

SHARDS

A Newsletter of the

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China Students' Club of Boston

March 2002

Message from the President

Dear Fellow Members,

The Winter That Never Was is almost over, and we can soon believe Spring is real, complete with the magnolias on Commonwealth Avenue and the daffodils in our own gardens. We have excellent programs yet to enjoy in this year's Club Program Calendar—Marblehead Pottery of current strong collector interest, guest lecturer Marilee Boyd Meyer, a new CSC member (welcome Marilee!); and our April meeting at Historic Deerfield viewing the new exhibition *Delicate Deception: Delftware at Historic Deerfield* with curator Amanda Lange, a longstanding CSC member.

Our Annual Meeting and Tea Party is always a festive year conclusion, so do plan to come and bring a friend (who might even become interested in membership!). By the way, did you know that our By-laws require our Annual Meeting speaker to be a Club member? This year we are pleased to have William R. Sargent (CSC President 1988-1990), currently curator of Asian Export Art, Peabody Essex Museum, as our speaker; his presentation is entitled *Traditions of Chinese Porcelain Production: Jingdezhen in the 21st Century*.

Beyond our rich and carefully planned Club activities, it is welcoming and rewarding that our members are being invited to attend ceramics programs at nearby institutions. Our treasurer, Gail Homer, a Friend of Asian Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, was instrumental in making it possible for us to attend The Friends' Symposium on Asian ceramics (see report on page 6). About ten of us attended and we loved it and learned lots—thank you Gail! Member Karina Corringan has invited us to the Peabody Essex Museum for two ceramics events (listed on page 9), and David Wood of the Concord Museum welcomes us (free admission with our CSC Blue Card) to visit the current exhibition *Traditions in Elegance: 100*

Teapots from the Norwich Castle Museum (see page 6 for details).

I also want to thank Honorary Member Gerald W. R. Ward, Curator, American Decorative Arts and Sculpture, Museum of Fine Arts, for hosting our recent Peter Brown lecture. We definitely have member friends in the right places—onwards, let's "grow" our mutual interests!

At our January Board Meeting, the importance of having a Membership Chairperson has again been discussed, so much so that there is interest in creating a new Board position to serve this need. I would welcome your thoughts on what (job description) this potential new member might focus on, and WHO that person might be, all hands on board!!

Per December SHARDS, club name change continues under consideration. Board members hope to hear your thoughts during our forthcoming meetings. Please be inspired by Charlotte Wilcoxon, one of our longest-standing members, whose dear letter is reproduced on page 10. You can also send me (or any board member) a note or fax, especially if you cannot be at a meeting soon. This is your Club for sharing ceramics interests, and we want you to like what it is doing for us all!

Ciao,

Nancy A. Smith, President



English ceramic knife handles, 1730-1760



Study Group: British Delft within the Context of Early English Pottery

Report By Jeff Brown

As we all know, our Club's greatest asset is its members—their passion for ceramics, their knowledge and their willingness to share that knowledge has long been a hallmark of the CSC. On January 12 one such member opened her home and hosted fellow members to a study group and tour of her world-class collection of early English ceramics. Harriet Goldweitz needs no introduction; a longtime member of CSC, her collection and tireless research provided a real treat to our study group who found every object as fascinating as the next.

Harriet started with a group of slipware, showing us her prize piece—a 1675 Ralph Toft slipware charger. It had a wide, wavy flange as it was a difficult piece to throw. Toft made only 17 of these in his lifetime. Also in this group was a John Carter stag-decorated plate, c. 1680, and one of the earliest known dated thistle mugs from 1679. A rare and unusual slipware cradle was also examined, c. 1675, rather sophisticated in its decoration with cross hatching and beading—it would have been presented most likely as a wedding/fertility gift. There were examples, too, of Wrotham ware. Produced in the county of Kent, there were five principal potters there in the mid-17th century, their pieces resembling German wares. Harriet is proud to have three out of the five potters represented in her collection: John Eagleston, Henry Ifield, and George Richardson. We concluded the slipware group with Harriet's earliest piece—a Cistercian-ware mug. Since the abbeys were dissolved by Henry VIII in 1539, Harriet dates the piece to 1520-1539.

