

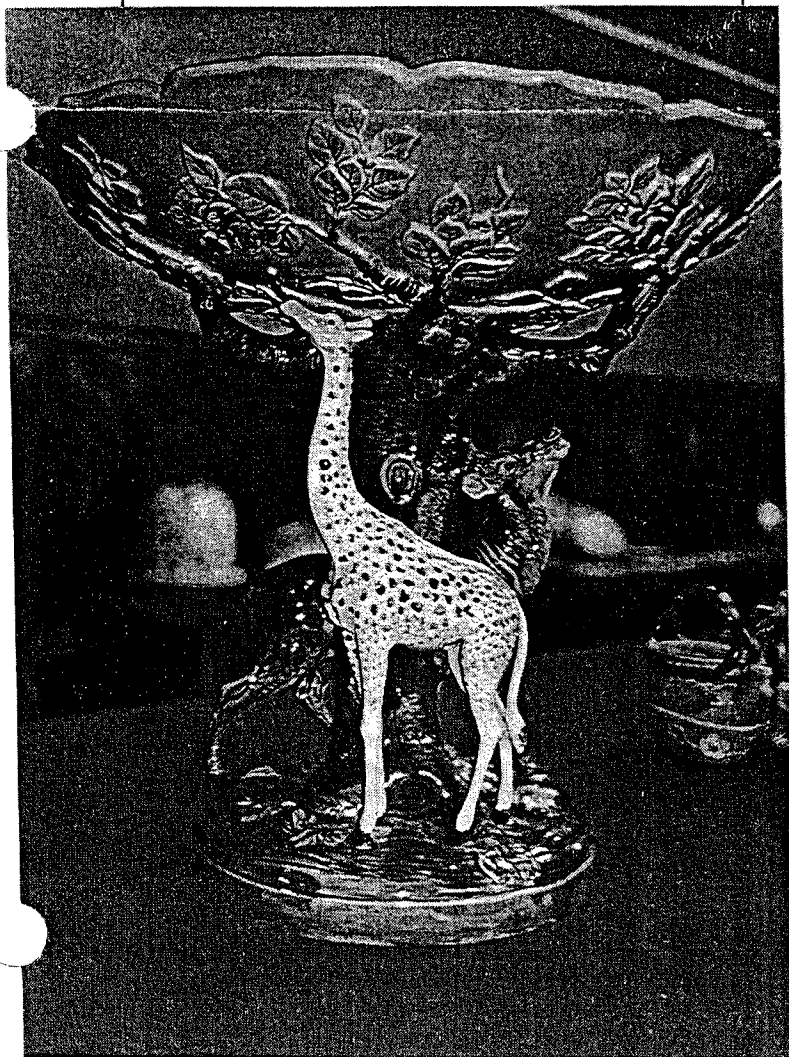
Majolica Matters

The Newsletter of the
Majolica International Society
Fall 1995

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Very rare George Jones compote with giraffe from the Margaret Thorne Parshall auction. See story, Page 7.



(Editor's Note: The following is the second half of a talk on majolica by a granddaughter of Henry Griffen of Griffen, Smith & Hill. Thanks to Joan Stacke, who forwarded us the section on Phoenixville potteries from The Potters and Potteries of Chester County, Pennsylvania by Arthur E. James, we have been able to determine that Miss Pennypacker delivered this talk to the members and guests of the Chester County Historical Society more than 50 years ago on November 17, 1942. Our special thanks to fellow MIS member and Griffen descendant, Esther Griffen Miller Morris of Santa Barbara, Calif., for sharing her copy of this talk with the Society.)

Majolica and Its Makers: Part II

by Frances W. Pennypacker

Now the pottery was ready for glazing. Some pieces were simply dipped into the glaze or "slip" and became either a solid white or a solid color, depending upon the chemical composition of the "slip." "Slip" is a soft clay mixture containing various oxides which, upon heating, assume beautiful rich colors. Pieces which were to be painted in several colors were placed away until the artists were ready for them.

In the Phoenixville pottery most of the decorating of the majolica was done by young girls and women. They applied the glaze with a camel's hair brush. Usually the inside linings of bowls, pitchers, cups, etc. were glazed by pouring in enough glaze to wash the entire surface and then draining out the excess, but, quite often, the inside was glazed by hand as well as the outside. The most frequently encountered lining color is a soft orchid pink which varies in shade in different pieces from a light to a dark pink. I have several pieces in pale green and a daisy compote with a pale gray blue lining. A piece of Phoenixville majolica can frequently be identified by its

orchid pink lining if there are no other identifying marks. After the lining was glazed, the pattern was glazed; and as all the work was done by hand no two pieces are ever exactly duplicated. The applying of the glaze was a delicate operation because no correction could be made. The glaze itself gave no indication of the final coloring because it was without color until after firing. After painting the biscuit, each piece had to be placed carefully upon a tray so that it would not touch any other piece. The slightest roughness in handling would cause the biscuit to chip or break and the whole piece would be discarded. Mrs. Murphy¹ says that the shell and dolphin compotes were particularly difficult and were dreaded by most of the artists. The fragile shell points broke off so easily and often after spending a long time in carefully applying the glaze, a point would break off and the whole effort would have been wasted.

