

THE ORIGINAL HOME OF THE CLUB TARRYTOWN, NY 1977 – 1989

Many of our members recall our original Club Headquarters, a red brick Georgian mansion near the Hudson River in Tarrytown, NY. The official opening included a momentous event, the unveiling of an 8-foot *Merry Wanderer* figurine, created in Rödental, Germany by Master Sculptor Gerhard Skrobek. The "Big Boy" became a Tarrytown landmark, matching the one that stands outside the *M.I. Hummel* factory in Germany.

Goebel Collectors' Club



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INSIGHTS

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

M.I. HUMMEL CLUB 40TH ANNIVERSARY RETROSPECTIVE

*Exclusive reprint:
INSIGHTS Issue #1, 1977*

Decade-by-decade Club highlights

Special moments and memories



M.I. Hummel®

Celebrate with the Club



The Love Lives On!

Dear M.I. Hummel Friends:

It's a rare friendship that lasts forty years – something to be proud of and to cherish. That's the way we feel about all our friends who are part of the M.I. Hummel Club as we continue to celebrate our 40th Anniversary year.

It all started in 1977 when a group of like-minded individuals agreed to enter into an experiment in collecting, bound only by their affection for M.I. Hummel figurines. While these members were sharing information and the enjoyment of their hobby, they began to share something even more special – friendship. The Club grew, people connected at Local Chapter meetings, at conventions, and through travel. Our members discovered their affection for their fellow collectors, and for the spirit the figurines came to represent.

Although the M.I. Hummel Club was founded and operated by a ceramics company, it's the members who have joyfully embraced the idea, expanded the concept, and made it into a four-decade-long story of success. Whether you've been with us on the journey for all 40 Club Years, or you got on board somewhere along the way, it's you who are our driving force and shining lights.

And what a journey it's been! Our Club has been re-invented more than once, we've had our ups and downs, but we've emerged strong, enthusiastic, and with our bonds of friendship solid and stronger than ever. The love most certainly lives on!

Cordially,
Ken and Chuck
Managing Partners
The M.I. Hummel Club of North America
Newboden Brands



SPECIAL ISSUE FOR A SPECIAL YEAR!

We've taken a break from our usual INSIGHTS to take you on a walk through 40 years of Club history – starting with the very first Club Magazine! When our Club was founded, it was known as the Goebel Collector's Club. Back then our magazine was a simple, black and white, 6-page newsletter. It is reprinted in its entirety, so you can see where we started, and how far we've come.

What follows is a decade-by-decade sampling of INSIGHTS issues. You'll have an opportunity to look back, reminisce, and enjoy that warm feeling of belonging. It's what Club membership has always represented, no matter what the decade. Enjoy!

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ON THE COVER:
The *Merry Wanderer*, in all sizes, is our Club's mascot.



The Goebel Collector's Club was founded ♦ The average new home cost \$49,300 ♦ The average income was \$15,000 ♦ A gallon of gas cost 65¢ ♦ Jimmy Carter was President ♦ The *Mary Tyler Moore Show* won an Emmy ♦ *Rocky* won Best Picture ♦ Club President was Dieter Schneider ♦ Club headquarters was in Tarrytown, NY ♦ The average collector was female, 26 – 55 years of age, a high school graduate, married with two children ♦ Most members owned between 11 and 50 figurines and were collectors for about 15 years

Goebel Collectors' News

SPRING 1977 Vol. 1 No. 1



Wilhelm Goebel

Dear Members,

A warm and hearty welcome to the Goebel Collectors' Club.

For a long time we at the House of Goebel have wanted to bring our devoted collectors into the Goebel "family" – and we are delighted to be able to do this now, through your Club.

The Goebel Collectors' Club will be the basis of a creative exchange of ideas among all friends of fine porcelain and ceramic art. The Club's Executive Director, Joan Ostroff, will serve as the link between you and the Goebel Company. She will achieve this by meeting and talking with you, by answering your questions both personally and through these pages of the *Goebel*

Collectors' News, and by communicating to us your interests and concerns.

The *objets d'art* we manufacture are the result of a combination of the creativity of our artisans, plus the skills of our production staff – all working together to bring to you the perfection you have come to expect.

We have been known for the highest quality standards for more than 100 years. I pledge to you that these high standards will continue in the future.

The Goebel trademark is your guarantee.

I hope you will enjoy what we have planned for all our members, and look forward to the pleasure of greeting all of you personally in the not-too-distant future.

Sincerely,

The Remarkable Story of Sister M. I. Hummel



A strong, penetrating yet gentle quality shines through this portrait of Sister M. I. Hummel.

Children are children the world over. Impish or shy, saucy or quiet, mischievous or thoughtful...language differences don't matter, nor do variances in national custom. The innocence of childhood projects a universality that is loved and understood everywhere. This is perhaps the key to the remarkable and enduring popularity of the wonderful creations of Sister Maria Innocentia Hummel.

