



**ROYCROFTERS-AT-LARGE ASSOCIATION**  
**CHRONICLE**

**:: OUR MISSION ::**

*The Roycrofters-At-Large Association was formed over 30 years ago by a group of East Auroran's that included several descendants of the original Roycrofters, including Elbert Hubbard's granddaughter. The Roycrofters-At-Large Association, Inc. has been entrusted with educating, fostering and inspiring through the continual evolution of the Arts and Crafts Movement.*

■ LATE WINTER 15-16 ■

**Artist's fascination with nature brings  
clay to life, and life to clay**

*By Joe Kirchmyer*

The profound beauty of nature is not lost on Roycroft Artisan Mary Pratt. Whether it's a flower in full bloom, a frog resting at the edge of a pond or an insect in flight, these are the moments that inspire Mary to return to her studio and get her hands dirty.

"In the course of our existence, it is possible to live an entire lifetime never touching anything handmade," shares the Wisconsin native on her website, prattclaystudio.com. "Like those who lived before me, I am committed to re-creating nature's detail with an ageless material."

That commitment is evident to anyone fortunate enough to hold one of her creations in their hands or even taking a few moments to enjoy the gallery of photos on her website, as this writer did before asking her to provide a few more details about her life as an artist, and her life's work.

*Nature is very well-represented in your pottery. How did your relationship with nature develop and find its way into your art?*

Nature is in my fiber. I grew up in North Central Wisconsin, on a dead-end gravel



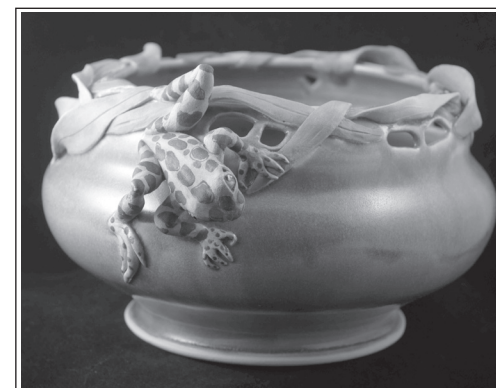
*Mary Pratt with a peice of her pottery*

road in the middle of nowhere. The Wisconsin River was across the road from my house, and I spent my childhood in the woods drawing, studying, reading and photographing everything I could. The natural world gives me solace, energy and inspiration for not only my work, but life in general. I am constantly in awe of the natural beauty surrounding me, no matter the season.

*When did you discover that you were actually an artist who could indeed make a living at her trade?*

I'm not sure I have reached that stage yet! I've been working for myself or other potteries now since 1986. I did take a few years off to stay at home with my daughters, and also worked in research and development of medical training simulators. Sculpting skin cells and intricate body parts pushed my sculpting skills to a new level and continues to influence my work today.

*Did you receive any formal training, such as a college art degree, or did you take a different route to your profession?*



*2016 Goodie Box by Roycroft Artisans  
Brian Newton and David Tundo*

**2016 Goodie Box**

The bowl is made from Norfolk Pine, it was turned on a lathe and sanded. The finishing process brings out the color and translucence of the wood and is polished to a high gloss. The Goodie top is made of heavy gauge copper using the techniques of chasing and repousse, similar to how the Statue of Liberty was created. The lid is a subtle tribute to Kitty Turgeon featuring the motto Head, Heart and Hand. It also has a prominent "Double R" trademark for our organization, founded by Kitty and others to support artists and the continuation and evolution of the arts and crafts movement.

*Continued on page 3*




**2016 CALENDAR**

**ROYCROFTERS SUMMER SHOW**  
June 25th & 26th, 2016  
10am - 5pm  
Parkdale Elementary School  
141 Girard Avenue, East Aurora, NY

**ROYCROFTERS WINTER SHOW**  
December 3 & 4, 2016  
East Aurora Middle School  
430 Main Street, East Aurora, NY 14052  
*Directly across from the Historic Roycroft Campus*





## BOARD MEMBERS

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### Board Meetings

Board meetings are regularly scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month. The first 15 minutes of the meeting is reserved for member comments, after which the board will enter a closed session.

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Industry without Art is Brutality. These words were found carved into a door of the Chapel on the Roycroft Campus. These words hold true now as they did more than a century ago. Industry is about production, and it is about constant innovation and change.

Although the Roycroft was born as a reaction to industrialization, the original Roycrofters strove to bring a beauty to function.

Drawing on the beauty of the process and integrating the beauty of nature, they attempted to temper the brutality of the machine. One needs only to look at a piece of Roycroft copper to perceive the blows of the hammer, and the illusion of tooled leather in the chasing. Someone who is more than the casual collector of Roycroft will appreciate the evolution of the work from its brutal beginnings to the finer work of the middle and late mark periods.

Elbert Hubbard, and Bert after him, attracted talented artists like Walter Jennings and Karl Kipp who elevated the furnishings created on the campus to the level of "Fine Art." Artists are still attracted to the campus and endeavor to produce work that is Fine Craft/Art.