The success of the final color depended not only upon the skill of the artist, but also on the condition of the biscuit. Clay that had been burned and had become too hard would not take the glaze well. A properly fired clay gave the glaze a chance to melt into the body, giving a softer and more brilliant effect. Phoenixville glazes are famous for their brilliance and richness of coloring.

Etruscan majolica was produced in a great variety of shapes and sizes. We find whole dinner services in the shell and seaweed and cauliflower patterns, tea sets, cheese and sardine dishes, compotes, nappies, pitchers, vases and decorative ornaments. Mother remembers an umbrella stand, a hollow tree stump with a boy standing at one side, a bird's nest in the crotch of a branch as nearly as large as the boy². One of my cousins, a daughter of Harry Griffen, has a lovely shell compote

¹ As a girl, Mrs. Garrett Murphy had been a decorator at the pottery.

² See p. 162 of Karmason/Stacke for reference to a James Carr garden seat with "boys bird-nesting in the regular school-boy style."

supported on the entwined tails of three dolphins.³ There is a somewhat similar but less graceful one at Memorial Hall. In this, the three dolphins' tails hold up the shell as it might be held up by three fingers. These shell designs show the influence of Irish Belleek porcelain. I have brought with me this evening a Belleek shell to illustrate the similarity. This influence is also shown in the use of nacreous glazes on these shells. In an article "American Majolica" by Edwin Atlee Barber in the **Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum** for July 1907 are illustrations of two shell and dolphin ornaments which bear out this resemblance to Belleek. [Editor's Note: See next article for more information on Belleek.]

In September I spent an afternoon at Memorial Hall⁴ in Fairmount Park examining the collection of majolica which is at present stored down in the depths of the Museum. The curator, Miss Beatrice Wolfe, lent me a copy of the **Bulletin** which contains Dr. Barber's article, and I have it with me this evening. In it, you can see illustrations of these shell and dolphin designs and several other interesting pieces of majolica. One of these illustrations of a low square cheese dish in water lily design with a lid with a swan handle pleases me because it shows the complete cheese dish of which I have only the square dish without the lid or stand. In my majolica collection, I have a sardine dish of similar shape, but the lid has a handle formed of three fishes. The blue coloring is quite perfect and quite unusual, I think.

I have with me a majolica platter with handle in creamy white which I think is unusually attractive. I have seen the same platter design in color without the ivy handle, and it has never seemed as lovely as this one in white.

³ This piece is now in the collection of MM editor, Polly Wilbert.

⁴ This building was originally constructed for the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibit (1876).

One of my favorite pieces is a fruit dish of green oak leaves and brown acorns. The alligator tea set and the green grape leaves are examples of majolica dipped in glaze not painted.

The largest part of my collection is made up of the shell and seaweed collection. I have plates in three sizes, a cup and saucer, platters, a nappy, a tea pot and cream pitcher and a large pitcher and some butter chips. The latter have little color and are gilded. My cousin, Mrs. William A. Longshore, has a large white china pitcher with blue seaweed and a gilt edging to the shells. This evidently is an experiment in china making, using the majolica molds, and the result is a frightful monstrosity. At Mr. Will Sigman's photography studio in Phoenixville, I have found a picture of some of the more recent products of the pottery, when china was being made, including a baseball pitcher and a small pitcher in the apple blossom design made in the same molds that were used when majolica flourished. He also had a picture of two kilns which I had printed to include in my exhibit.

The marking of Phoenixville majolica is distinctive. Although some pieces have no marking at all, the majority have the monogram of Griffen, Smith and Hill. This GSH monogram is enclosed in a circle bearing the words "Etruscan Majolica." Frequently, the monogram is formed without the surrounding circle and occasionally the word "Etruscan" alone is found. Some majolica has no monogram but bears a mold number, such as a letter "M" or "L", followed by a number 1-4-24, etc. Frequently the number of the artist is also found. Mrs. Garrett Murphy was number 24. She was thrilled to find her number on my shell and seaweed bowl or nappy. She told me that Harry Griffen came to her at one time and asked her to time herself as she painted a dozen of these nappies and to estimate the cost. She reported that it would cost a dollar to paint a dozen bowls. Later, another artist who worked more quickly than she was able to paint a dozen for fifty cents,

but Mrs. Murphy feels that they were not as carefully done.

In the early 1880s there was an exhibit in Chicago to which the pottery sent a display. The most competent artists were set to work to do their best for this exhibit. The results were most gratifying because the Phoenixville Pottery won the gold medal. This resulted in a flood of orders and the pottery for several years worked at top speed. Of this competition, Mrs. Murphy says proudly, "That's when we brought home the bacon!"

