

Information on James Fortmann

James Fortmann was born in 1917 in Dubuque, Iowa to parents who emigrated from Austria and Germany. After graduation from high school in Dubuque, James received a degree from the Art Institute of Chicago. He received his teaching credential from the University of Chicago, and his first teaching position was in Baltimore, Maryland. During World War II, Fortmann served as an illustrator for the U.S. Air Force. After the war, Fortmann settled in California where he taught in a variety of schools, both at the secondary and community college levels. Most of his years were spent in the Long Beach area where he taught at a technical high school, first with the drama department creating sets and later as the ceramics instructor. Fortmann regarded himself as an educator, rather than a production potter. His wife, Jarvis, was also a schoolteacher for many years. Upon retirement, the Fortmanns purchased property in Sedona, Arizona, where they have lived for 25 years.