12 for a salad plate, \$26 for a dinner no matter what pattern it is. A collectible dealer would be hard pressed to charge this much and may end up with it on their gravestone. However for someone who wants this pattern and has broken a salad plate, \$12 is very reasonable.

Send in your photographs and questions. They will be answered as space allows.

## Update to Vol.1, No. 1, Book Reviews

Architectual Terra Cotta of Gladding, McBean, by Gary F. Kurutz. Windgate Press, Sausalito, CA, 1989. Hardcover.

Gary Kurutz's book is out-of-print, however it can be ordered from the Franciscan Newsletter for \$45 plus \$5 UPS. Washington residents be sure to include sales tax.



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*James Elliot, Proprietor*

**Wanted/For Sale Advertisements**

**For Sale:** Apple: Box, 4-3/8 x 3-1/4, \$40; Applique: plates \$28, salads \$23, desserts \$18, c/s \$30; Desert Rose: single tall shaker \$15, pr flat shakers \$35, butter dish tray only \$10, 3 section divided tray, 11-3/4 x 8-1/2, \$43, demitasse cup only \$30, Ivy: single shaker \$12; Meadow Rose: single shaker \$10. Donna Black Milburn 1110 Bellamah Drive, Alamogordo, NM 88310 (505)437-1404.

**For Sale:** Lots of Tiempo and Metropolitan, all colors. Some Coronado and El Patio. Wanted: Catalina pieces from GMcB era. Sharon Freeburne, 12409 Blackwell Rd., Central Point, OR 97502 (503)855-7243.

**For Sale:** Apple: 13 plt dinner \$11, 12" chop \$42, milk pitcher \$42, cov. cass. \$67, 10 c&s \$10, 3 pt relish \$42, med platter \$37,

2 AD c&s \$36, 3 rim soup \$12, Cafe Royal: 3 plate dinner \$14, 5 plate salad \$10, 5 plate b&b \$8, 6 c&s \$14 Daisy: 3 plt dinner \$14, 3 fruit bowl \$10, 3 plt b&b \$9, 3 c&s \$14 Ivy: div. veg. \$42, 4 c&s \$15, 3 fruit bowls \$11, 3 side salads \$37, 4 sherberts \$27, salad bowl \$110, 3 tumblers \$32. Desert Rose: 2 jumbo c&s \$42, 3 - 12 oz mugs \$26, 2 fld soups \$16. Meadow Rose: butter dish lid \$17, veg bowl \$24, 4 fruit bowls \$9, c&s \$14, salad plate \$11. Strawberry Fair: 7 plate dinner \$16, 9 plt salad \$11, 3 plt b&b \$9, 11 soup/cereal \$11, sugar \$26, creamer \$23, 8 c&s \$16, platter \$43, butterdish \$38. All mint, PIX, priced each. Call Terry Krefl (410)298-2048.

**For Sale:** Desert Rose: 10oz tumb 4 @ \$25, Fruit. luncheon plate worn in center \$40, Poppy dinner plates with rim chips 2@\$6, with nicks or flakes 5@\$10; Strawberry Fair: all have minor nicks or flakes, dinner 5@\$8, salad 2 @\$6, bread &

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Wanted/For Sale, continued

*(Continued from page 6)*

butter 2 @\$4, cereal 2@\$6, all 11 pieces for \$50. Items priced each, shpg & ins. extra, \$4 minimum, (410)321-6076 until 10pm EST. Don Currens, 414 Aigburth Rd, Towson, MD 21286.

**For Sale:** Large selection of Sea Sculptures, sand, white, & primary white. Ralph Clifford (510)843-9336 PST.

**Wanted:** Silver Pine: any pieces except the basic 5 piece place setting. Also Del Mar: salad plates, soup bowls, mugs, pitcher, coffee pot, relish, med platter, sauce boat, butterdish, chop plate and side salad. At reasonable prices, please. Roy Eddey, 145 4th Ave #8E, NY, NY 10003 or E-mail to MXW60A@Prodigy.com

**Wanted:** Other Franciscan collectors to network/trade with. Interested in Contours, Kaolena, Polynesia, various Hand Painted lines and GMB Art Ware. Li Vaughn (619)438-4611, 6704 Antelope St., Carlsbad, CA 92009.