With large orders pouring in, the pottery for several years did a flourishing business. An old grist mill and other buildings were purchased for expansion and three more kilns were built. Among these large orders was one from a Canby, Ohio firm for majolica to be given away with their tea. **Hobbies** [Magazine] for March 1939 says, "The Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. caused a boom in the Phoenixville, Pa. plant when in 1880 they placed a large order for majolica to be used as premiums with baking powder." Whether there were actually two companies giving majolica premiums, I don't know, but the result finally seems to have been disastrous, because the market became flooded with majolica. This glutting of the market brought about a decline in the majolica business toward the end of the 1880s. In 1889, Mr. Smith retired from the firm because of failing health. According to several reports, a fire in 1890 destroyed part of the plant, and the making of majolica was discontinued when Mr. Smith left the firm. Mr. Harry Griffen's father-in-law, Mr. James Stuart Love, became a partner with Mr. Griffen and in an effort to avert financial failure, they began to manufacture china and porcelain. A Frenchman, Mr. A. D. Vitan, was engaged to supervise the china making, but Mr. Vitan seems to have been a disrupting influence and soon had the bookkeeping in a chaotic condition. The porcelain making did not prove to be a savior for the company, which failed.

In the course of a little over 10 years, majolica found its way into every part of the country. It seems to have been very popular through the South and Middle West. Last summer, we had a seller from Minneapolis who is a collector. She said she thought there was more majolica to be found there than in the East. She has a theory that our majolica was much influenced by the pottery of Wedgwood. In a letter to me she says, "The fact that Etruria, England was where it was made and that the ware here was called Etruscan made me wonder if the English had any interest financially in our own ware?" There is nothing to indicate, however, that the English potters had any financial connection with the Phoenixville Pottery.

From Mrs. Charles Knox of Phoenixville, I have borrowed two pictures -- one of a group of kilnmen and the other a group of the women employees with Mr. Harry Griffen and Mr. David Smith. I think the group of women and girls is a joy. The quince seed ringlets and the plaited and flounced dresses with overskirts and braiding show that the working girls of the eighties were as interested in style as their much becurled and besweatered granddaughters of today. Most of these girls had names of Irish origin: Dismant, Taney, Coyne, McClinsey, Monchan, Argus, and McCoy. In those days, wages were not as high as they are now, but on piece work the girls sometimes made as much as ten or eleven dollars a week. I have talked with four or five of the women who used to work at the Pottery, and they all seem to look back upon their days there as very pleasant, and the relations between the employees and employers must have been friendly because they all speak with real affection of "Mr. Harry."

I think you all would rather see than hear about majolica. I have asked Mrs. Ellis Stern of Coatesville to bring some of her majolica here. She has examples from some of the other potteries while the large proportion of mine is from Phoenixville. I have a few pieces

unmarked which I am certain are not from Phoenixville, but I don't know their origin. Some of them are very crude in color and body and serve as contrast to the finer texture and more brilliant and rich coloring of the Phoenixville Pottery. One plate with a leaf and butterfly design has a mark, but I cannot identify it. I want particularly to call your attention to my duck. I don't know who made it or where it came from, but it is one of my prized possessions.

Now, I think it is time to look at the collection of majolica. If any of you want to ask questions, I will try to answer them. ♦

The Belleek Connection to Etruscan Majolica:

(The following information comes from The Victorian Collector's Handbook, Charles Platten Woodhouse, FRSA, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1970, pp 85-86)

In her talk of 50 years ago, Frances Pennypacker makes note of the influence on Etruscan majolica of Belleek porcelain. The establishment of the Belleek Pottery in Ireland in 1857 resulted from the discovery of fine feldspar in County Fermanaugh. John Bloomfield, a landowner at Castle Caldwell, sent specimens of feldspar deposits and china clay to England to be analysed after seeing the products of the Staffordshire potters at the Great Exhibition (1851). When it was ascertained that Belleek feldspar was of superior quality to that found anywhere in England, many Staffordshire potters imported vast consignments from the Bloomfield estates. A London architect, Robert William Armstrong, with his partner, D. McBirney, established a pottery at Belleek [Ireland] in 1857. The enterprise was successful from the start. When Brianchon, a Frenchman, invented a pearly glaze, Armstrong and McBirney acquired the patent. The effect of the iridescent lustre on the beautiful white Belleek porcelain was exceedingly attractive and

brought instantaneous success. Nothing like Belleek ware, with its pearly sheen, could be produced in England.

What is most interesting to collectors of Etruscan majolica is that when the original glaze patent expired in 1872 (English patents only lasting for 25 years), Armstrong's sons emigrated to America, where they were employed by W. Lenox at the Trenton Pottery, New Jersey. The Belleek parian produced at the Trenton Pottery was at first of high quality, but deteriorated after 1884 when the firm changed hands. In *Majolica* by Karmason/Stacke, the American Belleek produced in 1882 by another Trenton firm, Ott and Brewer, is also noted. One must ask where were the Armstrong sons then? Were they still at Lenox?)

