

Holmes County Folklife Fieldwork for Ohio State Arts Council
Performed by Michael and Carrie N. Kline, Talking Across the Lines, LLC
www.folktalk.org

Summary of Non-Recorded Interview with Carol Ohl of Treaty Line Pottery, January 8, 2009

www.treatylinepottery.com

Mike and Carol Ohl moved to Holmes County from urban Ohio six years ago when Carol was 60. They went to work building a norbigama kiln with more than 500 bricks. Carol transitioned from being a medical technologist to a potter. They fire the kiln three times a year. Each firing requires one and a half cords of wood, which the Ohls, along with friends and students, feed into the kiln over the course of 40 hours. The Ohls barter hunting rights on their land in exchange for cordwood from their Amish neighbors. The kiln holds 500 good-sized pots. Carol's work incorporates salt, used in the kiln's second chamber, and ash to provide color and texture variation.

While playing in the creek, the Ohl's granddaughter found what turned out to be an alluvial clay deposit left by the glacier. Carol now uses it for a glaze. Fredericksburg pottery, located across the Wayne County line not far away, also utilizes clay deposited by the glacier, known as "Fredericksburg clay."



Carol sells 1500 pots annually. They live on the north side of the Greenville Treaty Line. Mike says the Europeans mistakenly gave the Indians the side with water access, including the Great Lakes. But the Europeans broke the Treaty right away, settling the north side. So these newcomers carry on their bent of a tradition dating back to Prehistoric communities. They pay homage to local history and heritage, marveling at the arrowheads they have found, and making their own artistic imprint.

Photos:

Digital photos by Carrie N. Kline

Printed and digital photos by Carol Ohl, along with her family and community

Additional materials:

Arts & Quilts of Amish Country brochure referencing Treaty Line Pottery