

# Majolica Matters!

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE MAJOLICA INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

WINTER 2001

## MIS ANNUAL MEETING – *Philip English*

The 13th Annual MIS Meeting will occur in Dallas, Texas the weekend of May 4th-6th. All of our meetings will be in the Dallas Marriott Quorum just north of LBJ Freeway at the Tollway. The Dallas-Fort Worth area offers many fine museums such as the Kimbell and Amon Carter in Fort Worth and the Dallas Museum of Art. As Jim Trout and others have reported majolica can be found in dozens of antiques shops located primarily in Dallas. Food and entertainment are diverse and the quality excellent. If you are adventuresome you maybe pulled to Fort Worth and Billy Bob's at the Stockyards. Be sure to bring your cowboy boots.



Our meeting opens at 7:30 p.m. on Friday May 4th with Cake and Coffee to listen and meet the authors who have made our collecting of majolica such an adventure. We will hear from Helen Cunningham, Nic Dawes, Joan Graham, Marilyn Karmason, and Marshall Katz. Rumors abound that Robert Cluett, who is working on a new book on Brownfield may also attend. So bring your autograph pens and lots of questions to see if we can stump the pros.

Saturday begins with Breakfast and Barter and Buy at 8:30 a.m. followed by Collections and Collecting. Jim Trout and Jerry Leberfeld are to present slides of their collections giving all of us insights into their fascination with majolica. You may at 1:00 p.m. wish to join Duane and Wanda Matthes for a tour of antiques stores and high-

lights of Dallas. Saturday evening after a social gathering and a southwestern meal all beginning at 6:00 p.m., we will a top the evening with talk from John Keefe the Curator of Decorative Arts from the New Orleans Museum of Art.

Our business meeting begins at 9:30 right after a continental breakfast. Majolica Heaven will open at 10:30 a.m. with dealers from across the United States. Special thanks should go to Duane and Wanda Matthes, Jim Trout and Hedi Hollomon for their assistance in this very special event. We look forward to stimulating your imagination and renewing old and new friendships.

## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Joan Stacke Graham*

When Moe Wizenberg asked me to write A Letter from the President for Majolica Matters, I thought about what I might say that was either new or newsworthy. I realized that what I wanted to say is how grateful I am for the commitment of all of the people who have worked so hard to make this organization into what is has evolved into. Moe has taked over the editorship of Majolica Matters, Phil English, our VP in charge of our annual meeting has been doing an extraordinary job as did Jerry Leberfeld our former President. Cheryl Smith, Treasurer and Membership Chairperson and Marilyn Karmason our Secretary have together kept our communications compete and up to date. Jim Trout and Polly Wilbert our Regional Chairpeople complete the picture keeping us all together. Duane Matthes, our Web Master has taken us into the 21st Century, and we are forever grateful to Michael Strawser, our founder.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Moe Wizenberg, Editor  
Helen Cunningham, Associate Editor  
Debra English, Associate Editor

# VIENNESE MAJOLICA ARCHITECTURE

*Valerie A. DiSpaltro*



On a recent trip to the lovely city of Vienna, while walking through the colorful fresh food market, NASCHMART, my husband and I discovered the magnificent MAJOLIKAHAUS at 40 Linke Wienzeile. It is an extraordinary apartment building designed by the famous architect Otto Wagner, and constructed in 1898-99. The beautiful facade is completely covered with majolica tiles which form a weaving swirling elaborate floral motif in shades of green and rose. It appears to represent a giant spreading rose tree.

The balconies are cornered with huge green leaves.

I hope that any of our members who visit Vienna can see this exquisite building and enjoy it as much as we did.



## OBITUARY

Sharon M. Jones of Tulsa Oklahoma died unexpectedly on December 16th, 2000. She was a long time member of the Majolica Society International and an early member of and major contributor to the activities of the Tulsa Majolica Society.

Ian Smythe of London England died suddenly on January 19th, 2001 after heart surgery. Ian and his wife Rita were the owners of Brittonia, Grays Market and Ian was major force in creating a strong interest in fine majolica before most of us even heard of it. They were among the founders of the Majolica Society International, and neither our meetings nor trips to London will be the same without him beside Rita.

