



Majolica Matters

A Visit to the Sarreguemines Museum

by Wanda Matthes



Mural of Faïence tiles "Le Boulevard" by Dapres Steinlen, c. 1902

Very early in January 2011, Duane and I began to plan a trip to Paris to take place during the first two weeks in August. We quickly made our flight plans and reserved our hotel. We planned to spend each night in our hotel in Paris but take day trips out to see sights that we had not seen on previous trips. Shortly after we made these plans, Jean DeFrocourt and Philippe Meunier, who were in Texas to participate in various antique shows in the U.S., drove to Dallas to spend a couple of days with us. While discussing the trip with them, we mentioned that we would like to see the Sarreguemines Museum. We thought we might take the train up to Sarreguemines then, back to Paris in one day.



The map shows the location of Sarreguemines on the German border in the Moselle département, the Lorraine région, of France. On the left is a drawing of the pottery works in 1900

Jean and Philippe suggested that a drive would be much more fun and would allow us to explore more of France as we drove to and from the Museum.

Philadelphia 2011 Convention Registration Remains OPEN!

Keynote Speaker Nicholas Dawes will headline the 2011 Majolica International Society Convention, **October 27 through October 30**, in Philadelphia.



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www.sarreguemines.fr/Musee/

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Shortly afterward, Jean and Philippe returned to Paris and contacted Emile Decker and Christian Thevenin at the Sarreguemines Museum, asking if either or both would be available for an appointment with us, sometime during the first two weeks in August. M. Decker and M. Thevenin agreed, and the chosen date was Tuesday, August 9, which would be at the beginning of our second week in Paris.

Duane and I arrived in Paris on August 3rd and began this much anticipated time to explore Paris and to enjoy a bit of cool French air while Texas was having one of its longest stretches of over 100 degree temperatures since 1981. Now, having been in Paris for a week, it was time to execute the plan to visit Sarreguemines. Jean and Philippe had arranged for a car for the four of us. Duane and I were awake by 6:00 a.m. and were ready when Jean and Philippe arrived at the hotel at 8:00 a.m. and we were off on what was expected to be about a four hour drive.



Sarreguemines city welcome sign, "Bienvenue" has used ceramic tiles as mulch (a statement about the ceramic history of the city)



Sarreguemines 1900



Arriving at Sarreguemines City Limits



The four Musketeers (Philippe Meunier, Wanda, Jean DeFrocourt and Duane) on tour in the Museum



The city run museum has a simple exterior with the one identifying aspect being the large glass windows (upper-center), the 19th Century Wintergarden designed by Paul de Geiger



The Musée de la Faïence is worth visiting for its superb Wintergarden designed by Paul de Geiger, Director of the Sarreguemines pottery from 1871 to 1913. It includes a huge majolica ware fountain.

and sheep grazing on the lush green grasses. We were also amazed to see fields of sunflowers with their heads bowed low with seeds, ready to be picked. Another marvel for us were the many wind turbines posted on the landscape, making clean energy for the people of France.

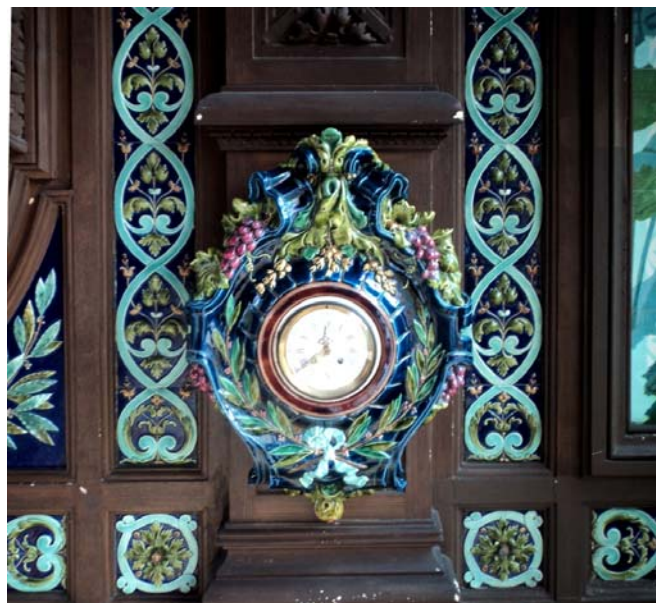


The size of monumental majolica Wintergarden fountain dwarfs Wanda

Having never been out of Paris, with the exception of a trip to Versailles, Duane and I were taking in the sights. The drive toward the French-German border was beautiful, as we gazed on mile after mile of perfectly manicured farmland and pastures filled with so many handsome and seemingly contented cows



