



The Quarterly Publication of the Majolica International Society

# Majolica Matters

[www.MajolicaSociety.com](http://www.MajolicaSociety.com)

December 2009

## Majolica International Society's annual convention returns to Dallas for 2010.

JR and the Ewings are gone but Dallas remains one of the most prosperous and exciting cities in the union. The city's diverse ancestry, an intricate weave of Native American, French, Spanish and Mexican has created an equally complex political and cultural milieu. Boasting world class museums, art galleries, theatres, concerts and opera. The Adolphus Hotel located in the center of town is again our 'home away from home'.

We officially start our convention Thursday at 7:30 p.m. with registration, followed by "MajoliCake and Coffee" - a chance for us all to reconnect and attend member presentations, about fabulous Majolica.

Friday morning after breakfast, buses will transport us to see three members' homes. We are very appreciative to Mary Lynn Ryder who has invited us to visit her at her new address - Thank you! Sis Miller has once again opened her magnificent home to us and will welcome our visit - What a delight! A big thanks to Barbara Hunt Crow, who has graciously invited us to visit her home. She is also hosting a luncheon for the group - Barbara, we are indebted to you!

Saturday, following breakfast, Mr. Ed Flower will hold another *mini majolica auction* with items consigned by you or any dealer wishing to participate. Please consign as many pieces as you wish - they will all be protected by reserves, and we will all have fun. The morning will be capped by a presentation by author Dimitrios Bastas, who will speak on American Majolica.... again complete with slides. At approximately 11:30 AM, we will board buses for an afternoon of 'antiquing'. We will visit several antique shops and have an opportunity to purchase Majolica, as well as, other wonderful treasures, followed by a lunch at Amore's Italian Restaurant. The cocktail party and Majolica Heaven Preview will be held Saturday from approximately 6 PM till 7 PM, and will be followed by our MIS Annual Gala Banquet. We are honored and elated to have Mr. Nicolaus Boston as our guest speaker. In addition to being a good friend to the society, Mr. Boston happens to be one of the most knowledgeable and well educated historian, antiques dealer and Majolica's top expert. Undoubtedly Mr. Boston will not only educate us and woo us with never before seen pieces, but he will do so with his usual ease, charm and of course he will do it with a delightful British accent. An evening not to be missed!

Sunday will begin with breakfast and annual meeting, immediately followed by Majolica Heaven. As always, our dedicated dealers have been hard at work gathering new pieces of majolica to tease and please us all.

Please call your airline and reserve early, then call the The Adolphus Hotel at (214) 377-6031 and make your reservations so you can get as many nights for our low rate - I promise we will all have fun visiting members homes, antiquing and seeing magnificent majolica whether on slides or in person, but mostly we will have fun just being together!

Wishing you and your family Happy and Healthy New Year!

Hugs to all, Gabrielle

## Make plans for Dallas, Texas

**Date:** April 29 - May 02, 2010

**City:** Dallas, Texas

**Hotel:** The Adolphus Hotel

**1321 Commerce Street**

**Dallas, TX 75202**

**Reservations at:** 214.377.6031

The nightly rate is an unprecedented \$129 plus tax - so please come early, stay a few extra days and enjoy all the many things that Dallas has to offer.



**MAJOLICA WANTED:** for the 2010 mini auction to support Karmason library fund, to be held at our 2010 convention. We can auction a piece for you and charge a 10% commission to go to the fund, the balance to you; or you can donate a piece with the entire proceeds to the fund and you take the tax write off. Contact Ed Flower at 631 968 7797 or email [Flowerbulldog@aol.com](mailto:Flowerbulldog@aol.com)

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## Convention 2010 - Hotel Headquarters

Members Randy and Darci Iola helped us find and negotiate our terms and rates at our Dallas Convention headquarters hotel, the Adolphus Hotel. Here, members can immerse themselves in the glamour of the Gilded Age for a fabulous value of \$129/night! This baroque masterpiece has been a giant among Dallas historic hotels since 1912, when Missouri beer baron Adolphus Busch decided that his adopted city didn't have a hotel to suit his taste. Hence, fame, fortune, and flamboyance came together in 21 stories of unabashed baroque splendor that critics at the time called "the most beautiful building west of Venice." Throughout its history, luminaries such as Babe Ruth, the Vanderbilt's, U2, Oscar de la Renta, Donald Trump, and Queen Elizabeth II have come to agree - there is no Dallas, Texas historic hotel quite like it.