## UPCOMING SALES

**FEBRUARY 18, 2001 IN DES MOINES, IOWA**  
Daugherty Auction Services of Adel, Iowa will hold an important majolica auction on Sunday February 18th starting at 11 AM at the University Park Holiday Inn, 1800 50th Street in West Des Moines. There are approximately 100 pieces of English and American Majolica from one Des Moines Collection. For more information and color photos go to [www.daughertyauction.com](http://www.daughertyauction.com) or contact them at [dauction@hotmail.com](mailto:dauction@hotmail.com) or 515-993-4159.

### MICHAEL STRAWSER SPRING MAJOLICA AUCTION

March 30 & 31, 2001, Fort Wayne Indiana  
Michael and Majolica Auctions will hold their spring sale March 30 & 31 in Fort Wayne. About 1200 Pieces including items by Minton, George Jones, Etruscan and other major makers will be offered. The catalog will be mailed about mid February and as usual will be richly illustrated in color with descriptions and will contain lodging and other information. Further information is available at Michael's website [majolicaauctions.com](http://majolicaauctions.com)

### MAJOLICA & CERAMIC TOUR

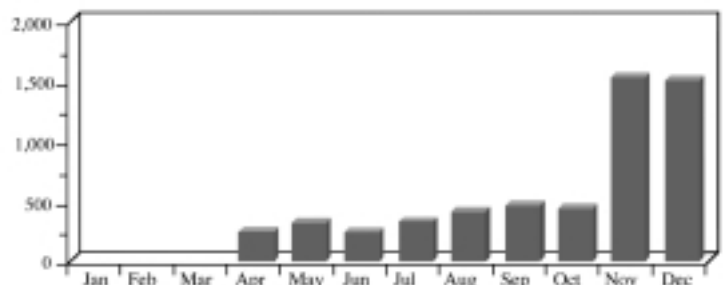
England, May 18-27, 2001  
Randi Schwartz a majolica expert, owner of "The Raven and the Dove" in the Chicago area and an old MIS friend and dealer will host a tour to England,

visiting museums, potteries and markets in London, Stoke-On-Trent, Oxford and the Cotswolds May 18-27. In addition to deluxe accommodations the trip will offer an opportunity to visit private collections and facilities not open to the public, including the Blue Room at Spode. Joan Jones will conduct a tour of Royal Doulton and give an after dinner talk. For more information contact Roundabout Europe at [www.roundabouteurope.com](http://www.roundabouteurope.com) or at 888-849-4222. Sounds like a great sequel to the Annual Meeting - make May your Majolica Month!

## MIS WEBSITE NEWS

*Duane Matthes, Webmaster*

MIS emerged on the world wide web in April 2000, by announcing and demonstrating [www.majolicasociety.com](http://www.majolicasociety.com) to the members attending the 2000 annual convention. Then the summer edition of Majolica Matters gave a popularity boost when it was published to the entire MIS membership. Subsequently the factors of growth in our MIS web site content, registration with search engines, placement of reciprocal links, enrollment in online directories, and offline marketing (word of mouth) have resulted in the fantastic increase in popularity. Web page views is one measure of popularity of a web site. The MIS web site has grown from a few hundred page views a month to a December volume of over 1,500. You might think of that as the MIS web site facilitating 1,500 people, each month, to read one page about majolica. The internet team can't wait to see the impact this increased exposure has in helping MIS grow and assist in their objectives of: bringing diverse members together to share their collecting experiences and encourage the highest level of interest about this fantastic Victorian ceramic! If you have input on the MIS web site please contact Duane Matthes at [duane@emajolica.com](mailto:duane@emajolica.com).



# CERAMICS WEEKEND IN NEW YORK

*Deborah English*

The weekend of January 19th –24th was a big one for those majolica fans who could manage to get to New York. It opened with the Ceramics Fair at the American Academy of Design where Nic and Martine Boston showed their absolutely gorgeous booth. Down the way a little at "the Other Armory" on 26th Street, another antiques show was happening whose exhibitors included the Aranosians' as always fabulous Cara Antiques.