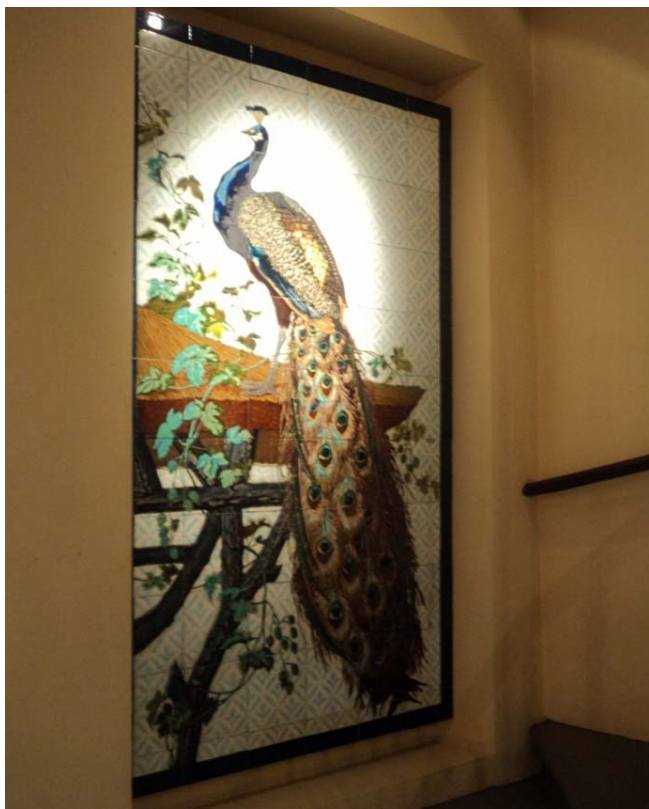
Detail of the Wintergarden fountain tiles



The clock in the Wintergarden



Faïence murals "Arrival" and "Departure", by Martial Simas, c. 1890



A faïence peacock mural was simply tucked in the staircase up to the Wintergarden

We hoped to arrived in Sarreguemines by noon, have lunch and be ready for our appointment with

M. Decker and M. Thevenin at 1:00 p.m. While we ordered lunch at the restaurant, across from the Museum, Philippe walked over to let the Museum know that we were "in town" and would be on time for our meeting at 1:00. Unfortunately, when he arrived, he found that M. Decker was ill and had been hospitalized, and, of course, would be unable to meet with us. The assistant curator, Christian Thevenin was most cordial and, even though he struggled with English, and Duane and I struggled with our French, with the help of Jean and Philippe, we had a wonderful tour of the Museum and its collections.



All smiles at the entry of the Sarreguemines kiln

We then ventured outside to the kiln, which still stands on its original site.

Afterward, M. Thevenin gave us a tour of the contents of the Museum (the storage rooms) filled with pieces not yet ready for the public parts of the Museum. This was amazing! M. Thevinin spoke, with great excitement, about their new museum which is to be built in the near future. The new facility will allow room for many more pieces from the great manufactory to be seen.

As we walked outside to see the kiln and, yes, walk inside the kiln, M. Thevenin told us of another American, Helen Cunningham, author of Majolica Figures, who had visited the Museum during the time she was researching her book (published in 1997).

Since many of you may have never visited the web site for Sarreguemines, I am using information taken directly from their site to give you historical information about this great maker of majolica and other fine ceramics.



Who would have thought we would ever be inside a 19th Century Sarreguemines kiln



Interior of the Sarreguemines kiln

The Historical Museum (also named "Museum of Decorative Arts") was originally the residence of Paul de Geiger. Now it contains collections of faience, including the magnificent "wintergarden" richly decorated by Schuiler.

Numerous pieces of 19th and 20th century faience, flowerpot-holders to monumental fireplaces are displayed side by side. Two big panels depicting the allegories of earth and fire give a magic touch to the place.

Between 1880 and 1882, Paul de Geiger built, as an extension of his residence, a winter garden in a typically Art Nouveau" style. It is covered completely with faience tiles and has a monumental fountain in the middle. Two panels on each side of the fountain show views of Sarreguemines. Framing the entrance, two female figures representing allegories of earth and fire incarnate the two elements which, when fused in a kiln, gave birth to masterpieces of ceramic art.



