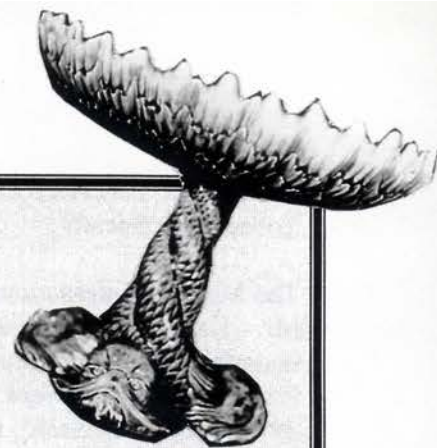


Majolica Matters

The Quarterly News of the
Majolica International Society
Spring 1998



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Important

Annual Meeting Reminders:

Monday, April 13th is the **deadline for making hotel reservations** at the special rate for the Society's 10th anniversary annual meeting in Baltimore. There are a limited number of rooms available at these rates. Please see the registration form attached at the back of this issue for the telephone numbers of the hotels.

The **completed registration form** for the annual meeting must be received with your check at the Society's New York address by **Friday, April 3.**

Dues

Your **1998 dues** (\$35.00/household) must be paid by **May 1st** in order to continue as a member in good standing of the Majolica International Society. This is the cut off date for members to be listed in the Society's 1998 membership directory and to continue to receive newsletters.

10th Anniversary Annual Meeting: Our Speakers and Programs

Our Friday night May 1st program *Majolica Cake 'n Coffee*, which begins at 8:00 p.m. at the Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor, features presentations by two leading experts in the fields of ceramics and interior design.

In his talk on Palissy ware manufactured in Portugal, ceramics authority and Pittsburgh native Marshall Katz will include a number of slides that will be featured in his forthcoming book on the subject. Most of these ceramic pieces have never been seen outside Portugal. His talk will cover the actual chronology of the major Portuguese Palissyists and will identify makers who are virtually unknown beyond the Iberian peninsula. Mr. Katz's book, *Portuguese Palissy Ware: A Survey of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Ceramists from Caldas da Rainha, 1853-1920*, will be published in spring 1999.

Mr. Katz is a graduate of Cornell University and served in the U.S. Coast Guard in the early '60s. In 1965, he was an officer of Papercraft Corporation in Belgium, and ultimately served as that company's Chairman, CEO, and President from 1978-1988. He is presently chairman of Cavendish Holdings. Mr. Katz serves on a number of boards of cultural and arts institutions in Pittsburgh, including: the Andy Warhol Museum, the Carnegie Institute, the Carnegie Museum of Art, the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh; the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, the Pittsburgh Opera, and the Pittsburgh Symphony. He is a member of the Majolica International

Society, the American Ceramics Circle, and the Tobacco Jar Society.

The Majolica International Society is grateful to Mr. Katz for the valuable work he has undertaken in researching French and Portuguese Palissy ware. His earlier books are: *19th-Century French Followers of Palissy*, written with Robert Lehr and published in 1994 and *Palissy Ware: Nineteenth-Century French Ceramists from Avisseau to Renoleau*, published in 1996. Mr. Katz was the author of the cover article on Portuguese Palissy ware featured in *The Magazine Antiques* in August 1997.

On Friday evening, we will also be delighted to have New York interior decorator Susan Zises Green as a presenter. Mrs. Green has had her own decorating business for the past 28 years. Her work has been seen in a number of decorating and design magazines including *House and Garden*, *House Beautiful*, *Town and Country*, *The New York Times*, *Cosmopolitan* and an upcoming issue of *Architectural Digest*. Mrs. Green graduated from Harcum College in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania and attended the New York School of Interior Design. She has participated in six of the esteemed Kips Bay Decorator Showhouses in New York and is a member of the American Society of Interior Designers.

As we have seen in photographs in *Majolica Matters* and in slide shows at our annual meetings over the years, the Society's members put a great deal of effort and expense into displaying their majolica collections. In Mrs. Green's presentation, we will see how the design experts do it.

