

Majolica Matters!

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE MAJOLICA INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY
www.majolicasociety.com

DECEMBER 2001

MAJOLICA SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING-MAY 3-5, 2002

The Westin Atlanta North at Perimeter,
Atlanta Georgia.
LeRoy Davis, Meeting Chairman

Plans are well under way to bring you the best International Majolica Annual Meeting ever! Mark your calendar now to be in Atlanta for the weekend of May 3-5, 2002. Arrangements have been made to hold this grand event at the Westin Atlanta North at Perimeter beginning at 3:00 Pm on Friday, May 3 and ending on Sunday with what is always the convention highlight: Majolica Heaven--the world's foremost majolica show and sale. The convention content will include:

Round-table discussions designed for new as well as experienced majolica collectors on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Optional group discussion topics will include : 1) cleaning and caring for majolica, 2) insuring and protecting your collection, 3) shopping for majolica via internet auctions, 4) setting a direction for your collection, and more.....

Several Majolica Society members have already volunteered to share slides and stories of their experiences in collecting majolica with those attending the convention. These presentations will occur both Friday evening and during the Saturday morning Majolica College program. Everyone is encouraged to bring pictures of their personal collections including favourite and mystery pieces.

Majolica "Barter and Buy" will be held on Friday evening in an all new format, allowing members to bring pieces they want to sell from their collections, and an opportunity to buy from other members of the society. This will be held during the "Majolica and Coffee" reception, and will be followed by a couple of very interesting presentations by society members.

Optional Tours of antique and cultural centers in Atlanta will be provided during "free-time" on Saturday afternoon. Dearing Antiques in the Miami Circle antique area will be on the list of stops.

A Gala Majolica Society Reception and Banquet will be held on Saturday evening. We are excited to have Paul Atterbury again coming from England to be our featured speaker at the convention. He is a recognized expert on majolica and Victoriana and a captivating speaker.

On Sunday we will have our annual business meeting , then comes Majolica Heaven which is well described both literally

and figuratively. What an opportunity to see the world's largest showing of majolica, all there to be seen, touched and bought!

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Westin Perimeter at a group rate of \$109 per night. If you would like to make your reservations now, call the Westin at 770-395-3900 or 888-733-7666 and refer to the Majolica Society Meeting.

See you there.

UPCOMING SALES CHRISTIES FEBRUARY 4, 2002

There is a sale of English and American majolica at Christie's in New York on January 24, 2002. The auction includes approximately 60 lots of majolica from major factories such as Minton, Wedgwood, Holdcroft and George Jones.

Included in the selection is a single owner section from The Parker Collection. Highlights include a rare Minton fish platter and cover, model number 1979, ewers modeled by Protat, and vases designed by Carrier de Belleuse and Jeannest. Many of the pieces have celebrated examples illustrated in Marilyn Karmason's, Victoria Bergesen's and Nicholas Dawes' literature on the subject. Some are rare examples with unpublished comparables.

We'll keep you up to date at www.majolicasociety.com as items are posted to their website, so look for more information soon and remember they have services for absentee bidding.

MICHAEL STRAWSER AUCTION APRIL 5 & 6, 2002

Michael Strawser's Majolica Auctions will be conducting their Spring 2002 Majolica Auction on April 5 & 6, 2002 in Hatfield, PA. This is a change in location due to scheduling problems in Fort Wayne. Majolica Auctions also has services for absentee bidding.

If you want to downsize all or part of your collection Majolica Auctions is still accepting pieces for this auction and you can contact them at 219.854.2859.

EDITORIAL BOARD

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MASSACHUSETTS COLLECTOR DONATES SANDED MAJOLICA

Margaret E.C. "Pegge" Howland of Heath, MA has donated over 500 pieces of her collection of sanded majolica to The Jones Museum of Glass and Ceramics in Sebago, Maine.