As Trenton was only 50 or so miles east across the Delaware River from Phoenixville, what might the chances have been that those working at Griffen, Smith & Hill were aware of the Armstrongs' presence and the Belleek-type products being manufactured at the Trenton Pottery and elsewhere or that knowledge of those designs and how they were manufactured came to Griffen, Smith & Hill? The similarity to Belleek of the shell design of the Shell and Seaweed compote might not have come about from simply seeing Belleek ware for sale. ♦

The Auction Scene

by John J. Collins

Another successful event took place in March, when Michael Strawser presented a majolica auction in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Originally billed as containing over 825 pieces in 548 lots, those who attended were rewarded with the surprise addition of 63 lots totaling nearly 100 more pieces. A very excellent assemblage of majolica, let me tell you!

The stars were predictable: the Minton pigeon game pie dish (\$8,800), the Minton 4-tier oyster server (\$3,300), the very rare George Jones water lily centerpiece (\$2,090), the George Jones rooster tea pot (\$3,740) and the Minton chestnut server -- in outstanding condition but missing the spoon -- for \$1,100. Absolutely the most beautiful piece of Etruscan Shell & Seaweed I have ever seen, a piece perfect in every way (colors, glaze, condition, molding, form, mark, etc.) was an 8 1/2" bowl that sold for \$2,200. Conversely, an Etruscan Shell & Seaweed tea pot, in good condition with good color and with some excellent restoration, was sold for the surprisingly low cost of \$220. (All dollar figures in this article include the 10% buyer's premium but do not include sales tax.)

Most prices were reasonable. Ten Etruscan Shell & Seaweed butter pats ranged from \$110 to \$220. An Etruscan lily punch bowl in excellent condition was sold for \$825, and a pair of George Jones dog dishes went for \$660 each. (One had sold for \$920 at the William Doyle auction last year.) The Etruscan maple leaf cake stand with pink background was sold for \$165, and a small 3 3/4" Etruscan hawthorn pitcher for \$330. Etruscan cauliflower plates, 9", in good condition drew new owners for \$275, while the GS&H strawberry and apple plate, with a hairline, was sold for \$110. Several pond lily pitchers were sold for \$39, and a corn pitcher with pink inside glaze sold for \$137. A Holdcroft melon-pattern creamer brought \$66: very reasonable.

Absentee bidders, who constituted fully 40% of the registered bidders, were successful a large percentage of the time. This is an excellent way to participate and to add to one's majolica collection. Even though I attended, I was bidding for three other collectors who could not be there!

I continue to believe that these auctions provide both the collector and the dealer an absolutely superb opportunity to add pieces to

his/her collection at an affordable cost. (Consider that Shell & Seaweed teapot: \$220!!) I also think that, on balance, the auction results show that Victorian majolica has been holding its value. In addition to the inherent quality of each piece, its relative rarity must also be considered. A marked Minton cat dish, which your author has never seen in any book or at any display (and may never see again!) was sold for \$853. The piece is a singular curiosity and no doubt that fact correctly influenced the prospective buyers. And, of course, each auction provides attendees the superb opportunity to see, study, touch and closely examine a large range of majolica. Imagine close to 1,000 pieces in one auction room!

A clearly marked reproduction Wedgwood cauliflower cup and saucer sold for \$88, while the nearby original Wedgwood saucer -- sans cup et avec ding! -- was sold for \$49. Reproduction majolica is certainly out there; it's very prominent, for example, in Tiffany's catalogs. (Interestingly, the Victorian yellow basketweave originals for one of the current Tiffany reproductions were also in this auction.)

I again commend Majolica Auctions for the accuracy of its catalog. The condition of each piece (chips, hairlines, repaired, restored, etc.) is noted. While it is always the buyer's responsibility to ascertain the true condition of the piece, Michael's catalog goes a long way toward ensuring that the adage "truth in advertising" applies. As an example, the catalog clearly identified a Wedgwood caterer jug as "restored." I was interested in the piece, but on close inspection found it very much restored and repainted inside. It sold for \$440. In better condition, I suspect it would have brought a much higher price, but the catalog was accurate.

Upcoming Auctions:

Of interesting and potentially serious note to all MIS members is the coming glut in

auctions. As this newsletter is going to press, the following is the list of upcoming auctions featuring Victorian majolica:

Majolica Auctions, Sunday, October 29, 1995,
Sheraton Valley Forge, Valley Forge, Pa.

Contact: Michael Strawser

Bonhams, Nov. 8, 1995, 11 a.m.

London, England

Contact: Eric Knowles

William Doyle, Weds., Nov. 29, 1995, 4 p.m.

175 Ea. 87th St., New York City

Contact: Nicholas Dawes

Majolica Auctions, March '96, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Majolica Auctions, June '96, Valley Forge, Pa.

