



Majolica Matters

www.MajolicaSociety.com

June 2009

New York City was...

Dear MIS Member:

Webster's defines *memories* as 'the store of things learned, seen and retained'.....and what a great set of memories you gifted me this year!

Thank you all for attending the 21st annual convention here in New York.....and thank you for gracing our home with your visit. It was an absolute thrill to see everyone. I do wish we could do it more often.

Loads of gratitude to Donna and David Reis who gave their presentation Thursday evening as an introduction to their collection, and then allowed us to visit their magnificent home and fabulous Majolica....and as if that was not enough of a treat, they also served a superb luncheon. Thank you!

Marilyn and Ed Flower allowed us entry into their enchanted world, replete with collections of art, memorabilia, advertising, cookie jars, and of course Majolica (to name just a few of their treasures). They too, wanted to insure that we did not go hungry, so they served a fabulous New York brunch. For this and all the work Ed does during the course of the year, a mere Thank You does not seem enough....but that's all I can offer. THANK YOU!

Jim Harkess, sorry you did not feel well enough to give your presentation, but rest assured Carol did a great job with it. Carol gave us a 'mini tour' of your collection and made sure we all had fun viewing it: Thank you both!

Wedgwood's jasper or basalt urns (with covers or without) have never been a subject that I have searched for, however sprinkled with Wedgwood Majolica, Paul Lauer managed to give us an education, as well as, a tour of his home and lovely collections - Thank you!

Carlin Grant, by showing us your many collections, and by sharing the fact that you started collecting as a young girl....you have somehow validated our own 'obsession' with collecting - Thank you for sharing!

A great big Thank You to all the Board Members who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to promote the Society and Majolica .

Last but never least, a big Thank You to all our dealers who have managed, yet again, to bring us beautiful, interesting and rare pieces and who have been making sure, year after year, that we all spend our kid's inheritances at Majolica Heaven.....and so we did!

Members are actively working out the details, the schedules, and the program for the next convention, and since everything in Texas is always bigger and better, I am sure our 22nd annual meeting will be no exception.Details will follow. Save the dates: April 29th through May 2nd, 2010.

Wishing you all a great, fun-filled and safe summer

Gabrielle

Make your plans for 2010

Date: April 29 – May 02, 2010

City: Dallas, Texas



MAJOLICA WANTED: for the 2010 mini auction to support Karmason library fund, to be held at the next convention. There are two possibilities. 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

HELP WANTED: collector presenters to give about half hour of your time at the next convention, telling us about your collection or anything else that you want to talk about concerning majolica. Contact Ed Flower 631 968 7797 or email

Flowerbulldog@aol.com

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The photographs for this issue were shot and donated by Maryanne Leckie, Laurie Wirth-Melliand, Bob King, Frederick Jagu, Carolyn Brownawell, and Duane Matthes. THANKS to all for capturing wonderful pictures, and, most of all, for sharing them with us.

MIS Convention New York - 2009

By Wanda Matthes

The Convention actually started for Duane and me, when we arose at 4:00 a.m., on Tuesday, April 28, to make our 8:00 a.m. flight from Dallas to NYC. Thank goodness, our excitement kept us awake until boarding time! This was Tuesday morning so the flight was not crowded and it was uneventful for the most part.

As the plane neared the city, and made its way to its landing at LaGuardia, we viewed, with excitement our noon-day view of the island, and expressed pride on seeing such sites as the Statue of Liberty at close range from the air.

Soon, with luggage in hand, we exited the airport to a warm, humid day, much like the days we had just left behind in Texas. Our Yellow Cab driver, was a large, turbaned man, who spoke incessantly on his cell phone in his native language...which was not English. The pitch of his voice was surprisingly high and rather loud and he drove like a banshee to our destination. He failed to notice the heat, seemingly enjoying the hot wind as it blew us about as he swept us into the city. Finally, as we neared our hotel and the traffic came to a halt, he too became aware of the heat and decided to turn on the air conditioned. By this time, we no longer looked crisp and well attired, but, Hey.... we were in NYC and were planning to enjoy the whole experience.