**French Room Dining - Adolphus Hotel**



**Lobby - Adolphus Hotel**



**Early 1900's Post Card - Adolphus Hotel, Dallas**

## Nicolaus Boston - 2010 Keynote Speaker & Exhibitor

**By Wanda Matthes**

This is a partial reprint from *Majolica Matters* 2004

Nicolaus Boston will be our keynote speaker in Dallas on Saturday evening, May 1, 2010, at the Adolphus Hotel. To many of our members, Nic has been a friend and a source of fabulous majolica, directly

from England for many years. For those members who do not know Nic, I would like to introduce him to you by using an interview which, Phil English, then MIS President, did with Nicolas before Nic spoke to the MIS in Orlando, Florida on Saturday, May 1, 2004.





**Q. Phil:** How did you get into the business?

**Nic:** I am a second-generation antiques dealer. My father, had an Antique shop in Islington, London, and dealt in the finest 19th century objects, furniture, bronze, marble etc. My brothers and sisters grew up surrounded by Dad's merchandise and collections. We played in them, on them, and under them.

I studied art history, photography and graphic art at college, but by eighteen years of age, I had already started to work at weekends and during holidays, buying and selling antiques for my Father. It was by attending antique auctions, markets, and visiting shops and warehouses around Great Britain, that I really learned the trade. I constantly asked questions and learned from the most successful European fine art dealers and witnessed the finest, hundred thousand dollar objects being sold, and secured the deal with the shake of a hand and the wink of an eye. It was a very exciting schooling. A customer of my Father's, a well known furniture dealer from Houston, Texas, one day asked me if on my travels I ever came across any "Majolica". Majolica..."What's a Majolica?" I thought. He pulled two photographs from his wallet. One picture was that of an unmarked majolica corn pitcher, the other was of a solid green majolica leaf plate. He challenged me... "For every corn pitcher you find me, I'll give you \$20 and for every green plate you find me, I'll give you \$10". "It's a deal", I replied.

The year was 1980 and the Majolica market was nonexistent. To my surprise, it seemed like nobody else in the world except my Texas customer and I, knew what this brightly glazed Victorian ceramic was. I searched every antique shop, mall and auction for green plates and corn pitchers and I left no stone unturned. In fact, in those days, every time you turned a stone, a corn pitcher rolled out.

I learned many years later that the corn pitchers were made by the company Adams and Bromley and their advertising slogan was "Majolica, made for the millions"! They were not lying!

Time passed by and my shipments of pitchers and plates to Houston became larger and larger. I remember one shipment in particular containing over one thousand pieces. I felt like a real wholesaler! It was very exciting! Interestingly, whenever I offered my customer a piece of good quality majolica, for example, a cherub on a dolphin, a stilton dish with a cow finial, or game tureen with a bright turquoise body decorated with partridge and chicks, he shrugged his shoulders and turned them down. They were too fancy for him. What he wanted was "dresser fodder".... country pieces to decorate kitchen hutches and shelves. That suited me perfectly! I loved "the fancy stuff" so I kept them all. With the profits of

selling the "country" majolica I was able to build a collection of the "fancy stuff" for myself.

I was still living at home with my parents, brothers and sisters, and everyone was getting slightly fed up having to share their home with "Nic's collection" Majolica cherubs, huge jardinières, umbrella stands and pedestals were everywhere and gradually taking over. Space was running out. The time eventually came when the majolica had to go.

On a buying trip to London, I noticed a small shop for rent in a good quality antiques mall in London's fashionable Chelsea. The rent was reasonable so I decided to lease the space and open a majolica shop with my collection. I was nineteen years old and my brothers thought I was mad. I opened and a few weeks later, every inch of floor and shelf space was covered with majolica. Not much happened in the first couple of weeks, except, of course, for the turned up noses and guffaw of laughter from unimpressed passers-by. "Majolica ....is he mad!". In those days very few people knew what Majolica was and Victorian design was very unfashionable. However, I did not loose faith. There had to be more people who loved this ceramic fantasy as well as me. One morning a beautiful, glamorous, lady from New York, wandered into the shop. She could not believe her eyes, a shop full of majolica. The lady excitedly informed me that she was a majolica collector and owned over a thousand pieces! I could not believe it! Someone who loved majolica it as much as I did! We became friends immediately. Things got even better when the beautiful lady bought everything in the shop...the whole, entire collection all in one go! Not a Majolica vase or cheese dish left! Later that day, I rang my brother and told him that I had officially become a "Majolica dealer". Hey...not so mad....

**Q. Phil:** How far do you go to track down a piece?

**Nic:** Borders, countries, continents, latitude, longitude... the hunt for Majolica knows no limits. If Martine, my wife, and I hear about a good piece in some far flung corner of the globe, we go! The important thing is to get to that piece fast...faster than anybody else! Over the years and mostly before our two girls, Maeve and Elizabeth were born, we have traveled thousands of miles at a moments notice to secure many special pieces. A whisper, a telephone call, a small advert in a newspaper about a forthcoming auction in Katmandu, we would spring into action, leaving the cat with a neighbor, grabbing our passports and credit cards and head for the nearest airport. Our philosophy has always been, that hopefully our keenness to travel will end up securing that great and rare object. However, in the event of things not working out, for example the piece turns

out to be very restored or just too expensive, then we would have no regrets, we would always end up having a great time anyway! New countries, new cities and new people! Good things usually come from our spontaneous Majolica hunts....Greece, Sri Lanka, Austria, South Africa, wherever. Majolica can pop up anywhere and, as a result, so can Martine and I.

