

October 16-19, 2014



Report

2014 Annual Meeting Mendenhall & Winterthur

By Kurt O'Hare with supplemental information provided by David Hoexter, Judie Sidall and Loren Zeller.

Thursday Evening's Kick Off and Friday's Full Day at Winterthur

I had been anticipating the TCC's annual conference at Mendenhall, Pennsylvania, and the Winterthur Museum in Delaware since it was announced in 2013. It was just the excuse I needed to make my first trip to Winterthur. Not wanting to repeat my late arrival of last year, I left early so as not to miss dinner and drove right into standstill traffic that was backed up from a very serious accident. So I sat there for the better part of an hour which, once again, put me in danger of missing dinner. Fortunately there was light traffic the remainder of the trip, and I made it in time for a cocktail and the salad course. Dinner was a lively event with everyone catching up with each other since last year's meeting. Following dinner, President Loren Zeller officially opened the meeting and introduced our

keynote speaker, Pat Halfpenny, who kicked off the first session with a rousing talk titled "*Perfecting Printing on Pottery*," which included a discussion of recently completed primary research revealing a large 17th century Italian transfer-printed serving platter. This put to rest once and for all the belief that transfer printing was first invented in England in the late 18th century. For the Anglophiles in our group, it was a bitter pill to swallow.

Once Pat wrapped up her talk – it was off to get some rest in preparation for the full day at the Winterthur museum. I had to register as a "day tripper" and stay in a hotel nearby because I was late to register for the meeting and, as a result, the Mendenhall Inn was fully booked. So, armed with my trusty GPS, I took a wonderful drive through the coun-

tryside in the moonlight to my hotel 20 minutes away.

Friday began with a full breakfast and a short bus ride to the Winterthur Museum. We were first wel-

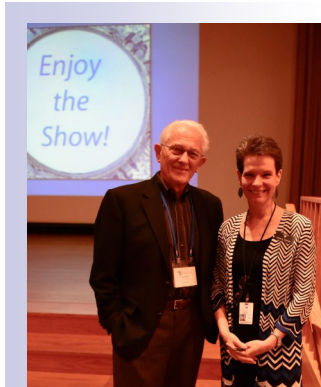
come to the Winterthur Exhibit, *Transferware: A Story of Pattern & Color*, by Leslie Grigsby and Pat Halfpenny. Following these presentations, we visited the Ceramics and Glass Galleries where the new Transferware Exhibition was installed. This wonderful exhibit was organized by Pat Halfpenny and Leslie Grigsby. We learned that the exhibit included selected items on loan from some TCC members. It was well conceived and beautifully installed.

The afternoon was devoted to tours and workshops which were excellent. Four

workshops were offered, from which attendees selected two. I had the opportunity to see the demonstration of bat printing by member Paul Holdway, former Head Engraver at



Keynote Speaker,
Pat Halfpenny



TCC President, Loren Zeller with
Leslie Grigsby, Winterthur's Curator
of Ceramics & Glass

comedy by Leslie Grigsby, Winterthur's Curator of Ceramics and Glass. Then Pat Halfpenny and Loren Zeller introduced the new TCC-NCS Online Exhibition, *Printed British Pottery & Porcelain*. This was followed by an introduction to the new



Paul Holdway
demonstrates bat printing

Thursday Evening's Kick Off and Friday's Full Day at Winterthur, (Continued)

Spode. It was a very informative 90 minutes in which Paul produced several different bat transfers on a variety of pieces including a mug. Kudo's to Paul for recreating the first English bat printing process and being able to demonstrate it so clearly.

I was also privileged to participate in the library workshop where, much to my surprise, we were actually able to handle the books and thumb through pages of some of the most important sources of transferware images. The two other workshops, "How Was it Printed?" conducted by Pat Halfpen-



Wintherthur's Librarian, Emily Guthrie, shares a rare volume of illustrations about the transfer printing process with conference attendees M. Sack, D. Hoexter, J. Siddall, S. Ferguson, & M. Weingberg

ny and "Before Transferware: Considering Earlier English Ceramic Designs" given by Leslie Grigsby were reportedly well received.

My third special event was a tour of the DuPont home, now the museum and, after walking through a fabulous collection of Schimmel Eagles and passing two red ware chargers with images of Washington and La Fayette created in slip, we ended the tour in the "blue room" which is the epicenter for American themed transferware. It was quite an experience with all manner of American views in dark blue on every



wall and every surface. There was so much to see elsewhere, so we didn't have time to dawdle. The remainder of the tour was a whirlwind visit to a fabulous spatter collection, the Teitelman collection of transfer decorated creamware, and the best exhibit of early American blown glass outside of Corning.

In between the tours I had the opportunity to visit the Campbell Soup Tureen exhibit with Bill and Terry Kurau as my personal docents. They walked me through the collection

and showed me the soup bowl that they had sold to the Campbell Soup Company many years earlier.

That evening, after another 3-course dinner at the Mendenhall Inn, Loren Zeller hosted the second annual "Show and Tell" segment which was as popular this year as last. After which this exhausted TCC member turned in for the night.



Above: Members Linsey Bates and Richard Halliday discuss Linsey's printed shards.

Right: Richard Crouch shows a rare bed pan printed with a Dr. Syntax pattern



One section of the Winterthur/TCC Transferware Exhibit, *Transferware: A Story of Pattern & Color*

Saturday at the Mendenhall Inn Conference Center

For some reason, my GPS never brought me back and forth from my hotel to the Mendenhall Inn the same way. This enabled me to see the countryside which is gorgeous. The roads in many cases were 1 – 1.5 lanes wide and traversed hill and dale which was a treat with Saturday morning being no exception.

