

Tiny beads of birds, each not larger than one inch long, and each molded and painted by hand, are strung into necklaces.

Orders are still to be filled for the potter's ceramic blossom.



The Farmington Hills potter estimates she's made about 5,000 hand-sculptured flowers that can be hung from a chain, or a rope or a scarf, being distributed now through Mariam Haskell, a New York jewelry firm.

Staff photos
by Harry Mauthé



Ruth Poris, once known as "the wind chime lady" because she enjoyed putting different textures together to make unusual sounds, shows some of her work in her home showroom at 28505 Sugarspring.


Farmington potter creates quality for a mass market

By LORAIN McCLISH
The delicate and intricate details of a rocking horse, maybe, or a butterfly, are the marks of one Farmington Hills artist who says she aspires to carry out the deepest feeling of the potter, the artisan who is the creator of civilization's oldest art form.
Ruth Poris, who works out of studios in her home at 28505 Sugarspring, says she sometimes becomes disgusted thinking about the hobbyists who use the art for fun and games, putting an overabundance of poor quality pots up for sale at \$2 each.
"It's a tragedy for the professional whose career is going down the sewer and a tragedy for the public who doesn't know the difference," she said.

MRS. PORIS has a background of amazing variety. She is a minister. She is a retired school teacher. She has taught guitar and modern dance. She is a published poet and author of children's books. She is an artist and a sculptress.
In the areas of art, she is adamant that the craftsmanship must be equal to, or above, that of the innate talent in the artist to produce a quality piece.
And she is just as adamant that artists be paid full value for what they create.
To artists who insist on forever doing their own thing, she says: "OK. Paint ten pictures that are saleable; then you can paint one for yourself. If you don't do that you'll never make a career of it."
Practicing what she preaches, Mrs. Poris is now involved in her second venture in mass producing. Her product is hand-sculptured, one of a kind, open-petaled, non-ame flowers. The variety is infinite.
HER COMMISSIONER is the New York jewelry firm Mariam Haskell. Some of the first pieces have already arrived in the Detroit area and are on sale in Jacobsens, retailing at \$24 each.
Each delicately molded flower,

reminiscent of a lily, is made with an opening so it can be strung from a rope, chain or scarf, or to be wrapped around waist, head or neck. She estimates she's made up to 5,000 of them, and not two are alike, though colors are limited to eight.
"To make a living at being an artist, you have constantly to be on the lookout for gimmicks. Constantly looking for that something different that is going to sell. The survivors find, create, produce and sell the gimmicks," she said.
Her first gimmick and her first mass produced item was mini-pots, accompanied with air ferns and mini slings.
Then, for a while, she says she was known in the Ann Arbor street shows as "the wind-chime lady" because she produced so many of them.
Her head was turned to jewelry during Birmingham's street show last summer.
While she and her husband, Bob, were unloading two car loads full of heavy pots and wind chimes, the potter in the next booth had all of her merchandise in one little case.
"It was then that I decided the smart thing to do was to look to beads," she said.
MRS. PORIS credits the art department at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus as

being "the best in the business."
"They have the best teachers in the area and they charge the least money of any place I know. Between OCC and the Farmington Public Library you can get any kind of an education you want," she said.
To make the jump from OCC to a New York jewelry firm in five years, however, Mrs. Poris said it is mandatory that artists go into their chosen field thinking of it as a commercial venture; then give it wholehearted effort with body and spirit.
She worked at her sculpting "something like 16 hours and 200 pounds of clay a day."
She is disheartened by those who "make pots by number" as well as those who claim to be artists, yet can't duplicate when asked.
She has six persons working for her now, helping to fill orders for her ceramic blossoms. Of those she interviewed for the job, many were art majors, "yet couldn't take a ball of clay and model something right in front of them. And some didn't have the foggiest idea of what mass producing was all about."
She sums up her feeling about her new endeavor by saying, "It is well to enjoy the recognition, to earn a reputation as a professional, to combine the art and the craft. And it all goes toward keeping you well disciplined."



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Suburban Life

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'Taste and Tea' benefits center

Card games begin at 10:30 a.m. on March 16, and lunch will be served at noon when Farmington Neighbors Club gives its annual benefit for the Farmington Community Center.

Members are preparing their favorite salads and desserts for the affair, which is called "Taste and Tea."

"Everything planned for the day will center around food," said Jewel Bailey, speaking for the club this week. "It is the first breakaway we've had from our regular spring fashion show."

Even so, informal modeling of clothes by Bee Lynn Fashions, will be part of the afternoon.

But food will predominate with the luncheon recipes compiled in a book; recipe card holders for table favors; and apothecary jars filled with surprises for table decorations.

It is the club's major fund-raising event of the year, and all proceeds will be given to the center.

The Farmington Neighbors Club meets the third Wednesday of every month, generally in the center, for lunch and a program.

Tickets for "Taste and Tea" are \$3.50 and must be purchased in advance through Jean Telford, 476-8094.



Farmington Neighbors Club members who are testing recipes for "Taste and Tea" are Jewel Bailey (left), Helen Prinsce, Jean Telford and Grace Baker. The March 16 event is the club's annual benefit for the Farmington Community Center.

Oakway's harpist wears many hats

"Where's Andrew?"
"Ask Andrew."
"Go tell Andrew."
That name is repeated many times at Oakway Symphony Orchestra rehearsals until Andrew Henderson is ready.
Like Bartholomew Cubbins, the storybook character who had 500 hats, Andrew Henderson of Northville wears many hats for Oakway and in the musical world.
He's assistant conductor to Francesco DiBlasi and orchestra manager. Henderson also is librarian and stage director. He will be visible to the audience at the next concert, at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 19, in the Clarenceville High auditorium, as principal harpist for the orchestra.
HENDERSON WANTED to play harp from the time he was five years old. His parents took him to the opera where he also fell in love with the

stage action. The result was that he has specialized in both.
He earned a bachelor of musical arts degree, with a minor in theater, at Southern Illinois University, and then did graduate work at University of Michigan.
His choral experience includes the Robert Shaw Choral, and he teaches both privately and in schools.
Currently Henderson is director of music for First Methodist Church of Wyandotte, director of the Performing Arts Chamber Ensemble and music director for the Livonia-Redford Theater Guild's production of "See-Saw," now in rehearsal.
IN THE PAST, he has been a professional jazz pianist, director of several productions for the Dearborn Civic Theater, a teacher at Ladywood High School in Livonia and with Circle Playhouse, which was nationally televised in the 1950s.
Dr. Burkhart is professor of systematic theology at McCormick. Prior to joining that faculty in 1959, he was a chaplain in the U. S. Air Force.

Presbyterian church sets Lenten seminar

The Rev. John E. Burkhart, of McCormick Theological Seminary, will lead a Lenten seminar in First Presbyterian Church of Farmington on the weekend of March 12-13.
It is called, "What Does Easter Mean Today?"
In the first session, on Saturday, from 2 to 3 p.m., Dr. Burkhart will discuss the crucifixion. He will preach