**Q. Phil:** The strangest customer you've ever encountered?

**Nic:** About twenty years ago, Martine and I were renting a small apartment in Wimbledon. It was a cold winter. The hot water and heating system in our building was archaic and on its last legs. On one particularly bitterly cold, snowy day, our old boiler gave up. Boy, was it cold! We called an emergency plumber. Plumbers in England are like gold dust and earn a fortune, especially in the depths of winter and especially when your boiler has given up. Several hours and several layers of clothes later, Tony the plumber arrived. Tony was a pleasant, chatty chap who set about trying to crank life back into the ancient boiler which was situated in an annex next the kitchen. On our kitchen table were a few pieces of majolica, (my haul for the day), a Minton monkey teapot, a George Jones sardine dish, and an unmarked Stilton dish with a blossom finial. After an hour or so and several cups of tea, Tony had been successful and the boiler was working. The apartment started to warm up and Martine and I felt brave enough to slowly unpeel our woolen layers. Pointing to George Jones sardine dish in the middle of the table, Tony said, "What's that then? I love fish. I'm a big fisherman. I never miss a weekend on the river bank". Without going into too much information, (I wanted to be polite without informing him that the pieces on my kitchen table were probably worth \$5,000), I told him that the pieces were Victorian and called Majolica. "Majolica is it", he said. "And that's on majolica is it?", he said, pointing to Joan Stacke's and Marilyn Karmason's book that was sitting on the other end of the table. "Yes it is", I replied. "Can I have a look?", he asked. I handed him the book, wondering how long this was going to take and where it was leading. I hoped he was not charging by the hour. Tony flicked through the book, smiling at its contents. He was obviously smitten. "It's great stuff, isn't it"? "Yes", I replied. "I'll have to keep my eyes open for it", "O.K." I said, "Good luck." Putting the book back on the table, he said, "Well, must go, nice to meet you, let me know if the boiler gives you any more problems. I'll pop a bill in the post".

Tony left and the boiler carried on working. The cold winter passed, and the spring had sprung. April is a busy time in the London Antiques trade and I was running around, doing Majolica dealer stuff, auctions,

restorers, shippers, customers etc. Trying to keep all of the balls in the air. My mobile phone rang, "Hello, Nic...It's Tony the Plumber, remember me", Tony the plumber, what does he want? I definitely sent him a check for the work he did a few months ago. "Yes, I remember you Tony, how are you?" "Fine, Nic. Listen Nic, I'm in a little village just outside London, I'm fitting a central heating system", he continued, "I've just stopped outside a small antique shop and in the window is a piece of that majolica stuff, like the stuff in your kitchen"..O.K.", I replied. "What is it like?" "Well, it's a dish and cover of some sort...a rabbit and two ducks on the top and a basket weave base...I think it's one of those game tureens things...it has a ticket on it for #500 (about \$950), is that too much?" I was amazed. All those months ago, in those twenty minutes or so in my kitchen, Tony the plumber had become a majolica fan and obviously had an 'eye', as we call it in the trade. "Well Tony", I replied, "I have a couple of those tureens in stock presently so I'm not interested in buying it, but thank you so much for calling me. It's a good price perhaps you should buy it and start a majolica collection for yourself."

I was half joking but that is exactly what Tony did. He negotiated and got it for #450 (\$800). That day Tony the Plumber became a Majolica collector. Over the years he has become a good customer and to date has about one hundred pieces. Every now and again, he pops into my Kensington Church Street shop and spends some time talking about what's new in the majolica world, what rare pieces have come onto the market and just general "majolica" chitchat. It's always good to see him. He's a nice chap. Of course, the best thing of all, is that if I ever have a plumbing problem, he's the man. It's amazing how much plumbing can be fixed for a couple George Jones chestnut plates.

**Q. Phil:** Something about your family, the crazy life you all lead?

**Nic:** My poor family...what can I say? Majolica dealer's daughters...two little girls who know the golden rule only too well..."Don't Touch Daddy's 'Jolica". I grew up around my Father's antique business and Martine grew up around her Father's monumental stone business back in Ireland. We both grew up living "above the shop" so to speak. We both feel that it was good place to grow up and gave us the basic understanding of commerce. Seeing deliveries coming and going, money changing hands and the general hubbub of day-to-day business was exciting and very interesting. No two days were ever the same.