As you may know, Sotheby's was to hold an auction of the Harriman Judd Collection on Monday. Messrs. Harriman and Judd were able to amass an incredible assemblage of late Victorian ceramics and they showed wit and creativity with their selections. Majolica was only a small part of the whole; clearly they seemed more interested in other art forms, especially the works of Doulton Lambeth, Moorcroft and the really strange and witty Martin Brothers. Majolica's lack of numbers in the sale however (30 lots) was more than compensated for by the extravagance of its offering. It's not often one gets to see a Minton Double Bunny Game Pie Dish take back seat to a Life-size Minton Blackamoor. (On Sunday, a man standing next to the Blackamoor was overheard saying, "I'm going to have to rethink this Majolica stuff." I hope he doesn't; there's quite enough competition in the salesrooms already.

In anticipation of the sale, Sotheby's offered lectures on British Pottery, followed on Saturday night by cocktails and canapés. The auction was well attended, thanks to good marketing. MIS members and their friends included: Joan Graham, Marilyn Karmason, Jerry and Aviva Leberfeld, Moe Wizenberg, Jim Trout, Linda Horn, Heidi Holloman, Ed and Marilyn Flowers and Phil and Deborah English. The Bostons and the Aranosians were there, of course, as were Nick Dawes, Peter Rose, Richard Denis and Paul Atterbury. It was wonderful seeing all those authors and getting a chance to speak with some of them.

One of the common points of discussion was the condition of the majolica pieces. Some had been badly damaged and heavily restored. Of those, some needed more work. Nearly everything had more than the typical chips and dings. The collectors had lived in California and so, some of our group speculated about an earthquake. We'll never know what happened but it seems a plausible explanation. Each piece had been a

fine example when it left the factory.

## Lots and Bid Prices

(Exclusive of buyers premium):

1. Minton Lycee Nut Tea Pot, \$11,000.
2. Mintons Monkey teapot, \$4 250.
3. Brownfield Chinaman Tea Pot \$4500.
4. Minton Rooster & Monkey Tea Pot, \$6500.
5. Mintons Blowfish Tea Pot \$30,000.
6. Mintons Double Bunny Game Pie Dish, \$40,000.
7. Minton Monumental Tri-Pod Jardiniere, \$32,500.
8. George Jones Boars' Head Game Pie Dish, \$ 5500.
9. Minton Dove Tureen, \$10,000.
10. Minton Hare Game Pie Dish (w. liner), \$1500.
11. Wedgwood Cow Finial Cheese Dome & Stand, \$8500.
12. George Jones "Empty Nest" Game Pie Dish, \$11,00.
13. Minton Life Size Blackamoor, \$100,000.
14. Wedgwood Salmon Platter (cobalt), \$ 4000.
15. Mintons Cat Pitcher, \$10,000.
16. Minton Frog Bon-bon Dish \$2750.
17. Doulton Lambeth Candlesticks, \$1500.
18. George Jones Triton/Mermaid Jardiniere, \$4250.
19. George Jones Turquoise Bird/Dragonflies Garden Seat, \$6000.
20. George Jones Cobalt Bird/Dragonflies Garden Seat, \$9000.
21. Wedgwood Box and Cover, \$1,300.
22. Minton Monkey/Pineapple Writing Stand, \$\$8500.
23. George Jones Bird/Nest Writing Stand & covers, \$6000.
24. George Jones (cobalt) Bird/Dragonflies Jardiniere, \$2250.
25. Minton Foxglove Jardiniere & Underplate. 16 3/4" \$6500.
26. Minton Scallop Shell Ewer, \$ 9000.
27. Minton Heron & Pike Ewer, \$8000.
28. Wedgwood Naiad Table Centerpiece, \$6000.
29. Minton Green Strapwork Jardiniere, \$1700.
30. Minton tri-lobed Bon-bon Dish, figure of Industry, \$2750.

Buyer's Premium was 20% of the first \$15,000 (per item), 15% on the next 85,000 and 10% on any excess over \$100,000. (What a deal.)

Obviously, a four inch snowstorm didn't dampen any ones' enthusiasm.



