



The Quarterly Publication of the Majolica International Society

Majolica Matters

www.MajolicaSociety.com

June 2010

Majolica International Society Convention 2010, was amazing! We hope that you will enjoy all the photographs throughout this edition, thanks to Maryanne Leckie, Frances Cordell, Bob King, Donna Reis, and Duane Matthes. If you look closely, you will see lots of smiles, because we really had fun!

Heaven 2010 was beyond compare with dealer Charlie Washburn passing over ownership papers, of a never before seen "grand champion" Minton Majolica Hound, to Donna and David Reis.



The Convention Mini-Action was a huge success, netting the Society \$3,255. Thanks to all who donated pieces and all who purchased them.



The George Tinworth 1876 Centennial pulpit. Donna Corbin told us these monumental pieces of Doulton stoneware were sadly, destroyed.

A long time ago, in a pottery far, far away...

In Dallas we heard the real story of American Majolica.

2011 Convention plans! Things are changing!

The Society's plans to hold the next annual meeting in the Philadelphia area near the end of October 2011. It is our hope that this change of date and the choice of a meeting place, central to many of our members, might be more conducive to bringing a larger group of our members together, yet still fit into the Majolica Heaven dealers' schedules. More news to come on this announcement.

Inside this issue:

- MIS Convention-Dallas, TX, 2010
... Why We Choose to Attend
- Photographing Your Majolica
- MIS Dues Process
- Web Sites to Visit
- My First Convention
- Meet Heaven's 2010 Dealers
- Christie's Auction - Sep. 23, 2010
- Sharing - 1992 Historical Photos

MIS Convention-Dallas, Texas, 2010 . . .

Why We Choose to Attend

by Wanda Matthes

For some collectors, getting the quarterly newsletter, *Majolica Matters*, and receiving email updates by *Majolica Mail* and visits to the web site, www.majolicasociety.com are enough. But for some of us, missing the event would leave us with a huge feeling of loss.

The first convention that Duane and I attended was the eighth annual meeting which was held in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, April 26-April 28, 1996. Some of the people we met at this meeting were: Marilyn Karmason and Joan Stacke authors of , *Majolica, A Complete History and Illustrated Survey*, published in 1989; Helen Cunningham, author of *Majolica Figures*, actually published in 1997; Nicolas Dawes , author of *Majolica*, 1990; Marshall Katz, author of *19th Century French Followers of Palissy* with Robert Lehr; and Rita and Ian Smyth of Britannia in London's Grays Market. The speaker was Eric Knoles, auctioneer at Bonham's in London. The home collection which members visited was that of John and Beckie Boraten. Their collection was one of the most complete collections of Etruscan Majolica ever assembled. At our table for dinner that Saturday evening sat, now past president, Phil English and MIS Librarian, Deb. This is how friendships begin!

If you wish to learn all of the details of that meeting, please go to www.majolicasociety.com and you will find, in the members' area, all of the *Majolica Matters*, published since the beginning of our Society in 1989.

Now to our 22nd annual convention, April 29th-May 2, 2010, at the Adolphus Hotel, in Dallas, Texas... The convention officially began on Thursday evening, April 29, with registration and a meet and greet, which we call *Majolica Cake and Coffee*. Member representative, Darci Iola, had prepared the name tags and packets for the group, both of which were terrific! She could only be at the Convention in bits and pieces because of a family obligation, but she and husband Randy, did their part in welcoming MIS to Dallas. President, Gabrielle Ehrenthal was unable to travel, due to illness, so Joan Stacke Graham took on the presidential role to get us started. There were two member presentations that evening. The first by, "yours truly", Wanda Matthes. Mine was called, "Defining One Part of my Majolica Ensemble," which focused on the human figures in my collection. One of a pair of pieces I discussed in the presentation was the Hogarth figurers, Minton shape #293 and #294. Why are they called Hogarth? This question and research

on it kept Melissa Bennie of Christies, New York, awake during the wee hours of the next morning.



Minton salts, shapes #293 and #294, referred to as Hogarth figurers

The second presentation of the evening was by Laura Pate, owner of Brown Mountain Restorations in Dallas. Laura spoke on Techniques of Ceramic Restoration or, as her presentation was titled "Old Pots, New Tricks". She gave us a very interesting and informative talk and power point presentation on restorations practices of the past and those currently used. When her talk ending, she graciously took questions from a very interested audience.



Laura's presentation included this ceramic restoration example of "before" and "after".



Laura Pate of Brown Mountain Restorations, Dallas



Laura Pate used this majolica fish repair to show "Fabrication" (lower left) and then the process of building up the colors to create the exact outcome the original artist accomplished.

Friday morning began early with breakfast at 9:00 and registration continued for those members who had arrived after the Thursday evening event. By 10:00 a.m., members had enjoyed a leisurely breakfast at the hotel and were ready to board the bus for our tour of member homes in the city.



Hugo Lonitz foxes chased ducks around and across the Miller dining room table

Our first destination was the home of member, Lois (Sis) Miller, whose 1924 Tudor style home was designed by architect, Anton Korn. The home is rich with architectural elements and utilizes replaned oak timbers from the grand Oriental Hotel which had been torn down. The home has a warm and cozy feeling, with many wonderful pieces of Black Forest, Staffordshire and yes...majolica. Animals, being the common thread which runs throughout the collection.