Martine and I like the idea of our girls experiencing aspects of our childhood and we encourage them to be around the daily deliveries and shipments of majolica

in our shop and home. We like them to meet our customers and generally feel part of our all-consuming business. Maeve attended her first auction at Christies in London when she was a few weeks old and our two year old, Elizabeth's, most frequent request is "I come your shop in London, Daddy?" which she often does and is always well behaved...well nearly always. We always have fun, when I return home in the evenings, unpacking new purchases from crates and cardboard boxes "Well girls, what is it?" I ask, "Minton! Minton!" they shout. "No, it's not Minton....it's....it's..." I reply, "George Jones!", they scream .Elizabeth then follows up with "your 'jolica too 'spensive Daddy". Thank you Elizabeth...out of the mouths of babes...

Now, the year is 2010. Nic, Martene, Maeve and Elizabeth now make their home in Ireland.

I hope that you will come to Dallas for our annual MIS Convention, April 29-May 2, 2010, where you can meet this, still young, icon of the majolica collecting world. I am sure that Nic will entertain us and fill us in on changes in his family and, especially changes in the world of majolica collecting.

Visit his web site at: <http://www.majolica.co.uk/>  
Or for lots of fun, visit his Minton YouTube work at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_Nfuovvlbs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_Nfuovvlbs)

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## MIS Convention 2010 - Program Summary

By Ed Flower

**Thursday Evening:** Coffee and Desserts.

Member presentations:

A. Wanda Matthes: Collecting Majolica Without Breaking the Bank.

B. Laura Pate: Techniques of Ceramic Restoration.

**Friday:** Breakfast together at the hotel

Dallas Home and Collections Visits

A. Home of Sis Miller: Majolica, Palissy and other fabulous things.

B. Home of Barbara Hunt Crow: Majolica and so much more, plus lunch.

C. Home of Mary Lynn Ryder: Majolica, Palissy and other fabulous things

**Saturday:** Breakfast together at the hotel

Speaker: Author, Dimitrios Bastas, American Majolica

Mini Majolica Auction: Benefiting the Library Fund

Antiquing with Wanda: Buses will transport members to area antique shops

Lunch: Amore's Italian Restaurant

Cocktails and Majolica Heaven Preview Party: 6:00 p.m. at the Adolphus Hotel.

MIS Annual Gala Banquet: followed by keynote speaker Nicolaus Boston

**Sunday:** Breakfast together at the hotel

Annual Business Meeting: 8:30 a.m.

Majolica Heaven: 10:00 a.m. open to convention attendees

Majolica Heaven: 12:00-4:00 open to the public

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## Convention 2010 Speaker - Dimitrios Bastas

By Duane Matthes

The MIS 2010 annual convention attendees will have the opportunity to meet and hear from ceramic collector and author, Dimitrios N. Bastas. His beautiful and informative two volume book, **Etruscan Majolica: the Majolica of Griffen Smith & Company**, published and released in 2009, will, I'm sure, be the basis for his presentation, entitled "American Majolica".



The book's back cover describes Dimitrios as a long time collector and dealer of Etruscan Majolica. As a professional, award winning, graphic artist, he has combined his love for

Etruscan Majolica and his artistic skills to create these exciting books that capture the history, process, and the mystic of the most dominating company of ornamental majolica production in America. The pages of his beautifully designed books capture the color and whimsy of all the common and rare items produced by the

Pennsylvania pottery giant of the late 1800's. I'm positive that his presentation and talk will be one that you will not want to miss.

Dimitrios also has a gorgeous website you can visit which exhibits his design, his creativeness, and his knowledge of majolica. [www.etruscanmajolica.com](http://www.etruscanmajolica.com) .

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**Please call your airline and reserve early, then call the The Adolphus Hotel at (214) 377-6031 and make your reservations for Dallas 2010**



## Thanks to Our Dallas Hostess

By Gabrielle Ehrenthal

We are indeed grateful to all the 'Dallas Ladies', our hostesses, Sis Miller, Barbara Hunt Crow, Mary Lynn Ryder and Wanda Matthes, Amy Griffin and Darci Iola for all of their efforts in organizing the events and for their generosity in making us feel so welcome - true Sothern 'belles'!