Berta Hummel was born in the town of Massing in Lower Bavaria, Germany, on May 21, 1909, one of six children of Adolph and Viktoria Hummel. Although a closely knit family, the children were not carbon copies of each other. While her older sisters were industriously helping their mother with household chores, Berta was busy drawing, making costumes for her dolls, and putting on theatricals for family and friends.

War broke out when she was only six. Her father was drafted into the army and the family was left without his guiding influence. Berta, whose artistic talents he had always encouraged, began to show signs of willfulness and lack of discipline, often taxing the patience of her teachers. Fortunately, her creativity was to be recognized early; due to the efforts of one of her teachers, she was enrolled at a fine religious boarding school at Simbach, near Massing, the Institute of English Sisters.

It was here that she first received artistic direction. Her flair for scenic and costume design, fostered just for fun in the family's backyard, now began to emerge as a genuine talent. Soon she was designing for school productions. In four years, she progressed from only sketching the friends of her childhood and illustrating folk tales to painting landscapes in watercolor.

The religious training at the school proved to be good discipline, and her development into a young lady and a promising artist was a delight to behold.

In 1927, when she was 18, Berta's proud father went with her to Munich where she was enrolled in the Academy of Fine Arts. To be on some familiar ground in otherwise strange territory, she took up residence outside the Academy in a dormitory run by a religious order.

The Academy, a prestigious center of design and applied arts, provided her with still more extensive training. Soon she began to paint in oils, and her experience with costumes was now expanded to include weaving of fabrics and designing clothing.

She was soon under the wing of a leading artist and teacher, who hoped she would remain at the Academy after graduation as his assistant. But a conflict was developing within Berta. Although she was gaining a great knowledge of art, its history, its scope, and an exciting awareness of what travel and study in other cities, perhaps even other lands, might offer a young student, she was still the simple Bavarian girl from a warm, loving family, and her ties to her background were strong. Her feelings of religion were profound, and through a friendship at the dormitory with two Franciscan nuns who were also studying at the Academy, became even more important.

Her wonderful sense of fun never left her, and to the delight of her fellow students (and often the chagrin of the Mother Superior) she would play pranks at the residence. But more than anything, she was a gentle, emotional person, deeply affected by people and events.



Sister M. I. Hummel doing one of her favorite things—talking with "her" children.

In 1929, Hitler's National Socialist Party was on the rise in Munich, with specific promises of employment within the party, offering an economic stability in depression years for sympathizers among the students of the Academy. But the militarism and politics of the Nazis were counter to Berta's sensitivities, and she turned with even greater need to the quiet, withdrawn life of her two religious friends.

With graduation drawing near, the pressures were becoming stronger for her to make a decision. On the one hand were her professors, eager for her to remain with them and continue her promising

development. But on the other hand, with the frightening political atmosphere gaining, there was the draw of fulfillment to be found behind the cloistered walls of a convent where she could continue her art while serving humanity through her devotion to God.

By the time of graduation in March 1931, she had made her decision. On April 22, she entered the convent of Siessen at Saulgau, and two years later was ordained Sister Maria Innocentia of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis.



Heavenly Protection: the innocence of childhood plus the security of faith.

While a novice, she had taught art to children in kindergarten, and by late 1933 had so developed that she exhibited her work in a nearby town. Franz Goebel, fourth-generation head of W. Goebel, first became aware of her in 1934, and sought permission from her and the convent to translate her sketches of sparkling children and serene religious figures into three-dimensional form. This marked the beginning of a relationship between Sister Maria Innocentia, the convent and W. Goebel that continues to endure, long years after her death.

But dark clouds were hovering everywhere, and soon the sisters began to live in dread, for the Nazi government was determined to close the convent. In late 1940, the convent became a repatriation center for German nationals from other countries, and a small group of nuns, Sister Maria Innocentia included, remained to care for them.

It was a time of great deprivation. No longer able to remain in her spacious studio because of the terribly overcrowded conditions, Sister Maria Innocentia lived in

Members' Page

Q: How many varieties of "Hummel" figurines are there?

A: There are approximately 450 different three-dimensional motifs, including not only figurines, but holy water fonts, madonnas, ashtrays, boxes and lamps as well. The various sizes produced of one model are considered a single unit, for purposes of this accounting. Because there is such a vast number of models, not all 450 can be available at all times.

Q: Why do some "Hummel" figurines have little holes under their arms or legs?

A: These are air holes, necessary to allow air to escape when the figurines are fired. Without these holes, the figurines would burst.

Q: Are visitors welcome at the factory in Germany?

A: Always! There is a beautiful Exhibition & Contact Center where guests are warmly welcomed. Not only can you see all the current objets d'art in beautiful array, but a tracing of the company's history through some of the rare products that have been produced during the more than 100 years of manufacturing.

a small, damp, basement room. Food and fuel were scarce, and she became terribly weakened by a lung infection. True to her dominant spirit, however, she tried to continue her work.