The chestnut dish, blue tit on oak leaf, and the double bunny table server, all by Minton, among other great and rarely seen pieces at the Miller home



Lioness center piece by T.C. Brown-Westhead, Moore & Co., which, like the model pictured on the cover of "Staffordshire Pottery", by Robert Cluett, was likely signed by the artist MVM (Mark V. Marshall)

After much oohing and aahing and stirring intellectual discussions amongst the members about majolica (many pieces seldom seen or seen for the first time) we reluctantly took our leave and again boarded the bus for the short drive to the home of member Barbara Hunt Crow.



Hostess, Barbara Hunt Crow lunches with Abra and Jim Wilkin



This miniature Welch dresser hangs on the dining room wall of Barbara's home and displays a collection of miniature pitchers, butter pats and Palissy items

Barbara's home is also Tudor in design but was designed and built during the last decade to fit snugly and unobtrusively into its historic neighborhood. This home is that of a discriminating but also an eclectic collector. From the first step into the foyer you see the collection of blue and white transfer ware plates and platters and pieces of varied shapes flowing across the open expanse of the curved stairway. Throughout the house one finds collections

of English oriental ironstone, stick spatter ware with scenes of rabbits and frogs, Staffordshire and English cottage ware and yes.....majolica! In addition, we found children's and miniature chairs placed, here and there, throughout the house. From the moment you arrive at her front door, you know that Barbara loves rabbits. The mat at her front door is in the shape of a running rabbit! Many pieces also show her love the lions and squirrels. The house was full of whimsical things and wonderful surprises around every corner.



Morgan Alred and Lauren Shuford Laughry of Dallas Auction Gallery enjoying lunch at the Crow home with MIS Librarian, Deb English and husband Phil



Vicki & David Koble of Bartlesville, OK, share lunch with John Brinker & Denise Buysse, Oceanside, CA, Mike Foley, Barrington, RI, and George Nalle, Austin, TX

Barbara provided us with a beautiful and tasty lunch and what a delicious treat that was! There was a place set for every MIS member. Some members in the dining room, some in the breakfast room, some in the sun room or family room and others enjoyed having lunch in the outdoor areas. It was fun to visit the different areas and see members chatting together in a rather intimate way, much like a majolica "family" reunion. When members had drunk in the ambiance of the house and grounds and had eaten a fabulous

spring time lunch, it was again time to say goodbye and board the bus.

Since the afternoon was still young and we were not due at the Ryder home until about 2:00 p.m., we were able to stop at a couple of our favorite antique shops in the area. First we visited Lover's Lane Antique Market, at 5001 West Lovers Lane, then to Antique Row at 5013 Lovers Lane. Both of these shops have a good inventory of majolica and many other wonderful antiques. This was our first chance to make a purchase. When it was time to go, members climbed back onto the bus with packages and big smiles.

By now it was nearing 2:00 p.m. and we were due at the home of member Mary Lynn Ryder. When her front door opened, we were confronted with the tantalizing smell of freshly baked cookies and Mary Lynn standing in the doorway to welcome us. Her sense of hospitality made us all feel at home. She was ready and eager to allow all of the attendees to the convention a chance to see how another true collector personalizes her home, making it like none other! Heidi Holloman, dear friend and fellow MIS member, was there to help greet members and answer the inevitable questions which always arise on an occasion like this. And, yes, members soon discovered the source of that tantalizing smell. Sitting on the kitchen counter, there were dozens of freshly baked cookies ready to be munched.



In the dining room of the Ryder home, we see this monumental Minton majolica punch bowl, decorated with daisies, holding a whimsical floral display with daisies. In the background we can see her striking display of American pressed glass.

Mary Lynn, like Sis and Barbara, is an eclectic collector. Her collections are made up of Mason's Ironstone, Staffordshire, fabulous art, antique weather vanes and American pressed glass along with a world class collection of both Palissy and Victorian majolica. ... and in the basement, members found pewter and other Early American treasures. Her guest house

displays her late husband, Charlie's collection of toys and iron door stops.



This huge (approximately 15") and rare monumental charger with mussels and fern by Manuel Mafra and Son, C 1870-1887, at the Ryder home commanded a lot of attention



The Ryder dining room table was set for a feast, using majolica servers, candlesticks etc., all there to thrill majolica lovers.

Our last stop on this event packed day was a visit to the auction gallery of Heritage Auction for a preview of their first auction of Victorian Majolica, which was to take place on Wednesday, May 26. Karen and Tim Rigdon, new MIS members and staff members at Heritage, were there to greet us and allow us to inspect the auction house's nearly one hundred lots of Victorian Majolica and Palissy ware. They too served food and beverages so, members were never allowed to feel hunger or thirst!

By the time our visits came to an end, members reluctantly climbed back onto the bus for the short ride back to the hotel, leaving a little time for a nap and a chance to freshen up before time for dinner on our own in the city. This was such a special day! Hopefully our many photos will allow you to a peek at some of the many fantastic things that we saw and the experiences we had during this, our first full day of the 22nd Annual MIS Convention.

Saturday morning breakfast began at 8:30 a.m. to allow for a full morning of programs. The first event of the morning was the mini-auction conducted by Program Chair, Ed Flowers, which was held to benefit the Karmason Library. The auction was a rousing success and it netted the Society \$3,255. This money will be used on equipment and research for our digital photo library, which is in the process of being built by MIS Librarian, Deb English and member George Weeks. These documented images will appear on the institution site, ARTstor, as well as the MIS web site. Deb gave a report on the progress being made on this monumental library project. A Power Point program was running in the room when other presentations were not in progress, showing the six hundred library entries already completed, giving members a firsthand look at what a library entry will look like.