## Majolica Heaven's 2010 - Tentative Dealers

Corinne Agesilas - Paris, France  
Nicolaus Boston - Limerick Ireland  
Jesse Davis - London, England  
Jerry S. Hayes - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Linda Ketterling - Toledo, Ohio  
Phillipe Meunier & Jean Defrocourt - Paris, France  
David Tulk - North Frambridge, England  
Charles Washburne - Solebury, PA



**Majolica Heaven 2009 was special. Additional dealers in Heaven 2010 will make it monumental.**



**Don't miss out on Majolica Heaven 2010**

## Castles and Majolica Holiday Traditions

By Laurie Wirth

Our family returned from a trip to Ireland this summer and, because of the weakened dollar against the euro, we didn't bring back any antiques to commemorate the trip. Although we had a phenomenal time climbing over more ruined castles and abbeys than I can count, I still couldn't help feel a little sorry that we didn't find an old treasure to remind us of this special vacation. I masked my disappointment with the rationale that I was practicing financial fortitude until my daughter (who is a willing conspirator in the accumulation of majolica for our collection) told me we had to sit down and peruse Michael Strawser's October 31st Majolica Auction catalogue.

Sure enough, in the back of the catalogue, Martina (my daughter) had spied the George Jones Castle Cheesekeep. "It's perfect—this is the perfect memento of our trip to Ireland!" she told me, stabbing the picture of the cheesekeep with her finger for added emphasis. "We don't need anything else in the catalogue—just that." "But, Martina," I reasoned, "we already have the GJ castle jardinière. Don't you think that's a bit of overkill?" She gave me one of those withering looks that made me want to go out and see if I misplaced a large quotient of my already dwindling IQ. "The jardinière doesn't have the flag flying on top," she reasoned. "Besides, what could be a more perfect reminder of our trip to Ireland?"



**The Wirth's George Jones Castle Cheesekeep, strutting its stuff during the holidays.**

She had a point. And, as some of you know, I love any majolica covered with green leaves that doesn't have a putti on it, so I decided to cast aside visions of the other majolica pieces that I was interested in at that auction and try to come home with the GJ Castle



Cheesekeep. Long story short—it now resides in my dining room.

To give the cheesekeep a chance to strut its stuff for the holidays, we decided to honor our tradition of using pieces from our majolica collection to decorate our Christmas dining room table. I've included some pictures and wanted to encourage all you fellow collectors out there to pull some of your favorite pieces off the shelf and decorate with abandon. Martina and I had such a great time looking for pieces to complement the cheesekeep holiday theme that we'll probably decorate the GJ Castle jardinière for the holidays, too!



The Wirth's Thanksgiving table.

### More Majolica Holiday Photos

Other members share their holiday displays and use of whimsical majolica. Majolica colors fit with everyone's holiday.



The Ehrenthal's dining room table



Art and majolica at the Ehrenthal's

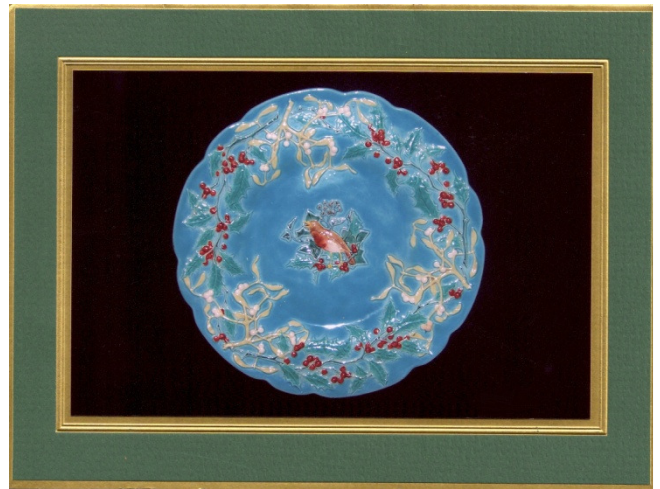


Majolica splendor at the Ehrenthal's





Holidays at the Paris home of Philippe & Jean



"Good Cheer, Glad Tidings",  
Maryanne Leckie's Season's Greeting Card



Beauty and a Beast, at a quite holiday time at the  
Matthes' home



Magical holiday powder room at the Matthes'

Happy New Year to everyone! I am sure that many of you have some special holiday photos showing parts of your majolica collection. It would be wonderful if you would share some of your favorites with the membership.

Please send your photos to [wanda@emajolica.com](mailto:wanda@emajolica.com) to be included in a future edition of Majolica Matters.

## Happy New Year 2010!

Please send your comments and material for the newsletter to:

**Wanda Matthes**  
3801 Indigo Drive  
Plano, Texas  
Phone: 972 - 596 - 2964  
eMail: [Wanda@eMajolica.com](mailto:Wanda@eMajolica.com)