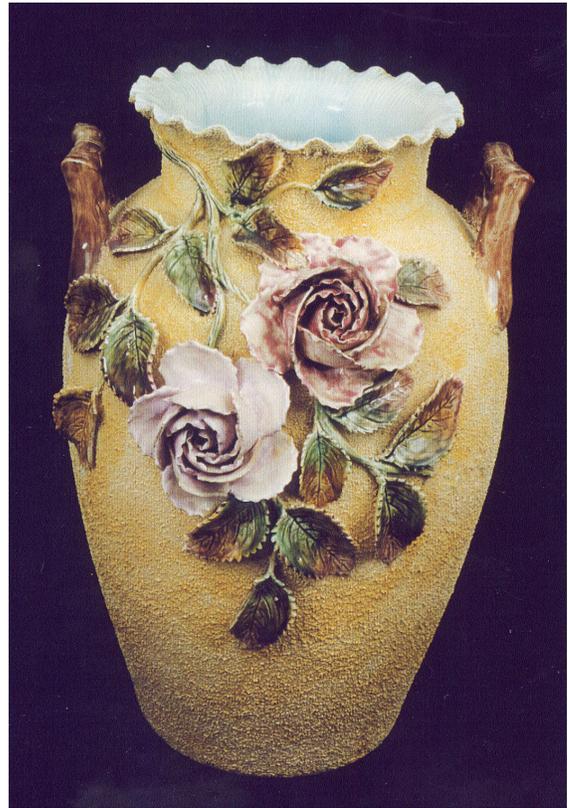
Sanded majolica is a form of Victorian pottery made in Europe and the U.S. between 1850 and 1900. Many of the finest examples in her collection were crafted in England, France, Portugal and Poland. Some of the more famous potters in England represented in the collection include Samuel Lear (Hanley 1877-1886); Thomas Forester (Longton 1883-1995); and Wardle & Co. (Hanley 1871-1910).

The most intriguing feature of the pieces is the "sand" finish. It isn't sand in the usual sense of beach sand, but is fine particles of clay that have been sprinkled on the surface of the object before it is fired. All nineteenth century majolica comes in a variety of rich, lustrous colors and is easily recognized by the naturalistic forms that adorn it in raised, applied or incised designs. The addition of "sand" on some of the pieces makes for an unusual, mossy effect that is very appealing.

Pegge purchased her first piece of sanded majolica in 1970 at an auction in South Deerfield, MA. Since then the collection has grown at the rate of about 30 pieces a year until in 2001 it contained over 1000 pieces of sanded ceramics. In addition to sanded majolica, her collection also includes examples of sanded porcelain, sanded Satsuma, sanded Mocha ware, sanded Luster ware, and sanded yellow ware, and Palissey ware.

Pegge Howland is a well-known antiques collector in Western Massachusetts and has given talks about her collection to the Pioneer Valley Antiques Dealers Association, the Shelburne Falls (MA) Historical Society, the Rowe (MA) Historical Society, and the Majolica International Society, of which she has been a member since 1990. Articles about her collection have appeared in American Country Collectibles (Dec. 1991), Victorian Decorating Ideas (Sept. 1988), and in the Heath Historical Society Newsletter (Summer 1992).

For more information contact Margaret E.C. Howland
23 Avery Brook Road, Heath, MA01346
(413) 337-4980, howlandd@crocker.com



20" Vase by Samuel Lear



Pegge Howland shows some of her Sanded Majolica

NOTES FROM THE EDITORS DESK

Moe Wisenberg

Let me first apologize to all of you for the lateness of this issue. I have learned that those who live by the computer may also die by the computer----continuing problems this autumn terminating fatally with the loss of what I had in Word as well as other files, so that much of what you will read is recreated or retrieved from other sources. This slow learner will definitely make more hard copies!

Like the rest of you I am eagerly looking forward to the 2002 Annual Meeting scheduled for May 3-5 in Atlanta where we have so enjoyed our previous meetings. LeRoy Davis and his team are doing a great job and I know it will be a great success (even if I don't get the piece I want at Majolica Heaven). More meeting information and registration materials will come to you with the next issue of Majolica Matters.

This issue is accompanied by a membership renewal form and member's survey. Our society year corresponds to the calendar year even though many of us have previously renewed our membership and paid dues at the time of meeting registration. Please renew now and simplify the meeting registration and records. The membership survey is critical if the society is to best serve you, our members----please take the time to fill it out and add extra sheets if you need them to tell all. The membership directory is currently scheduled to come out right after the annual meeting when the last stragglers should have renewed. The full membership directory is always available in its most up to date form in the member's section of our website, www.majolicasociety.com.