Item Name Majolica Teapot, Spikey Fish, Blow Fish, Minton

MISKLUDE 72

Medium Ceramic, glazed earthenware
 Function Table, Tea
 Manufacturer Minton
 Artist Designer England
 National Origin England
 Manufacture Date 1878
 Description 10" L, 7" D, 5" H
 Ovoid fish body on tapered green base of waves. The dorsal fin houses the brown seaweed handle. A similar branch protrudes from mouth. Finial is spiky fin and is painted blue to match the graduated blue of the fish.
 Pink interior.
 Marked: "MINTONS", date code for 1878, British Registry Mark.



Notes Reproductions are less crisply modeled and the glaze is often weak and sunny. Sometimes they are a little smaller. The eyes are often badly and intensely painted. Reproductions are common. The registeral tea pots are very well detailed.
 Condition problems: Often the finial has been badly chipped and repaired, or even replaced. Look for sharp points on the fins. Repaired finial OK, if the damage is not structural.
 Aesthetic Movement, Asian influence

Reference

Object Authority The English Collection Serial# 72 Image Authority Majolica Society
 Image Date November 2008 Image Type Digital Image Status permanent

Minton's "Spikey Fish" tea pot is an example of the over 600 items that have been photographed and documented for inclusion into our Karmason Library

Please take the time to read Deb's article on specifications of the entries included in this edition.

The final event of the morning was a presentation of the history and the production of the premier maker of American majolica, Griffen, Smith and Hill, most often referred to as Etruscan Majolica, by author, Dimitrios Bastas. This colorful Power Point presentation was accompanied by Dimitrios' live voice, as well as, recorded narration and well-know classical music, which was perfect accompaniment to the presentation. Members applauded several times during the presentation and gave him a standing ovation at the end. Dimitrios had brought along about twenty copies of his two volume set of books, Etruscan Majolica, which were "sold out" too quickly.

Dimitrios' talk began: "I bought my very first piece of majolica in 1984 in a mall antiques show in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Like many of you here, that first piece was a begonia leaf, in my case...an Etruscan majolica begonia leaf. That began a love affair with American Majolica that has lasted for twenty-five years. We have all heard the basics of the Etruscan

Majolica story as they have been repeated time and time again:

The pottery operated from 1879 to 1890.

They won an award for a majolica piece at the 1884 World's Fair.

A&P supermarkets purchased large quantities of their majolica as premiums.

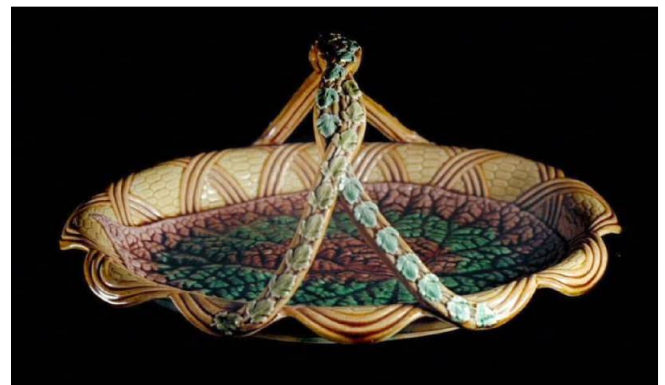
The pottery caught fire and burned down in 1890.

That's the story we all know. Unfortunately, like many stories repeated over time, the story has its root in fact, but time has blurred the details and left us with a story as much fiction as fact. This morning I will introduce to you the REAL story of Etruscan Majolica."

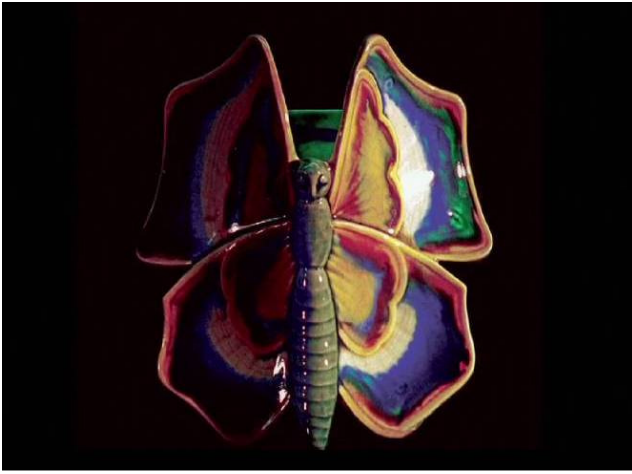


A long time ago, in a pottery far, far away...

Author Dimitrios Bastas opened his "American Majolica" presentation with these flying graphics, accompanied by the theme from "Star Wars". He had his audience "at attention", right from the start.



Dimitrios' Power Point presentation included this delicate and rare basket with begonia leave on basket with twisted vine handle



This rare Griffen Smith & Hill butterfly wall pocket flew through Dimitrios' multimedia presentation



This brilliantly colored Griffen Smith & Hill swan sardine box allowed Dimitrios to demonstrate the glazes used by this American Company.