Murals "Allégorie personnifiant le feu" (right) and "la terre", by Carl Schuller, "c. 1880



Four-piece peacock table center, by Victor Kremer c. 1925, 60 cm tall



Life size figure of Laurent de Médicis, c. 1880



Front details of the pedestal for Laurent de Médicis



Faience mural "Wading Birds", c. 1880-1890

Decorative panels (tile murals): A popular trend at the end of the 19th century was to decorate the walls of streets or the interior of houses with colored ceramic

panels. Some of the finest panels were made by famous artists of the time, one of them being Martial Simas. The Sarreguemines workshop also reproduced advertising posters such as "Les Petits Beurres de LU".



Majolica Fireplace c. 1880 - 1890

Stoves and Fireplaces: The expertise and excellent technical skills of the Sarreguemines faience workers can clearly be seen in these magnificent pieces covered in richly colored enamels, with tiles, sometimes enlivened by figures in relief."



The Casino at Sarreguemines, France

The Casino (which has nothing to do with gambling) Across the river (on the right bank of the Sarre River) sits this adorable little building, which, unfortunately, we did not tour. M. Thevevin did speak of it briefly. Here is the information that I was able to locate on it.



Close-up of the "Allegory of Ceramics" mural, c. 1880, in the center exterior of the prior photo of the river view of the Casino at Sarreguemines

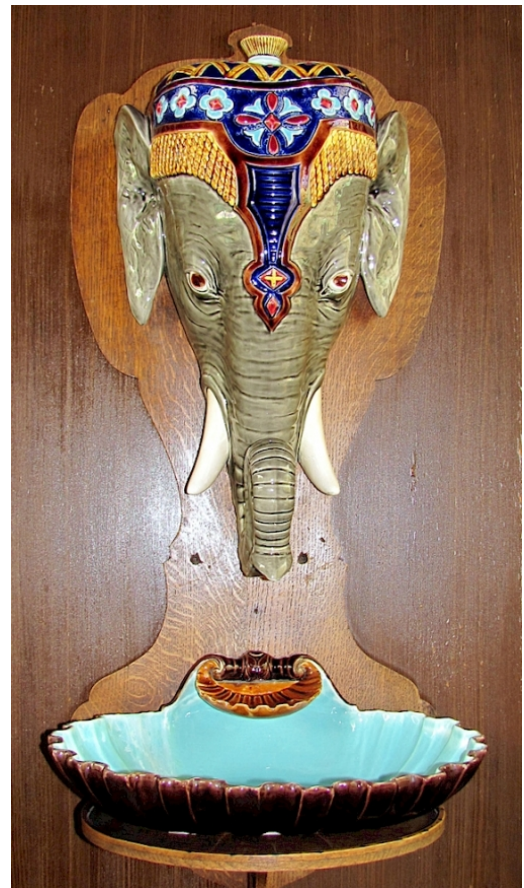
The Casino was constructed in two phases, between 1878 and 1890. The term Casino is the German translation of "circle". In the 19th Century, the name of the site was the "Reunion" (meeting square). It was a place devoted to the employees and workers of the faienceries (pottery workers). Its founder intended it to be a cultural center and meeting place, and it continues to play this role today. The setting is pastoral and there is also a small yachting harbor.



Mythological characters, Leda and the swan, c. 1875, 39cm tall



Non-majolica Sarreguemines items included this adorable child's wash sink with matching jug set



Elephant Fountain with Lavabo

Dining in Philadelphia - Convention 2011

By Carol Harkess

I became excited about my dining options by just reading about the fabulous and unique restaurants in Philadelphia. I believe Fodor's 2011 selection of the choice, "best of the best" restaurants will give convention participants a list to start off with. As with all incredible restaurants, please remember to make your reservations early. I am also including a list of restaurants recommended by the Radisson Warrick staff as great and an easy walking distance from the hotel.

Fodor's Choice Restaurants:

- 1. Amada**
217-219 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
215-625-2450
Authentic Spanish Tapas in the Heart of Old City Philadelphia
- 2. Barbuzzo**
110 S. 13 St., Philadelphia, 215-546-9300
Mediterranean Kitchen and Bar
(Racheal Ray recently stopped by Barbuzzo for her upcoming episode of the Racheal Ray Show)
- 3. Parc**
227 S. 18th St., Philadelphia, 215-545-2262
Parisian atmosphere with emphasis on culinary details. Excellent onion soup!
- 4. Vietri**
1312 Spruce St., Philadelphia, 215-732-3478
"Possibly the best Italian restaurant on the East Coast", Mario Baltali (NEED I SAY MORE!)
- 5. Zahav**
237 St. James Place, Philadelphia, 215-625-8800
DINNER ONLY. Zahav is a modern Israeli restaurant that brings the authentic flavors of Israel's culinary heritage to Philadelphia. In May 2009, Philadelphia Magazine selected Zahav as the #1 restaurant in Philadelphia. (Again, reservations please.....)