Moving on to tin-glazed earthenware, we examined some fine pieces. Tin-glazed wares were fired twice—once to a leather hardness and a second time to fix the decoration. Harriet also pointed out that 17th century chargers have lead-glazed backs due to the rarity and cost of the tin. As tin becomes more accessible in the 18th century both the front and back of pieces are tin-glazed. Chargers were made primarily for wall decoration and the earlier ones have a more concave silhouette than later, flatter, 18th century ones. Biblical and nature subjects were popular,

but Harriet's group concentrated on royal portraits from Charles II to George I. Georgian wares represent a change in style in the early 18th century—a flatter form, tin-glazed back, trees rendered in a sponged motif and the green changes from an earlier turquoise to a pea green.

A delftware jug with early Chinese-inspired decoration is Harriet's earliest piece of delft—most likely made by Christian Wilhelm in Southwark who started production in 1628. Another early and unusual piece was a large salt, decorated with distinctly Italian majolica-like colors, but bearing the arms of the city of London.

A delftware bowl has a ship's portrait of the *Devonshire* on the interior. Research has shown that this vessel figured prominently in many battles from Montreal to Martinique during the Seven Years War. The exterior decoration is rendered upside down to be appreciated when stored upside down on a shelf as was customary in the 18th century. Harriet pointed out that a major focus of her collecting is the historical interest of an object. Pieces cannot just be attractive; she prefers something with a historical connection or provenance.

Other fine examples of delftware included a pair of candlesticks after a silver form, a 1680s posset pot with “trekked” decoration which involves outlining the images in a dark blue line, a dated pair of delft shoes (1727), and a cruciform brick, c. 1750, probably used as a quill holder on a partners' desk. The most outstanding piece of delft was Harriet's 1745 charger with a meticulous rendering of Burghley House. It is the only one of three in private hands. The detailed decoration was pounced on from a print source, which took Harriet several years to locate.

A final rarity, only two known in existence, was a polychrome enameled armorial tin glazed plate—most likely made to fill in for a missing piece in an Export dinner service. When first offered the plate Harriet passed on it, but having “done her homework” she purchased the plate when it reappeared on the market, having learned to appreciate its importance.

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Study Group: British Delft within the Context of Early English Pottery

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The earliest piece in Harriet's extensive salt glaze collection was a German mug from the Witte Leeuw wreck, a Dutch ship that went down in 1613. Continuing into salt glaze, there were the wonderfully whimsical owl and bear jugs, their heads coming off to be used as cups. The owl was thought to be a Nottingham piece but based on recent research Harriet now thinks it is from Staffordshire. A very interesting comparison was made between a group of small mugs—a 1685 John Dwight salt glaze mug, a James Morley Nottingham mug, one in delftware, one in Chinese export blanc de chine, and one in silver. All are from the 1680s and all of pretty much the same exact form right down to the handle terminals! A great example of the movement of a design from one pottery and medium to another.

Harriet's collection of superb 18th century English salt glaze is an amazing chronology of the development of the medium and illustrates the enormous range of decoration that was produced. The earliest was a plain salt glaze with blue decoration, c. 1725. Pure white clay was so rare at first, it was only used on a teapot's feet, spout and terminals, the rest of the body was greyish. There was also a brown salt glaze of this early date with white slip decoration. Salt glaze lends itself to very thin potting and the slip-casting technique was perfected at this time, along with delicate sprigged decoration. Fashionable from the 1750s to the 1780s was scratch blue decoration, which was incised and dusted with a dry cobalt and then glazed. Then comes "William Littler

blue"—an all-over blue ground which is achieved with a thin dip of cobalt. One of the best examples of polychrome decoration on salt glaze was a charming little teapot with the very rare Kakiemon yellow tiger pattern on it. Transfer printing was done on salt glaze, mostly on plates.