The Roycroft Artisan Jury, comprised of the Roycroft Master Artisans, will meet April 2nd this year to both evaluate potential Artisans and to insure the high level of art is maintained in current ones. When looking at the work of Roycroft Artisans who re-jury every year and the Masters who re-jury every five years, the jury looks for high quality craft as well as a clear reflection that the Artisan continues to innovate and change (grow).

Industrialization has evolved with technology. For fine crafts this is true as well. Where table saws were once powered by steam-driven belts, now they are electric. Soldering once contained lead, cadmium and other poisonous metals and today clean silver solders are the norm. Artisans have evolved as well, but they have held true to the relationship between artistic beauty and function to temper the brutality.

Ron VanOstrand

## Artist's fascination with nature brings clay to life, and life to clay ...continued from page 1

I pursued a degree in studio art, with a concentration in ceramics and a minor in art history. Initially, I thought I would concentrate on drawing and painting but settled on ceramics after the first semester or two.

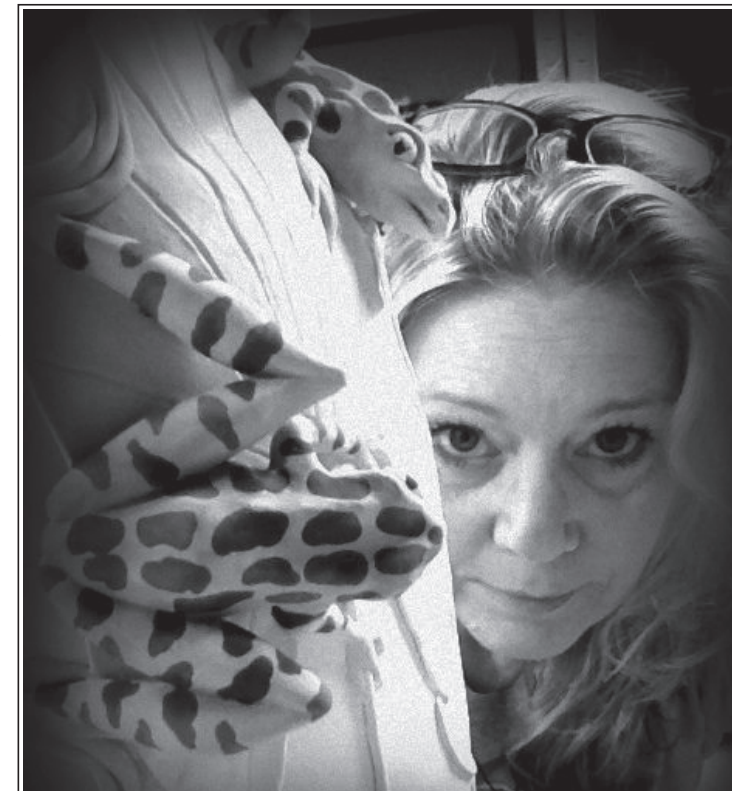
*How did you discover the Roycroft community, and how does that relationship make you a better artist?*

I learned about the Roycroft through my former employer in 2004. Becoming a Roycroft Renaissance Artisan and getting to know some of the other Roycroft Renaissance Artisans has been a gift. I love that it keeps me striving to be better, and constantly keeping the craftsmanship and quality in check. Being a part of this group really helps me to continue to reach higher by improving and constantly learning about my craft.

*Paint a mental picture for us of the place where you create most of your work.*

I work out of either my studio in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, or my home studio. Both have their advantages. My actual studio is lovely, with none of the distractions (including teenage daughters) of home. The home studio is quite convenient, especially when I'm working around kids' schedules or dealing with bad weather — it's an hour drive each way to my other studio. My studio is intimate in size. Lovely perennials shape the winding brick walkway, and a Ginkgo tree which we planted six years ago.

*Joe Kirchmyer is president of Kirchmyer Media LLC, a communications company based in West Seneca, N.Y. You can contact him at jkirchmyer@verizon.net.*



*Where do the majority of your sales come from... online, galleries, shows?*

The majority of my sales currently come from shows and special orders. I do sell through galleries and stores, and take online orders as well.

*Will you be heading to the Grove Park Arts & Crafts Conference in February? If yes, what do you most look forward to?*

Yes, I will be exhibiting at the Grove Park Inn again this year. This is my fifth year of exhibiting Pratt Clay Studio; I formerly did the GPI show with Ephraim Pottery the previous six years. People can find my booth in the Hoover Room.

The Grove Park Inn is magical. I love the show and the location for many reasons. Seeing my dear collector friends makes the show a reunion and I look forward to it all year. This show is the Arts & Crafts mecca, and I am thankful to be part of it.

To learn more about Mary's art and her inspirations, please visit her website at [www.prattclaystudio.com](http://www.prattclaystudio.com). And if you're ever fortunate enough to hold one of her finished pieces in your hands, close your eyes for a moment and reflect

upon the artist's relationship with nature ... a relationship that has indeed lasted a lifetime and continues to grow.