Enjoying spring in Central Park

We checked into our room at the Hilton Hotel earlier than we had thought possible and were ready for our adventure in short order. Our first call was to Joan Stacke. We made arrangements to meet her at her apartment around 3:00, giving us an opportunity to freshen up, have a nice deli lunch and take a walk through Central Park. The Park was bustling with activity, even in the early afternoon on a Tuesday.... and why not! Everywhere you looked were beautiful tulips, azaleas, cherry blossoms and dogwoods, along with an assortment of other amazingly beautiful flower and fauna.

Soon we were at Joan's apartment and the oohing and aahing began! No matter how many times we have seen her collection, I just have to drink it all in! And yes, she did have a fabulous addition to her collection of garden seats! Joan and Duane began rummaging through her armoire, filled with priceless majolica articles, books etc., which will be added to the Karmason Library over time. Thank heavens, George Weeks lives in her building and can take and return materials easily!



Joan's newest, The Egyptian Lady Garden Seat by Brown-Westhead-Moore, C 1875

It was now time for a break so Joan suggested a walk over to Linda Horn's Madison Avenue shop. When we arrived at Linda's shop, we spent time on the outside, viewing the wonderful displays of majolica and other exciting furniture and decorative pieces adorning the windows. We rang the bell and were greeted by Alayne, one of Linda's sisters, and long-time member

of the business. This was our first time to meet Alayne. She lived up the family's image of being elegant and charming. This was our first time to visit Linda's new shop. Very impressive!



Duane, Wanda, Alayne Baxter , and Joan Stacke with Massier in the background



Majolica could be found everywhere in Linda's Shop

As we walked back to Joan's apartment, we began to discuss dinner plans. Joan suggested that we eat at her favorite neighborhood restaurant, Grace's Trattoria Cafe and Grill. When we arrived, the place was bursting with activity. The food was wonderful, and, as always, we enjoyed spending a special evening with Joan.

Wednesday was a day to just explore the city. We had made plans to see Jerry and Aviva Leberfeld at their apartment at 5:00 p.m. but the day was ours! We again walked in the Park and then had a fabulous and leisurely lunch in a lovely restaurant in Rockefeller Center.

Our visit with the Leberfeld's was very special. We have not gotten to spend much time with them in the recent past, so it was time to catch up with their lives and, of course, ooh and aah over their fabulous

majolica collection and to view and discuss the latest additions their collection. Jerry and Aviva had made reservations at their favorite neighborhood restaurant which was alive with activity and replete with wonderful choices of food and drink. After a wonderful dinner and great conversation, we returned to their building for more conversation before, we reluctantly said good-night and headed back to our hotel.



Aviva & Jerry Leberfeld shared their collection



Like happy children on a NY majolica field trip

Thursday was a day to be up and about early to meet other MIS members for our trip to Long Island. We were like children on a field trip as we made our way by bus, out of the city and to our first "majolica viewing" of the day at the home of Marilyn and Ed Flower. NYC Traffic was heavy but members had fun chatting with each other and anticipating the visit which we all knew would be a Wow! When we arrived, we divided into two groups, one to enjoy the extraordinary spread of food and drink provided by Marilyn and Ed in their club house, while the other group toured the home, filled with an amazing display of Victorian Majolica.





Host Marilyn and Ed Flower provided a wonderful brunch

What an experience! So much rare and exciting majolica! Large pieces, small pieces, and everything in between. Thankfully there were many photos taken that day, allowing us to reflect back on what we had seen and also allowing us to share them with those of you who missed this unbelievable opportunity.

All too soon, it was time to board the buses again and make the drive to Gabrielle and Michael Ehrenthal's home. On arrival, we were again confronted with a fantasy of majolica and as well as their world class art collection. The Ehrenthals had suffered a "house crisis" in the recent past but the house and all its wonderful contents were in perfect order and just stunning. And yes..... their dining table was laden with fantastic desserts. Yum!



Gabrielle and Michael Ehrenthal used their majolica treasures to serve mouth watering desserts. Note the perfect use of the Minton lazy Susan in center



Two fabulous 14" vases, one with peacock and spaniel and the other with pheasant with rabbit, Brownfield date code 1870



Members Marilyn Spencer and Wendy Mishne enjoy dessert amongst Gabrielle's incredible collection of tea sets. Most sets were complete, including those ever-elusive tea trays!