By November 1944, she was so ill that she was admitted to a sanitarium for treatment, where her illness was finally diagnosed as chronic tuberculosis. In April 1945, the war ended and, feeling somewhat strengthened, Sister Maria Innocentia returned to the convent to help with the enormous task of rebuilding. Her spirit as ever was strong, but her physical condition had deteriorated so that she was forced to

This section is devoted to you—to your comments and questions. Just write to:

Goebel Collectors' Club
105 White Plains Road
Tarrytown, New York
10591

Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like a personal reply.

In this first issue of the Collectors' News we are answering questions that have been asked frequently over the years.

Q: Do all "Hummel" figurines have the name "M.I. Hummel" impressed into the base?

A: All "Hummel" products are so marked, except when lack of space or some technical production factor does not permit. These exceptions are very rare.

Q: What did W. Goebel manufacture prior to the "Hummel" products?

A: Initially, when the company was founded in 1871, they produced marbles, slates and slate pencils, soon expanding to porcelain tableware such as coffee services, milk jugs, egg cups, and other similar china items. By 1900 figurines had become part of the line, which was soon expanded to include earthenware items as well.

enter another sanitarium the following November, leaving it in late 1946 to return to her beloved convent.

On November 6, 1946, at the hour of noon, the chapel bells rang out in solemn proclamation of the death of Sister Maria Innocentia at the age of 37.

A young life, full of spirit and love, came to a tragic end. But the youthful, loving spirit lives on in the pert faces of the "Hummel" children and the gentle bearing of the madonnas that are with us in ceramic. If we look at them a certain way, we can almost hear them breathe!



A feeling of sunshine and warmth as joyous, adventurous childhood is forever captured in the ceramic renderings of Spring Dance, Follow the Leader and Crossroads.

Master Painter from the Goebel Factory Enchants Visitors to "The Old Country"



Master Painter Meyer, surrounded by the Goebel products display at The Old Country, gives his full attention to Serenade as Joan Ostroff looks on.

It was a most unusual sight. So unusual, in fact, that the faces of those who saw it registered disbelief, wonder, and finally utter delight. For there, seated at an orange and blue table, concentrating on the "Hummel" child he was painting, was Günther Meyer, master painter from the Goebel factory!

This remarkable happening took place at The Old Country of Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Va., last September. Herr Meyer was participating, along with about 40 other craftspeople from Europe and the United States, in the first International Crafts Exposition to be held there.

Each of the 12 days of the Exposition

thousands thronged the Gardens. In fact, there were days when the gates had to be closed early because more than 25,000 people had already gone through! And of all the craftspeople, the one most acknowledged the "star" was Günther — by several other artisans as well as by the fact of the constant crowds around him.

In the German Gift Shop in the Rhinefeld section of The Old Country, he sat surrounded by his materials, skillfully yet quickly stroking the glazed figurines with an assortment of 40-odd brushes. Working on a series of five of a motif at a time, he mixed his paints as he needed them, deftly used a silk cloth to achieve a desired effect, stroked

with a clean brush for the shading required by the sample figurine he frequently referred to — is it any wonder he entranced his audience? They gazed in awe and admiration as this superb artist demonstrated his talent.

Herr Meyer, a charming and witty man, held their attention easily. His interpreters worked well with him, and he answered frequent questions in depth, warmly and with obvious interest. Newly bought figurines were brought to him for his autograph, and he graciously signed his name and the date on the bases. Many figurines were purchased for that added touch, although unfortunately those that he painted on the premises could not be sold. They had to be refired after painting, to bake in the colors, and there were no kilns nearby that could do the job properly. But this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the spectators, and Günther was kept busy signing and posing for photographs.

A 1960 graduate of the State School for Advanced Studies in Porcelain at Selb in his native Bavaria, he had already had practical experience in his field. Apprenticed in 1955 to a porcelain manufacturing concern in Kronach, he also attended special classes for his craft before going to Selb.

He returned to the factory in Kronach in 1960. Seven years later he joined W. Goebel Porzellanfabrik, working in the laboratories where the 2000 different colors used in the painting of figurines are perfected. It was not long before he rose to the high rank of master painter as well as assistant manager of the painting department, positions he holds today.

In his leisure time, Günther enjoys restoring paintings as well as ornaments on antique furniture, particularly from the province of Franconia in Bavaria. This is extremely delicate work — much in keeping with the delicacy of technique used in painting figurines.

Günther says he will be delighted to greet Club members when they visit the factory — those who watched him work at The Old Country, and those who will be meeting him for the first time. And judging from the responses to him last September, that delight will be mutual!

Goebel Masterpiece to Adorn Vice-Presidential Residence

An exciting event of great interest to all collectors of the figurines produced by W. Goebel Porzellanfabrik recently took place. At his offices in New York City, former Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller accepted, on behalf of the American people, a magnificent and generous gift of *The American Bald Eagle*, showpiece of Goebel's new Eden Gallery Collection.

