

2007 TCC Annual Meeting Hartford, CT

A Report by Jackie Overman

Those attending the eighth annual meeting of the Transferware Collectors Club (TCC) experienced four days of non-stop learning activities, including the optional-day site visits, eight lectures, two annual-meeting site visits, and the show and sale. An unplanned highlight of the meeting was the glorious fall colors in the Hartford area for all to enjoy. We owe Fred and Peggy Sutor abundant thanks for organizing yet another successful meeting.

Thursday, October 18, 2007

Following registration, friendships were renewed and new ones made during the social hour and dinner. After dinner, Jessie Spiegel, Personal Insurance Appraiser with Chubb Group of Insurance Companies, gave the first lecture of the meeting entitled **"Insuring Your Collection."**

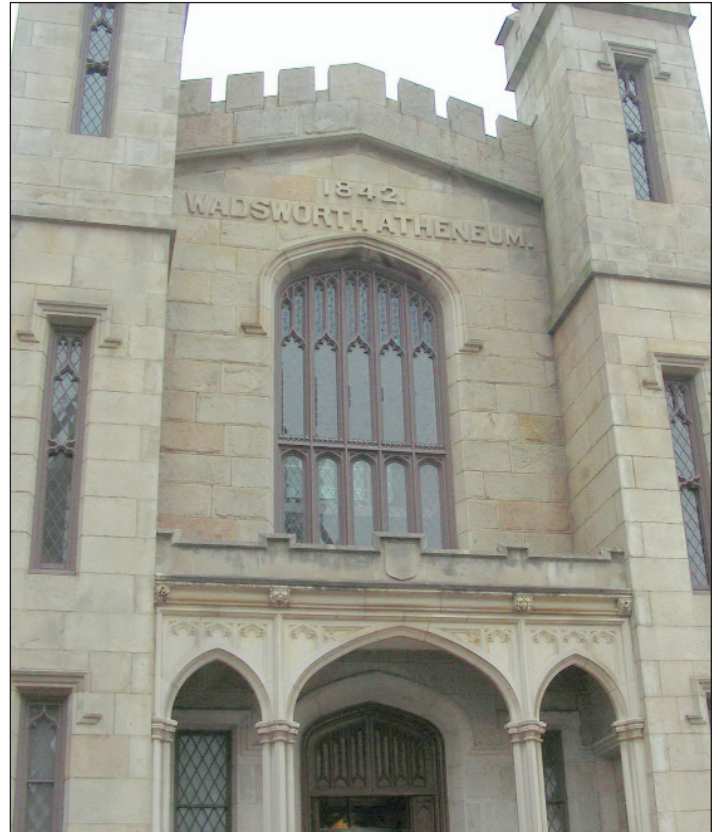
Spiegel discussed Chubb's Valuable Articles Coverage plans and also suggested other measures to protect valuable articles including developing an inventory with photographs and item descriptions or preparing a talk-over video inventory. Having valuables appraised by an outside company was also suggested.

One way to assist the inventory process is to use a software application. Spiegel suggested a program called Collectify. The program allows you to customize description information, include as many images of the article as you want, scan receipts, create reports, and print or email reports. It can be purchased for a reasonable one-time fee. The website address is www.collectify.com.

Friday, October 19, 2007

Friday began with the TCC General Meeting. Following the meeting, members walked or took the bus to the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in downtown Hartford.

The ceramics collection on display included, but was not limited to, creamware, white stoneware, salt-glazed stoneware, Meissen and Sevres porce-



lains, and Renaissance majolica. The latter two collections were given to the museum by Hartford native, J.P. Morgan.

Later in the afternoon, Dr. David Barker, Archaeological Consultant and Ceramics Specialist from Stoke-on-Trent, presented his first lecture entitled **"Transfer-printing and the Role of the Engraver in North Staffordshire."**

Although the copper plate engraving was a major component of the manufacture of transfer printed pottery, the engraver's role in the process has not been discussed in detail. Printing from copper plates had long been carried out on paper, but the process was adapted to decorating on pottery in 1751 by Birmingham engraver John Brooks, although he was unsuccessful in obtaining a patent for this. Other developments followed and in 1756, John Sadler and Guy Green of Liverpool were able to print 1200 earthenware tiles with the same pattern in the space

of six hours. These were printed overglaze, or “bat-printed,” a method which was readily adopted by North Staffordshire pottery manufacturers.