Spill vase by Brown-Westhead Moore, 6 1/2"



The Ehrenthal's used several whimsical majolica friends to help with the drink service

Two world class collection along with unbelievable hospitality from both the Flowers and the Ehrenthals! What a memorable day on Long Island! The drive back to the city was a bit more quiet. We were tired and ready to relax and reflect on all that we had seen and experienced during that wonderful day.

Duane and I had made a date to have dinner with Linda Ketterling and Peter Rollitt, along with David Tulk and daughter-in-law, Bridgett. Unfortunately, Bridgett and David had to deal with a parking problem with their van and never made it to dinner. We ate in the hotel restaurant, the Etrusca, a very elegant restaurant with great food and atmosphere. We were also joined by Amy Griffin, Maryanne Leckie and Darci Iola, since we all needed to be ready for the official beginning of the convention with MajoliCake and Coffee.



David and Donna Reis opened our Member presentations at MajoliCake and Coffee

At 7:30 p.m., after a short , "meet and greet", our presenters, Donna and David Reis gave us a Power Point presentation entitled, "No Teapots or Dead Animals, Please", giving us a mere inkling into what we would see when the entire group of MIS Convention attendees visited their home on Saturday.

Donna and David gave us a glimpse into how their love affair with majolica began. Donna told us about growing up in a family who collected many things and of how her family's enthusiasm for collecting had inspired her and David to become the collectors they are today.



Minton fawn with tree trunk flower holder, modeled by Paul Comolera in 1875

David told an amusing story of the arrival of the Minton fawn. The piece was purchased, sight-unseen, and was "dropped off" at their home. When it came in through the front door, it looked so perfect in the entry, it has never moved into the living area, but stands to welcome family and guest and it serves as the overture to the dazzling symphony of majolica which awaits throughout their home.

Donna spoke about her love of oyster plates, servers and other sea items even though their family keeps a kosher home.

David and Donna hunt for live animals....in the ceramic form!



The Reis's single tiger in rest pose
by Brown Westhead Moore C 1877



The Reis's single tiger in protection mode
by Brown Westhead Moore



Donna Reis listening to collector's stories,
flanked by the Minton Peacock,
C 1873, modeled by Paul Comolera

Connecticut member, Paul Lauer, followed the Reis's presentation and gave us a most entertaining peek into his collection, entitled, "Big is Beautiful."



Paul Lauer comically explains -
"sometimes I say vase and sometimes
I say vahse, for no apparent reason."

His and Elizabeth's collection and exploits as a collector were enormously entertaining. One collector story went something like this - "When I came home, I told Elizabeth that we were about to make the steal of the century at a "hick" auction to which no one was paying the slightest attention. Right! When we arrived

PARIS INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION. 45
We give on this page some of the very varied works of Messrs. BROWN-WESTHEAD, MOORE & Co., of Caudron Place, Staf-



fordshire. We shall engrave other of their excellent productions. However, by a very marvellous achievement in pottery—a group Here we only insert a few of their lesser works, surmounted, of two Tigers. It is meant to show the power of the works in

Now, the hunt is on to find this piece with two tigers
formed as one huge piece

at that "hick" auction, we found Wedgwood dealers from NY, Philadelphia, Chicago, LA, and even London. Half the local Wedgwood world was there. We purchased it, obviously, but it was far from the steal of the century. "



**The Lauer's Minton - Pair of Jardinières and Bases
32 3/4" tall**



**The Laure's Sarreguemines Majolica Font
38" high x 29 1/2" diameter**

Friday, the second group of MIS members took the tour to Long Island which left those of us who had toured on Thursday, a day to, once again, enjoy the city. Duane and I ate lunch in Little Italy and then made our way to the New York University area, stopping off in Washington Park to listen to a group of young musicians play Dixieland. They entertained with expected instruments except that the expected string bass was, instead, a wash tub bass. The group filled the park with tunes like, "This Little Light of Mine", and "I'll Fly Away". When their set ended, we made our way to the apartment of Hubert Des Forge, a visit we had long anticipated.



Oscar Moore, Hubert Des Forge and Wanda are all smiles when surrounded by majolica beauty

Once again, Duane and I were confronted with the most magnificent collection of majolica, mostly French, of course! Hubert has a collection of French figural pitchers which includes even the most rare. Shelf after shelf, row after row, of animal pitchers and human form pitchers, as well as tea pots in the form of a human face. The dining room, which was our entry point into the apartment, was decorated with many flower pieces made by Massier. The chandelier was not an antique, but, the perfect appointment, a huge butterfly!