Mr. Rockefeller announced that the eagle, the first of only 200 to be reproduced before the mold would be broken, would be placed in the official Vice-Presidential residence in Washington D.C., where it would remain as a permanent part of the furnishings.



Former Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller and Wilhelm Goebel, president and chairman of the board of the Goebel Group, admire *The American Bald Eagle*, majestic handpainted, handcrafted porcelain sculpture created by Gerhard Skrobek, internationally renowned artist.

Muhammad Ali a Winner — of a '71 Plate!

He's powerful, tough and virtually indestructible — but that doesn't change the fact that the World Heavyweight Champion can still appreciate the gentler things in life! Muhammad Ali proved that last spring when, in Munich to defeat contender Richard Dunn, he made an effort to locate the rare 1971 "M.I. Hummel" annual plate, till then missing from his personal collection.

As all serious collectors know, this plate was sold out at most dealers almost as soon as it went on the market. But with such a request from such an unusual collector, a diligent search was made, and one was located in the family's private collection.

Cradling the precious gift cautiously in his huge hands, Ali said, "My grip is so strong that I'd hate to break this after the Goebel people went to so much trouble to get it to me!" So far as we know, it's still in one piece.



World Heavyweight Champion receiving one of the world's lightweight champions from factory representative Rainer Mueller.

It is with great delight that I welcome you to the Goebel Collectors' Club. I know you're going to thoroughly enjoy your membership!

Over the years there have been many people asking about the creator of the "Hummel" figurines, Sister Maria Innocentia, and about Lore, Charlot Byj, Janet Robson, and all the eminent artists who have designed for the company. We have also been asked about our figurine-making process and about the factory itself, as well as many other questions that have been of concern to collectors. Is it any wonder we decided to do something about it? So here we are, your link to the Goebel Company, in full swing and eagerly planning ahead.

We have marvelous ideas for the future. In upcoming issues you will learn the fascinating Goebel history, the development of the trademarks since Franz Detleff Goebel founded the company in 1871, and, of course, how all our figurines are made. And just as we have included in this issue a detailed biography of Sister Maria Innocentia, we will print the biographies of all the others you've asked us about.

I will always be interested in hearing from you. On page 3 of this publication is a section devoted to your questions and comments. We call it "Members' Page" because it belongs to you. Any thoughts you have that you would like to pass along, any questions that you have—here's your chance. Of course, I will be glad to answer your questions personally, too. Just be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope when you write to me and you'll get my answer in the mail.

My schedule allows for me to do quite a bit of traveling, and I am sure I will be somewhere in your area at some point during the year. I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible (I wish I could meet everybody!), getting to know you and enjoying your collections with you.

From my corner of the Gallery I can see all kinds of things to share with you in future issues. *Collectors'*

From Joan's Corner



News, published quarterly, will bring to you not only what I've already outlined above, but news of enticing future Club promotions, discussions of new products, exciting collecting ideas, reports of my travels — and more!

This and That

The fourth *Blumenkinder* edition by Lore has been delighting collectors since its introduction a few months ago. Limited to 2000 only, these "flower children" have been shyly and innocently charming their way into the hearts of collectors since the first edition was introduced in the mid-1960s. The unique tradition of the creation of each leaf and petal as an individual entity is, of course, maintained. Not only are these depictions of gentle innocence lovely additions to collections — they are also valuable acquisitions as well. Numbered certificates are available to permanently record the ownership of each *Blumenkinder* figurine. Shown below is *Springtime*, an appealing evocation of that time of year.

astating prowess is sure to wreak havoc on their opponents. Created by Hanns Welling, whose background includes a number of years of theatrical experience, these imps slyly look as though they're awaiting applause from you — the audience!

There are some beautiful new figurines which we look forward to detailing for you in the near future. Among them will



The Co-Boy Bowler Springtime by Lore

be North American birds as part of our Wildlife Series, including the Bluejay, Baltimore Oriole, Canada Goose, Sparrow Hawk, Cedar Waxwing, House Sparrow, Barnswallow — not to mention a line devoted only to Owls! For all you ornithologists among us, there's a real treat in store!

Soon we'll introduce you to the fine artistry of Hy Levens, whose exciting ceramic series depicts African animal heads. Available separately, mounted on wood, or with all seven on a wood replica of the map of Africa, it will bring you a marvelous touch of the wild.

PREVIEW: Watch for the first installment of the fascinating history of W. Goebel Porzellanfabrik coming up in the next issue!



Collecting with Joe Weaver

It is our great delight to introduce you to one of our youngest members, Joe Weaver. Despite his youth—eight-and-three-quarters years—Joe has become involved in collecting in many different ways. He has a variety of collections, is quite knowledgeable about how to collect, what to look for and how to care for his collection. In addition, he is a member of three Local Chapters! A founding member of the Baby Bees Chapter, Joe and his mother, Mary Ann, make up one of the parent-child teams who hold office in the Chapter. (For more information on this new way to share collecting with young people, turn to page 12.) We think you'll find reading a young collector's perspective an interesting point of view.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT COLLECTING?
I think collecting is fun. Looking for things that I want is exciting, and having them for my own feels good.

WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TO COLLECT, AND WHAT DID YOU COLLECT?
About five years ago I was really into toys and I started collecting plastic *Star Wars* figures. I always wanted a complete set of whatever new things came out. I collected about 60 figures, and just when I thought that I had all of them, they came out with seven new ones! So I decided to collect other things to get my mind off them.

WHICH WAS YOUR FIRST GOEBEL FIGURINE?

A Funny Face From Outer Space by Charlot Byj. I chose it for myself. We were in a jewelry store looking around, I saw it and it made me feel funny too. We decided that day that I could start my collection with this little green alien.



In 1989, M.I. Hummel went international with its headquarters in Rödental

WHAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF COLLECTIONS DO YOU HAVE?

Knives, stamps, brass animals—lots of brass animals—cast iron banks, cast iron toys, *Smurfs*, rabbits of all kinds, and a very, very large sticker collection. *Co-Boy* and *M.I. Hummel* figurines are my favorite Goebel products. I also collect *Red Heads*, *Friar Tuck* and *Today's Children*. I have a figurine called *Signal* which I like a whole lot because it is a boy playing baseball, and I want to play baseball next year. (Ed. note: from the *Amerikids* collection.)

WHICH IS YOUR FAVORITE?

The *Retreat To Safety* Plaque. When I started studying about trademarks I decided that I really wanted a Crown or a Full Bee mark. Mom found the Full Bee *Retreat To Safety* and brought it back from a trip as a present for me. But it's hard to pick a favorite piece. Some I like because I received them at a special time or place, or someone I like gave it to me. Or because they are funny and make me laugh.

HOW DO YOU DISPLAY YOUR COLLECTION?



My rabbits are in my room on the hall shelves. I have cast iron on shelves in my playroom and brass in our den. Stickers and stamps are stuck in albums. *Retreat To Safety* is hanging on the wall. My *Co-Boys* are spread all over the house. The shelves in our kitchen and den are full of my different collections.

HOW DO YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT COLLECTING?

I am a member of the Baby Bees, Heart of Texas, and Great Lakes Chapters of the Goebel Collectors' Club. The Baby Bees Chapter meets about once a month. We always talk a lot about *M.I. Hummel* collectibles. An important thing we learned was how to inspect figurines before buying.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE YOUR AGE WHO WOULD LIKE TO START COLLECTING?

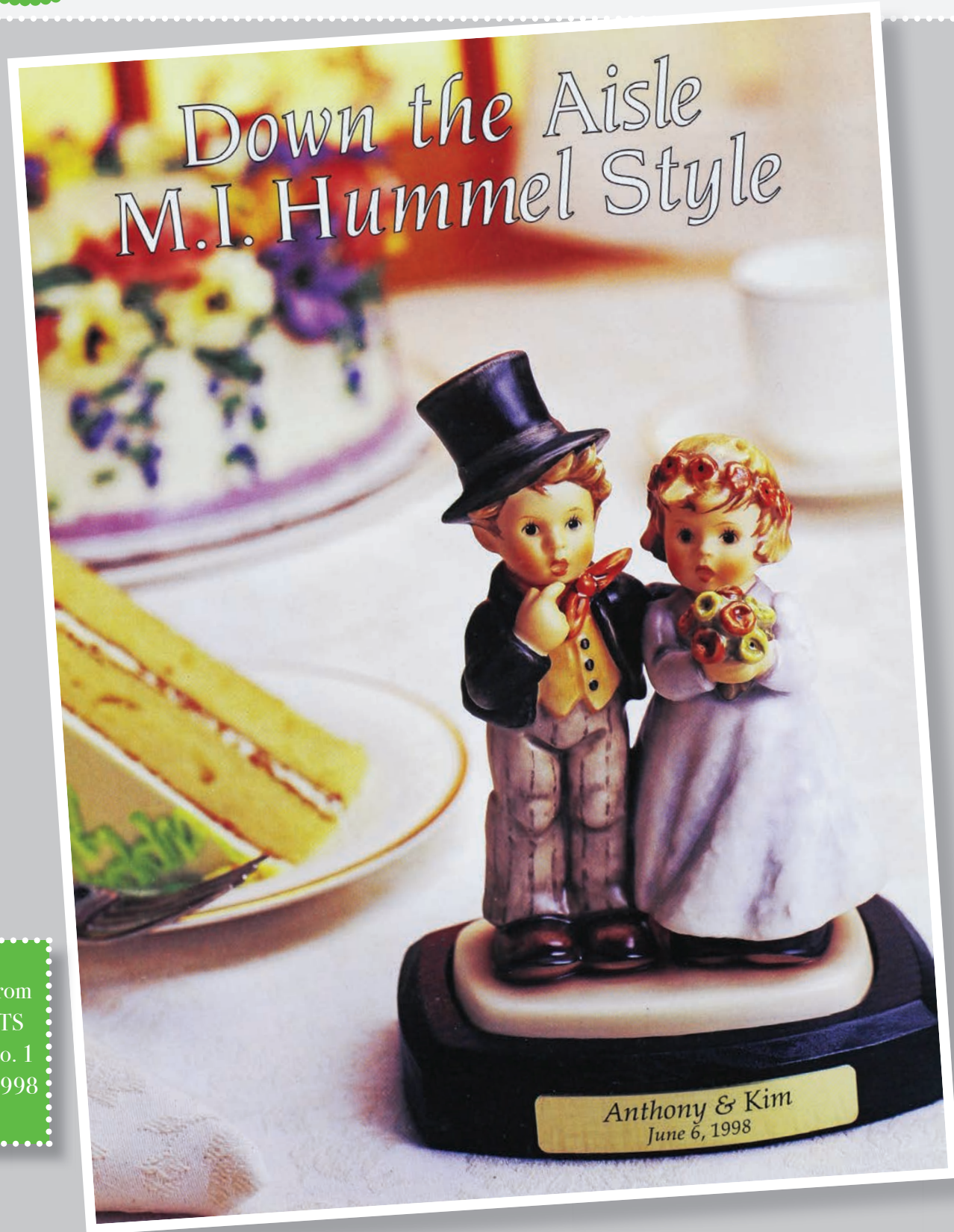
Collect what you like and what you can find fairly easily. Try to get as many pieces as you can. Keep your collection in one place and keep it organized. Go to stores where the things are sold, and be sure to look over what you buy before you pay for it.