Duane Matthes continues to serve us all above and beyond any reasonable expectations on our part. In addition to keeping the membership files he makes the website better and better--it's full of information, up to the minute news, and now a great way for us to communicate with each other. I can't begin to tell you how good it is and how much is there: you must look for yourself and become a participant. As we had predicted the website can do things for us that no other medium can including Majolica Matters.

I have enjoyed being your editor and I intend, with your help, suggestions and input, to continue to improve our newsletter. Deborah English and Helen Cunningham have both been my right hands (yes, I know I look strange) and I thank them enormously for their unstinting help and encouragement. The rest of you also have stories and experience to share with us so please do so. Deb and Phil English had speculated a while ago about what the Victorians served with their majolica pieces so in this issue we are beginning a recipe section. The suggested drink would be just right served at this time of year in a Copeland Centennial Ewer, or Wedgwood Punch and Toby Bowl, but will be fine in a lesser piece if you don't have the correct one!

This has been a year full of pleasure and happiness in many ways but also a year of horror as we discovered on September 11th. Like some of you, I came as an immigrant to this country which has been kinder and more bounteous to me than I could ever have imagined. It has given us many many privileges, not the least of which is our freedom to associate with one another and to each pursue our own heart and direction. I hope you and those who are close to you have all remained well and will do so in the New Year. Happy Holidays and God bless us all.
Moe

PALISSY WEBSITE

www.palissy.com

Marshall Katz does it again! He has long been our major source of information about Palissy ware with his books on the French and Portuguese followers of Palissy, his multiple articles and fascinating talks to our society at several meetings. You must visit his great new website at www.palissy.com even if you are only peripherally interested in Palissy, and for those of us who are Palissy collectors, it is a must. The site is full of information and contains history, a glossary, five pages of makers, marks, museums where pieces can be seen, upcoming Palissy shows, various articles, and more----what a great window onto Palissy ware!

He also gives a great plug for his viewers to join the Majolica International Society of which he is, of course, a long time member and contributor to

Majolica Matters. Thanks Marshall!

THIS JOURNEY

Jim Trout

If I had known what lay ahead for me in collecting and amassing majolica I would have started earlier....much earlier than 1980. This is a glorious journey--the most fun filled trip I ever imagined and it is basically without end.

Probably every collector of whatever is collectible has experienced this--sort of like a continual treasure hunt--each day on the prowl for our passion is one of anticipation and urgency. Discovery crowns the effort--but possession satisfaction is but short lived and doesn't still our eagerness for the next foray into malls, shops and auctions. The appetite is insatiable--most love to talk to other collectors, sharing experiences and trophies, comparing and discovering. In our homes are majolica treasures displayed as individual tastes dictate.

Since majolica is wide ranging in social appeal it brings us together as a common denominator. The fellowship of our society confirms the collecting worthiness as well as the special allure that distinguishes majolica from all other treasures.

Thank you Michael Strawser for bringing our society into being in 1989--just look at what you have wrought.

EBAY, THE INTERNET, AND THE MARKET FOR FRENCH MAJOLICA FIGURES

By Helen Cunningham

When I first began collecting majolica, especially Sarreguemines and other French majolica figures over twenty years ago, I could find no information on the subject. In fact, at that time very little information existed on majolica at all. So perhaps at this point it is a good time to consider the changes in the market place over the last couple of decades with the increasing awareness and interest in majolica and majolica figures and with the increasing popularity of the internet as a source. But first, an awareness of the history of the Sarreguemines area will aid in understanding the atmosphere in which the production of majolica began in France.

Sarreguemines lies along the left bank of the Sarre River in the Lorraine region of France. It was here in 1790 that three tobacco merchants from Strasbourg, Nicolas and Augustin Jacoby and Joseph Fabry, opened a pottery firm in an old oil mill. Toward the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century the firm had managed to establish a reputation for its diversified production and for the quality of the wares.