Hubert's wall of French figures

The apartment was also filled with coveted cachepots at least one huge Massier rooster, umbrella stands and too many other wonderful things to begin to describe. We spent a most relaxing but exciting afternoon with Hubert and his partner, Oscar Moore.



These two umbrella stands flank the fireplace

We saw photos of his apartment in Paris and discussed his relationship with Robert Lehr, one of the founding members of the Society, and Robert's, wife, Sophie, whom we never met. Those of you who did know Sophie, speak of her with great admiration and affection! Hubert told of how as a young man in Paris, he had introduced his friend, Robert, to Sophie, an introduction which led to a long and exciting life for the Lehr's.



Some of the feathered friends, found throughout Hubert's apartment

Just when it was time for our visit to end, the rain came pouring down, so we settled back into conversation until the rain slackened and we could get a cab back to the hotel.

The evening was one we would share with MIS officers. Again, we enjoyed an evening with great

food and great company with the team who work at making the Society one that appeals to our members from across the USA, as well as France, England, Australia and Canada.



Carol Harkess presented their collection

Saturday morning, we met for breakfast and two more member presentations. Carol Harkess bravely stood in for her husband, Jim, who had suddenly become ill.



Harkess' - collection tour was enchanting

Carol pulled off their presentation, "What We Collect", which contained many images, such as Elvis, connected to their home city of Memphis. Since Jim had not shared the presentation with Carol, so... she

enjoyed seeing the Power Point for the first time too! She performed like a pro. Bravo to Carol! Jim we loved your humor!

delightful insight into how she became a fan of majolica and some other favorite things.



Fabulous Copland centerpiece with darling putto candleholders



Two bunny mugs set Carlin on her collecting path



Déjà Who - Jim's humor was fun



Bill and Carlin Grant



Dr. Harkness' restoration "laboratory"

Texas member, Carlin Grant, followed with her presentation of "Majolica and Some of My Other Favorite Things." Her presentation was delightful and showed her great diversity in collecting. She gave us a



The Grant's dining room where Japanese imari and English staffordshire, along with English porcelain work in ensemble with green majolica



A peek into Carlin and Bill's delightful and diverse majolica collection



Carlin's Bug Toys are some of her favorite things

Following the presentations, Ed Flower, with the help of our own Society "Vanna", Joan Stake, held a mini-auction to benefit the Karmason Library Fund. Thanks to the members who brought pieces to be auctioned, we had a lively, though short auction, and gained additional funds to benefit our new library.



Amy Griffith pauses to admire the view along the drive up to Donna and David Reis's home

A When the auction ended, it was time to board the buses to see the collection of David and Donna Reis in Rye, New York.

All of the members entered the house as one group, and roamed freely, getting to view, first hand, the objects which Donna and David had described in their talk on Thursday evening. There were so many fabulous pieces, with the Minton peacock at the top of the rung. Piece after piece of fabulous majolica, carefully selected and tastefully placed in settings that felt so "right". Hopefully the pictures will tell the story for those of you who were not able to be there.



The Reis's dining table, adorned with putti candelabras and a table center with putti, served members with scrumptious and beautiful lunch

Donna and David served a wonderful lunch of salmon and grilled asparagus along with Cesar salad and then....dessert and coffee.

Please send your comments and material for the newsletter to:

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Meliss Bennie, of Christies, gives us prospective on the Henri Deux barometer and thermometer, designed by Charles Toft and made by Minton for the Vienna Exhibition of 1873



Choisey-le-roi poultry in the Reis's kitchen. Note also their choice of the 19th century English majolica tile border which surrounds the room

The day was bright and sunny and the temperature was delightful, which allowed members to eat inside amongst all of the marvelous majolica, or outside, enjoying a fabulous day in May, while visiting with fellow majolica lovers. David gave us a tour of his huge garage, even starting up the car engines so we could hear them purr! All too soon, it was time to head back to the city to get ready for the Majolica Heaven Preview Party which was to begin at 6:30.

As the doors to Majolica Heaven opened, and we viewed the dealers standing with their displays of rare and striking majolica, you could hear the members utter sighs and moans of sheer pleasure at the sight. All too soon, the cocktail hour and majolica viewing ended and members dispersed to a night on their own in the city.