**Wanted:** Brochures, factory memorabilia, information on Gladding McBean and Franciscan. For private collection and research. Contact: James Elliot, (206)527-5078 or write to 8412 - 5th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

**Wanted:** Floral: 4 berry bowls, gravy boat with lid & underplate, 2 vegetable bowls. Donna Black Milburn 1110 Bellamah Drive, Alamogordo, NM 88310 (505)437-1404.

## Collectors on Collecting

*(Continued from page 2)*

desert and snacks. I have used the oval platter for steak plates, the ample eating surface well accommodating "surf and turf," or steak and lobster. The ash trays make excellent butter pats or dipping bowls for , olive oil, or sushi.

Franciscan Poppy can be augmented with pieces from other hand-painted embossed Franciscan lines. This practice of "mixing and matching" different dinnerware lines is very popular today with modern china, both formal and informal. It works quite well with Franciscan Poppy from the 1950's as well. The only rules I observe are to color coordinate, and to avoid pieces with a rim shape. Other than this one is limited only by imagination and the availability of pieces. Desert Rose looks quite nice on a table of Franciscan Poppy. The pink of the roses goes well with the colors of Franciscan Poppy, the leaf colors match. Recall that there are some coupe shaped pieces in Desert Rose, the coupe dessert plate, steak plate, TV tray and party plate, among others. These all work well with Franciscan Poppy. I have used a green-lined Desert Rose coffee pot with Poppy, which lacks a coffee server, and the long and narrow for French Bread. The Desert Rose salt and pepper grinder makes a pleasant and practical accent to the table while the soup tureen blends in well. Really, most of the accessory pieces of Desert Rose work well with Franciscan Poppy, heart shaped dishes, mi-

crowave sets, egg cups, demitasse, as well as others. I like Meadow Rose less with the Franciscan Poppy, the yellows tend to clash to my eye. Ivy, however, can also be pressed into service with the Poppy quite nicely. The dark greens match. The covered vegetable, large mugs and pickle dish work well sprinkled among the Poppy pieces.

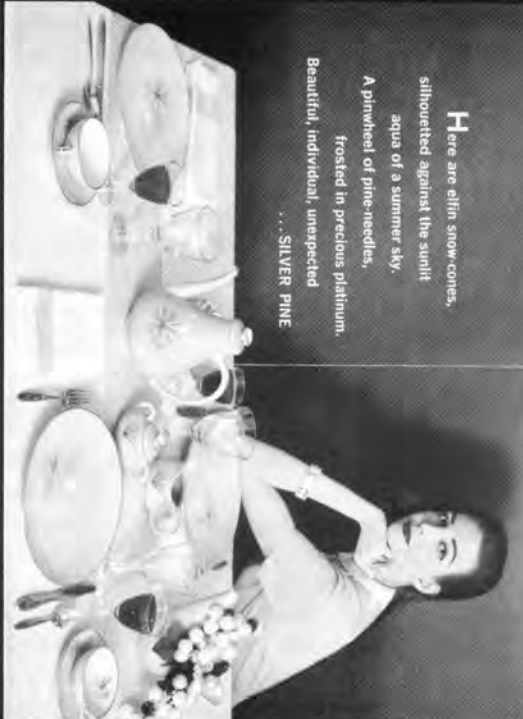
Wildflower, despite similar poppies and blue lupine seems not to mix well with the Franciscan Poppy. Additional shape details and the explosion of flowers on the Wildflower tend to detract from the Franciscan Poppy. Wildflower needs to stand on its own. Two exceptions, however, the Poppy salt and pepper shakes (which are individual poppies) seem a better match for Wildflower than the actual Wildflower salt and pepper shakers, which are simply Desert Rose salt and pepper shakers dipped in the poppy yellow. These should not be confused with the Meadow Rose salt and pepper shakers, which are of a different shade of yellow and different clay quality. The Wildflower individual poppy ash trays are splendid with Franciscan Poppy, again as butter pats or dipping bowls. In general, Franciscan Poppy is hard to find, probably secondary to its short length of production, and its popularity in California. The California poppy is California's state flower. Since the cup/saucer, dinner and bread & butter were sold in "starter sets," they are available. Fruit and cereal bowls as well as salad plates are more difficult to find especially in good condition. The cereal bowl is large and quite utilitarian, while the salad plate is versatile for multiple uses resulting in these pieces often being found in particularly worn condition. Serving pieces are all rare.

