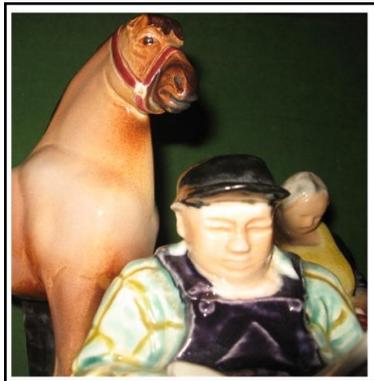


W.L. Howat married Agnes Wanier in 1922. Agnes had lived in Kreischerville with her German-born parents and worked as a stenographer for the Atlantic Terra Cotta Co. The Howats had two daughters, Joyce and Darle.

Agnes worked side by side with her husband and helped the ceramics plant develop into one of New York City's leading manufacturers of handmade stoneware and porcelain decorator items.

The pieces in this exhibit are characteristic of European villagers and may have been designed or inspired by Mrs. Howat.



Tottenville Historical Society

The Tottenville Historical Society was founded in 2003. Its primary goal is to document and preserve the culture and history of Tottenville and vicinity, and to educate the public about local history through the Society's newsletters, programs, exhibitions and events.

We invite you to join this effort through membership support and by sharing information, so that our local history can be recorded for generations to come.



Tottenville Historical Society

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HOWAT CERAMICS A TIMELESS LEGACY



Exhibit Opening:

December 27, 2009, 3-5 p.m.

Exhibit: Dec. 28, 2009—Jan. 31, 2010

By appointment

19 Winant Place, Charleston



ORGANIZED BY THE
TOTTENVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Walter Leonard (W.L.) Howat (1890-1964) was born in Canton, IL. Howat first became interested in porcelain while working for the U.S. Bureau of Standards, Clay Products Laboratory during World War I doing experimental work to reproduce *Marquardt* porcelain. This German-made porcelain was used in the manufacture of protection tubes for thermocouples (sensors for measuring temperature) and had become unavailable during the war.

After the war, Howat relocated to NY and became employed by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Co. (ATCC) as a ceramics engineer. After his departure in 1933 from ATCC, Howat established Howat Ceramic Works on Hopping Ave., Tottenville. It became one of the few plants in the U.S. to perfect the technique of casting statues, busts and smaller statuary in porcelain. Howat had even designed his own oil-burning kilns.

Howat Ceramic Works was located in a garage at the rear of his residence at 85 Hopping Ave. The pottery factory exists today and has been converted into a two-family residence.

Remembrances of the Howat Ceramic Works plant:

“Howat had plaster moulds for the pieces, which were broken on the bank of the (Arthur) Kill behind the operation.....I know they were still making pottery there when I was in grammar school (graduated P.S. 1 in 1960) because I used to go onto the beachand pick up broken pieces...and cones for firing..... including test tiles for painting.....It was like a treasure hunt, finding parts of birds and heads and things.”

“I remember seeing, as long as Mrs. Howat was around, the pottery in the windows of the sun porch at the back of her house (85 Hopping Ave.)”

Carol-Lynn Rossel

Former Hopping Ave. resident



Side view of the former Howat pottery plant, Tottenville (2009)

W.L. Howat’s interest in porcelain began as a hobby. His interest in commercializing was inspired by a desire to produce a porcelain that was comparable to the highly-desirable porcelains that were being produced in Europe.

More information about Walter and Agnes Howat, his pottery plant, or images of pieces manufactured by the firm would be welcomed additions to our archives.



The figurines in this exhibit were donated by Charles and Virginia (Kiefer) Wetherill. Previously, they were collected and lovingly cared by Ginny’s mother, Ida Kiefer, of Tottenville.

There are 3 basic categories of pottery: earthenware, stoneware and porcelain.

They vary according to the clay used to make them, and the temperature needed to fire them.