When Dimitrios's talk was finished, it was time to, once again, board the bus to explore the city. Today was shopping day! First we traveled North to one of the largest antique malls in the area, Forestwood Antique Mall, located at Forest and Inwood Rd. This is a very large multi-dealer shop so members had lots of shopping choices. Member, Linda Feld, was there to greet us with refreshments and lots of interesting majolica. When it was time to leave, there were many members boarding the bus with packages.

Our next stop was Snider Plaza Antique Shops, home of my business, Trilogy Antiques, which is located at 6929 Snider Plaza, near the campus of Southern Methodist University. This was also our lunch stop where members were treated to lasagna and salads at Amore's Italian Restaurant (next door) while others shopped for antiques at Snider Plaza Antiques. When both our appetite for food and antiques were satisfied, it was time to head back to our hotel.

Our bus took us on the scenic route through the beautiful neighborhoods of University Park and Highland Park, then back to the Adolphus Hotel downtown. When we reached downtown, we were

forced to travel a bit more slowly than we had planned, due to the long lines of protestors who were protesting against Arizona's new immigration law. Once back in the hotel, we had time to freshen up, relax a bit and prepare for the what we all came for... the Majolica Heaven Preview Party scheduled for 6:00-7:00 p.m.



Snider Plaza Antique Shops exhibited this marvelous miniature room setting, painstakingly assembled by dealer, Susan Brown. These intricately detailed miniatures of Victorian ceramics were smaller than the strawberries in the dessert



Jim and Carol Harkness, Memphis, TN, with David Tulk at the Majolica Heaven Preview Party



Ed and Marilyn Flower, Heidi Holloman and Carole Nalle at the Saturday evening Preview Party



President-elect, Laurie Wirth-Melliand, Hubert Des Forges, of NYC, and Jean Defrocourt of Paris discuss this huge Palissy lobster at the Preview Party



Wanda Matthes with Melissa Bennie of Christies, New York



This monumental platter, measuring 37" x 18 1/2" , by Alfred Renoleau, C 1894, displays amazing relief



The Saturday evening Preview Party gives members an understanding of how Majolica Heaven earned its name



MIS Secretary, Linda Foley and husband, Mike at Saturday's Preview Party admire the George Jones "Punch" punch bowl, while surrounded by a myriad of fabulous majolica pieces waiting to find new homes



Leave it to long-time dealer, Charlie Washburn, to locate this, never before seen, life-sized Minton dog



Marks from the dog's base, dating it at 1876



Massier Roosters "strutting their stuff"

"What? It's 7:00 p.m. already?" How time flies when one is totally absorbed in a fantastic display of majolica which our dealers had present to us, but at 7:00 p.m. sharp, it was time for our gala banquet.



Carole and George Nalle of Austin, TX



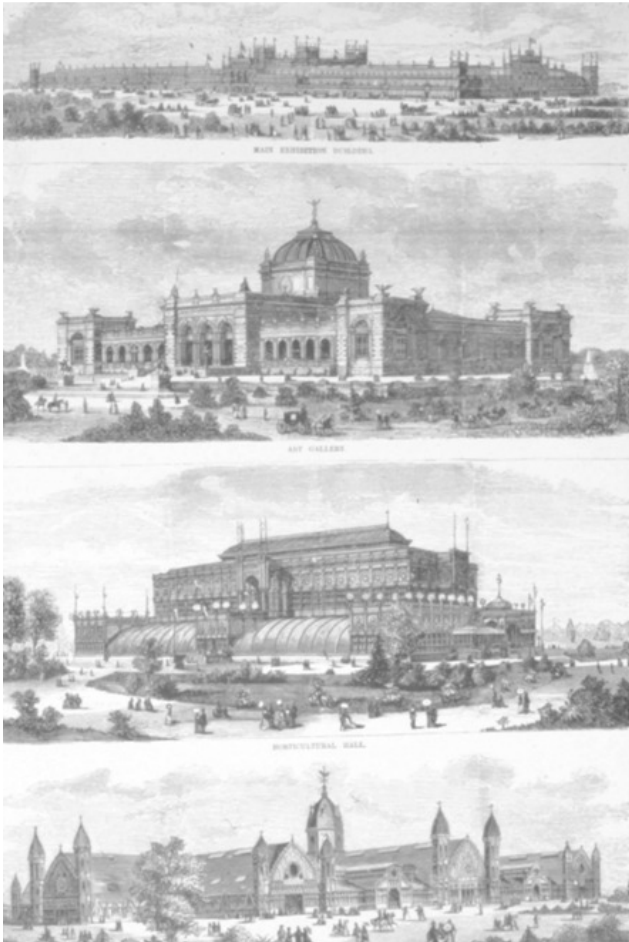
Laurie Wirth-Melliand, Susan Terral and Vicki and David Koble



New members, Karen and Tim Rigdon of Heritage Auction Gallery

Our key note speaker, Donna Corbin, Assistant Curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, spoke on "A Most Exquisite Display: European Ceramics at the Philadelphia Centennial International Exhibition 1876." Donna's talk and Power Point presentation was