In the redware category, Harriet's prize possession is an Elers slipcast teapot, c. 1690 along with a Chinese export one copying it. The English example had the finest sprigged decoration. It is interesting to note that the English redwares were oftentimes finer than the export ones they were imitating—the Chinese keeping the better ones for themselves.

We went on to a fine grouping of agatewares, often imitating silver shapes; some Jackfield which achieves its glossy black surface by having manganese added to the clay and then being dipped into a lead glaze; and then to lead glazed wares, a charming group of teapots in the form of an apple, pear, melon, and pineapple.

The tour ended with a creamware group. Transfer printing worked well on creamware, so Harriet had examples of chinoiseries, pseudo-armorials, Sadler prints and a rare teapot with portraits of both King George III and Queen Charlotte.

This tour can be regarded as a follow-on to Harriet's 3/25/99 CSC lecture *Passion, Perseverance, & Purpose: Secrets of One Collector's Methodology*. It was wonderful to see in the flesh many of the pieces referred to in that memorable talk. What can one say for the opportunity to view such great ceramics except "THANK YOU, HARRIET!"

Bits and Pieces—2002 Edition

Report By Jeff Brown

One of the most popular of all CSC programs, "Bits 'n' Pieces", was held in January this year. It is a great opportunity for members to share their knowledge, ask questions and learn from their objects as well as from other members' collections. This year's panel of experts presiding over the discussion were CSC members Dorothy Lee Jones, Tracy Wiggins and Carl Crossman. Some of the objects discussed were:

- A pair of Bocage figures sold as late 19th century Paris Porcelain, possibly Samson. Now there are several Samson marks, some in red, some in gold, some in Chinese figures, usually always good and clear and on the surface. These figures had no mark and the porcelain did not seem hard enough or white enough to be Paris. The panel suggested that there could be a very good possibility that they were 18th

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Bits and Pieces—2002 Edition

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century Derby or possibly from another English factory of the period.

- A small Worcester vase, Flight, Barr and Barr, c. 1815-1830. Decorated with a small miniature painting, beaded border with a pink ground on a tripod gilded base. (It was pointed out that this bubble-gum pink and lavender were very popular colors in the early 19th c.) These vases were probably made in pairs and sets of three and five for garniture decoration on mantles. This vase had a very finely written quote on the bottom from one of Sir Walter Scott's poems which most likely had some connection to the illustration on the vase.
- A blue and white kraak-ware plate, Chinese, c. 1630. Typical flower basket decoration with a wavy border and sand particles from the kiln stuck to the underside. The really interesting feature was that it bore an inventory number on the back from the collection of Augustus the Strong of Saxony, the founder of the Meissen factory and one of the most insatiable porcelain collectors in history.
- A charming tea cannister with Chinoiserie decoration molded from a silver form with a yellowish-grey sort of glaze. It was creamware decorated with an underglaze blue which accounts for the glaze color, c. 1770. Soon after this and for the next thirty years this form would have been cast in pearlware with a whiter body.



Bits and Pieces panel: Dorothy Lee Jones, Tracy Wiggins and Carl Crossman

- Compared to the previous tea cannister, we had a little milk jug in pearlware, c. 1780, with a pagoda and fanciful tree decoration. This pattern was seen on plates and bowls in many variations right through the 1820s.
- A large Chinese export footed, covered coffee pot with Japanese Imari decoration which had a porcelain boss that would have been fitted with a pewter spigot. These were made in the early 18th and late 19th century, but the panel thought this could probably be one of the early ones. Definitely after a metal form.
- A Chinese crackle-glaze stoneware ginger jar mounted as a lamp, finely painted in iron red over the crackle glaze. Most likely late 19th or early 20th century.
- A pair of Chinese export libation cups, one in the form of a rhinoceros horn, which is a classic Chinese form, decorated with symbols for long life and success to be used for toasting on very special occasions. Exported in large numbers from the 17th century onwards, they sometimes are difficult to date. Carl thought these were 18th century specimens.
- A Chinese export cut-corner salad bowl finely decorated in underglaze blue in the Nanking pattern, c. 1820. Carl dates the best Nanking to about this time. He also remarked that when it is found at auction, despite its usually high quality, it gets nowhere near the prices that Canton attracts and is usually a good buy.
- A reconstructed large tankard unearthed from the Deer Street Tavern site in Portsmouth. A refined buff earthenware, turned decoration and a mottled "treacle" glaze. With it a small complete mug, c. 1700, purchased "above ground" for comparison. The small mug did indeed seem to have the same glaze and turning as the tankard.
- A fine basalt ware inkstand with all its components—ink pot, quill holder and sander or pounce pot. 'Pounce' consisted of ground-up bones of cuttlefish which produced a fine, absorbent talc-like powder. There was no Wedgwood mark; it could be Eastwood, c.1790-1800. Louise Richardson has