Following dinner on Saturday night, we will be privileged to hear Nicolaus Boston speak on "Artists, Sculptors, and Designers: The Creators of Victorian Majolica". A second generation antiques dealer specializing in 19th-century high Victorian design, Mr. Boston began collecting majolica at the age of 16. By the age of 19, he had amassed a majolica collection of several hundred pieces. Upon graduating from Salisbury College of Art in 1979, Mr. Boston

joined the family antiques business with his specialty already firmly established. By the time he turned 21, he had opened a shop specializing in majolica in London's Kings Road, where he traded until 1992. Since 1992, he has been at his present address in London's premier area for antique ceramics, Kensington Church St. This year, he has also taken over his father's antiques business in the family's home town of Salisbury in Wiltshire.

Through his passion and academic interest in majolica, Mr. Boston has become a leading expert on several other Victorian ceramics and Victorian designers. He has organized many exhibitions of Victorian ceramics and has lectured extensively on his subject in Europe and America.

London Majolica Dealer Nicolaus Boston will be the featured speaker following dinner at the Annual Meeting in Baltimore.



Additional Activities in Baltimore

Antiques Show at the Baltimore Museum of Art

The Sixteenth Annual Baltimore Museum Antiques Show opens on Saturday, May 2. The show is one of America's only antiques shows housed in an art museum. It features 35 antiques dealers from across the country who offer fine antiques including furniture, porcelain, glass, silver, textiles, books, prints, and more. The show is a major fund raiser for the Baltimore Museum of Art and is assembled by a team of volunteers under the auspices of the BMA's Friends of the American Wing and the Women's Committee. Proceeds support the Museum's decorative arts accessions and general operations. Admission is \$10 (\$8 in advance) and the show is open on Saturday, May 2, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Sunday, May 3, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The BMA Show will also feature a Silent Auction with a wide range of affordable objects available for bids. Bidding opens during regular Museum hours on Wednesday, April 29th, and closes at 2 p.m. on Sunday, May 3. There is a \$5 bidding fee.

A special lecture at The BMA Antiques Show will be given at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 2. James A. Abbott and Elaine Rice-Bachmann will discuss their recent book, *Designing Camelot: The Kennedy White House Restoration*. Mr. Abbott, BMA Curator of Decorative Arts, is an expert on the Kennedy restoration of the White House and Ms. Rice-Bachmann is an independent consultant on American fine and decorative arts and is the coordinator of The Delaware Antiques Show. The lecture-only costs \$20 or \$50, which includes Show admission, and a catalogue.

Show tickets can be purchased at the BMA Box Office (Ph: 410-235-0100). Further information about the BMA Show can be gotten by calling the BMA Program Office at 410-396-6314.

The Baltimore Art Museum is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, 3 miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

Invitation to Tobacco Jar Collectors

Baltimore resident and editor of the *Tobacco Jar Quarterly*, Joe Horowitz, has extended an invitation to members of the Majolica International Society who will be attending the Society's annual meeting in Baltimore to view his collection of tobacco jars, which includes 100 examples in majolica.

Mr. Horowitz's home is about 25 minutes from the Inner Harbor area of Baltimore and he would be delighted to welcome members on either Friday or Saturday afternoon. For anyone who would like to visit the Horowitz collection on Friday afternoon, we ask that you contact Mr. Horowitz directly to make arrangements (Ph: 410-358-1323 or E-Mail: jfigtobjar@AOL.com). If you would like to see his collection on Saturday, at a break in our Friday evening program, we will try to organize arrangements for a group to go on Saturday afternoon. We very much appreciate Mr. Horowitz's kind invitation to us and his offer to be a resource in regard to anything relating to tobacco jars. He will also make information about the Society of Tobacco Jar Collectors available to anyone who is interested during our Baltimore meeting.