Engravers were skilled workers who enjoyed professional status and good working conditions. In the 1760s, North Staffordshire did not have the skills base of engravers, printers, and transferrers. Therefore, some potteries sent their wares out of the area to be printed. For example, from 1761 Wedgwood sent his wares to Liverpool to be printed by the printers Sadler and Green, and he continued to do so until the 1780s. The value of the business between Sadler and Green and Wedgwood rose from 30 pounds per month in 1763 to 650 pounds per month in 1771.

Wedgwood eventually established his own engraving shop and other potteries did the same. Bringing in engravers was easier for the larger potteries because engraving was an expensive process and a large amount of capital was needed up front. The large factories were able to plan ahead and have the patterns engraved to use when needed. At one time, Spode had 90 underglaze patterns available to use. The small potteries found it easier to outsource the process.

By the 1780's, the Stafford potteries were industry leaders, responding quickly to new ideas. Engravers and printers came to the area to set up independent shops for the potteries. By the end of the 18th century, there were many such shops in Staffordshire. One of the most highly regarded of these independent engravers was William Brookes who worked for Josiah Wedgwood II among others. He is attributed to be the first to put the same border on pieces with different center patterns and to put different colors on the same piece. One notes that the large potteries used the independent shops as well as their in-house engravers. Some independent engravers worked for several different potteries. The largest number of independent shops was 39 in 1820. This number declined by the end of 1830. However, independent shops remained in the area throughout the 20th century. Little has been written about these shops: their business has gone largely unrecorded.

Barker closed with a discussion of other sources of copper plates. The engraved copper plates were expensive and time-consuming to produce, especially when there was a separate pattern for each different piece of a dinner service. Therefore, other less expensive sources of copper plates were sought. Bankruptcy sales offered access to cheap copper plates, while some wholesalers and independent engraving shops purchased second-hand copper plates from these sales for resale.



Transferware mugs from the collection at the Wadsworth Atheneum.

After dinner, David Barker gave his second lecture entitled **“Some New Light on Staffordshire Printed Wares.”** In his introduction, Barker spoke in general of archaeological work in Stoke-on-Trent. The entire city of Stoke-on-Trent is an archaeological site, especially the pottery factory sites. Archaeological work on the city has been going on for 40 years, the last six or seven occasioned by redevelopment. Archaeological excavations are often targeted on a factory's ovens, revealing evidence of the problems encountered during firing the wares and the measures adopted to counter these. Digs of factory waste dumps yield a great magnitude of finds.

Barker said the theme of his lecture was “context” and correcting perceptions of past archaeological activities. The context refers to the fact that the finds from a pottery dig are part of a manufacturing system and include more than transferware. Perceptions refer to using the finds as the evidence available to us to reach conclusions. For example, ironstone (white granite) was a very important 19th century North Staffordshire product which was exported to the United States. However, in Britain, it has been ignored to such an extent that it did not feature in the collection of Stoke-on-Trent's Museum until Barker “repatriated” some from the US around ten years ago. Barker spoke of several archaeological pottery digs and their context and perceptions.

In 1800, the town of Tunstall had only three pottery factories, but by 1838 there were seventeen, most of which were engaged in supplying the North American market. Archaeological activity around Tunstall was slight until 1999 when new development in the town began. Since that time, there has been a considerable amount of archaeological work

in the area producing many new finds. Barker showed examples of the finds from the digs at the Woodland, Pinnox, and Unicorn potteries in Tunstall. The wares found included ironstone, flow blue, slip-decorated wares, sponge wares, and painted wares. Printed patterns included Venus, Willow, Asiatic Pheasants, and other printed patterns by the firm of Podmore, Walker & Co. Many printed wares from Wedgwood were also found, wares which surprisingly have not been very much studied in Britain. Barker stated that alongside the more expensive printed wares there was a large quantity of “bottom-end stuff,” the cheapest sponged and slip-decorated wares produced. He concluded that these potteries “flourished on mass producing mediocrity.”

The shards from a Spode waste site dig in Stoke showed a range of nice quality wares from the mid to late 1850s and included some of Copeland’s best patterns and printed wares. Pot lids and other pieces not usually associated with Copeland were also found.