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Bits and Pieces—2002 Edition

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found references to inkwells in stationers' advertisements from this period.

- A shell-shaped Quimper faience dish with two compartments, with typical decoration, probably about 1925. Members were stumped as to its use, everyone immediately guessing either an olive or shrimp dish but it turned out to be a strawberry dish—the smaller compartment being for the cream.
- A tin-glazed figure of a rabbit with glass eyes which surprised everyone when they found out it was a piece by Emile Gallé. Known primarily today for his fantastic creations in glass, Gallé grew up in a family of potters and studied both mineralogy and botany. This very rare figure represents a revival of interest in earlier tin glazed earthenwares and is marked "St. Clement" for the factory owned by Gallé's father. Dated to the last quarter of the 19th century (see page 12).
- A highly unusual tin glazed plate with very "un-English" characteristics: very glassy surface, pitted back, three stilt marks and a yellow border. And yet, it was given an attribution of London, c 1730, on the basis of archaeological evidence.
- A large octagonal tin glazed soup plate with an elaborate chinoiserie design, naively painted, matching a dated example of 1737. An old sticker on the back said Liverpool, design elements point to London, but Louise Richardson now thinks it is Irish due

to the lumpy thick glaze and overall crudeness. Painters moved around, patterns went with them from one factory to the next. Louise left us with the unreassuring thought that "You just don't know, and sometimes you'll never know."

- A Chinese late Ming small dish with the reign mark of the next to last Ming emperor Tien Chi, 1621-27. Made for export to the Japanese, with enamels that precede the Japanese Imari palette. Carl suggested a later Kangxi date.
- An English teapot, c. 1805-1810, with red and gilt enamel decoration. An exact match to one in Robin Emmerson's book attributed to Thomas Rose.
- A pair of faience fine French candlesticks marked VP which was a mark for a Marseilles factory of one Veuve Perrin or Widow Perrin who took over the operation upon her husband's death. The factory ran throughout the second half of the 18th century. The panel was hesitant about that date, saying the mark could have been added.
- An English pearlware cup and saucer, c. 1825, with an unusual transfer print decoration of a Chinese dragon on a stipple background. The cup was handleless. People think that this design was only on earlier wares, but handleless cups were made well into the 19th century as they were stackable and the merchants receiving them suffered far less breakage as they would from handled wares.
- A mid-1930s child's egg cup and plate made by the Roseville Pottery in Ohio. Their wares were often confused with Dedham pottery and that of the Saturday Evening Girls who produced similar wares with juvenile themes and colors.
- A pair of glazed earthenware dragons made by contemporary Welsh artist Ian Baggett.



Quimper
strawberry
and
cream
bowl



Ian
Baggett
dragons



Traditions in Elegance—100 Teapots from the Norwich Castle Museum Exhibition at the Concord Museum

We received the following kind invitation from David Wood, Curator of the Concord Museum:

“I wanted your membership to know that, if they will identify themselves as China Students’ Club members at the desk, they are welcome to see *Traditions in Elegance* free of charge, and that if they would like to join me at the Museum on Thursday, April 18, at 11:00, I would be happy to tour the exhibition with them.”