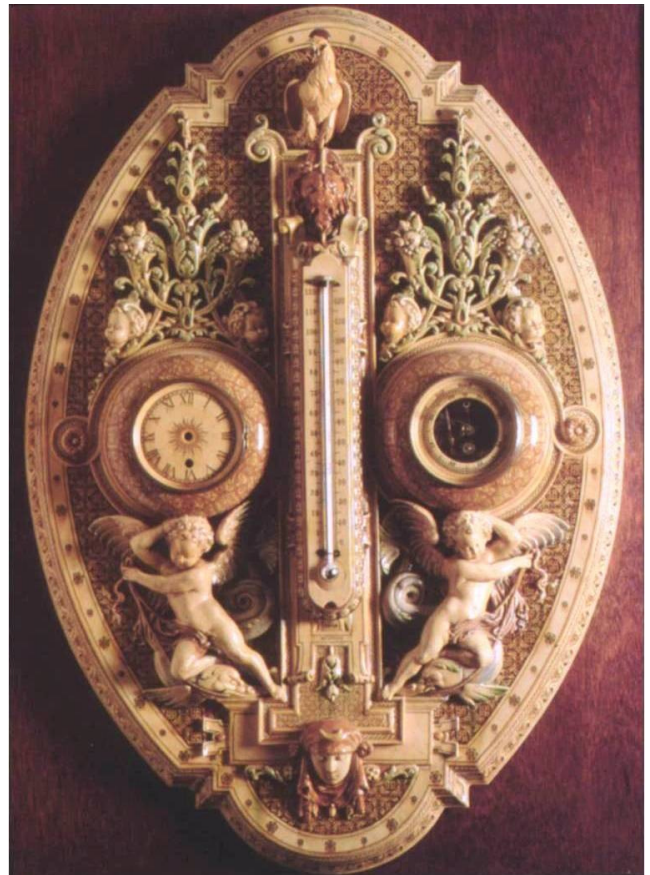
most interesting and engaging!



Donna Corbin shared prints of the, Philadelphia Centennial International Exhibition, 1876



Keynote speaker Donna Corbin, Assistant Curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art



Charles Toft specialized in Henri Deux ware at Minton and was responsible for the design of such amazing objects as this combination thermometer, barometer, clock that can be seen in the A.B. Daniell exhibit. The clock retailed for £166, not a small amount of money in the 19th century.



The Philadelphia Museum bought this platter for \$101.17 from the Barbizet stand at the Centennial. The dish imitates the work of the 16th-century French ceramist Bernard Palissy. The scale of the Museum's dish is very much that of the 19th century. At somewhere around 44" across, it is unlike anything made in the 16th century.



London merchant, A.B. Daniell & Son, Centennial stand. They represented the Minton, Worcester and Coalport factories. Minton majolica dominated.



George Tinworth was responsible for a number of objects that were exhibited at the Centennial including the wonderful bird nest plaque at the bottom of the Doulton stand photo.



Photo of the Henry Doulton stand. He sent some 1,500 pieces of pottery to the Centennial.

Donna Corbin asked, "What were the lessons of the 1876 Centennial Exhibition? This certainly is not an unreasonable question, given that from its inception, the educative benefits of such an event were paramount. William Morris, the great 19th-century reformer was of the opinion that 'the making of ugly pottery was one of the most remarkable inventions of modern civilization.' In *Masterpieces of the International Exhibition*, the author wrote, 'Industrial Art, which of course includes ceramics, does not fully achieve its end unless all articles of domestic use are redeemed from the hopeless ugliness into which they have fallen, so that our eyes shall be pleased and not pained by the surroundings of our daily life.' I leave you with this image of the Copeland Centennial vase to decide for yourselves."



W. T. Copeland & Sons Centennial Vase, circa 1876, measures 9 1/2"

Also in attendance, and our guest for the evening, was Kevin Tucker, the Margo Perot, Curator of Decorative Arts at the Dallas Museum of Art. When Donna's talk was finished, both Donna and Kevin engaged in the question and answer period with members.

Sunday morning, May 2nd, we met for a full breakfast at 9:00 a.m. and our Annual Business Meeting. Due to the illness and absence of our president, Gabrielle Ehrental, Phil English, past President, opened the meeting. The first order of business was the report of the nominating committee.

Joan Stacke Graham, past President and Nominating Chairman, announced that to facilitate the smooth running of the Society, outgoing board members will extend their terms to help new board members transition. Members with new board positions include:

Carolyn Brownawell - Secretary - elect
Jim and Carol Harkess-Co-Vice Presidents for Conventions - elect
Laurie Wirth-Melliand - President -elect
Charlie Washburne - Dealer representative

Present board members nominated for a second term include:

Amy Griffin - Treasurer
Maryanne Leckie - Vice President for Membership
Deborah English - Librarian
Duane Matthes - Webmaster
Wanda Matthes - Editor-in-Chief, Newsletter

Board members with extended terms include: Gabrielle Ehrental, President; Ed Flowers, Vice President for Programs; Linda Foley, Secretary.

After the membership approved the slate of officers, Laurie Wirth-Melliand, President-elect, assumed responsibility of the meeting. She called on Maryanne Leckie, VP Membership, who reported that while membership is down slightly and that it has been difficult to get regional meetings off the ground in a number of areas, the good news is that Darci Iola held a successful regional event in Texas and Donna Reis has agreed to become the Regional Rep for the whole Northeast including New England. Maryanne is looking for help getting a Midwest group started so, if you are interested in that position, please contact her.

The good news from our Treasurer, Amy Griffin, is that the Society is on sound financial footing and its funds are invested in an FDIC insured account (at a solvent bank!).

An extensive report on the wonderful progress of the Karmason Library was presented by Librarian, Deb

English, on Saturday, so at Sunday's meeting discussion was limited to how best to photograph your majolica pieces for submission to the Library.