Restaurants recommended by the Radisson and within easy walking distance are:

1. Devon Seafood Grill
2. Alma DeCuba,
3. Tequila
4. Tinto
5. Pietro

I hope this helps with your Philadelphia planning.

Reprint - from the ARTstor Web Site



New collection agreement: Majolica International Society, September 28, 2011 by ARTstor

ARTstor is collaborating with the Majolica International Society to share 1,000 images of Majolica pottery from the collections of its members in the Digital Library.

Majolica is a variety of brightly painted, tin-glazed pottery made of soft earthenware. It was first introduced to Italy in the 14th century by merchants from Majorca, and the tradition was revived by British porcelain factory Minton & Co. and French ceramic chemist Leon Arnoux, who presented Majolica at the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851, where it was greatly admired by Queen Victoria and the general public.

Majolica designers drew on many sources, often combining them to make a Victorian statement in a single object. By the 1870s, Majolica was in wide everyday use, both on the dining table and in garden decorations. A revival of interest in the 1970s by collectors brought back an appreciation of its aesthetic and historic worth. Today Majolica pottery is highly sought after in the art pottery market.

The Majolica International Society's membership consists of scholars, collectors, dealers, traders, auctioneers, photographers, restorers, decorators, and lovers of this whimsical Victorian ceramics. The images appearing in the ARTstor Digital Library are part of the photo archive of the Marilyn Karmason Majolica Reference Library.

For more detailed information about this collection, visit the Majolica International Society page.



MIS Western States, 2011 Luncheon

By Maryanne Leckie



Sue Furchtenicht (left) has fun sharing her collection with Linda Foley

The Western States Region held its fourth get together on May 14, 2011 at the lovely home of Sue Furchtenicht in Santa Maria. Sue lives in the heart of the Santa Barbara wine country, midway between beautiful Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, California. The theme of the luncheon meeting was "Wine Country Meeting for Lovers of Majolica." Sue shared information about the local wineries and the luncheon meeting showcased some of the fine wines from the area.



Mike Foley, Loretta & Gary Graham discuss majolica with Sue Furchtenicht and Linda Foley

Sue shared her Majolica collection which includes the complete George Jones monkey tea set and a rare Sarreguemines platter which features a hunting scene. Her collection of Majolica plates is on a shelf which encircles her dining room.



Rare Sarreguemines hunting scene platter

In addition to the festive and fun luncheon members visited some of the wineries that Sue recommended. They also attended the C.A.L.M. Antique Show at the Earl Warren Show grounds in Santa Barbara which had an excellent array of Majolica.

Everyone attending the luncheon had a good time and look forward to our next meeting.

Maryanne Leckie,
Western States Regional Representative

Paris' Maison Hermès Displays for Fall 2011

From September 3, To November 15, 2011 Galerie Vauclair will have Wicker furniture and Majolica ware displayed in the Hermès showrooms in their retail showrooms at 24, Rue du Faubourg, Saint-Honoré, Paris



**Galerie Vauclair, 36 rue de l'Université, 75007, Paris
Contact us: Laurence Vauclair +33 6 09 48 27 86
Mail : info@galerie-vauclair.com**

Leila Menchari, Maison Hermès' decorator, and Laurence Vauclair wanted to highlight and magnify this metaphoric link between the cycle of seasons and the history of art. Leila Menchari has displayed an exquisite nature and fauna. A royal crane, an elephant, partridges and pheasants have been caught in the clay body of these fabulous enameled flower pots. We can figure how long it was to perfect such gorgeous pieces of art. These animals have been represented with such an elegance and dignity.

Baltimore Summer Antique Show

By Nic Boston



Maeve & Lizzie Boston are just a few of the beautiful things that the Boston's displayed at the Baltimore Summer Antique Show (August 25 - 28)

Hi Majolica Matters,
We have returned to Ireland, from the Baltimore Summer Antique Show despite many flight and train cancellations.

Our daughters, Maeve & Lizzie helped Martine and I for the first time at a show. We all had a ball.

Earthquakes and hurricanes didn't put off the youngest Majolica dealers on the block and although Baltimore was in lock down, the collectors who got to the show made the show successful.

Many thanks to all of them.