Traditions in Elegance is an exhibition which explores the custom of tea preparation and tea drinking in English life through its most prominent artifact—the teapot. The teapots selected for this exhibition are 100 of the finest 18th and early 19th century examples from the 3,000 in the Norwich Castle Museum’s acclaimed Twining Teapot Gallery. The

British Tea Ceremony held an important place in upper-class social life of the 1790s and commanded certain rules for preparation and presentation. Visitors to the exhibition will see why part of the attraction of tea drinking lay in the beautiful and delicate equipment required. These accessories, the hot water urn, teaspoons, sugar nips and porcelain teacups and saucers became status symbols and provided an opportunity for individuals to reveal their wealth and taste.

MUSEUM HOURS: January-March: Monday-Saturday 11-4, Sunday 1-4; April-December: Monday-Saturday 9-5, Sunday 12-5. The Museum is located in Concord, MA, at the intersection of Lexington Road and Cambridge Turnpike. For further information call the Concord Museum at 978-369-9609

Symposium on Chinese Ceramics at MFA Report By Gail Homer

The Friends of Asian, Oceanic and African Art at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts invited the China Students to attend an all-day program on Asian ceramics on February 9. Nine members of the Club came to the Saturday meeting that included illustrated lectures and a gallery talk. The event was inspired by the re-installation of the Museum’s Chinese ceramics gallery.

The program opened with Harvard’s Robert Mowry (Sackler Museum) whose talk was entitled *Brown and Black-Glazed Wares (Temmoku)*. Starting with dark-glazed stonewares as early as 9th or 10th century BC, he led us with excellent slides through the clay body and glaze techniques of celadon, cobalt, Tang Dynasty sancai, and blue-splashed wares to the Song Dynasty, the golden age of dark-glazed wares from the Ding kilns. He dwelt on Song glazes of russet (some with gold leaf), partridge feather, hare’s fur, intaglio, and Tz’-u-chou. Still concentrating on showing us depictions of MFA’s own objects, he traveled through the Yuan and Jin Dynasties, ending with the multi-colored enamels decorated in Jingdezhen.

Former director and curator of Asiatic Arts at the MFA Jan Fontein, an Indonesian and East Asian scholar, explained the enormous value of MFA’s 1950 gift of the Charles Bain Hoyt collection. This is especially strong in Tang and Song Dynasty objects. He talked about his archeological travels to important kiln sites in China and entertained us by reading a chapter from his about-to-be-published book on his career. He handed around shards which he found that clinched identification of certain museum objects.

Theow Tow, Director of Asian Art for Christie’s, described certain aspects of Emperor Kangxi’s court life and ceramics. He pointed out the interplay of Chinese and Western cultures both in matters of design and collecting.

The program concluded with a walk-about in the Museum’s Chinese ceramics gallery’s new installation donated by Beth Schmidt, a longtime friend of the department. Led by Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, we focussed on particular objects as Mr. Fontein regaled us with tales of past donors, forgers and scholars.



The Keele Conference By Louise Richardson

On the face of it, Keele is a small, unremarkable university in the middle of England. Yet for many China Students' Club members, mention of the name evokes memories of a place which drew ceramics enthusiasts like moths to a flame, a place where family and spouses were neglected, where lifelong friendships were made based only on a shared passion for pots, where research was so exciting that sleep was difficult and the days never long enough.

Sadly, the Keele flame has now been extinguished. The university remains, difficult to reach, with crippling beds, uncertain food, challenging bathrooms, and a lecture hall that rarely maintained a habitable temperature. The attraction of England in August remains, with the necessity of packing both wool socks and sandals, your heaviest sweater, and always an umbrella. But we never paid any attention to that. Those of us from the USA who first applied to the Ceramics Summer School for the *Creamware and Pearlware* course in 1986 considered it an ideal vacation spot, where the strong leadership of a rather obscure group called the Northern Ceramic Society, combined with outstanding lecturers and a diverse international group of attendees, to produce something wonderful.

For the next fifteen years, the excitement generated by the Keele experience carried on through

several memorable courses and some less appealing ones. There were always museums to visit, historic collections to discover, and the thrill of sharing it all with some of our favorite authors and lecturers, like Geoffrey Godden, Terry Lockett, Pat Halfpenny, Jonathan Horne, and our own Diana Edwards, Jonathan Rickard, and Harriet Goldweitz. Harriet, of course, had discovered Keele before any of the rest of us. Even in a poor year there were lectures of star quality, never to be forgotten.

