

Thanks to one local potter, this year's St. Patrick's Souvenir Trailer will feature a new and unique item that can be a precious keepsake for lads and lassies for years to come.

Hal Giddens has crafted 100 Irish pots with the official copy-righted St. Patrick's logo on them. A full-time computer programmer at Farmer's Furniture, Giddens has been doing pottery since 1999.

Souvenir co-chair Glenda Ricks actually knew Giddens and had been impressed with his work in the past.

"She called me on Christmas Eve and told me she had a job for me," he said.

Giddens said he began working on the pots during the last week of January and just finished at the end of February.

To make them, Giddens said he threw them on the potter's wheel and let them dry until they were leather hard. He then stamped each pot with the official St. Patrick's logo, trimmed them and let them dry. He then put them in a kiln with a bisque fire, which helps get all moisture and any organic matter in the clay to burn out. Giddens then waxed the bottoms of the pots, put a glaze on the logo, waxed the logo and then glazed each of the pots a second time. After the pots were put through the glaze fire one final time, the pots were complete – all 100 of them.

"It takes a good three or four days just for one to dry," he said.

So needless to say, Giddens has been a busy man for the past few weeks.

"I worked on it every single day," he said.

Each pot is made from Georgia clay that came from Lizella and comes complete with its own serial number. Ricks said two of the 100 available pots had already been sold as of press time. She hopes the works of art will grow in demand through the years.

"Our goal is to get to needing 500 pieces," she said.

The pots will be on sale at the pancake supper and the Arts & Crafts Festival at the souvenir trailer and also at the Chamber of Commerce. Giddens will also sell separate items Super Saturday at the Dublin-Laurens Artists Guild booth.

In addition to the pots, Ricks said the souvenir trailer will feature an array of T-shirts, jewelry, ties, scarves, cups, children's items, playing cards and the denim jacket that can be used to replace the more formal traditional green jackets for some official St. Patrick's events.

Ricks said the pots are a unique addition to this year's souvenir trailer. The pots are \$15 each.

"They are a very unique item", she said. "We're hoping to add a piece each year and that it will be an annual event."