Warm regards, Nic

**See YOU in Philly,
at Convention 2011!!**

Heritage, Auction Item - Update

By Pam Ferrazzutti

Hi Wanda,

I noticed that the sardine box, featured from a Heritage Auction and on back page the last two Majolica Matters was unattributed but likely English.

It actually was made by the "Victoria Pottery Co." I had one that was marked. It also came in cobalt. The firm's Majolica output was of superb quality. Please see Majolica, by Karmason and Stacke, 1st Edition, p. 126, as well as the mark on p. 214.

Victoria Bergesen's, Majolica, p. 157 and 158, has a reprint of an 1882 Crockery and Glass Journal article about Victoria Potter, Co. It reads "Three new sardine boxes attracted our attention . . . the 'Sardine', with four or five specimens of the finny tribe lying on a bed of rushes . . ."

Warm regards, Pam Ferrazzutti

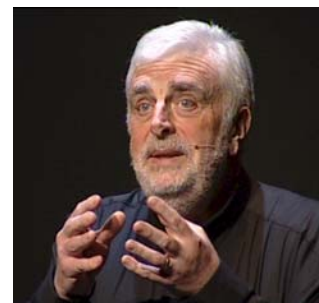


**Sardine Box, Victoria Pottery Co., c. 1882
Lonsdale Street, Stoke-on-Trent**

Bertrand Cocq - 2011 Convention Speaker

By Ed Flower

Bertrand Cocq, a majolica scholar and historian who has contributed to both "Majolica Figures" by Helen Cunningham, and "Pichets en Barbotine" by Maryse Bottero, will speak to us on Friday morning. His presentation is titled "French and Belgian Majolica Figural Jugs - Their Makers and Their Imagery".



Bertrand is a renowned collector and dealer in old postcards and Victorian trading cards. He is also a playwright and performer. He and his wife Edith live in Callone-Ricouart, France.

Please send your comments and material
for the newsletter to:

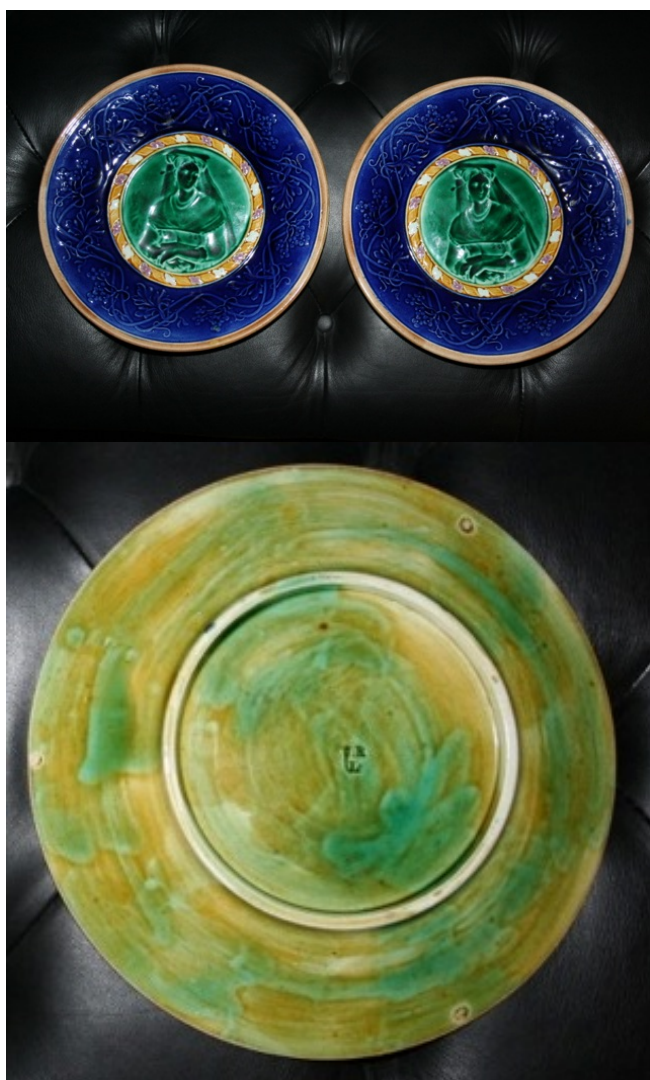
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JL Roth - Marked Items

By Paul Pogue

In response to the MIS Newsletter request to share JL Roth research, I'd like to share photos of a pair of plates I picked up in Toronto close to 20 years ago.