In 2001, it all fell apart. The subject, *London Ceramics*, was interesting and the lecturers excellent, but the acrimony that had been building between the NCS and the University reached impossible levels, and the Keele Ceramics Summer School came to an end. And what an end it was! None of us will forget John Black's brilliant lecture on early London delftware and its ties to Holland, Geoffrey Golden on the early porcelain factories, and Jonathan Horne's overview of Fulham stoneware.

The University has decided not to continue the course, while the Northern Ceramic Society is sponsoring a shorter but similar event in Swansea, Wales, in September, 2002. With the same leadership as the 2001 course, it stands a good chance of succeeding, hopefully lighting a flame which will burn as brightly as the one at Keele.

Peter Brown on the History of British Cutlery and Table Settings Report By Jeff Brown

The CSC, jointly with the Wedgwood Society, was addressed by Peter Brown, Curator of Fairfax House in York, England, on 2/16/02. The talk was based on an exhibition and collection of English cutlery formed by Bill Brown (no relation to Peter), who over 45 years has researched this subject that spans about 5000 years. The earliest examples of knives in the collection are bone and bronze—having come from Denmark and Iran. The evolution of design in this early period was extremely slow and it wasn't until the 15th century that one sees a rapid development of the form. Peter pointed out that cutlery certainly doesn't provide a complete history of decorative arts, but it's a good index to understanding them.

In Greek and Roman times, wall paintings containing small table arrangements illustrated ladles and spoons, seldom knives, although they certainly existed. Knives excavated in Britain from Roman times more often than not are folding knives with bronze handles and zoomorphic or hunt-scene decoration. These were clearly "campaign cutlery" brought in by the Roman occupying forces. Some knives from circa 100-400 AD made of iron and bronze had a ring to allow them to be carried on a belt. It has often been thought that the fork was not developed until the 13th-14th centuries, but excavations near York have uncovered forks from around 950 AD.

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Peter Brown on the History of British Cutlery and Table Settings

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As for usage, there are, unfortunately, few early images of people dining in England (even now the Queen refuses to be photographed while eating). A rare example shows Richard II at table in some detail. It pictures the bone-handled knives then in use, with their sheaths. Around 1400 bone-handled knives appear not only in England but throughout Europe. Examples of early sheaths exist thanks to “mud larks” who comb the banks of the Thames at low tide and unearth these artifacts, which got there possibly due to the practice of sweeping the remains of destroyed buildings into the River. The sheaths usually bear classic Saxon designs of entwined animals and hunts scenes, sometimes using small rivets to pick out a pattern.

Dining in grand households followed a strict hierarchy, as was illustrated in another print. A “Presenter” would cut and serve up thick slices of old bread to the king or nobleman to be used as trenchers. The meat was placed upon the bread and eaten with the fingers or with the aid of the knife. The trenchers were replaced as they got soggy and the used ones, soaked with meat juices, were often distributed to the poor. In the print, a secondary table of guests is shown with just spoons, and at a third table the least socially important people have no implements at all.

Around 1500, cutlers were trying new decorative techniques and knives appear with jet handles and silver caps. Cutlery was a very personal thing in the days before stainless steel and you were very careful about what you used to put things in your mouth. Guests seldom expected to be supplied with any cutlery even at the grandest table and therefore brought their own. A school of itinerant cutlers slowly grew in London over the course of the 16th century and with this growth came the development of the first sort of assay or maker’s marks. The cutlers continued to innovate: handles were carved to resemble figures in contemporary costume, figures of Justice, even the skull of death. Also, by the middle of the 16th century, the bread trencher gave way to a small

square or rectangular wooden one for food presentation.