Wanda Matthes, editor of this newsletter, is looking for volunteers to submit articles and photos for future issues. She particularly asked for photos of the first piece of majolica you ever purchased. If you can remember that far back, please get a photo to her and include a little information about how you lost your majolica virginity.

Following officer reports, Laurie opened a discussion on "Pushing the Passion", an attempt to "spread Majolica love" and attract new collectors to majolica. She emphasized that we particularly need to attract younger collectors...No offense to our senior members but we have to think about the future! An enthusiastic discussion followed which culminated in the naming of an ad hoc committee to follow up on suggestions for majolica outreach.

Donna Reis suggested that the Society set up a Facebook web page to allow further interaction among members and to better relate to the younger collectors who are regular Facebook users. As of the publication of this newsletter, we are now on Facebook!

facebook.com/majolicainternationalsocietyofficialpage
Thank you Donna!

Duane Matthes, our Webmaster, has promised that soon our website, www.majolicasociety.com, will point you to both our BLOG, karmason.blogspot.com, and to the new facebook page. Great news!

As a final order of business, Laurie announced the Society's plan to hold the next annual meeting in the Philadelphia area near the end of October 2011. It is our hope that this change of date and a meeting place, central to many of our members, might be more conducive to bringing a larger group of our members together, yet still fit into the Majolica Heaven dealers' schedules. More news to come on this announcement. There are many new and exciting things going on in the Society. We need your input. Please get online and share your thoughts!

I, along with all the other convention attendees, want to give a special thanks to our home, hostesses, Sis Miller, Mary Lynn Ryder and Barbara Hunt Crow for getting their homes and their collections ready to be shared with all of us and for making us feel so totally welcome. We would also like to thank Karen and Tim Rigdon who were responsible for arranging the preview of the upcoming majolica auction at the Heritage Auction Gallery.

I also want to give special thanks to MIS Secretary, Linda Foley, for giving specific details on the Sunday morning Business Meeting.

We are looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Wanda Matthes, Editor -- Majolica Matters!!!!

Tips for Photographing Your Majolica

By Deborah English

The goal is to produce photographs with the highest possible level of detail. They must also be able to reach ARTstor's considerable requirement for image size. We are trying to use ARTstor's standards for the MIS archive, so that ARTstor will have the broadest possible selection to use. Furthermore, as researchers begin using the MIS website, they will require a level of professionalism for their images. Several factors play a role in achieving this, and they will be explained here, along with suggestions for accomplishing successful pictures. That said, we are not professional photographers. We just do the best we can.

Digital photography is strongly urged. We have the capability to scan, but the results will never reach the standards for size and clarity that we need. We would choose to scan only when dealing with the rarest of opportunities to capture an image.

The big points are these:

1. Avoid distraction within the frame.
2. Provide adequate non/flash light.
3. Provide a stable surface, and use a backdrop.
4. The backdrop should be a pale color, and without pattern.
5. The camera should be parallel to the object, and it should be held steadily.
6. Fill the picture frame with the object. Close ups are good.

Suggested Materials

A digital camera capable of producing photographs at minimum 100 dpi. More is better.

A tri-pod to control handshake. Handshake is almost inevitable when taking pictures without flash. Tripods can be cheap or expensive. Go for the cheaper model, though make sure you can adjust its height. At photography supply stores. If you don't want to use a tri-pod, consider finding a stable place for the camera to rest while you click the shutter. An example could be the top of an arm chair.

A stable, raised area, such as a table, with enough room to support lighting and object. It should be high

enough that you can comfortably aim the camera head-on at the object.

At least two electric light sources. It will be much easier if you have photographer's lamps. You can buy the cheaper ones, if you like. They will work just as well as any. Otherwise, use two un-shaded household lamps. Use extension cords for greater light mobility.

A pale, plain (no fancy weave) cloth, or matte paper. You will need two yards for small to mid-sized objects. You can find the paper at art supply stores, and some gift wrap stores. Please, no dark colors and no white. I have a role of Martha Stewart paper that is working well for me. I also have some turquoise velvet that is pretty, but harder to use. A good on-line place for paper is: Paper Source.com

A lightweight, large board, such as foam core, to provide the foundation of your backdrop. Art supply stores, sometimes Staples. 24x36" is a good size for table pieces. You can also tape paper to the wall, if you choose. It probably won't work with cloth. You will need something like painter's tape to support the weight of cloth.

Clear plastic plate, easels, or supports.

Composition

We need pictures that deliver information clearly and quickly.

The photograph should have only one object in it. If you have a cup and saucer, photograph them separately, and then together. We will probably use all three shots. If you have clear display stands and easels, you can try to get them both into one frame, but it's a challenge.

Place the object at eye level with the camera, and so that the face of the lens is parallel to the front of the object. We need profile shots. I know you can't get every interesting bit into one shot, so don't try. You'll get bad perspective distortions. Take several shots. We have unlimited capacity to acquire photos. Consider photographing the backside. Please photograph the underside, even if there is no mark. Information about the glaze and materials can be important. This will not be necessary for Minton, George Jones, and Wedgwood. There is already much documentation for these companies. However, if you are blessed with an unusual or particularly strong set of marks, please include them.

Fill up the picture plane with the object, not the backdrop. Bring your camera close to the object without cropping anything. Leave a small area of backdrop. The camera sees all things equally, and valuable digital memory will be wasted on cloth.

Set your focus to automatic.