By 1860 the firm had 2,000 workers, four kilns, and more than 4 million annual gross including a range of products without precedent. In the twenty years around mid century, the factory had increased its work force by 1700. A boat now carried materials between the five production plants along the Sarre River. It was in this climate that majolica production began. Made from the old stoneware molds, these pieces exhibited the high standard of workmanship that had become synonymous with the name Sarreguemines.

The end of the Second Empire came in 1870 with the developing Franco-Prussian War. In 1874, the Treaty of Frankfurt ceded Lorraine to Germany. Majolica production continued at Sarreguemines, though now under German control. The McKinley Tariff Act of 1891 required that all imports be marked with the country of origin, but it was not until after the turn of the twentieth century that the Lorraine crest with the words "Made in Germany" were added to the Sarreguemines mark. By 1907 Sarreguemines employed 3,250 workers and was one of the largest pottery manufacturers in the world. After the war the Lorraine territory was returned to France.

Sarreguemines majolica was exported worldwide, a testament to its popularity. Countries such as South America, Australia, Norway, and Russia ordered special majolica toby jugs commemorating a president or heroic national figure. This is one reason Sarreguemines figures appear on ebay from these countries.

In 1899 an English liquor distributor ordered jugs from Sarreguemines and added advertising logos as a promotion for its liquors. Noting the apparent popularity of these French jugs, English manufacturers soon began producing toby jugs remarkably similar to the French ones. Even the Germans manufactured jugs like the popular Sarreguemines examples. With this in mind, it becomes easier to understand why so many jugs are sold on ebay as Sarreguemines when in fact they were not made at the French factory.

The most popular of the Sarreguemines jugs during this period included the #3181. This jug appeared on the market in five different sizes, each slightly different so that the smallest is not an exact duplication of the largest. Unmarked English copies of this design are very similar to the middle sizes. Sarreguemines jugs have nice detail, a solid feel, and better coloring. More accurate flesh tones and an entire interior of turquoise differentiate them from the English versions.

Collectors can identify the English jugs by their thick potting and their bluish skin tones. Some have rather messy coloring. The few English designs that have colored interiors use blue tones, unlike the greenish cast of the Sarreguemines turquoise.

Besides the unmarked English copies, marked ones also appeared. Foley and Fielding openly copied the middle size of the #3181. The Fielding and Foley jugs are lighter, thinner potted, and have nice detail with nice coloring. The Foley jugs have softer, subtler coloring. Both the Fielding and the Foley jugs have turquoise coloring only at the interior top rim.

Josef Strnact of Turn-Teplitz, Germany, also manufactured a similar jug. The company began in 1881 as a terra cotta factory and shop for decorating porcelain. It closed in 1932. Very nice detail, less color and slightly speckled pale pink cheeks separate these jugs from the others.

Other jugs seen on ebay under a keyword "Sarreguemines" search include those that have long been mistakenly attributed to the French manufacturer. It is interesting to note that many majolica dealers now identify these jugs as Sarreguemines-type. However, non-majolica dealers and individuals still confuse these jugs with Sarreguemines because of the telltale turquoise lining. These jugs were not made at Sarreguemines, but in all probability they were made somewhere nearby, either in France or in Germany. Nonetheless, collectors seem to like these jugs because of their whimsical expressions.

EBAY, THE INTERNET, AND THE MARKET FOR FRENCH MAJOLICA FIGURES

Continued

Throughout history the northern part of France has been in the path of marching armies, from the Vikings to Napoleon to both World Wars. In addition, 90% of France's coal and a large part of its iron come from this area. Because of large deposits of resources needed by armies for fuel, much of the land in the area has suffered repeated destruction over the centuries.

This region also has forests and streams: important resources needed by pottery manufacturers. Hundreds of majolica producers, cottage industries as well as major manufacturers, located their factories in northern France and in nearby Germany. Unfortunately, during World Wars I and II most of the records, catalogs, and designs of these factories were destroyed. Without factory records it is difficult to determine with any accuracy exactly where these factories were located.

The Sarreguemines-type character jugs are lighter in weight and more thinly potted than actual Sarreguemines pieces. They are also marked with a four-digit number beginning with a seven or an eight. The turquoise interiors are not as deep as those of Sarreguemines interiors. The exterior coloring on these jugs includes burgundy, dull blue, purple or olive green, colors never found on Sarreguemines characters. Also the skin tone is not as rich and the eyes are black, not brown or blue as is the case on most Sarreguemines.