Auction House Phone Numbers:

Bonhams, London 011-44-171-393-3942

Majolica Auctions 219-854-2859

William Doyle Gallery 212-427-2730

By my count these five events alone could bring over 5,000 pieces of Victorian majolica onto the market in a short 8-month time span. This number would be in addition to all the majolica already being shown by dealers in their shops and at the regularly scheduled shows, including Majolica Heaven. I cannot help but believe that this is an unprecedented and possibly one-time opportunity for collectors to add real quality and diversity to their collections. It might be years before we again get to see this great profusion of Victorian majolica available for purchase. But I also firmly believe that there will be a major turmoil -- and softening -- in price. I think higher quality Victorian majolica will keep its relative value but that common pieces or pieces with problems may not be sellable at all, given the substantial number of better pieces that will be available to buyers. Keep an eye on the catalogs. This promises to be an exciting year. ♦

Report on the Auction of the Margaret Parshall Collection

by Marilyn G. Karmason

On June 2, the last 290 pieces of the majolica collection of the late Margaret Thorne Parshall were auctioned off at the Pleasant Valley

Auction Hall in Pleasant Valley, New York. From the late 1930s until her death at the age of 83 in 1976, Mrs. Parshall had amassed a collection of some 800 pieces.

The auctioneer, Cal Smith, regaled the crowd with stories of Mrs. Parshall's early life as the daughter of a wealthy banker, living on some 3,000 acres in nearby Millbrook, New York, and later as the antiques dealer/wife of a wealthy horseman in the same town. The auction was enlivened by Smith's announcements of the original prices of the items and the evening's auction price. In the early '40s, a 15-inch compote with a buck and a giraffe at its base by George Jones, which was incorrectly labeled James Carr⁵, had cost \$100, the most expensive piece in Mrs. Parshall's collection. An MIS member/dealer scaled the heights of \$17,000 to capture it at this auction.

A series of Choisey le Roi "bunny plates", \$2 a piece to Mrs. Parshall, ran up to \$140 each at the auction. The George Jones inkwell with two birds covering the wells was written down for \$50 in Mrs. Parshall's ledger, but another Society member/dealer signed a buyer's check for \$4,700. George Jones' strawberry dish, in the ledger at \$40, had the yellow finches chirping away at \$4,300. (All prices plus 10% buyer's premium.)

Mrs. Parshall's personal label, complete with item number, was attached to each piece. Her collection was documented and photographed

Set of bunny plates from the Parshall Auction.
(All Parshall Collection photos by Joan Stacke.)



for China Classics: No. 1 Majolica (Larry Freeman, 1949). The first auction of part of the collection was held in the late '50s in Pleasant Valley; the auctioneer was Bob Smith, father of the present auctioneer. In the late '70s, soon after Mrs. Parshall's death, there was a second auction of her majolica run by O. Rundle Gilbert of Garrison, New York. That event was attended by neophyte majolica collectors Marilyn-and-Joan, and most prices were safely under \$100. Little did we know what was in store for all of us! ⇨

⁵ As there aren't any notations in Mrs. Parshall's ledger for George Jones (GJ), perhaps she had mistaken his mark for that of James Carr.

Mrs. Parshall was a sophisticated woman who spent the winters in Pinehurst, North Carolina in the horse breeding world. Her father, Oakley Thorne, Sr., a contemporary of Averill Harriman, established his financial position in railroads, banking, publishing, and horses. In addition, he introduced Black Angus cattle to the United States. In Mrs. Parshall's day, Millbrook maintained the Victorian social customs of calling cards and afternoon tea -- the last stronghold of Old Society. She established the Millbrook Needlework Guild and, continuing a tradition begun by her parents, was generous to the community. Cal Smith recounts that when she saw that Millbrook needed a new firehouse, she gave them the land and paid for the building. Then, when she saw that it was empty, she told the firemen to buy the needed equipment and send her the bill. When Mrs. Parshall died, the mayor of Millbrook and the trustees of the village asked that all the shops in Millbrook be closed from 2 to 3 p.m. on the Saturday following her death.

We can understand why she enjoyed majolica so much, as we read part of what she had written in her ledger: "If you live in the country, you'll like majolica and think it belongs there -- if you happen to be a city person, you'll like it because it will bring country things to you ..." Mrs. Roeve Parshall Yelverton, her sister-in-law, close friend, and the family historian, reports that Mrs. Parshall loved majolica "because of the chase!" ... and we can all understand that. ♦

Antiques Periodicals

by Marilyn G. Karmason

The Society has assembled the following list of antiques newspapers that sometimes include articles about majolica as well as announcements of forthcoming auctions and sales of majolica. Some of these are published weekly, some monthly. Subscribing to one or

Squirrel jug and its illustration in China Classics: No. 1: Majolica. A featured piece from the Parshall Auction.



more of these publications will enable MIS members to keep up to date on and to attend sales and auctions in their own regions and even to plan trips that include majolica activities away from home.