Excerpt from INSIGHTS Vol 10, No. 2 Summer/Fall 1986

THE
90's

Bill Clinton was President ♦ A gallon of gas cost \$1.15 and a dozen eggs cost 88¢ ♦ Snowboarding was introduced at the Winter Olympics in Nagano Japan ♦ *Frasier* won an Emmy for best comedy, Lisa Kudrow for playing Phoebe in *Friends* ♦ 26% of American households had Internet ♦ *Titanic* won Best Picture ♦ Club headquarters was in Pennington, NJ ♦ The free membership figurine was *Garden Treasures Hum 727* ♦ For the first time, *M.I. Hummel* teamed up with Steiff stuffed animals to offer The Wonder of Christmas Collector's Set ♦ *M.I. Hummel* launched its first website



Down the Aisle
M.I. Hummel Style

Excerpt from
INSIGHTS
Vol 22, No. 1
Summer 1998

A Romantic New
Figurine Celebrates
Tying The Knot!

M.I. Hummel and weddings have always gone hand in hand! Now, the mid-year premiere of a special figurine makes the subject of marriage particularly timely.

Dearly Beloved presents a couple dressed from head to foot in wedding regalia. The groom is nattily attired in a suit and top hat, the girl wears bridal white with a garland of flowers in her hair. Their wedding wear makes them absolutely unique among M.I. Hummel figurines — *Dearly Beloved* is the first and only motif to feature a bride and groom.

Now M.I. Hummel enthusiasts all over the world have the perfect figurine to place on their wedding wish list, or to bestow on a blushing bride and groom. *Dearly Beloved* comes with a handsome wooden display stand with an engravable brass plaque. So you can have the piece personalized with names and a date to create a really precious heirloom. Take the figurine off its base and it becomes an ideal wedding cake topper. And keep in mind that the figurine can be a wonderful anniversary gift to commemorate the day when a special couple exchanged vows.

Add an M.I. Hummel Touch

There are plenty of ways to incorporate M.I. Hummel figurines in a wedding celebration. If you're hosting a bridal shower or an at-home wedding, why not set up a buffet table which includes M.I. Hummel figurines in and around the centerpiece? We Congratulate

(Hum 220) with its flowery trellis, looks right at home among the blossoms.

Another nice touch: use a small figurine to adorn your package. It's a delightful way to present a "little something extra" for the bride-to-be. Just make sure the figurine is fastened securely with string, ribbon, or pipe cleaner. And if you happen to be the bride, remember that M.I. Hummel figurines make meaningful gifts for your wedding party or maid-of-honor.

Consider using our adorable new 3.5 inch M.I. Hummel friends (see pages 10 - 11). They're just the right size — and price — for some special wedding fun.

Gifts that make memories

Of course, M.I. Hummel works of art make memorable wedding gifts. Our recommendation this year is *Dearly Beloved*, destined to become a true heirloom. But many other figurines are well-suited for weddings. Consider a gift that reflects the personality and lifestyle of the bridal couple. For instance, *School Girl* (Hum 81) and *School Boy* (Hum 82) are wonderful for teachers or a couple in college. And for the bridal shower, the classic *Stormy Weather* (Hum 71) or our latest rain-drenched pair, *Sunshower* (Hum 634/2/0), make perfect presents.

