

Riverstyle

/ News / Riverstyle /

<< A garden grows at LaCroft... Great-grandchildren of found...>>

- Local News
- Obituaries
- Opinion
- Police & Courts
- Community News
- Riverstyle**
- School Spotlight
- School News
- Business
- Ohio News
- National News
- International News
- SUBMIT News

The legacy of Taylor, Smith & Taylor Pottery lives on

July 31, 2012

By STEPHEN HUBA - Hancock County Reporter (shuba@reviewonline.com) , The Review

Save |

CHESTER-The Taylor, Smith & Taylor pottery site has sat vacant and blighted for so long that it's easy to forget that, at one time, the Chester company helped set America's dinner tables with attractive, economical china.

TS&T was one of the largest, most successful potteries in the area, employing up to 700 people and churning out dinnerware that was easy on the eye and equally easy on the wallet.

Today, 30 years after the riverfront factory closed, all that's left are piles of brick, concrete, steel and wood-the vestiges of a once-proud pottery that are waiting to be recycled or hauled off to a landfill. Recently, among the rubble and ruin, demolition workers found a perfectly-intact cup with gold lining around its delicate rim.

Article Photos



An early TS&T back stamp with the griffin logo. (Courtesy...



It's the kind of lining that lifelong Chester resident Shirley Barnhart, 86, remembers her aunts painting onto TS&T china years ago. "Several of them were liners," she said. "I remember going for my aunt to get the gold (paint). You'd get a small bottle, which went a long way."

Many area residents remember TS&T as one of the area's biggest

News, Blogs & Events

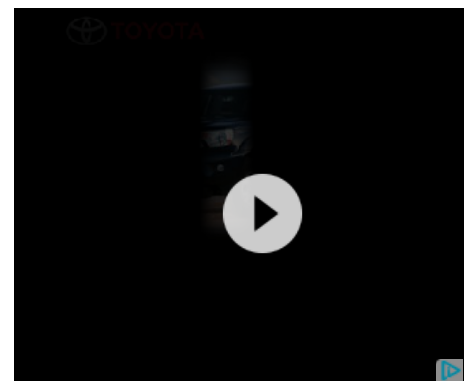
I am looking for:

SEARCH

in:

- News, Blogs & Events
- Web
- EZToUse.com

EZToUse.com
 YOUR YELLOW PAGES CONNECTIONSM to Print & Online
 Your #1 source for internet yellow pages



Home Goods and Furniture

Up to 70% Off Top Brands and Styles New Limited-Time Sales



DROID TURBO

GET **\$300**

WHEN YOU TRADE IN ANY SMARTPHONE & BUY A DROID TURBO

New device payment activation & port-in required. Trade-in must be in good working condition. \$300 = \$200 trade-in VZW gift card + \$100 bill credit applied within 2-3 billing cycles.

SHOP NOW

verizon | motorola

employers in the mid-20th century, while others enjoy collecting its distinctive plates, bowls, cups, trays, soup tureens and spittoons. Some even still use the stuff.

"The colors they were offering (in the 1930s) were almost ahead of their time, and, so, they were better positioned for the 1940s and '50s," said Sarah Webster Vodrey, director of the Museum of Ceramics in East Liverpool. "They were open to the fact that Americans were becoming more open to colorful dinnerware."

The prime example of that trend in the 1930s, Vodrey said, was TS&T's "Lu-Ray" line of pastel dinnerware. "Lu-Ray" was introduced to the American consumer in 1938 with the colors Windsor Blue, Persian Cream (more like yellow), Sharon Pink and Surf Green. Chatham Gray came along in 1949.

"Set your table with jewels" read TS&T's promotional literature for "Lu-Ray," which reportedly took its name from the colorful Luray Caverns in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. "Soft precious shades to glisten with ever-changing beauty at each meal," read one illustrated price list from 1948. "Graceful, smooth flowing lines to cast lovely long reflections. These are Lu-Ray Pastels, master potted from the world's finest opaque dinnerware body."

"Lu-Ray" became a lucrative alternative to the brighter shades of the Homer Laughlin China Co.'s "Fiesta" dinnerware, introduced in 1936, Vodrey said. TS&T's answer to "Fiesta" was its own "Vistosa" line introduced in early 1938.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the Great Depression, "there was a desire for color and an openness to color" in the popular culture, which extended to the kind of dinnerware Americans used, Vodrey said.

TS&T, founded in 1899 by the brothers William L. and Charles A. Smith, established itself in the early part of the new century as a maker of hotel china and toilet ware, in addition to dinnerware. An illustrated 1917 catalog shows a detailed array of Chester hotel china, "Verona" and "Avona" dinner service, and toilet ware-bed pans, brush vases, mugs, slop jars, slop pails, spittoons and more.

The hotel china and toilet ware later dropped away as TS&T concentrated on dinnerware and specialty items, Vodrey said.

David Wright, 68, of Chester, worked for TS&T on the cleanup crew from 1965 to 1967, even as he was beginning a career with the U.S. Postal Service. "A lot of the people who worked there grew up in the pottery and worked there their whole lives," he said. "There were people there in their 60s and 70s. It seemed like everybody who worked there ... loved the plant and loved the job."

Dave Conley, who recently retired as director of retail sales and marketing for Homer Laughlin, worked for TS&T from 1964 to 1981, the year the Chester plant was closed by then-owner Anchor Hocking. Conley was assistant manager, then general manager, of TS&T's chain of retail stores, known as Cavalier China Co.

"At one time, they were the second-largest pottery, after Homer Laughlin," Conley said. "It was a department store dinnerware line. As imports started to have an effect, they moved to ... large customers like Sears, S&H Green Stamps and supermarket promotions with Giant Eagle, Publix and Winn-Dixie."

After "Lu-Ray," which was discontinued in 1961, TS&T's most popular dinnerware lines included: "Conversation" (1950-1954), designed by Walter Teague, "Versatile" (1952-c. 1965), "Pebbleford" (1952-c. 1960), "Chateau Buffet" and "Oven-Serve" (1956-c. 1965), and "Taylorton," a fine china line in production from 1958 to circa 1965, according to the out-of-print "Collector's Guide to Lu-Ray Pastels" (Collector Books, 1995) by Kathy and Bill Meehan.

The guiding force behind some of TS&T's most popular lines was the designer John Gilkes. Another important TS&T industrial designer was Doris Coutant, who, although afflicted with polio, painted some of her designs by holding a paintbrush in her mouth.

It was Coutant who, in the 1950s, assisted with the design of the Howdy Doodie cookie jar, banks and children's dishes for TS&T and Purinton Pottery.

Save |

Recommend 11 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.

G+1 0

[Subscribe to The Review](#)

Great savings
to start

+

\$10 off your first order.*
Use code **SAVESMART**

Shop Now

jet.com

*See site for details

The Review

210 East Fourth St. , East Liverpool, OH 43920 | 330-385-4545

© 2015. All rights reserved. | [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)