When photographing plates and platters, remember that the easel can be distracting. Clear plastic easels can be found at Michael's and in home furnishing stores. If you have them, they are a better choice because they don't hide any of the object.

Place large platters on the floor and stand over them, pointing the camera downward. This takes some acrobatic skill, but you will have less distortion.

Please notice that drapery becomes another element in the composition. Keep your backdrop anonymous. Do not use black or white backdrop. The details in the white areas of the majolica are lost with each of these. Try to find a pleasant pink or pale gray. I find these work the best. Pale turquoise is also good.

Monumental pieces are difficult to photograph. It may not be possible to provide a backdrop, but you can minimize distraction by removing other objects from the picture's frame. Look for small things like light cords, rug corners, etc. They are very noticeable in the picture. If you can get someone to help you, it might be possible to hold up a cloth behind the object. Wrinkles in the drapery are less problematic with large objects. Continue to try to balance the lighting. Take several shots to accommodate the details. You should take several long shots when doing monumental pieces. If the object is too large, don't feel obligated to get the mark, especially if the potter is well-known.

Light/No Flash

Ample light is essential. Without it, the camera cannot acquire the information it needs to make a clear picture.

Unfortunately, light from a flash causes a glare on the majolica's high glaze. It hides detail and is strongly discouraged.

After much experimentation, I have discovered that the best solution is to use at least two controllable light sources. Two tall, un-shaded household lamps can suffice, though if you have photographer's lights, use them; you can aim them to your choosing. Turn on all the lights in the room. This will add to the ambient light and help the camera pick up more information. Be sure there is no glare from the ambient light. Be wary of bright, unfiltered sunlight. It can be so bright as to throw everything else off.

Place the lamps on opposite sides of the object. This should reduce shadows cast by the object. Look through the camera viewfinder and judge how the lamp placement affects the shadows. If you see a prominent shadow, moving the closest lamp, either

forward or back, will likely minimize it. Small shadows are not a problem. Nor are shadows from underneath.

In the camera viewfinder, make sure you can see the details in white areas. If you can't, try moving the lamps. You may have to balance shadows and details. Turn off your flash function. It will want to work for you.

If you can, set your camera for automatic mid-range exposure. Do not use the portrait or landscape function. You can try the close-up option, but it might be too limited.

Little known art fact. Human eyes look for contrast. When contrast is found, the eye is attracted to it, satisfied that it has seen the view, and moves on. That is why a black and white graphic print is so dramatic: it can be understood quickly. The problem is, of course, that subtler details get subdued. The trick is to create as little dramatic contrast as possible so that the smaller details get a chance to be seen. Cameras work the same way. The pale backdrop creates less dark/light tension and allows the camera to 'see' the small stuff.

Setting up Your Stage, a Simple Suggestion

For small to mid-sized pieces, this has worked for me. Set a card table against a wall. You will need to prop up your backdrop high enough that it remains in the camera range. To do this, I used a piece of foam core board, taped paper to the back and draped it down the front to cover the table.

Then, under the paper, I slipped a shipping box to lift the horizontal plane to a more comfortable level. You can also sit on a stool. Put the two un-shaded lamps on either side, with room to move them around. Your own experimentation may produce a better solution.

Keep a dust cloth handy. You might want to use it.

For Your Mental Health

Take at least three shots for each picture. One will be the best. Take the main shot and all the related shots in succession, so they will be properly grouped and identified.

While you are photographing, keep a record of each object, its dimensions and marks. Have your records in the same sequence as the photographs in your camera. Don't try to do it later. It is very hard to re-create the order of the photo shoot and it takes much more time. If someone can be there to help, it will go quickly.

MIS Dues Process

MIS annual dues are managed by the date you originally joined MIS. If you join in June then your annual dues will be due the next June. We use three methods to communicate the status of your dues payments.

The first, and primary, is on your Majolica Matters mailing label. It will always carry your *paid through date*. The second is the dues notices we will send you with each Matters until your dues are paid for that calendar year. Finally, if you go past your *paid through date*, we send a *past due notice* that notifies you that dues are now "*past due*".

Thank you for prompt dues payments which make everything operate smoothly.

Web Sites to Visit

by Duane Matthes

- Don't waste another day without visiting this great American majolica web site:

www.etruscanmajolica.com

Make sure you visit the "SEE" and "LEARN" sections.

- Then go on over to our new public MIS facebook page:

www.facebook.com/majolicainternationalocietyofficialpage

The official public Facebook page of the Majolica International Society, visit and interact with other members.

- And if you've never been to the MIS BLOG

karmason.blogspot.com

The Majolica International Society's public BLOG for Victorian majolica news and updates from around the world.

- Then use your MIS password to visit the MIS private member area.
(email duane@emajolica.com for a password)

www.majolicasociety.com/memberarea

This web site is a storage site for all of our society historical documents, and always growing with more and more content.

- Last, visit the MIS Resource page

www.majolicasociety.com/resources.htm

Use this page to find majolica resources. If you're a member and don't find your LINK listed; that's a problem you can solve by contacting duane@emajolica.com to add your majolica resources link.

My First Convention

by Carmen Pattinson

Follow on from Presentations by Dimitrios Bastas, American Majolica and Donna Corbin, Associate Curator in the European Arts Department of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

It was really inspiring listening to the two presentations at the MIS convention in Dallas. Dimitrios Bastas really opened my eyes to American Majolica. I was thrilled to learn that the Hill and Smith, (from Griffin, Hill and Smith) were originally from Stoke-on-Trent, like myself. What was even more interesting was the fact that one of them had worked at Wedgwood. It was only the other day that I was comparing the two companies, and had noticed that Griffin, Smith and Hill had done "versions of", and in some cases, completely copied Wedgwood majolica. Well you learn something new every day!