Perhaps as many as twenty different models exist from this manufacturer and many models were made in three, four, or five sizes. Besides jugs, bottles also exist. Prices on these jugs have fallen as they have with the more common Sarreguemines jugs.

The publication of books dedicated to majolica in recent years has fueled interest in collecting. With increased information, more collectors felt armed with knowledge. Prices began to rise as demand increased. Collectors haunted antique malls and flea markets in search of the treasure waiting just around the corner. Majolica figures were not easy to find and when they were available, their prices reflected the seeming scarcity.

However, with the advent of the internet, collectors now have not only information but also a source for additions to their collections. Web sites for majolica dealers and of course ebay have provided information and availability, so the laws of supply and demand have again affected prices.

When supply exceeds demand, the prices drop. Such is the case with the Sarreguemines #3181 jugs. As we have

seen, these jugs were extremely popular at the turn of the nineteenth century and were manufactured in large numbers; consequently, there is virtually always one on a web site or on ebay. When my book was published, these jugs were not commonly found and the large size could command prices from \$225 upwards. Now on ebay, these jugs rarely receive bids of more than half that amount. The smaller sizes have also witnessed falling prices, though it seems in general that their prices have not dropped as dramatically as the largest size.

Other Sarreguemines character jugs are enduring falling prices. As more and more consumers connect to the internet, prices have steadily declined on the more common jugs. Good news for beginning collectors. They can start to collect with less initial investment than those who started several years ago or more.

The flip side of the coin is that although prices have fallen on the more common jugs, they have climbed on the rarer ones. The demand is there and with limited supply, prices on these jugs have doubled or tripled. The fact that these jugs surface at all is exciting for collectors. Commonly in the past collectors would pass on a very rare example and bid far over value on a more common one. This seems to remain the case in some instances; however, collectors now express more confidence and seem to have a greater comfort level with buying from photos and emails. They are willing to bid ever higher on the rare pieces. Of course, this situation depends on who is participating in the auction just as it does with live auctions.

Perhaps as noteworthy is the fact that prices on somewhat less common pieces have remained rather constant despite the internet. Though not really rare, these jugs surface infrequently on ebay or other internet sources. The prices realized for these jugs reflect their sporadic availability.

Other French manufacturers of majolica figures seem to be experiencing the same trends that I see with Sarreguemines. Onnaing pieces appear regularly on ebay and the more common pieces have dropped in value. The rare examples, on the other hand, seem to command prices in keeping with their scarcity. The same holds true of St. Clement, Orchies, and other French firms.

A word of caution is in order at this point. Most of the dealers that I see on ebay seem reputable. However, there are a few that misrepresent their merchandise. I have also seen skill bids to run up prices on rare examples of majolica figures.

EBAY, THE INTERNET, AND THE MARKET FOR FRENCH MAJOLICA FIGURES

Continued

Buyer beware is still the best rule. Before bidding, check the feedback if buying from ebay. Feedback is not always a safety net, but it certainly helps to know the experience of previous buyers. It also helps to see who has already bid. Check the bid history and see if you recognize any of the user IDs.

If I find that a seller has negative feedback, I search for the complaint. From the remarks, I can tell if the dealer was at fault. In many cases the buyer had little cause for complaint, so one must consider the source. A second word of caution: read the description very carefully. Knowledgeable dealers describe any flaws in detail. Ask questions before bidding, especially on majolica. Do your research. Learn what colors appear on certain figures. Then buy pieces in the best condition that you can afford. Pieces in good condition will appreciate in value more than damaged or repaired pieces unless those pieces are very rare.

In conclusion, the market for majolica figures has been expanding in recent years. New collectors enter the market and affect the balance of supply and demand. New sources such as ebay and internet web sites create still more collectors, but also provide more availability in turn affecting the laws of supply and demand. Prices fluctuate as they do with any commodity. However, in general prices on majolica figures appear to be stabilizing. Prices on those rare examples have skyrocketed, but sufficient examples of quality merchandise exist at very reasonable prices for the new collectors.