There was some hope of finding shards from Josiah Wedgwood’s factory in the excavation of the site of his Ivy House Works in Burslem Market Place. However, no more than a handful of shards could possibly be linked to Wedgwood, perhaps not a surprise because he worked there less than three years. Of far greater interest from the site was a large deposit of wares from the factory of Enoch Wood & Sons. Wood could be described as the first archaeologist in Stoke. He formed the first museum there in his factory and was fascinated by all things ceramic. He also placed a number of ceramic “time capsules” around the town containing wares from his factory. The Market Place deposit was one such capsule, and it can be closely dated to 1835. The Ivy House Works was demolished early in this year and work on the construction on the new Market Hall on this site began in December of that year. Wood was involved in this project and had the opportunity to exercise his passion for burying things. Archaeological finds from this site contained a massive number of printed shards of patterns that are well known and marked. Among these were examples of multicolored printed wares. The date of this deposit – 1835 – pushes back the introduction of multicolor printing by five years or so, which is an important revelation.

Obviously, archaeological digs are valuable in that they show the whole range of a pottery’s wares and provide other information that would not be found any other way.



Rare 18th century salt glazed pieces at the Atheneum

Saturday, October 20, 2007

Michael Sack presented the next lecture entitled **“Chinoiserie Evolved: English Teawares of the Early 19th Century”** in which he discussed teawares from the Staffordshire potteries from 1813-1833.

The patterns on the teawares are transfer printed. Therefore, in Sack’s judgment, the chinoiserie teawares can be considered transferware. The patterns are outlines of the subject matter with limited detail. The outlines are filled in with enameling overglaze. The colors used are varied and can be very vibrant. Because the enamels could not take the heat to set the glaze, sometimes the transfer pattern also was not underglaze as seen in pieces where the pattern has rubbed off with usage.

The oldest antecedent of these pieces was Chinese import porcelain. In 1723, Meissen developed the first European porcelain and manufactured pieces of elegance and refinement. These early pieces of chinoiserie were made for the upper end of the market. French artist Jean-Batiste Pillement drew designs meant to be copied for furniture, fabrics, and other decorative arts. The Staffordshire potters copied the elegant style of Meissen chinoiserie and derivatives of the Pillement designs. However, the resulting teawares were not as refined and were for the lower end of the market. The Staffordshire potters may have developed a unique style of chinoiserie because it is not seen on any other decorative objects of the time. Sack muses whether the potters realized after awhile that the cheaper teawares were a distinctive style.

Some of the Staffordshire potteries producing the teawares include New Hall, Spode, Bailey & Son, Hilditch & Son, S & J Rathbone, Machin,

Gerard, Cope & Gerard, and Miles Mason. Spode did not produce many teawares, but the pieces that were produced were more sophisticated. Hilditch, on the other hand, produced an abundance of the teawares. The shapes of teawares produced by these potteries include tea bowls or cups, saucers, teapots, creamers, sugar bowls, waste bowls, and bread and butter plates.

The teaware patterns initially were patterned after Chinese porcelain pieces and contained only Chinese subjects. Over time, the patterns became a mixture of Chinese and English subjects. No pieces have pattern names, but may have pattern numbers. The pattern names have been assigned by collectors. The patterns in general ignore proportion and perspective and can be quite stylized. In addition, the transfer printing and enameling may be “sloppy.” Sack commented that this is what makes the pieces charming, whimsical and fun.

The Staffordshire teawares patterns include the following common elements identified by Sack: parasols, Chinese scrolls, rocks (usually stylized), flowers in pots (usually way out of proportion), overarching branches, pagodas, tea houses, exotic birds, tea tables, fences, and animals. Sack showed several wonderful examples of each of these pattern elements by various potters. Of course, he has source prints.

The subject of the next lecture, given by Peter Scott was **“Bristol and River Thames Transferware Themes.”** Transferware with these patterns was manufactured in Bristol first by Pountney & Allies (1816-1835), and then by Pountney & Goldney (1836-1849). Pountney and Allies produced the Bristol Views and River Thames Series which were continued by Pountney and Goldney. Some pieces, such as the “Coat of Arms of Bristol,” are marked “Bristol Pottery” but such pieces were manufactured by the aforementioned potteries. The Bristol pottery was remote from Staffordshire, but employed laborers from there. The pottery produced was not the best as demonstrated, for example, by noticeable joints on some pieces. The wares were sent to Dorset and South Wales on the ships that went there to pick up the raw materials needed by the pottery. The pottery did not export to United States. It produced mostly dinnerwares and toilet wares, but did not produce teawares. Correspondence or records of the factory have not been found. The Museum in Bristol has no pieces of the Bristol or River Thames Views.