Louis Marc Solon Pate-sur-pate c. 1870

On to Donna Corbin's presentation on "A Most Exquisite Display: European Ceramics at the Philadelphia Centennial International Exhibition 1876." Donna had mentioned the work of Louis Marc Solon - Pate-sur-pate, who's work I was familiar with. I knew he was the master of the technique, and was regarded as the best, ranked higher than George Jones' Pate-sur-pate by Schenk. I also knew that there was a family connection between Solon and Leon Arnoux (art director, designer and chemist at Mintons 1849-92) So when I returned home I got stuck into my reference book - The Dictionary of Minton by Paul Atterbury and Maureen Batkin. In my research, I

found out this interesting fact which links back to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



George Jones Pate-sur-pate by Schenck. c. 1880

Louis Marc Solon perfected his technique of Pate-sur-pate at Sevres. He exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 - and this is where he met Colin Minton Campbell, when Campbell bought Pate-sur-pate panels designed by him. This led to Solon joining Minton in 1870. This is where Louis Marc Solon met Leon Arnoux's daughter and married her. They had a son Leon Victor Albert Solon (1872-1957). Leon Solon (Leon Arnoux's grandson) received training at the Hanley School of Art, South Kensington and at the Minton factory, where he specialized in slip trailed decoration.



Minton Secessionist ware by Leon Solon and John Wadsworth. c. 1905

He became joint designer with Wadsworth of Minton Secessionist Ware. Leon Solon emigrated to America in 1909, where he worked in a variety of fields, including architectural decoration. His best achievement was the polychroming of the architectural and sculptural decorations of the Philadelphia Museum of Art building, and the Rockefeller Center in New York. Isn't that amazing that there is such a connection between Stoke-on-Trent and America.

I hope you found this as interesting as I did, especially as a few people were interested at looking at America's history.

Carmen Pattinson,
www.MoorlandAntiquesMajolica.com

Meet Heaven 2010 Dealers
by Duane Matthes

Hard work, gave us seven great international dealers at Majolica Heaven 2010. These people are more than dealers. They are our friends and our majolica mentors. They scower the earth to find the majolica that will fulfill our dreams.



Nebraska members, Al and Mary Lee Coco with London dealer, Jesse Davis



Dealer Charlie Washburn, Solebury, PA, with new members and first time attendees, Sandy Steeley and Debbie Venditto from Houston, TX



First time Heaven dealer, Carmen Patterson, from West Yorkshire, England



Parisian dealers Jean Defrocourt and Philippe Meunier with Texans, Frances Cordell and Wanda Matthes and author Joan Stacke from NYC



Dealers Celso DeOliveira, Solebury, PA, and Linda Ketterling, Toledo, OH, along with Chicago, collector, Abra Wilkin

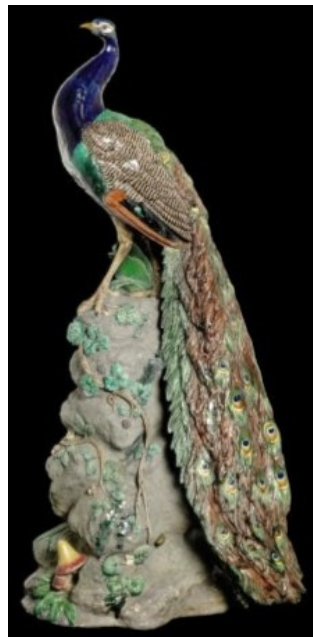


Dealers, David and Krissy Tulk of Madelena Antiques, North Farnbridge, England, with, Maryanne Leckie of Newport Beach, CA in the center



NYC member, Richard Benenson with Paris dealer Corinne Agesilas

Christie's Auction - September 23, 2010



Melissa Bennie at Christie's wants the membership to know that Christies London will feature a monumental Minton majolica peacock, modeled by Paul Comolera estimated at £50,000-80,000. The sale will be at King Street, London on September 23, 2010.

Contact Melissa Bennie
+1 212- 636- 2215
or
mbennie@christies

Sharing - 1992 Historical Photos

By Kathy Duane

While on a family trip to Washington, DC in 1992, I photographed the Minton Majolica display cases shown in the adjoining photos. This "permanent" exhibit was a recreation of the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.

The photos were taken for my own enjoyment and unfortunately, in retrospect, I should have photographed the entire Minton display case. Luckily, I did include the words "Minton Stokes on Trent", which are visible in the lower photo.

The exhibit was installed in the Smithsonian Institute's Arts and Industries Building. The building, shown below, was originally known as the U. S. National Museum. The "Castle" was designed in high Victorian architectural style by the Washington architectural firm of Cluss and Schulze. It opened in 1881, just in time for the inaugural ball of President, James A. Garfield.

I wish I had taken more photos of the "permanent" exhibit now that it has proved "not to be permanent."

Kathy Duane



The Arts and Industries Building, Washington DC,



The Smithsonian Minton exhibit as Kathy Duane photographed it in 1992.



The Smithsonian's Minton exhibit detail photo. Notice the rare beetle box, to the right of the male Hogarth salt cellar figure.



The Smithsonian Minton exhibit detail photo.

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