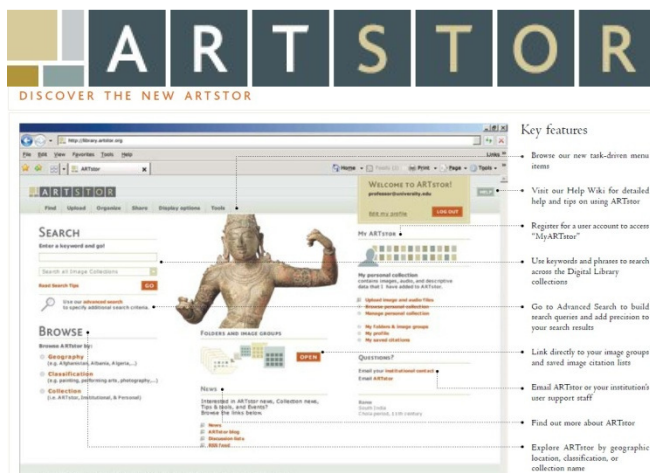
## Karmason Library Update

By Deborah English

Things are progressing smoothly, if slowly at the Karmason Library. Duane continues to put articles in the periodicals section, and they are already available on-line in the member's section of our website. Thank you, Duane.

George Weeks has been hard at work on scanning Joan's very valuable, rare and fragile books. These are also appearing on the web site. It's a slow job, requiring much patience. Thank you, George.

The other news is what is happening with the Photo Archive. To those who were at the convention in May, I apologize because you will have heard some of this already. Hang in, though. There's a little more.



### ARTstor

We became aware early on that we were going to need a mammoth web site to hold all the images of majolica that we hope to collect. Eventually, the Archive will hold several thousand pictures, and the web sites that are generally available to us are either too small or, if large enough, too expensive. Furthermore, there remained the question of making it available to the academic community. Several people who are museum curators suggested we try to get into ARTstor. As luck would have it, the MIS was accepted as a contributor, provided we meet some initial requirements.

ARTstor is an-image based data bank that is designed specifically for academic research. Its members are museums, libraries and universities. It was founded with a grant from the Carnegie Mellon Foundation, and is run as a non-profit. It collects images from museums and major collections around the world. There are two classes of affiliates (my word). One is 'participant'. That is the organization that subscribes to ARTstor and is permitted to browse the data bank.

The other is the 'contributor'. That's what we are. We will submit images with pertinent information, and ARTstor will put it onto its website. We are not participants. More about that later.

There are relatively few rules about qualifying to be a contributor to ARTstor, but those few rules are absolute:

1) All the articles whose images appear in ARTstor must be antique (at least 100 years old). They must belong in a cohesive group of similar objects, and we have to be able to establish a historical context for our collection of images.

2) ARTstor is non-profit and not-for profit. It is rigorous about leaving out anything that smacks of commercialism. This means that ARTstor is unavailable to dealers and auction houses. Furthermore, nothing that sounds like advertising can be permitted within the entries. Violation of this rule can lead to expulsion.

Their initial requirements are pretty daunting. They will not post our material until we have 1,000 entries (!!!). There are very specific guidelines about the quality of photography. These are sensible parameters, all based on clarity at a super-zoom inspection. There are only a few computer programs that ARTstor will accept, and the entries must be uniform in appearance with the entries of other contributors.

After much deliberation, we decided on the Filemaker Pro program for our entries. It has the most flexibility of all that we saw. It's not cheap. I bought one for myself because I have other uses for it in my own work, so it was easy to justify. Eventually some other volunteers will need Filemaker on their computers, and I will recommend that the Library reimburse those persons' expenses.

### Progress to Date

Before we applied to ARTstor, I had been designing entries for use on our own website. The design was a work in progress, but I had made nearly 150 entries. They were all in WORD, which is completely incompatible with Filemaker Pro. All of those entries had to be disassembled and re-configured for Filemaker. Once we swallowed THAT little nugget, we decided to use those entries for our own website, too. So, I have spent the summer doing surgery on the original files and am coming down the homestretch on that project. By the way, when the entries are posted on our web site, they will have been taken out of Filemaker and converted to a program that all computers have.

Other details have required solutions. The file size of the ARTstor entries is so large that I cannot keep them on my computer. Each entry in TIFF exceeds 60 MB. The images are currently saved in JPEG, but when they are sent to ARTstor, they will have been reconverted to TIFF. Everything is being kept on two external hard drives. When we send entries to ARTstor, we will send the hard drives by mail. A matching hard drive will go to Duane for our website.

#### Questions we all have:

1) Will MIS members be able to visit ARTstor?

As it stands now, no. If you want to visit ARTstor, you can go to a municipal library, or a university library. It's very likely that they would be participants. Apart from general curiosity, there is no significant reason for us to use ARTstor. Everything that goes into their data bank will also appear in ours. Ours will actually have more information per entry. Additionally, our databank will also house related materials that are not majolica. That is going to be a big part of the Karmason Library, and none of it will be on ARTstor. In short, ours will be better for us. Also, let me tell you. It's not easy to navigate. It's pretty balky.

2) Where do the images come from, and can I contribute too?