## *Marilyn G. Karmason has done it again.*

Marilyn has contributed a two part Victorian majolica article at the Collectorcafe.com web site. It was published back in kDecember 2000 and included references to Majolica International Society (MIS) a nice advertising banner for MIS, and a hyperlink to the MIS web site. The article can be found at [www.collectorcafe.com/article\\_archive.asp?article=580&id=2121](http://www.collectorcafe.com/article_archive.asp?article=580&id=2121) and part two of the article is at [www.collectorcafe.com/article\\_archive.asp?article=580&id=2120](http://www.collectorcafe.com/article_archive.asp?article=580&id=2120)

Another interesting article by Jonna M. Gallo at Collectorcafe can be found at [www.collectorcafe.com/article\\_archive.asp?article=580&id=2172](http://www.collectorcafe.com/article_archive.asp?article=580&id=2172)

## ***A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR***

My deepest thanks to those of you who have contributed the material in this issue as well as material which I have in file for future issues. For the first time we are beginning to build up a small back log of material for the newsletter. We also have been promised a number of articles by new authors and the next issue should contain part two of the Paxton story by Barbara McIntyre. I am gradually getting the hang of putting this thing together and hope to continuing the newsletter. Your suggestions and comments are more than welcome.

In regard to the annual meeting the time has come. The moment of decision is upon us. Unlike the voters in Florida we can make a clear and unmistakable choice! If you fill out the meeting registration enclosed with this newsletter and send your check we will, I promise, recognize your intention of coming to the 20-01 Annual Meeting in Dallas. The meeting scheduled for May 4th to 6th in Dallas promises to be fantastic. The program outlined in your registration form looks like our best yet and how can you beat a \$99 per night rate at the Dallas Marriott Quorum. Dallas is a hub for several airlines so cheap airfares are a real probability leaving us with more \$\$\$ to spend at Majolica Heaven

There are a large number of antique shops in the Dallas metropolitan area, both in shopping centers like Snyder Plaza as well as some excellent Antique Malls where both majolica and non-majolica temptations abound. Lovers Lane Antique Mall has been open since 1992 and has been rated by D Magazine and People Newspapers as the Best Antique Market in Dallas. There are 40dealers who regularly travel abroad to bring back the best of majolica, sterling, Imari, Staffordshire, Quimpers and other desirables. Almost all of the dealers have some majolica and reproductions are banned. Considerations is give to the trade and they will arrange shipping across the United States. Lovers Lane Antique Market is open Monday through Saturday from

10 am to 5 pm at 5001 W. Lovers Lane at Briarwood, just west of Inwood Road. For more information on the web see [www.loverslaneantiques.com](http://www.loverslaneantiques.com). We appreciate the publicity given to our society and it's annual meeting by Lovers Lane Antique Mall and Trilogy Antiques

See you in Dallas. Register early and often!

*Moe Wizenberg*

advertisement

While visiting the  
May 2001 Dallas Convention

## **Trilogy Antiques**

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[trilogy@emajolica.com](mailto:trilogy@emajolica.com)

# ART AND MAJOLICA: A GLANCE AT ORIENTALISM

*Deborah English*

Two museums shows traveling in the US this year look at Orientalism and its significance in the late 1800's. This was a wildly popular art movement and it embodies a lot of what we see in majolica. The word 'Orientalism' is derived from the French orientalisme which means the study of the language, art and culture of the Eastern world. To the Victorians, that region was east and south of the Mediterranean Sea and included North Africa and the Levant. India seems to have been the eastern edge.

Orientalist painting was luscious: packed with lavish details of carpet and marble, slave girls and snake charmers. One could see tiles, hookahs, sheiks, and Arabian stallions. Lovers of the Tales of the Arabian Nights brought their own imaginations to the intensely romantic pictures. Semi-nudity, an acceptable form of eroticism was widely employed.

The Grand Tour had been long considered an educational requirement for well-bred young men, and it came to include North Africa and modern day Turkey. Young painters who had once ended their trips at the ruins of Rome now found their way south and east, in search of the mysterious and exotic imagery. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made it easier to travel to those regions.

Artists from every major European country (and America) made Orientalist pictures. The most well known are the French painters Delacroix and Ingres but in England, Edwin Lord Weeks was equally successful. American painters producing Orientalist pieces include John Singer Sargent and William Merrit Chase.