Scott exhibited a wonderful footbath in the “Bristol” pattern. The bath is unique in that the pattern is on both the outside and inside of the piece. The pattern shows Bristol Harbor. Scott

explained some of buildings of the harbor scene like St. Mary Redcliffe Church. He also discussed “Bristol Hot Wells” showing a River Avon scene with a large steam boat; this transfer is Scott’s favorite Bristol pattern and is taken from an aquatint by E. Wallis in 1803. Other Bristol patterns Scott showed include a 15” platter of “Clifton” which is a suburb of Bristol; a plate of “Cook’s Folly;” a 10” plate of St. Vincent’s Rocks;” a 15” platter of “View Near Bristol, River Avon;” and a rare soup plate of “Roman Encampments on the River Avon.”

The Bristol Views and River Thames Views use the same borders. The source prints of the River

TCC Meetings and What’s in it for You

By Sue Wagstaff

A couple of years ago we wrote of our adventures in getting from San Francisco to the Phoenix meeting as the variety of venues gives us a chance to explore the USA in a way that we would probably not have devised otherwise. This year’s outstandingly successful get together in Hartford prompted some additional thoughts.

It seemed a little strange that there were fewer attendees than at Philadelphia last year, especially as the weight of membership is predominantly located in the eastern seaboard states and distances, for most, would not have been greatly different. It is also surprising in view of the healthy upswing in membership, nearly twofold in two years. There were some new faces present to be sure, but the usual suspects were there in greater numbers. So, what’s in it for us and what therefore, is in it for you if you have yet to put in an appearance?

Well, first, it’s *fun* and this derives from the people attending. Many excellent friendships have been formed to the extent that personal visits and contact have taken place between many members throughout the year, some on more than one continent! Then there is a wide variety of talks and outings. Some are directly concerned with transferware, of course, some are a little more general, some look at the history, of the factories and manufacturers, of the patterns and views, of the trade and traders and so on. The visits cover anything from viewing private collections of transferware to museum collections including broader historical or cultural aspects. This year, for example, visits included Hartford’s outstanding Wadsworth Atheneum, Historic Deerfield and the Mark Twain House. Most tastes are therefore covered. But above all, you will meet a wide circle of very nice people and make some very good friends so, if you have been wondering about it and not yet put your toes in the water, try it! Come next year to Williamsburg and the year after to Bath, England. Both venues offer a wide variety of experiences. And, not least, new faces will help to keep the Club on its toes.

Thames series have not been found. The patterns of this series Scott showed include a soup tureen, ladle and undertray in the "Oxford" pattern; a 7" plate of "Park Place;" a sauce ladle and 10" platter of "Richmond Bridge;" and a 7" plate and cake plate of "Park Place, Henley."

Historic Deerfield:

At 11:00 am we boarded the buses to Historic Deerfield. Along the way, we stopped for lunch at the Congregational Church in Sunderland, Massachusetts. The ladies of the church prepared a wonderful homemade lunch. The whole experience was delightful.

Upon arrival at Historic Deerfield, we gathered at White Church and were welcomed by Amanda Lange, Curator of Historic Interiors. Lange provided a brief history of Historic Deerfield.

On a gorgeous, balmy fall afternoon, we strolled Main Street of Historic Deerfield in search of transferware. The Flynt Center of Early New England Life, which displays more than 25,000 objects made or used in America between 1650 and 1850, was the highlight of the Historic Deerfield experience. Visitors enjoyed a ceramics collection ranging from Chinese export porcelains to Delft wares, stonewares, creamwares, pearlwares, brownwares, painted wares, lusterwares, and transferware.

Memorial Hall Museum, a 1798 building, houses collections of Deerfield decorative arts and Native American exhibits. A larger collection of transferware in many colors was displayed in more period-like cases.

We returned to White Church where Louise Richardson, a research associate at Strawberry Banke in Portsmouth, NH, presented the final lecture of the day. Ms. Richardson focuses her study of transferware on pieces found in digs in many areas of downtown Portsmouth and Strawberry Banke and pieces descended through families of Portsmouth or in other ways related to Portsmouth. Her lecture was entitled "**The Riley and Phillips Factories**" which were in operation the first half of the 19th century.

We were told that John and Richard Riley operated two potteries in Burslem. The Nile Street Pottery opened in 1802 and Hill Works Pottery in 1814. The potteries were in operation until 1828 when they were sold because there was no one in either family able to carry on the business. Ms. Richardson showed examples of wares from the Riley pottery, including pieces with the Dromedary, Piper, and Hindu Temple patterns. Some of the

pieces demonstrated the pottery's marginal skill at applying patterns. The pieces were from collections at Strawberry Banke, Portsmouth Historical Society, or private family collections. Richardson has not found any Riley marked teawares at Strawberry Banke.