The teapot is an unique shape. It is my favorite piece in the Franciscan Poppy line. The piece is short and sleek, 4-1/2" from base to lid finial, and quite wide, 10" from handle to spout tip. Since the spout extends so far, it is often the brunt of impact throughout the years. I have examined six or seven teapots, all of which have had varying degrees of spout damage. Since the piece is so rare, I can accept a small flake to be able to include the teapot in my service. Because Franciscan Poppy is a coupe shape, the full weight of items stacked on top of plates unfortunately is transmitted to the raised, embossed decoration onto plates below. This often leads to wear, especially to the large poppy of the dinner and salad plates. Make sure to cushion your Franciscan Poppy when stacking, I use thick paper plates to reduce this wear. This is also a key area to examine when considering a purchase of Franciscan Poppy.

I hope collectors may find the above information and "table tips" helpful, and I thank readers for "bearing with me" as I write about my zest for Franciscan Ware. My partner referred to this article as a love letter to Franciscan! I would be delighted to discuss or correspond to other Franciscan collectors, and look forward to further accounts of others' collections in future Franciscan Newsletters.

*Dr. Kormanyos collects pottery and practices his violin and internal medicine in Portland Oregon. His phone number is (503)282-3582.*


# Franciscan Fine China: Silver Pine



**Franciscan masterpiece china**

**SILVER PINE**

Here are elfin snow-cakes, silhouetted against the sunlit aqua of a summer sky. A pinwheel of pine-needles, frosted in precious platinum. Beautiful, individual, unexpected... **SILVER PINE**



**Franciscan masterpiece china**

**SILVER PINE**

Stock No.	Description	Price Each
10	Flwr. Dinner	5.75
08	Flwr. Salad	5.20
15	Flwr. Dinner	4.45
20	Cup	4.45
01	Flwr. Dinner	4.20
03	Soup Plate	3.25
22	Cup, After Dinner	4.30
23	Saucer, After Dinner	3.20
24	Cup, Green-Sage Shiner*	3.40
25	Saucer, Green-Sage Shiner*	3.40
40	Creamer	11.40
41	Sugar with Lid	12.50
55	Teapot, Multi-Handled Oval	23.00
70	Flower, Large Oval	18.40
71	Flower, Multi-Handled Oval	19.00
80	Sauce Bowl — Without Stock	14.50
81	Sauce Bowl — With Stock	21.95
82	8-PIECE PLACE SETTINGS	27.00
83	8-PIECE PLACE SETTINGS	175.40
84	8-PIECE PLACE SETTINGS	175.40
85	8-PIECE PLACE SETTINGS	263.40

\* Also listed at \$100.00 for Stock Bowl

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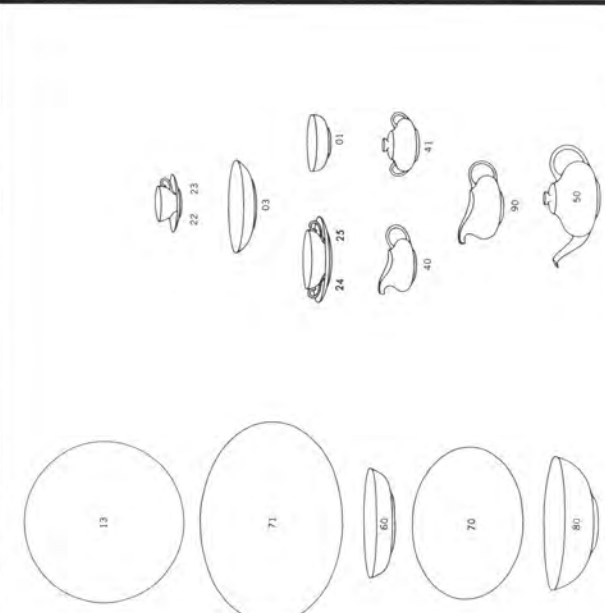
**Franciscan masterpiece china**

**SILVER PINE**

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Reproduced is the brochure for Silver Pine fine china. Silver Pine was introduced in 1954 in the Masterpiece line. Other patterns introduced in 1954 were Autumn, Oasis, and Contours Art Ware. The Silver Pine fine china pattern was decal applied with platinum trim on the Encanto fine china shape. The Encanto fine china shape was designed by Mary Grant.



**Franciscan masterpiece china**

**SILVER PINE**

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