Baltimore Orioles Home Stand

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May 1-3, the Baltimore Orioles will be at home at Baltimore's Camden Yards in a stand against the Minnesota Twins. Friday's game starts at 7:05 p.m. and Saturday's and Sunday's begin at 1:35 p.m. If you want to mix your majolica with America's favorite pastime (or maybe your spouse does), you can contact the Orioles' main ticket office (Ph: 410-685-9800) or Ticketmaster (Ph: 410-481-SEAT) for ticket availability.

Parting Words

by Polly Wilbert

As I finish this, my last issue of *Majolica Matters*, I'm moved to look back at what I've learned during my six years as the Society's newsletter editor. To steal a page out of Robert Fulghum's book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, here are some of the things I've needed to know about majolica:

1. To prevent mishaps, open a package of newly purchased majolica over something soft -- like a bed.
2. Make sure that you've really checked all those balls of tissue paper and have thoroughly emptied the packing box.
3. Never wash majolica in hot water.
4. Never display majolica on top of your refrigerator -- because every time you close the door, your majolica will take a tiny hop closer to oblivion. (Wished I known about Quake Wax then.)
5. No matter how many times you run Spell Check and proofread newsletter copy, there will always be at least one typo still lurking in the text.
6. Windex makes majolica gleam!
7. After you've gotten your bearings as a majolica collector, just trust your gut and buy when your inner self says to. If you delay, the piece will be gone!
8. And lastly, remember, in the end, they're really only dishes.

Four issues a year for six years . . . Sometimes it was all I could do to sit down at the computer to put the next issue together. Other times, an issue would simply write itself -- particularly when many of you were so wonderful about sending in articles, thought pieces, photos, and information.

Beyond all of that, I feel strongly that change is good for an organization like ours -- mind you, it's not without its occasional pitfalls -- but new perspectives and new initiatives brought to bear by new people hold tremendous potential

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value for us. I heartily recommend that you make this organization better by rolling up your sleeves and pitching in on a Society assignment.

Ultimately, for me, meeting all of you -- whether in person or by correspondence -- has been the best part of my stint as the Society's scribe. Thank you so much for your generous spirit and for all of your support. I know that you will continue to give Anne Mock, who becomes our editor with the 1998 Summer issue, the same kind of assistance for the issues ahead. And, fear not, I'm sure I'll send in an article every now and again, so you really haven't seen the last of my by-line. Peace.

Victorian Majolica Still Sizzlin' Hot at Auction: World Record Set at Christie's Sale in London

In October 1993 at its Minton Bicentenary Sale, Bonhams in London sold a Prometheus vase for £60,000 (setting the world record auction price at that time for majolica). In 1992 at Sotheby's in London, an 1877 Minton game pie dish with two hares and two mallards with the hares' ears joined to make a handle, (illustrated on p. 48 of *Majolica* by Karmason and Stacke) fetched \$84,500. In March 1997, Sotheby's New York offered a monumental 3-foot long, 2-foot high Minton wine cistern dated 1873 at its first auction devoted solely to English Victorian majolica. The cistern brought \$50,600.

This year, at the beginning of March in London at Christie's King St., a Minton & Co. monumental majolica peacock was sold for £85,000 (plus 10% buyer's premium), which at current exchange rates works out to about \$153,000 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (The buyer wished to remain anonymous.) (Sorry, the photo of this peacock promised by Christie's London did not arrive in time for us to print it. For illustration, see *Majolica* by Karmason and Stacke, p. 57.)

This established a new world record auction price for Victorian majolica. As detailed in *Majolica* by Karmason and Stacke (p. 52), the peacock is one of about a dozen examples

known to exist and was modeled by French sculptor Paul Comolera for Minton & Co in the 1870s. (It was also made in a smaller version that was just 11 inches high.) This monumental piece sold at Christie's King St. showroom was a featured item in their 19th-Century Sale, which offered furniture and sculpture, and was the only piece of majolica offered.

For those of you who may be feeling that majolica fever has become the modern equivalent of 17th-century Dutch tulipmania, it doesn't seem that we've yet reached the end of majolica's ride into the heights. Don't we all wish, though, that Grandma had left us a peacock or two among the old family photos and other whatnots?