The Majolica potters were aware of the movement's popularity and quickly adopted it for their own use. In a game that we play, tracing contemporaneous influences on Majolica, I think it's fun to look for Orientalism in Majolica pieces, in our reference books if not our collections. Some pieces reflect the importance of Ottoman design as an art influence. Others describe the Eastern world as the Europeans believed it ought to be. The piece of Majolica that prompted my thinking about Orientalism was the T.C Brown -Westhead and Moore Camel group, found in Helen Cunningham's book (p. 47).

Here are a few others.

In Karmason and Stacke :

On page 36: Minton Thomas Goode Elephant

On page 61: Minton pair of life sized Blackamoors

On page 123: Brown- Westhead and Moore Slave Girl Garden Seat

On page 192: Massier Tambourine Wall Plaques.

In Nick Dawes' book:

On page 12: Three examples of Sphinx imagery by Wedgwood and George Jones

On page 62: Copeland Lotus jug

On page 76: Wedgwood Group of Rebecca and Isaiah

On page 143: An Arab atop a Tobacco Jar, inscribed in English "old friends"

In Leslie Bockel's Victorian Majolica:

On page 106: William Schiller two piece Planter

In Helen Cunningham's Majolica Figures, many examples, including:

On page 17: Various Humidors

On page 32: Minton Blackamoor Child Garden Seat

On page 37: George Jones Camel Sweetmeat Dish

On page 45: Worcester Camel with Howdah

On page 88: Sarreguemines Candlesticks

On page 130: A Schiller Elephant Centerpiece.

(The realities of copyright and the cost of color printing regretfully prevent us from reproducing the above. Pull up your books and enjoy. The Editor.)

From our collection, I've included a picture of a Holdcroft Garden Seat. It is a tripod of elegantly wardrobed elephant heads, topped with a turquoise cap and red center star. The British Imperial presence in India (the Raj) was celebrated by Victorian Britons as evidence of their superior society and military prowess, and provided a popular theme in decorative arts. The elephant is exotic and his elaborate presentation stimulates reference to wonderful tales of mystery and adventure.

A cursory look suggests the English and Germans treated the subject somewhat more seriously than the French, who were generally more lighthearted in their approach. Think of the humidors. (Of course, it's not hard to find examples to contradict any generalization.) I was unable to find any examples of American or Portuguese Orientalist Majolica. Perhaps someone knows of some examples?

# ART AND MAJOLICA: A GLANCE AT ORIENTALISM

*Continued*



Camel by T.C. Brown-Westhead and Moore



Interior of the Mosque at Cordova  
Edwin Lord Weeks (American, 1849-1903)



Holdcroft Elephant Garden Seat

## CAT-A-TONIC

*Moe Wizenburg*

In keeping with the tradition established by our first editor, Dr. Howard Silby, we will now deal with a medical topic. If you were to ask the MIS resident majolica guru and psychiatrist Marilyn Karmason for the definition of catatonic she would probably give you a learned explanation about the catatonic variety of schizophrenia. There is however a much more important meaning to catatonic, namely “describing a particularly exhilarating stimulus produced by proximity to or possession of Minton majolica cats.” Notice the pleased appearance of Jim Trout as he examines or perhaps fondles a Minton cat just prior to the Sothebys auction of January 22nd, 2001, at which he formally adopted the cat. If that isn't a picture of someone getting a tonic I don't know what one is!

Jim now has a modest family of 3 Minton cats of which he is the justifiably proud owner (not father). Ask him to show you their pictures when you see him at the annual meeting.



*Look at that knowing wink.*

## MIS FISHING CONTEST

The MIS Fishing Contest has been won by Marshall Katz whose 28-1/2 inch long pike is clearly the largest majolica fish of the millennium. The fish is on a Barbizet platter, one of a set make for the 1889 Paris Exposition. Marshall has graciously offered to write an article about these pieces for the next issue of Majolica Matters - watch for it.

The runner up, entered by our president, Joan Stacke Graham, was 23 inches long but not a fish to take lightly. It is the wonderful yellow fish atop the Minton Tureen shown below. All those who would be delighted to own the losing fish please raise you right hands!



My thanks to those who entered our contest and to Jim Trout (no pun) who served as judge. A suitably inscribed commemorative certificate will go to the winner and our condolences to the owner of the Minton Tureen!

Please send your comments and material for the newsletter to:

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Deadline for the next issue of Majolica Matters is March 10, 2001.