Oh yes. PLEEZE! There are two categories of images. The first is "permanent", which is self-explanatory. The other is "placeholder", which is an image of poorer quality than meets the ARTstor standard, but which illustrates a particular object. We can use these, and insert proper images when we can.

Michael Strawser and Madelena Antiques have both agreed to allow us to use their websites for placeholder images. I can't begin to thank them enough; it is helpful beyond words. Fully half of the completed entries are placeholders.

Because of the commercial restrictions, their entries will be listed under personal names: Michael's and David Tulk. (The MIS website can give full credit to any dealer who wishes to contribute, so that a David Tulk entry, for instance, would read "Madelena Antiques".)

Our collections will provide the permanent entries. For the sake of experimentation, we have begun with Phil's and my collection. The Ehrenthals, the Flowers, Joan Graham, and David and Donna Reis have all agreed and are in the process to have their collections photographed for the archive. Together, that will make perhaps 500 entries. Duane and Wanda Matthes have a huge number of high quality images that we will use. So, we'll be well on the way to the

preliminary 1,000. So far, we have about 200 completed entries. After we get this first slug done, we'll be begging you to contribute. I won't go into the photographic requirements here, but anyone with a digital camera should be able to meet them.

## Amazing Auction Results - "TH DECK"

By Duane and Wanda Matthes

At the October 2009 Strawser Auction, a single Mallard Duck caused a huge amount of wing flapping. The in room bidders liked the object and knew it was unusual and very special but most of us didn't know enough to really value it. The auction book had it as marked "TH DECK" and the auction house said there was plenty of pre-auction interest in the item. The item had in-room bidding but nothing matched the internet bidding that drove the single 9 1/2" duck, with a chip to the foot, to \$2,400 plus the fifteen percent buyers premium.

Obviously the Mallard was special, even though he would need a bit of restoration to the chip to his left webbed foot..



**Mallard Duck, by Joseph-Théodore Deck**

Doing a little research, we found that Joseph-Théodore Deck (1823–1891), a 19th century French potter, was born in Alsace.. He studied sculpture and chemistry to prepare himself for his trade as a potter.

At age twenty-four, Deck was living in Paris and by 1856, now in his early thirties, he established his own workshop and began to experiment with the Islamic style of ceramic making, and in particular the Iznik style....

*Here is what we learned from Wikipedia: "Iznik pottery, named after the town in western Anatolia where it was made, is highly decorated ceramics whose heyday was the late sixteenth century. The*



*largest collection of vessels is in the British Museum and Iznik tiles may be seen in quantity in the imperial and religious buildings of Istanbul. Iznik vessels were originally made in imitation of Chinese porcelain, which was highly prized by the Ottoman sultans. As the potters were unable to make porcelain, the vessels produced were fritware, a low-fired body comprising mainly silica and glass.*



**Le Coq, by Joseph-Théodore Deck.**

**The rooster displays vibrant, almost shocking colors, and a distinct mold, showing Deck's Middle Eastern influences, as well as, influences of the Chinese, Japanese. .**

By 1858, he opened 'Faience d'Art Th. Deck', with his brother Xavier.

Deck showed his ceramics in London in 1862 and Paris in 1867.

By 1870, his work displayed the distinctive 'bleu Deck coloring. and Japonisme was an important aspect of his work.

He won many medals at international exhibitions. We find him exhibiting in London in 1871, Vienna in 1873, and in Philadelphia in 1876, where his pieces were shown in the Collinson & Lock Stand. He again showed in Paris in 1878 and 1889.

In the 1880s, Deck worked in the Chinese tradition, also collaborating with Raphaël Collin....again I relied

on Wikipedia to describe why a friendship with Raphael Collin might have been important to Deck....

*Raphaël Collin (1850 - 1916) was born and raised in Paris, where he became a prominent academic painter and in later life a professor at the Académie des Beaux-Arts. He is principally known for the links he created between French and Japanese art, in both painting and ceramics.*

In 1887, Deck published a treatise under the title "La Faïence". It was in that year the he was appointed Director of the National Porcelain Manufactory at Sevres.

Deck died in 1891 but the factory continued with his brother, Xavier and His nephew, Richard, until 1905.

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### **Turquoise is Top Color for 2010**

Interior designer Debbie Sheaf is way ahead of the curve. Last February, inspired by the blues and greens in her collection of antique majolica pottery, she painted the room that houses her collection a vibrant turquoise.

Turquoise was selected as the color of the year for 2010 by Pantone, a global color authority. The blue-green shade replaces mimosa, the sunny yellow that was Pantone's top pick for 2009.

Combining the "serene qualities of blue with the invigorating aspects of green," turquoise evokes thoughts of "soothing tropical waters and a languorous escape from the everyday troubles of the world, while restoring our sense of wellbeing," said Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute in Carlstadt, N.J. Just the kind of feel-good color we need in 2010.