Cheers, Paul



JL Roth, English plates, bottom plate shows marks

Editor's additions

The following are Karmason Library submissions from member's David Tulk and Wanda Matthes



JL Roth, figures 12.75" tall,
Madelena Antiques - Ben & David Tulk



JL Roth, Monkey Wall Plaque
Duane and Wanda Matthes Collection

2011 Convention Schedule

NOTE: The final detail schedule will be in your convention packets.

Arriving on Wednesday will also allow convention-goers to take advantage of some of Philadelphia's best rated dining experiences.

Convention starts Thursday, October 27, 2011

Thursday, 9:45am: The first 50 majolica lovers who register for the 2011 Convention will have a special treat in store. One of Architectural Digest's top 100 interior design teams, **Bennett and Judie Weinstock**, have graciously agreed to host two teas for 25 convention-goers at a time in their apartment on Rittenhouse Square.

Thursday, afternoon 2pm: Many of you will recall the wonderful lecture given at last year's convention in Dallas by **Donna Corbin**, one of the curators of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Donna has graciously offered to coordinate a "behind the scenes" tour of the Philadelphia Museum of Art's collection of American Etruscan majolica, acquired by the PMA in 1876 as part of the Bi-centennial Exhibition. The PMA is also one of the only museums in the world, outside of France, to have acquired the incredibly rare, 43" x 13" Palissy platter, crafted by Achielle Barbizet, which was also displayed as part of the exposition. Admission fees for the entire museum are included as part of the MIS registration fee so, in addition to our "behind the scenes tour," be sure to take advantage of all the exhibitions this renowned museum has to offer during our visit.

Thursday, 5pm: Board Bus to Hotel

Convention-goers will be free to make their own dinner arrangements at one of Philadelphia's many fine restaurants on Thursday evening, but don't stay out too late because the rest of the weekend is packed with majolica-related activities.

Friday, 7:50am: The MIS is hosting a breakfast in Paris! Well, almost... You'll feel as if you've entered a 19th century Parisian bistro when you walk into the Parc Restaurant, located in the same block as our hotel.

Friday, 9:30am: Join us back at the hotel to hear two presentations.

- **Bertrand Cocq:** "French and Belgian Majolica Figural jugs - Their Makers and Their Imagery"
- **David Koble:** "From: It's just a plate.", "To: Now that's a plate!"

Friday, 12:00 Noon: board the bus for Hatfield, PA, to take part in Michael Strawser's world-renowned, eagerly awaited two-day majolica auction. Preview and bid on a vast assortment of majolica which

Michael is corralling in preparation for this special weekend.

Friday 5pm: Board Bus to Hotel

Friday, 7:30 pm: You better bring your party clothes because the doors to an incredible Majolica Heaven Preview Party, complete with cocktails and luscious appetizers, will open only to registered MIS convention-attendees in the ballroom at the Radisson Plaza Warwick Hotel. Majolica lovers will have an expanded two-hour time frame to preview one of a kind pieces presented by the world's most knowledgeable and discriminating dealers (Is it too soon to liquidate my 401K?).

Saturday, 7:00am: The buses leave the hotel to depart for the 2nd day of Michael Strawser's Majolica Auction. We'll have boxed breakfasts waiting to hand out as you board the bus for Part II of this exciting auction in Hatfield, Pennsylvania. There will be staggered bus departures in the afternoon for those who want to get back to the hotel a little earlier to rest up for Saturday evening's festivities.

Saturday, 7:30pm: The MIS Saturday evening festivities start with a wonderful dinner served in the small ballroom at the Radisson Plaza Warwick hotel. To top off the evening, our featured guest speaker will be none other than **Nicholas Dawes**, renowned author and Antiques Roadshow expert, who will enlighten and entertain majolica lovers with an in-depth look at the cultural and historic events that influenced the design and manufacture of Victorian majolica.

Sunday, 9:00am: Breakfast will be served at the hotel and the MIS Annual Business Meeting will commence at 9:30 am. The MIS Board of Directors will unveil many new projects which have been undertaken to benefit the Society and its members during the past eighteen months.

Sunday, 10:30am: MAJOLICA HEAVEN opens its gates to convention-goers! Need I say more? (If I do, you'll have to call me and hope I don't hyperventilate because I get too excited just thinking about it!)

We need you in Philadelphia to make this convention a success and to broaden and secure majolica's appeal to an expanded generation of collectors. Visit the MIS website by going to: **www.majolicasociety.com** and use the links to reserve your spot for this monumental weekend—as soon as you finish reading this!

See YOU in Philly