This list has been developed through the generosity of Society members across the country. We would appreciate it if you would send to us the names and addresses of any additional publications that you recommend. **Majolica Matters** will publish updated information about any additional antiques periodicals, thereby adding to our list of resources. From time to time some of these newspapers may themselves have a "change of address." We would appreciate your assistance in keeping us notified of any changes that you may discover.

Northeast:

Maine Antiques Digest
Post Office Box 645
Waldoboro, ME 04572

Antiques and Arts Weekly (aka "The Newtown Bee")
5 Church Hill Road
Newtown, CT 06470

Brimfield Antiques Guide
c/o Brimfield Video
Brimfield, MA 01010

New England Antiques Journal
4 Church Street
Ware, MA 01082

Mass Bay Antiques
Post Office Box 293
Danvers, MA 01923

The Hudson Valley Antiquer
Post Office Box 651
Rhinebeck, NY 12572

New York Antique Almanac
Post Office Box 335
Lawrence, NY 11559

New York-Pennsylvania Collector
4 South Main Street
Pittsford, NY 14534

Treasure Chest
Unit 211A
253 West 72 Street
New York, NY 10023

Joe Sater Antiques and Auction News
Rt. 230 West
Mt. Joy, PA 17552

Midwest:

Antique Review
Post Office Box 538
Worthington, OH 43085

Antiques & Collecting
1006 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605
Antique Week
Post Office Box 90
Knightstown, IN 46148

Antiques Trader
Post Office Box 1050
Dubuque, IA

South:

The Midatlantic Antiques Magazine
Post Office Box 908
Henderson, NC 27536-0908

Antique Monthly
2100 Powers Ferry Road
Atlanta, GA 30339

Southern Antiques
Post Office Drawer 1107
Decatur, GA 30031-1107

Southern Antiques
Walton Press
Post Office Drawer 1047
Monroe, GA 30655

Antique Press
12403 North Florida Avenue
Tampa, FL 33612

West:

West Coast Peddler
Post Office Box 4134
Whittier, CA 90607

CANADA:

Antique Showcase
Amos Gibbs Publications Ltd.
Post Office Box 260
Bala, Ontario POC 1A0
CANADA

ENGLAND:

Antiques Trade Gazette
17 Whitcomb Street
London WC2H 7PL
ENGLAND ♦

Quote of the Day:

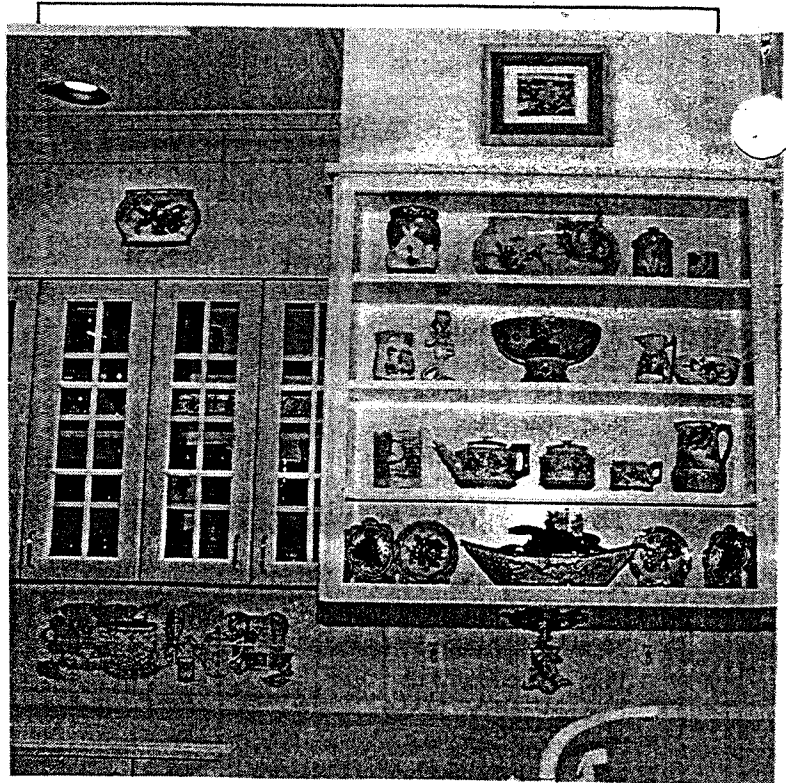
"Not all wonderful people are Antique Collectors
But all Antique Collectors are wonderful people!"

Their wonderful majolica collection displayed in Chip and Kathy Duane's brand new kitchen.



Chip and Kathy Duane's Majolica Kitchen

The Duanes of Chester, New Jersey have been kind enough to share with us these pictures of the kitchen in their new house, where Kathy's majolica collection is featured. Please especially note the wall tiles under the glass fronted cabinets which have been painted with lovely arrangements of majolica by A.R.K. Restoration and Design of New York City. ♦



Dallas, Texas Members

There are now 17 members of the Society living in Dallas. Would one of you be willing to host a regional gathering of this group? The Tulsa, Oklahoma group very much enjoys their informal get togethers, which usually take place on a Sunday afternoon three or four times a year. Perhaps some of you Dallas-area Texans would like to take a leaf out of their book and give it a try. Any volunteers?