I would encourage all potential collectors of majolica figures to get to know the dealers in the Majolica International Society. These dealers have demonstrated their expertise and their interest in majolica. They are willing to educate new collectors and they offer quality merchandise. Check out their web sites and buy with confidence. Many of the dealers list items on ebay with links to their web sites. I find this a great way to search for interesting and unusual additions to my collection.

BOOK NEWS

Coming Soon--"Majolica: A Complete History and Illustrated Survey" by Marilyn Karmason and Joan Stacke is under revision and will, hopefully, be out soon. We will let you of it's appearance as soon as we find out, but for up to the minute information see the society web site, majolicasociety.com.

"Pichets en Barbotine, Personnages Animaux Fleurs" by Maryse Bottero is a wonderful resource full of photos of very collectible majolica pitchers made in France. Written in French but a picture is worth a thousand words.

PALISSY WARE EXHIBIT

The official name and dates for the Palissy ware exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts, Tours, France and the Adrien Dubouché Museum in Limoges, France are as follows:

"La faïence de Tours (1840-1910):
Avisseau et le souffle de la Renaissance"

Tours: October 15, 2002 to January 15, 2003
Limoges: February 1, 2003 to March 31, 2003

The exhibition in Tours will be the more comprehensive with about 150 exhibits. A color catalog including a number of essays, as well as the full text of Avisseau's Treatise on Colors (never before published) will be prepared for the exhibition.

This will be the finest collection of works by the Tours Palissyists ever assembled. It will also include historical documents never viewed by the public. If anyone is interested in attending opening night, presumably on October 14, 2002 in Tours, you may write or fax directly to the museum, attention Mme. Danielle Oger.

Musée des Beaux-Arts
18, Place François Sicard
37000 Tours, France
Tel: 011-33-2-47 05 68 73
Fax: 011-33-2-47 05 38 91

Musée National A. Dubouché
Place Winston Churchill
87000 Limoges, France
Tel: 011-33-5-55 33 08 50
Fax: 011-33-5-55 33 08 55

Please send your comments and material
for the newsletter to:

M.J. Wizenberg
1608 Elmhurst Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73120-1218
Phone: 405 848 4028
Fax: 405 848 4531
E-mail: moewize@aol.com

MAJOLICA IN ART

by Allison Palz

Some years back I cut this picture out of a Sotheby's auction catalog. It is a painting by Louis Moeller (1855-1930). If you look at the pitcher in the center of the table you will notice it is Majolica. The pattern is Wardle Bird and Fan. Obviously I found this exciting as I have a number of Wardle pieces shown in the accompanying photograph.



VICTORIAN TREATS

APPLE TODDY

Deborah English

This tastes best served in a Wedgwood or George Jones Punchbowl!

Fifteen Stayman or Winesap apples. Stick a clove in 8 of them and bake all until just ready to burst.

Four quarts of whiskey, 1 quart brandy, 1 quart peach brandy, 1 quart Jamaica Rum, 1 pound sugar dissolved in a little as will do the trick: say a little over 1 part.

Put the baked apples in a well-glazed stoneware jar. Pour the liquors and sugar on them, apply close fitting airtight cover and set aside. When ready to serve add 6 quarts of water plus a lump of ice. (Should be made in January for the following Christmas).

Dorsey Gassaway's Receipt
Via "Maryland's Way" Cookbook

EGG NOG

Moe Wisenbert

This recipe has been handed down in the family of Edmund Hartt who was a Boston shipbuilder. He was the builder of the Constitution, one of the first ships of the US Navy, and in 1799 built the frigate Boston. This old family recipe came as an added bonus when I married Toni, one of his descendants. The Recipe is undoubtedly of a later date but I think he would have enjoyed as much as I have.

Beat 12 eggs, add 2 cups of fine granulated sugar and beat until light and foamy. Stir in 5 quarts of half and half cream. Slowly add, while stirring, 2 fifths brandy, 1 pint dark rum, 1 cup bourbon, 1 cup dry sherry, 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg.



GET IN ON THE COOKING FUN

Please send the editor your recipes in the Victorian style. I think we can have a lot of fun with this and find a way to display our Majolica in action. Coming in future issues are Jellied Veal and Ham Pie, Green Sweetmeats, Pigeon Pie and others.