Sotheby's New York April Sale **Features Monumental Majolica**

by Nick Dawes

Sotheby's New York sale of 19th-century furniture and works of art on April 29th will include over 40 pieces of majolica and Palissy ware. Three monumental works by Minton & Co. to be offered include: a Prometheus vase painted by Thomas Kirkby, which is extremely similar to the one sold at Bonhams in London in 1993 for a then world record auction price for majolica; a monumental and early wine cistern or jardiniere modeled by Marochetti ca. 1850; and an extraordinary pair of jardineres on figural pedestals modeled by Albert Carrier for the London Exhibition of 1862. This magnificent pair of vases, which have been in a private European collection since the 19th century, are a superb example of Minton's exhibition pieces.

Good pieces by Minton, Wedgwood, and George Jones will also be offered, notably a selection of figural ware and a full-scale bee hive cheese stand.

Minton Prometheus Vase Painted by Thomas Kirkby, 1872, to be Offered at April 29th Sale at Sotheby's New York. Photo Courtesy of Sotheby's.



Continental majolica will feature a Hugo Lonitz heron floor vase in the Minton style and several Palissy dishes, notably a superb and large example signed by Joseph Landais and dated 1850.

To order a catalog (No. 7122) for the April 29th sale, please call Sotheby's Subscription Office at 800-444-3709. For further information on the items being offered, please call Nick Dawes at 212-606-7226.

Skinner's December Auction Brings **Strong Wedgwood Majolica Bids**

Remember the Rubens garden seat that was shown on the last page of the fall issue of MM? On December 13th at Skinner's auction rooms in Boston's Back Bay, it brought \$5,750 (prices

includes buyer's premium). Two Minton majolica figural vases from 1873 and 1874 modeled and decorated with a fox applied to the side of a tree-form vase with fruiting grape vines, a black bird perched near the top, height 9 inches went for \$4,600.00. A Wedgwood caterer jug, ca. 1870, with raised jewels and banded motto, impressed factory mark and incised monogram FBR for the designer, Frederick Bret Russel, (rim restored), height 9 1/4 in. went for \$345 despite an estimate of \$500-700.

Annual Meeting Travel Tips

If you are flying in to the Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Airport, you have a number of options for reaching downtown Baltimore and our hotels. Since last fall, a light-rail train system has been operating from the new International Terminal at BWI with trains running every 15 minutes into central Baltimore. The Camden Yards stop on this line is just 2 1/2 blocks from our hotel. If you've got a schlepper for your luggage, good wheels on your bags, or amazingly, you're the one who packs light, try the MTA light-rail system. The fare is \$1.35 in exact change. All-day MTA passes are \$3.00 and can be used for one day's unlimited travel on light rail, train, bus or/and subway. These can be purchased at any light-rail or subway station.

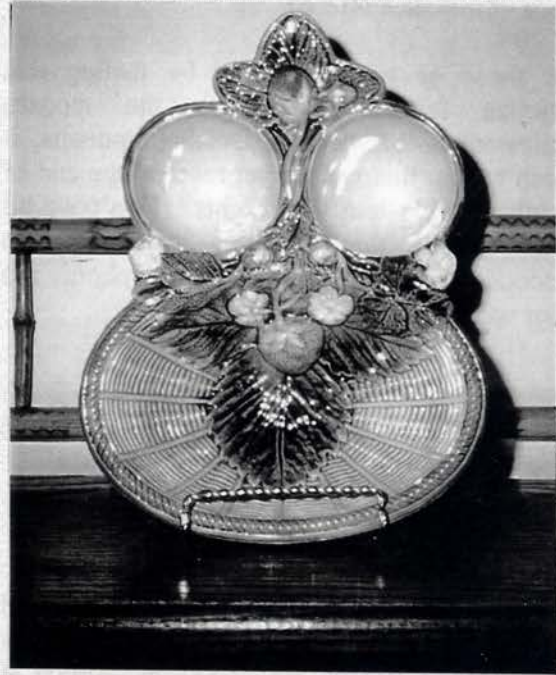
Super Shuttle Van service is located near baggage claim and offers service to the Inner Harbor hotels every 30 minutes. One-way tickets cost \$10.00, round trips, \$15.