If you would be interested in attending such a meeting or in hosting it, please drop us a note or call Polly Wilbert (O: 617-227-0050 or H: 508-745-1017) and we'll see if can't get you off and running! ♦

A Suggested Code of Ethics

by John Collins

The possible adoption of a voluntary code of ethics has been a topic of ongoing discussion

within the MIS and the Standards Committee. Because many of us are in the process of acquiring majolica, either for our collections or for business/sale, it is reasonable for the Society to consider adopting a few ground rules to guide those transactions and to encourage both a "level playing field" and the highest possible commercial standards.

In the Southwest, Mr. E. Edilberto Bustamante, the President and CEO of Bustamante Enterprises, Inc., a major producer of antiques shows and markets, set up a 14-person Ethics Committee which in December 1989 adopted the following rules of ethics for his shows. We are printing these rules for the Society's membership for comment and possible adoption and use for Majolica Heaven and by MIS member dealers worldwide.

Rules of Ethics

Bustamante Shows are characterized by a considerably high level of courtesy and business integrity. Dealers will aspire to a code of excellence so the public is aware of the spirit of professionalism.

1. Exhibitors will issue a dated written receipt to customers for all purchases with the following printed information: dealer's name, address, and telephone number.
2. All items for sale will be clearly marked in dollars and cents. Price list for multiple set items sold singly will suffice.
3. Exhibitors will not appraise or offer an opinion on merchandise in or from another dealer's booth, unless so requested by the seller.
4. Refunds will be made in accordance with the laws of the state where items are sold.
5. It is the responsibility of the dealer to advise in writing on the receipt when an item has been restored, repaired or in any way altered.
6. Each item will be clearly identified on the price tag and on the receipt as to approximate date of origin and place of origin, if known.

7. For security reasons, photographs of booths or merchandise are not permitted without the Exhibitor's and Show Producer's permissions.

8. Any dispute by a customer or between exhibitors arising from a transaction at a Bustamante Enterprises, Inc., show or event which is not satisfactorily resolved shall immediately be brought to the attention of the Show Producer.

Of course, this code would have to be tailored slightly to best serve the Majolica International Society, but that would be a task for the Standards Committee. Member comment on this matter is strongly requested and should be forwarded to the MIS Secretary at the Society's mailing address, please. The Secretary will then forward them to the Standards Committee. Many thanks, in advance, for your input. ♦

Future Annual Meeting Sites Announced

Guided by member comment and mindful of the value in planning ahead, the Board has determined the sites for the next three annual meetings:

April 26-28, 1996	Valley Forge, Penna.
April 1997 (prob. 2nd weekend)	Atlanta, Georgia
April 1998	New York City, NY

The Executive Committee is currently working to firm up arrangements with a hotel in each of those areas and is seeking the best possible rates and services for our meetings. The details of the specific dates and hotels for 1997 and 1998 will be announced as soon as possible.

For 1996, we were unable to secure arrangements near Brimfield, Massachusetts because Brimfield's May dates coincided with many graduations in New England and the hotels were unwilling to offer discounted room rates or their ballrooms were booked. ♦

Whoooo Made The "Mayer" Owl?

by Polly Wilbert

In the Summer 1995 newsletter, Society member Lucy Thompson of Brownsville, Oregon advertised for information on her owl paperweight with the name Mayer in small raised block letters on the back. Vivian Carroll of Marietta, Pennsylvania wrote to say that she also owns one (marked 19) and Phyllis Ann Hays of Tulsa, Oklahoma owns another (no number). Who made these owls? Are they paperweights? Marilyn Karmason and I have had a running discussion for the past two months as we have tried to determine whether the owl was made by the Arsenal Pottery owned by Mayer Brothers of Trenton, New Jersey (1869-1893...) or by the Mayer Pottery Co. of Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania (1881-1985). Using a variety of ceramics references (Barber, Lehner, Bergesen, and Debolt), we have still not been able to determine definitively "whoooo done it." In her book (p. 170), Marilyn has attributed a similar owl tile to the Beaver Falls firm.

Confusion reigns because of the name Mayer at both potteries. The Arsenal Pottery is recorded as having made majolica as early as 1876 for the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia and as late as 1893 when they also exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair, in both instances displaying "finely modelled Toby pitchers." Arsenal did not apparently mark its products.

The Mayer establishment in Pennsylvania, however, has a large number of well documented marks, most of them stamped logos but not molded as with our owls, but there are no references to its having manufactured majolica.

Could the owl have been made by the Arsenal Pottery of Trenton as a souvenir of its display at the Philadelphia or Chicago exhibitions? If so, then why is there no inclusion on the front or back of either the event or its dates?

Perhaps it was simply given out as a memento or as a kind of ceramic business card to act as a reminder of the manufacturer's name? The painted numbers on two of our owls are similar to those used at other majolica manufacturers to identify painters or decorators.