Duane and I experienced a most memorable dinner and evening with majolica friends, old and new. Walking back to our hotel after dinner, we remarked at how privileged we feel, just being a part of the MIS and all the special people and the special times we experience with our majolica friends. Thanks for the memories!

Sunday morning arrived and it was time for another group breakfast, and a short business meeting. Gabrielle thanked all the participants and announced the destination for 2010 and then.... the *Heavens* opened for business! Collectors scurried from dealer to dealer, locating that special piece or pieces which they coveted for their collection. After seeing three world-class collections, plus opportunities to see at least two other fabulous member collections in one week-end, lust for majolica was in the air!

As the time approached for us to leave, we reluctantly went back to our room for the final time, and gathered



Michael Ehrenthal, Ed Flower, along with Gabrielle Ehrenthal, Melissa Bennie, with Brian Romano and partner, Ray Losure, and Hubert Des Forges, drinking in the delightful weather which was perfect for outdoor dining and bonding

our luggage for the trip back to Dallas. Rain was now falling at a rapid pace as we got into our cab and headed for the airport. We looked at the rain as good closure for what had been a bright and sunny week-end filled with fun and laughter with our special friends in MIS.

Not to "rub it in," but, I also want to mention one more thing that you missed if you did not attend this year.....members were also invited to visit Thea and Richard Benenson's new apartment and enjoy their wonderful collection of majolica in its new setting. Thea and Richard had graciously opened their former apartment to members during the first MIS visit to NYC . The Benenson's collection looked amazing in its new setting!

Many members also took the opportunity to visit with Joan Stake in her apartment for an informal viewing of her outstanding and ever growing collection.

Save the date for May 2010. Our destination is once again, Big D! Texas hospitality and new memories await! Don't miss out on all the fun! Be there to make new friends and new memories together. Reading about what happens at MIS Convention is fun, but nothing compares with the pleasure of seeing the majolica and experiencing the convention fun first hand!

Auction Results

By Duane Matthes

This last spring while attending Michael Strawser's Majolica Auction I saw an event that surprised me. A piece of American majolica manufactured by Morley and Company, of Ohio reached a hammer price of \$3,000. It was a piece that I had never seen before, the extremely rare, figural dog door stop, with a minor hairline to the base us 9 1/2" tall.



Additionally, I recently saw a second amazing auction event and this one was online. A seller from Sussex, England listed and sold a fragment described as Italian majolica by George Jones for an astounding \$315.50. It was a very nice and sizable chard, and it did get 18 bids (indicating a bidding war occurred) so the seller was not the only person that thought it was special. The last straw was that the UK shipping

would be £12 and the US, shipping was \$59! This is two "Matters" issues in a row where I have given you ideas of what to do with your broken Majolica.



Majolica Baby at Heaven 2009

By Wanda Matthes

Parisians, Corinne and Fredrick have been attending the MIS Convention, as a couple for several years. Since last years convention, son Leo has arrived. He seems pleased to be nestled appropriately inside the Minton passion flower jardinière.



Visiting the Flower's home



Visiting the Ehrenthal's home



Visiting the Reis' home



Visiting the Benenson's home



Visiting the Stacke home



Members loved Heaven 2009,
Make your plans for Dallas 2010!



What's Going on at the Web Site

By Duane Matthes

The 2008 chart below presents several facts to us. First it informs us that 6,360 global visitors have visited our public web site, www.MajolicaSociety.com in 2008. These web visitors came from a total of 2,466 cities. With an average 2008 membership of around 400 members, the logic of elimination, helps us determine that our web site was visited from over 2,000 unique cities that we have no membership. People trying to learn more about Victorian Majolica. Visitors were primarily from the US, Europe, and Australia. But notice, the visits from South America, India, Middle East and a series of Asia Pacific counties.



This second chart details the visits from the United States. It displays that we had 4,273 visits from 1,738 U.S. cities. So the same logic from above applies here. Our site was visited by well over a thousand U.S. cities that we have no membership. Additionally, it shows heavy visits from the New York to Washington corridor, North Texas, Florida, Chicago and the West Coast. Also 67% of all visitors came from the U.S. Your Web is at work - spreading the news about Victorian Majolica.