Taxis are located near baggage claim. The fare to downtown should be about \$20. (It is about a 15 minute drive (longer in rush hour). For more information about all forms of transit to and from the airport, you can call 800-435-9294.

MajolicAds

Desperately Seeking

Creamer and sugar for strawberry server measuring 8 1/2" x 6 1/2". (See photo). Creamer and sugar would be 2 1/2" diameter. Please call: 610-664-6527.



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We are proud to support the work of Heritage Industries, Inc., Peabody, Mass., a non-profit sheltered workshop for developmentally challenged adults, whose mailing service the Society uses to send out **Majolica Matters**.

Two-Day Majolica Auctions

1500+ Pieces from the
Estate of Mrs. Ellis (Anna) E. Stern

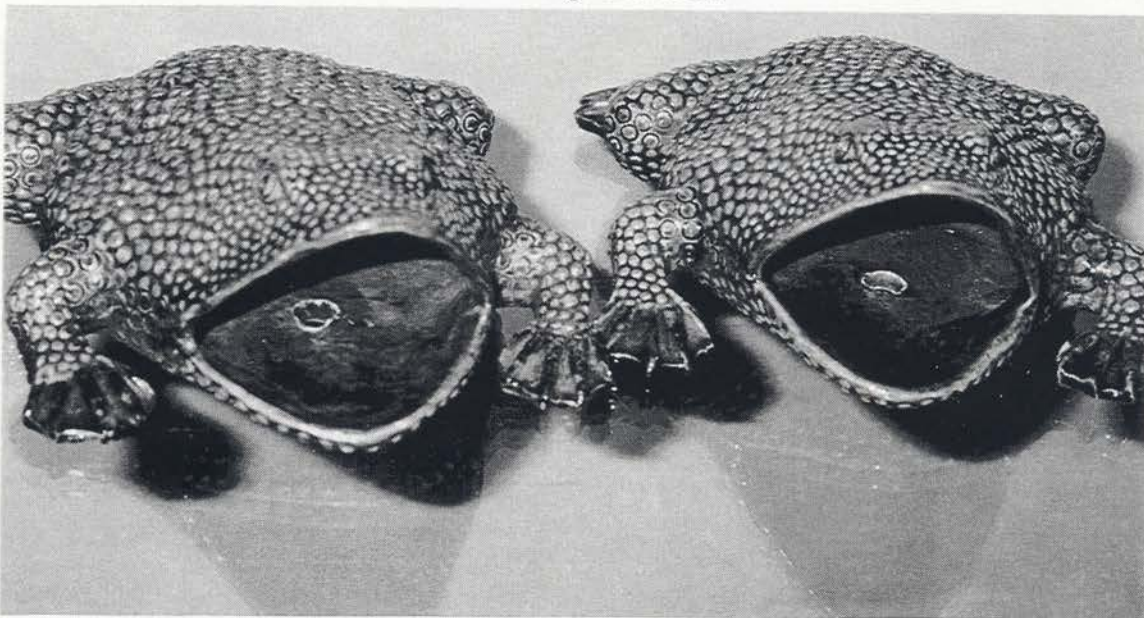
Friday and Saturday, April 3 and 4, 1998
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

1400 Pieces from the
Estate of Mrs. Ellis (Anna) E. Stern

Friday and Saturday,
October 23 and 24, 1998
Hatfield, Pennsylvania
At the Alderfer Auction Center

For more information about these auctions,
call Michael Strawser of Majolica Auctions,
Ph: 219-854-2859

*"Those American beer people think they had something original in their ad campaign . . .
Heck, we were the spokes frogs for Portuguese majolica a hundred years ago.
We were huge back then!"*



19th-century Portuguese Frog Wall Pockets seen at Miami Antiques Show, January 1998,
in the booth of Charles Washburne.