I arrived in time for another hearty breakfast after which we found our way to the lecture hall for Pat Halfpenny's second talk, *Penny Plain-Twopence Colored: Transfer Printing and Color in the 18th and 19th Centuries*. She discussed and illustrated multi-colored transferware, their dates and cost which kept everyone awake with interest – no small feat at 9:00am after a big breakfast. Again Pat shared new findings which added more information and corrected some existing beliefs on the date that multi-color was first produced by potters. She also pointed out that transferware was not a cheap product manufactured for the masses. We learned from Pat that it was, in many instances, more expensive than hand painted wares. This was groundbreaking work which altered our understanding of the transferware universe!

After a short break, Loren Zeller gave an overview of 150 years of Printed British Pottery. Weaving an interesting path through the entire period the TCC is committed to, he was able to bring together the different forces that motivated potters to create the varied materials, designs and colors we all enjoy.

After another short break of coffee and more donuts we were entertained and educated on the subject of privy excavations by noted NPS archeologist, Jed Levin. Jed's talk was titled *In the Shadow of Inde-*

pendence Hall: The Archeology of 'We the People', and introduced the extensive NPS studies of the National Constitution Center site in Philadelphia. The talk was very interesting and illustrated how important outhouses are to our understanding of the lifestyles and lives of 18th and 19th century Philadelphians, and how much Transferware ended up being disposed of in these "necessaries". Jed also taught us that archeologists have a great sense of humor.

After a very good buffet lunch in the main Mendenhall Inn dining room (I always eat too much at buffets) it was back to work with an interesting lecture by Deborah Miller, another archeologist from the NPS whose topic was: *Tanta-*

her colleagues at the Center utilize the TCC's *Pattern & Source Print Database* for their research.

After a short recess – the Conference got down to serious club business with the Annual Business Meeting which was presented to a significantly smaller crowd. Perhaps everyone was tired after the buffet or figured they needed time off to digest the information delivered by the day's speakers; whatever the reason, those that were interested attended the presentation. Overall the news was positive. Board members reported the following: membership was strong, thanks to Judie Siddall, our Membership Chair; the Database continues to grow in size and quality (thanks to Connie Rogers, General Editor, and her intrepid staff of editors); Michael Weinberg, our Bulletin Editor, brought everyone up to date on the Bulletin (which gets better every year); David Hoexter, our Internet Activities Chair, discussed our digital efforts including traffic building, user levels, and the club's use of social media. Loren Zeller gave a "state of the club" overview including the financial portion (Klaus Zech our treasurer was unable to attend); and Frank Davenport, our Development Chair, discussed a

new relationship with Schiffer Books that would offer members a 20% discount on books through the end of 2014.

Then it was off to the DuPont Country Club for a cocktail hour and 3-course dinner. I left stuffed and happy, as I suspect were many others. One fact is certain – everyone eats very well at these meetings.

As I drove to my hotel via a different route that included a covered bridge, I realized

that time was flying by too quickly and, before I could blink twice, the conference would be over.



Presenter, Deborah Miller, National Constitution Center, Philadelphia

lizing Transfers: Printed Ceramics from the National Constitution Center Site. Taking us back to the time before the site was developed; she discussed life in 18th and 19th Century Philadelphia and the types of ceramics used by different segments of the population, which included a free black business owner. Deborah wove a picture with interesting anecdotes and facts that kept everyone interested, involved and chucking. She also demonstrated how she and



Members enjoy dinner at the DuPont Country Club

Sunday Events



Sunday Show & Sale

I was happy to see that everyone was wide awake for Sunday breakfast which was followed by a very interesting and spirited talk titled *Social Media and its Benefits for Collectors*.



Nick Routson Lectures on the Importance of Social Media for Collectors of Transferware

Nick addressed the importance of social media in attracting new and younger members in the digital world and how important publishing our information online is for the developing interest in Transferware. Nick presented examples of the use of new media and technology in an easy-to-understand conversational manner which was much appreciated. Not everyone agreed that the Internet is the future of the antiques business but everyone was informed on the issues. A spirited Q&A followed. Our final session introduced a new format to

the TCC; three short fifteen-minute presentations on a variety of topics. Connie Rogers discussed *Building the TCC Database* in which she reviewed some of the interesting challenges and discoveries made by the database editors; Judie Siddall presented *Pots, Prints and Posts*, which was about blogs with lots of transferware information; and Michael Weinberg ended the session with an interesting review of the *Erie Canal on American Historical Staffordshire*.

Then came the long-awaited TCC Raffle which was organized by Frank Davenport, Leslie Bouterie and Peg Mauzy. Six wonderful items were raffled off and it was reported that the raffle raised over \$1,200 in support of the club's educational activities.

Then came the last two events: our



Susan Ferguson and Frank Davenport Draw Names for the Winners of the Raffle Items

boxed lunch and the Transferware Show and Sale which always ends the meeting on a high note.

The boxed lunches were the best I can remember and the Sale was represented by many fine dealers. Since it was a convenient travel distance by car for many of the sellers, the goodies were in abundance. There was plenty of room to wander around the sales tables. Checkbooks were out and smiles were on many faces. And yours truly was able to snap a number of pictures for the TCC database.

As another successful conference wrapped up – we all expressed our appreciation to DeeDee Dodd and Karen Beare for putting together a tremendous show. And as for DeeDee – she was literally everywhere at once making sure a great time was had by all. And just think: Next year we get to visit the V&A museum in London and travel to the land of the potteries in Staffordshire as part of our meeting activities!

Photos for this report were provided with thanks to Larry Bouterie and Kurt O'Hare.