In M.I. Hummel-loving families, a Century Collection figurine is often given to newlyweds by the parents of the bride or groom. A Century piece has special meaning for the bridal couple since it's produced for only one year in the 20th century — their wedding year! This year's Century piece, *Here's My Heart*, has a romantic theme that's simply enchanting.



As you, or a couple you love, stroll down the aisle this season, remember to make M.I. Hummel part of the festivities. Those sweet little children provide a perfect send off for newlyweds embarking on life's journey together.

Opposite page, *Dearly Beloved*
(Hum 2003) Item # 151254 6.50"
Suggested Retail Price: \$450 (CDN \$630)

THE 00's

George W. Bush was President ♦ YouTube was founded ♦ *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* were bestsellers ♦ People were listening to music on iPods and carrying digital cameras ♦ Jennifer Aniston divorced Brad Pitt ♦ *Desperate Housewives* averaged 21.7 million viewers ♦ The 70th Anniversary Collection was introduced – *M.I. Hummel* figurines made from the original 1935 molds with paint colors matching the originals ♦ After 17 years, the QVC/*M.I. Hummel* partnership was still going strong ♦ Members were in the midst of collecting the 8-figurine Kinder Choir ♦ Our Club Convention was held in Boston ♦ The Moments in Time Collection marked its fourth year with a new figurine, *Troublemaker*

On the hunt for M.I. Hummel

Cleveland, Ohio was host to a supermarket convention in the early 1960s. The connection to *M.I. Hummel* might not be immediately obvious. But believe it or not, this gathering of grocers marked the beginning of an epic collecting story unsurpassed in all the world.

It was on that trip to Cleveland that Ruth Miller, the wife of Robert Miller, a grocer from Eaton, Ohio, purchased her first *M.I. Hummel* figurine. She did so not as an investment, not in anticipation of building a collection, but simply because she loved the small treasure – precisely the way so many of our readers were first attracted to *M.I. Hummel*. The piece that caught Ruth's eye was *Happy Days* – a cheerful pair of youngsters making music together – the girl older than the boy. Ruth was reminded of her own energetic girl and boy back home.

Thousands of *M.I. Hummels* later, Ruth still fondly remembers that first acquisition. But unfortunately, she doesn't own it anymore! One of her children broke it years ago. "It lost its head," Ruth reports. "We threw it away. Of course, we should have repaired it. But at the time, we didn't know any better."

A pastime becomes a passion



some *M.I. Hummels* there, and were smitten, once again, with the joyful innocence of these ceramic children. They bought a few as souvenirs.

What made the Millers want more? "It was most definitely because of the way they captured the children," says Ruth without hesitation. Each figurine they purchased generated a fond memory of a child they knew. In their 56 years of marriage, Ruth and Bob raised two children of their own and now have five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Excerpt from INSIGHTS
Vol 29, No. 1, Summer 2005



The man who wrote the book on M.I. Hummel

Besides being an avid collector, Bob is well known as an author. He conceived and wrote the most famous and widely used directory of *M.I. Hummel* figurines ever published, *The No. 1 Price Guide to M.I. Hummel Figurines, Plates, Miniatures, and More...*



In the 1970's, as the Millers were busy tracking down every *M.I. Hummel* they could find, they sought reference materials to guide them, but none existed. Bob had been keeping meticulous records of his possessions, recording the slight differences he noticed in each figurine version. Eventually he decided that since there was no reference book to rely on, he'd have to write his own, using his observations as a starting point. Bob approached Dieter Schneider, the former Chairman of W. Goebel Porzellanfabrik, with his suggestion.



Herr Schneider listened politely and left the room. When he returned, he brought Wilhelm Goebel and Ulrich Stocke, co-owners of the company, and asked Bob to repeat the idea. The reaction was immediately enthusiastic. With the blessing and support of W. Goebel Porzellanfabrik, work on the reference book began in earnest.

As work progressed, Dieter Schneider introduced Bob Miller to Robert Campbell Rowe, the owner of Portfolio Press and publisher of noted coffee table volumes about *M.I. Hummel* figurines. The country grocer and the New



"Never, buy a Hummel figurine for an investment, but buy because you like and enjoy them, plus all the fun and pleasure you get from collecting!" – Robert Miller

Update: The Millers today

Bob and Ruth Miller celebrated their 68th Anniversary in January of 2017. They are both retired, and still pursuing hobbies. Bob enjoys reading, playing FreeCell Solitaire, collecting coins from around the world, and of course, keeping up with *M.I. Hummel*. Ruth enjoys knitting and playing Word with Friends. She also collects political buttons and B&G Christmas plates.