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### **MIS MajolicaMAIL and BLOG**

The Society has created a public BLOG on the Internet. It is hosted by Google at no cost to MIS. We have been posting information about Majolica and the general ceramics world. Most of the information we have already communicated to you as MajolicaMAIL, but now we post to the BLOG for our own history and also for public awareness about Majolica. If you are not receiving MajolicaMAIL emails please contact wanda@eMajolica.com.

Visit the BLOG as you have time at:



<http://karmason.blogspot.com/>

## Letter to The Majolica International Society



**The Loch Ard Minton Peacock**

Good Morning.

I am the manager of Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village here in Warrnambool - Great Ocean Road Australia.

I have been reading some stories about your society through the newsletters and see that the Minton

Peacocks are deemed the 'holy grail' of majolica collectors.

You may be interested to note that our Loch Ard Minton Peacock is currently being assessed for state heritage listing through its links to surviving Australia's most significant shipwreck in 1878.

I attach an image of our peacock and link to the heritage listed application that is pending currently with a final decision due in March 2010.

I am more than happy to write you a story for your newsletter. You may be interested to know that we host dinners in our Great Circle Gallery room called the Loch Ard Captains Table. These fine dining experiences use the Loch Ard peacock as a centre piece for our dinner. Maybe your society should join us one night for a dinner with your Holy Grail as a centre piece.

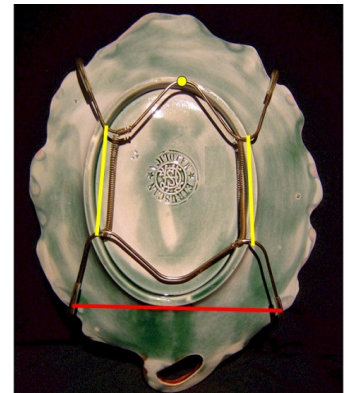
Regards, Peter Abbott  
Manager - Tourism Services

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### Hanging a Heavy Platter

By Duane Matthes

Have you ever tried to hang a large heavy platter with a plate hanger, and have the springs be over sprung by the weight of the plate? A solution to this problem is use the plate hanger, but add three new wires to make the hanger's springs rigid.



1. Attach a large plate hanger of the proper size.  
2. Next, attach a length of flexible, but non-stretching wire (picture hanging wire works well), at the position of the red line to insure that the two bottom support wires from the hanger won't spread, allowing the plate to slide out the bottom. This wire keeps the bottom two hooks of the hanger under the plate. Knot and twist the wire just as you would on a picture frame.

3. Finally, attach two similar wires where the yellow lines are shown in the figure. This stops the hanger's springs from stretching because of the weight of the plate. This keeps the hanging loop marked by the yellow dot in the figure behind the platter after you hang it on the wall.



## Thomas Forester - Additional Information

By Wanda Matthes

This response was supplied by dealer, Linda Ketterling

"This rare Forester frog wasn't mentioned. I thought you took photos of him at our last convention. Anyway, I'm sending you several photos, including the marking, which Karmason had mentioned in her book had never been seen by her. Thought you could add it to your article for the archives."



A left and right view of Linda Ketterling's singing Forester frog with its special mark

Steve Mullins, Curator of the American Toby Jug Museum in Evanston, Illinois responded with:

"Wanda, I found your article on Thomas Forester in the September "Majolica Matters" very interesting, particularly in light of the dozen Thomas Forester & Sons toby jugs in the American Toby Jug Museum here in Evanston, Il. Photos taken directly from the shelves are attached. All are marked TF&S.

FYI, we have a collection of more than 300 Majolica tobies in the Museum, including virtually complete collections by Sarreguemines, Onnaing, Fives Lille, Orchies, Desvres, St. Clement, Malicorne, Nimy-les-Moines, plus the relatively few English makers, such as Forester, Brownfield, Minton, etc. I would be happy to share photos for any interest thereof. Also we lead guided tours by appointment.



Steve Mullin's Toby Jug collection has the same frog with an alternative glazing, along with Drinking Pig in a Bow Tie



Forester's Elephant with Green Hat - c. 1890





**Forester's Dressed Bears with Umbrella, c. 1885**



**Lady with Bag, c. 1885**



**Sitting Dog, c. 1890**



**Squat Monkey, c. 1890**

MIS members wishing to learn more about the Toby Jug Museum can visit [www.tobyjugmuseum.com](http://www.tobyjugmuseum.com). Or visit it in person, by appointment, free admission!

**American Toby Jug Museum**  
 910 Chicago Avenue  
 Evanston, Illinois 60202

Phone: 877.862.9687

Sharing what you know about majolica helps us all understand and love it more. Please share your thoughts, your ideas and your photos. [wanda@emajolica.com](mailto:wanda@emajolica.com)