We learned that Edward and George Phillips operated a pottery in Longport from 1822 to 1847. Marks on the wares indicate George continued operating the pottery after the dissolution of his partnership with Edward in 1834. In 1847 the pottery became part of the Davenport Pottery. The pottery had a large export trade to the United States.

Shards from a dig at the Longport site provided a broad sampling of the Phillips pottery wares. Richardson also showed shards of the Verona and Friburg patterns that were excavated at the Warner House Museum in Portsmouth.

Examples of patterns from the Phillips Pottery shown by Richardson included Grecian scenery, British flowers, Cambrian, Africana, Ancona, Polish views, and Festoon. After Edward took over the pottery in 1834, the following patterns appeared: Park scenery, Verona, Canova, Corinth, and Friburg.

Following the lecture, a most delightful reception and dinner at the historic Deerfield Inn was enjoyed by all.

Sunday, October 21, 2007

To put it mildly, Ellen Hill has a passion for mulberry ironstone. She has over 1000 pieces in a multitude of shapes and patterns. Her interest has turned to shapes and was the subject of her lecture entitled "**Flow Blue and Mulberry Teapot Body Shapes.**"

Hill showed a slide of her "great wall of China teapots" displaying more than 150 teapots. All of the teapots are mulberry ironstone transferware and most of them were made by Podmore Walker pottery.

Mulberry ironstone is transfer printed wares made from the 1840-1860 by many manufacturers, especially those who made flow blue. The wares are sometimes called flow black. They were made almost exclusively for export to the United States and Canada.

The most common teapot shapes are as follows: 1) classic gothic shape has six to ten panels, angular form, and a pedestal base; 2) full panel gothic

shape does not have a pedestal base but has a particular handle and finial style; 3) primary shape has eight panels but is bulgy and wide in the middle with a recessed neck and foot, and 4) mobile shape has an oval bulbous form. Teapot handles can be bracket or loop shape. Bracket handles may be stylized to look like cock's combs. Hill showed many examples of the most common shapes. The classic gothic shape is the most common shape in mulberry ironstone. Based on her research, sixteen potters made the full panel gothic shape and thirty-nine potters made the primary shape.

Hill showed many examples of less common shapes she has named, such as boxy decagon, long hexagon, ridged square, and broad shouldered. Some shapes are registered and have registrations dating from 1946.

Hill asked the TCC to consider developing shape catalogs based on previous shape identifications from the literature as well as newly created names in order to provide consistency when communicating about pieces.

The final lecture of the meeting was presented by Don Carpentier, founder of Eastfield Village in Upstate New York. He shared with us **"Finds in a Newly Discovered Tip."** "Tip" refers to what is known as a waste tip, which is a place where all the unsuccessful manufacturing trials and experiments go.

In 2006, while vacationing in England, Carpentier obtained approval to explore the contents of a trench dug near the Royal Doulton factory on Nile Street. The Nile Street work site history spans a time period from approximately 1795 to the present and includes the following potteries: John and Richard Riley (1800 - 1817); J. Cormie (1817 - 1834); Mellor, Venables & Co. (1834 - 1854); Pinder, Bourne & Hope (1860 - 1884); and Royal Doulton (1884 to present.)

The finds from the site were abundant. Carpentier showed slides of shards and intact counterparts. Wares found at the site include pearlware, creamware, edgware, painted wares, slipware, and transferware. Examples of shards and other items found include shell edge pieces, tureen knobs, handles, sauce tureen bases, egg cups, glazed and unglazed open salt biscuits, potters tools, and salt glaze saggars. Some of the biscuit shards found indicated the pieces had been made on engine turned lathes as opposed to the simple turner's lathes. Making pottery made using engine turned lathes was an expensive and complicated process that was most likely used by the larger potteries.



Peter Scott's rare "electric" foot bath showing Bristol and the Thames River.



Carpentier also showed many slides of mochoware and transferware finds from the site. The latter included early children's ware, seals on pearlware and salt-glaze, floral prints, a reticulated plate, and chinoiserie, some of which was enameled. Carpentier brought transferware shards for TCC members to examine in hopes they could identify the pieces and/or patterns.

Following a generous boxed lunch, it was off to the highly anticipated show and sale. The large room was rimmed with booths brimming with transferware in an abundance of colors, shapes, and sizes. Once again it was a shoppers paradise.

Annual Meeting and Optional Day Photos courtesy Maryanne Leckie, Sue Wagstaff, Loren Zeller and Michael Weinberg.

See more photos on pages 14-15

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