By the beginning of the 17th century, displays of largesse and magnificence were very important and were meticulously rendered by Dutch still life painters of the time—a great source for the historian. A popular item throughout the 17th century was a hinged fork/spoon combination that was excellent for traveling, but it must be remembered that the use of a fork was still considered a bit effete and this implement was not yet in widespread use. Chip-carved decoration was popular on wooden handles and richer knives had handles of agate with a long bolster (the piece that connects the handle to the blade). Knives during this time were starting to be sold in pairs and were called marriage sets—a popular wedding gift decorated with all manner of auspicious symbols for happiness and fertility. The knives came in an elegantly wrought sheath or purse that was worn as a status symbol. All manner of rich and exotic materials were used—rock crystal, aventurine and ivory with damascened handles. Complete traveling sets were still popular, carrying everything from marrow scoops to nutmeg graters. By the end of the 17th century there was an explosion of color on the dining table. Expanded trading relations with the Far East brought richly decorated Chinese export porcelains. And into the 18th century, as Meissen developed the formula for porcelain and the English factories began, there was a craze for porcelain handles on cutlery. Chelsea, Bow and Worcester were all competing and producing handles by the thousands, very few surviving due to their fragility. Flowers were an enormously popular theme for decoration, yet Peter pointed out that the idea of actually putting real flowers on the table didn’t appear until the early 19th century with the Prince Regent (the future George IV). If an 18th century banquet had flowers on the table they were probably sugar or porcelain ones, as were other decorations such as models of gardens known as *parterres*.

By the late 18th century, the Sheffield cutlers came into their own, producing any kind of design in

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Upcoming Ceramics Events

CSC 2001/2 Meetings:

3/21: Marilee Boyd Meyern 'Understanding Beauty: Designs of Marblehead Pottery'; 1PM, Bowdoin Hall, one Bowdoin Square, Boston

4/20: Trip to 'Delicate Deception: Delftware at Historic Deerfield'; details to be mailed out

5/23: William R. Sargent on 'Traditions of Porcelain Production: Jingdezhen in the 21st Century,' plus Annual Meeting and Tea; Seccomb Hall.

Auctions:

Sotheby's, New York, 3/20: Chinese works of art

Christie's, New York, 3/21: Chinese works of art

Christie's, London, 3/28: Staffordshire figures

Skinner, Boston, 4/6: European and Asian arts

Christie's, London, 5/2: British ceramics

Christie's, London, 5/23: 19th century ceramics

Christie's, London, 5/30: Majolica.

Exhibitions:

Traditions in Elegance, 100 teapots from Norwich Castle Museum, Norwich, England. At Concord Museum, Concord, MA, until 5/27. See Page 6 for information on CSC visit.

The Copeland Collection of Chinese ceramic figures. At Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA, on permanent display.

Stuff of Dreams from the Paris Museum of Decorative Arts. At the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CN, 6/1-8/11. A hundred objects of French design—including porcelain—dating from the Middle Ages to the present.

Arts of Pacific Asia Show. At 32 West 23rd Street, New York, 3/21-24. A guided trip to see this exhibition and visit the Fair (see below) is being organized by the Peabody Essex Museum. Call 978-745-9500 for details.

Delicate Deception: Delftware at Historic Deerfield, 1600-1800. In Deerfield, MA, until 11/30. The exhibition has been curated by our own Amanda Lange. CSC members will have a chance to view the exhibits as part of our April meeting; see under Lectures and Seminars below. Call 413-775-7201 for information.

Fairs:

The International Asian Arts Fair. At Lincoln Center, New York, 3/22-26.

Lectures and Seminars:

Collecting Asian Art, Seminar at Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA, 3/16. Call 978-745-9500 for information.

Madame de Pompadour Crosses the Atlantic: Her Sèvres Porcelain in American Collections, lecture by Rosalind Savill, Director of the Wallace Collection in London. At the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CN, 4/12 at 11AM. Call 860-278-2670 ext. 3049 for information.

Delicate Deception: Delftware at Historic Deerfield, 1600-1800. A Two-Day Symposium at Historic Deerfield, 4/19-20. Call 413-775-7201 for information. **Note to CSC members:** the program for 4/20 will constitute our April meeting.