The couple's *M.I. Hummel* collection once numbered over 3,000, but they have downsized considerably. The figurines they still cherish in their personal collection are among the rarest: the eight International figurines that Bob purchased in the 1970s, *Silent Night with Black Child* which was purchased directly from Viktoria Hummel, mother of Sister Maria Innocentia, a special edition of *Dearly Beloved* made for the Millers by the factory on a special Anniversary, and other highly prized figurines.

Ruth recalls, "Collecting *M.I. Hummel* figurines was so much fun, but little did we know or believe that our hobby would become world famous. We did not plan it that way, it just happened out of our love of *M.I. Hummel* figurines!"

THE
10's

Barack Obama was President ♦ A gallon of gas was \$3.52 ♦ Lady Gaga sang *Born This Way* ♦ The Space Shuttle Discovery docked for the final time at the International Space Station ♦ Apple introduced iPhone 4.0, nine days after the death of Steve Jobs ♦ The world watched the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton ♦ *M.I. Hummel* figurines were produced by Manufaktur Rödental ♦ Club headquarters was in Mercerville, NJ ♦ Our North American Club Convention took place in Orlando ♦ It was the 6th year of the Hope Series, we had raised \$80,000 for NBCF, and *Song of Hope* was introduced ♦ *M.I. Hummel* partnerships continued with both Steiff and Swarovski



Excerpt from
INSIGHTS
Vol 35, No. 1
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See Marion
at our
2017 Memphis
Convention!

Profile of an artist

Marion Huschka is Master Sculptor at Manufaktur Rödental and a premier interpreter of the artwork of Sister Hummel. She comes from a family that has worked, through multi-generations, on the crafting of *M.I. Hummel* figurines. Here's her personal story:

When did you become interested in art?

Even when I was a child, art came from the depth of my heart, as if an inside force told me to draw, paint and sculpt. In our house, no sheet of paper or piece of modeling clay was safe from me! I realized early on that I had artistic ability. I wanted to go to the school of art, but my parents didn't have the money to make it possible.

What childhood experiences contributed to your development as an artist?

As a child, my teacher was my grandfather. He was a Master Painter, and he always supported me in my artwork.

What was your formal artistic education?

I had a three-year apprenticeship at the Goebel Company and at the porcelain school in Selb. During my apprenticeship I trained with Gerhard Wittmann. Then I learned from my senior colleagues, Gerhard Skrobek and Gerhard Bochmann.

What is your history with creating *M.I. Hummel* figurines?

M.I. Hummel figurines have always been part of my life, from the time I was born, because

they are part of my family's history. It started with my great-grandfather in 1890. He was a porcelain painter from Thuringia, and he worked for Goebel. Both my grandparents carried on the family tradition. My grandfather was a Master Painter and my grandmother worked in the packaging department. My parents were also involved with *M.I. Hummel* figurines – Dad was a porcelain caster and a foreman in the casting department. Mom worked in the painting department, and later in the office. Now, as a sculptor for Manufaktur Rödental, I am the fourth generation of my family to play a role in bringing *M.I. Hummel* figurines to life. I am very proud of that, and so happy to be carrying on the tradition.

How do you translate Sister Hummel's artwork into three dimensions?

I have over thirty years of experience, and that helps! But there's more to it than that. Before I start a new sculpture, I have to get the right feeling. I look at the painting and think about it. Little by little I start to get an image. The model exists in my mind. I start with the face. That takes shape first, and helps me to imagine the rest of the sculpture.



Do you have any feelings about Sister Hummel that help you connect with her and understand her artwork?

I think Sister Hummel was a woman full of love – love of God and all his creatures. And she shared this love with us, through her artwork. Her paintings and drawings show a deep understanding of the nature of children, and a fine sense of humor.

The scenes she created were very natural, not posed. The children are lost in their play and activities, not trying to attract attention. That makes it fascinating for the viewer, to get a candid peek into the world of childhood. When I'm sculpting the figurines, I have to be sure that this natural feeling comes through, and it isn't easy. It's a challenge to combine the expressive element of the artwork with the technical requirements of porcelain production. But I love doing it!

Do you do any sculpture outside of work?

I rarely sculpt at home, since I'm sculpting all day at work and I need time to relax! I did a big Goofy and Mickey for a Disney auction. But my favorite is my sculpture of a baby aardvark. It looks like E.T.!

What are your hobbies?

I love to garden and go for walks with my dog. I also go

horseback riding with my daughter who owns a horse. I like motor-biking, and I also enjoy skeet shooting.

What are you looking forward to most about the 2011 Convention?

I'm looking forward to meeting our collectors, talking with them about *M.I. Hummel* and everything else. For me, Conventions are like family reunions. I've known some of our collectors for years. I can't wait to see you all there!

2011 Annual Angel

This angelic visitor with candle aglow was modeled by Tamara Fuchs and will light up all our hearts in 2011. It's a dated figurine, so it makes a perfect keepsake for a special year, and a gift to be cherished forever.