If the piece was from the Beaver Falls company, then why is there no record of their having manufactured majolica? Could this have been a trial piece? If so, then how did our owls get distributed? And, how many of them are out there?

Whoooo can help us solve this majolica mystery? ♦

Majolica Travel Tip: England

by Ronald H. Anderson
Sleepy Hollow, Illinois

We spent our June vacation in England and came upon a wonderful shop with some exciting pieces of majolica in a most interesting display. The shop is called Antiquities and is located at No. 3 Tarrant Street, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 9DG. The owner's name is Ian Fenwick and his phone/fax number is (0903) 884355. Arundel is almost on the English Channel, southwest of London, between Brighton and Portsmouth. It is a charming town in and of itself, filled with nice shops and dominated by Arundel Castle, home of the Duke of Norfolk. I think any Society members headed for England would find it a worthwhile stop on their itinerary. ♦

Shine It Up With Windex!

by Polly Wilbert

Does everyone know that the reason some dealers' majolica shines like no other is that they use Windex to keep it sparkling? Or, am I the only one that this generally known fact slipped by until our annual meeting in Atlanta and I asked, "How come your majolica is so shiny?" ♦

Who Am I?

Formed of sensually curvaceous clay
My technicolor reality speaks as to a lover
"Hold me, caress me, take me home"
Each day, adore me anew.

Stroke my satin glaze
Become energized by my chakra colors
At work each day, know that I wait silently
For your fond gaze.

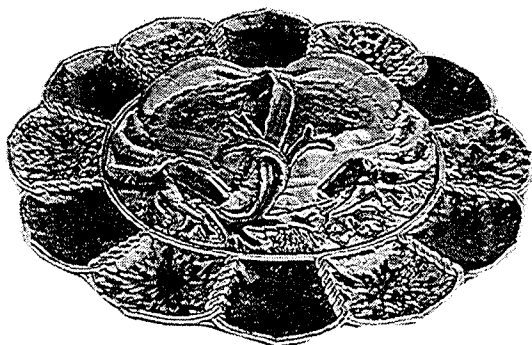
I bring beauty, warmth, pleasure
to your nights and days.

All you need do is
Buy me, take me home with you.

I am yours. I am your
newest majolica treasure.

Marguerite Smith
Warren, Michigan
© 1995

(Editor's Note: Marguerite's note with her poem says that these thoughts came to her on Sunday evening after this year's Majolica Heaven and that, "Majolica inspires!")



MajolicAds

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Submission Deadlines for Material for Majolica Matters

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Majolica Market is a bi-monthly international trade
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and dealers of majolica.

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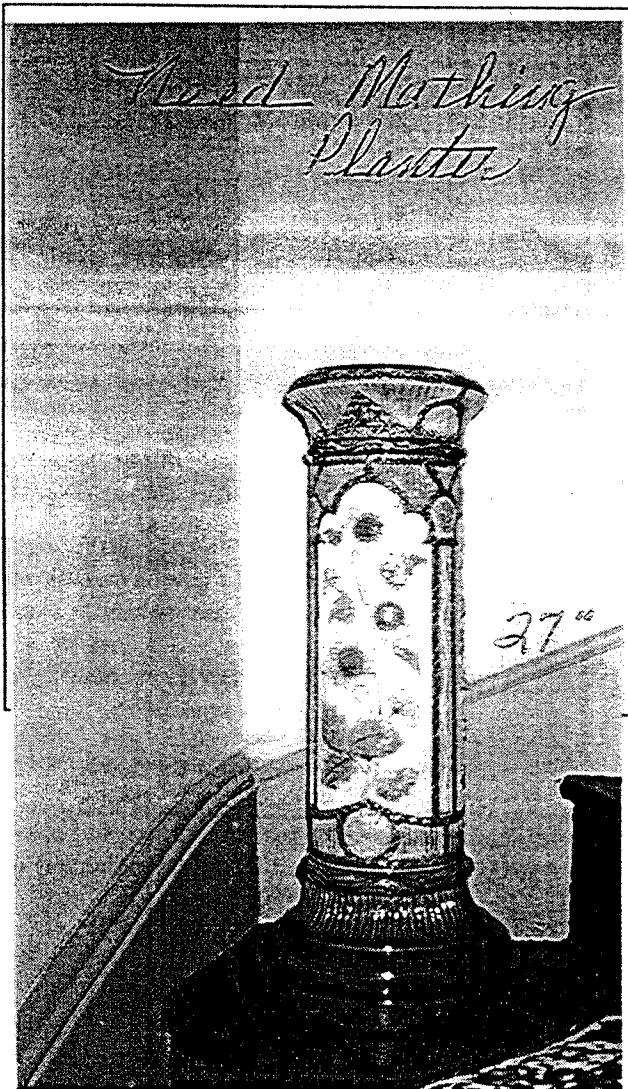
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