Peter Brown on the History of British Cutlery and Table Settings

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their famous Sheffield plate for about a fifth of the price of sterling. The silver-plating process allowed mass production of virtually any style imaginable throughout the 19th century to accommodate an ever

growing middle class.

This brought us to the middle of the 19th century. The rest, according to Peter, is subject for another lecture.

Shards contributors and helpers: Yon Bard (editor), Jeff Brown (contributing editor), Dora Bard, Gail Homer, Louise Richardson, Nancy A. Smith

Please send comments/contributions to: Yonathan Bard, 6 Holland Street, Newton, MA 02458; telephone (617) 244-7688, fax (617) 965-2897, e-mail (the preferred venue!) doryon@rcn.com

SHARDS



Jan. 4, 2002
Dear Ma Smith,

Congratulations on SHARDS!
I read it with enjoyment and satisfaction.

I am writing now to say that I think changing the name of the Club to leave out the word China would be a good thing to do. "China" once meant Ceramics; it no longer does and should be eliminated from that meaning.

Why not, "The Ceramic Club of Boston," or some such title?

Though I am no longer able to attend meetings because at 96 I ~~sup drive~~ and can't go alone on the ~~longer~~ subway, my good wishes will always follow its affairs.

(over)

With best wishes for the Club and its president and members for the year 2002,

Sincerely,

Charlotte Wilcoxon



The 'Utz' Sale By Yon Bard

One of this season's most talked about ceramics-related events was Sotheby's London 12/11/01 sale of the Rudolf Just Collection. What lent this sale its particular interest was the revelation that Rudolf Just had served as the model for Kaspar Joachim Utz, the hero of Bruce Chatwin's novel *Utz*. The fictitious Utz was a Czech gentleman who had accumulated a vast collection of Meissen porcelain, mainly figurines. After the Communist take-over Utz continues to live in a small apartment in Prague, and succeeds in guarding his collection against the constant threat of confiscation by the State. Eventually Utz marries his loyal housekeeper, and together they destroy the collection—by Utz's death in 1974 it has vanished!

In point of fact, Rudolf Just was born in Moravia in 1895. He started collecting in earnest in the 1920s, and amassed a collection much more eclectic than Utz's: there was much Meissen, but also other porcelain, faience, glass, brass, paintings, and—most impressive of all—a magnificent set of 17th century gold coins of the Holy Roman Empire. Ironically, the Communist take-over of Czechoslovakia helped Just acquire treasures he might otherwise not have had access to; in breaking up the aristocratic estates the government auctioned off their treasures, and Just was able to purchase some of his best pieces in these

sales.

Just came to Chatwin's attention when Kate Foster, an assistant in Sotheby's porcelain department, met the collector in 1966 during a study tour in Europe. Chatwin, who also worked at Sotheby's, was intrigued by what he heard of Just, and he too went to Prague and struck up a friendship with the collector. Thus *Utz* was born.

Just died in 1972, but, contrary to Utz's, his collection survived, having been hidden in various retreats by his widow. It finally surfaced last year, and was consigned to Sotheby's for sale.

Apart from the gold coins, the *pièces de résistance* of the collection were three large Meissen busts of Habsburg emperors, 12-14 inches high (see illustration). These figurines were part of a series modeled by Kändler around 1745. Very few of these were made and even fewer have survived. Just obtained his busts in the manner described above: they had belonged to the Counts of Waldstein, whose collection was nationalized in 1945 and subsequently auctioned off. In the Sotheby's sale they were estimated at £15,000-25,000 each, and actually sold at the lower figure (£17,625 each, including buyer's premium). At the recent New York Ceramics Fair I saw one of them—Ferdinand II to be specific—at a vendor's booth. The asking price was £50,000!



Left to right:
Habsburg Emperors
Mathias (d. 1619)
Josef I (d. 1711)
Ferdinand II (d. 1637)
Meissen, ca. 1745
From Rudolf Just Collection
Sold by Sotheby's, London,
12/11/2001



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**Gallé rabbit, Faience, late 19th century
shown at Bits and Pieces (see page 5)**