
The French Porcelain Society

President: Dame Rosalind Savill

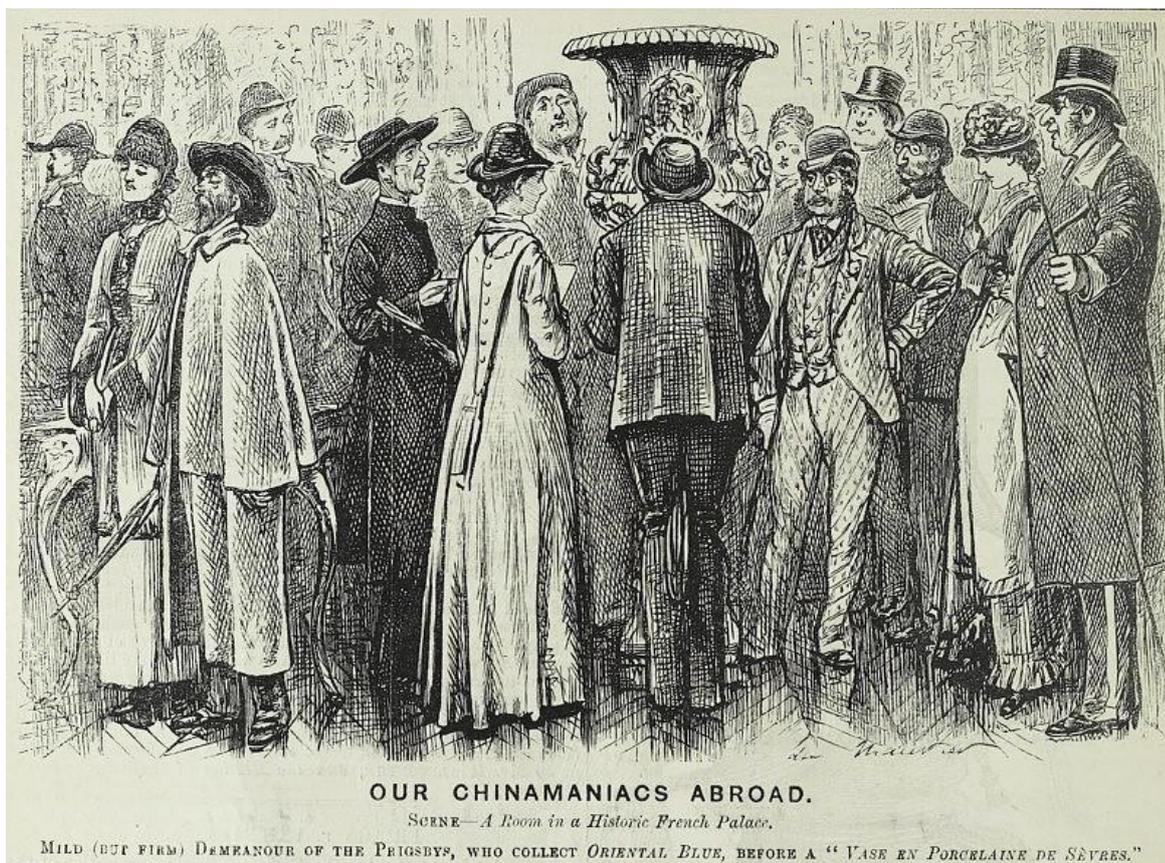
Chairman: Oliver Fairclough

www.thefrenchporcelainsociety.com

News

Autumn 2018

This is the first in a new series of newsletters from the French Porcelain Society. During the last eighteen months, the Society has developed a new website, and it has a lively presence on Facebook and Twitter. Nevertheless the Council appreciates that there may still be a need for an occasional newsletter that can be emailed or posted to members, some of whom may only visit the website occasionally. This will contain updates on forthcoming events, reports on our activities, reviews and other news, and will complement the website. We are deeply grateful to Catrin Jones, who edited the newsletter in its previous format and to all who have sent material for inclusion. Do please send more to fpsenquiries@gmail.com.



Particular thanks also to Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth who has developed our new series of 'Chinamania' evenings, where we discuss new research and have the opportunity to handle interesting pieces. Do book for the next one on 1 November.

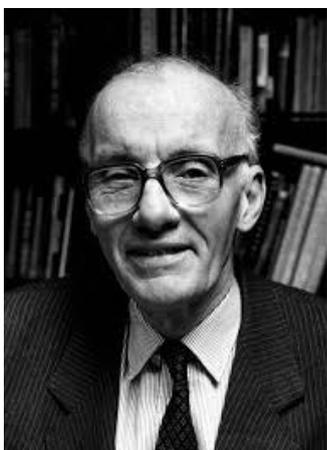
Diary Dates

21-22, September 2018: *A Passion for Porcelain: A Symposium in Honour of Meredith Chilton*. Gardiner Museum, Toronto

9 October 2018 – Autumn 2019, *Masterpieces of French Faience: Selections from the Sidney R. Knafel Collection*, The Frick Collection, New York

1 November 2018 (6.00-8.00 p.m.) *Chinamania*, FPS seminar, The Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT

The Bellaigue Lecture



The Bellaigue lecture commemorates our former President and Director of the Royal Collection, Sir Geoffrey de Bellaigue. This year's lecture on 25 June 2018 was organised in collaboration with the Wallace Collection and part of a seminar series exploring the history of collections, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Paris and London.

Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth spoke on 'Sèvres-mania'? The history of collecting Sèvres porcelain in Britain in the later nineteenth-century'. This sparkling talk chronicled the explosive increase in the market for 'Old Sèvres' from the 1850s, and explored its public display in loan exhibitions of art across the United Kingdom.

The Annual General Meeting

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held at the Mandeville Hotel following the lecture. As well as receiving the accounts, the meeting elected the Council for the forthcoming year. Catrin Jones, our long-serving newsletter editor, has resigned, together with Sue Newell, who has been elected Chair of the Glass Circle. We have also lost our Secretary as Laura Langelüddecke has resigned following the end of her contract as an Assistant Curator at the Wallace Collection, and are seeking a volunteer to take on this role. The Secretary organises three or four Council meetings a year, and is also an integral part of the team running the Society's events. Richard Hird has been elected, and Errol Manners has also recently agreed to rejoin the Council.

The Annual General Meeting also voted to modify the Society's purpose set out in its Rule 2 as follows 'The principal objects of the Society shall be to advance the study of French porcelain of all periods, *and that of European ceramics more widely*, and to further public knowledge and appreciation of *both*.

This broadening of our remit recognises that our activities have gradually expanded over the years. The theme of our 2014 symposium was 'Céramique sans frontières' while our most recent foreign trip was to Madrid. Be assured, though, that the ceramic arts of France remain the central focus of the Society. To take this initiative forward we are reviving the European Ceramics Study Group, a small informal body convened by Errol Manners in 2014. The Group will develop ideas for the Council.

Publications

Work on our latest biennial Journal, which will be published later this year. Titled *Makers, Markets, and Museums: French Porcelain in the Nineteenth Century, 1789-1918*, this is again edited by Diana Davis, with the assistance of an editorial board. Now fully peer-reviewed, Journal 7 will contain thirteen articles exploring collectors such as Baron Jean-Charles Davillier, George Watson Taylor, and Lady Dorothy Nevill, manufacture and design at Sèvres and in Paris, and new museums, such as London's now-forgotten Museum of Practical Geology.

To ensure that you receive your copy, please let us know if your address has changed.

Past journals can be ordered through the website, but we have now sold out of the revised edition of David Peters's 7-volume *Sèvres Plates and Services of the Eighteenth Century*.

Introducing Rachel Wood, membership administrator

Societies like ours run on the good will and work of our members. The French Porcelain Society is unusual in that a substantial part of our membership is resident outside the United Kingdom; hence our national representatives in the USA, France and Australia, who are all volunteers, and are a vital link between the Society's Council and its members. We owe them, and all of you, a membership organisation that runs smoothly. We therefore decided in 2016 that we needed a paid freelance membership administrator, rather than to continue to rely on the good will of Council members, most of whom have busy professional lives. Rachel Wood has been undertaking this work for us over the last year [some biographical text to come]. You can contact Rachel with any membership queries at fpsmembership@gmail.com.

Membership subscriptions

Having remained the same for a decade these have been increased in 2018 to cover core costs.

Subscription rates	Single	Joint
UK	£40 (previously £25)	£50 (previously £30)
Overseas	£50 (previously £30)	£60 (previously £35)
North America	\$70 (previously \$50)	\$80 (previously \$60)
Institutional	£75	N/A

If you have yet to do so, you can pay by card through our website www.thefrenchporcelainsociety.com, or by cheque to the Treasurer Sophie von der Goltz. We have recently asked UK-based members to complete new forms enabling the Society to reclaim tax under the Gift Aid scheme.

The Artois Service Rediscovered – Selma Schwartz

Imagine my surprise when, during the turbulent decade of the 1990s in my homeland, I recognized what was clearly a magnificent Sèvres service in the background of an official photograph of the infamous Serbian president, Slobodan Milošević! Now, some 25 years later, I have made my first visit to Belgrade to see the service and meet Biljana Crvenković, its curator. Two women from neighbouring countries have been brought together by the magic of French porcelain, via Britain, the Rothschild Collection and the Razumovski service.



The *service fond verd oiseaux et papillons d'après M de Buffon*, as it was known in the Sèvres records and commonly called the comte d'Artois service, is cloaked in mystery – in terms of its creation, its delivery and its subsequent history. David Peters (service number 82-4) has shown that work on the service began in July 1779 and continued until

August 1782. On the 6th of August that year, the comte d'Angiviller wrote to the director that the comte d'Artois wanted to make a present of a Sèvres service while in Spain and that the service was to be delivered to the comte de Montmorin, the French ambassador in Madrid, during September. As there was not enough time to produce a service, the gift was assembled from stock. Individual surviving service pieces with this decoration (Geoffrey de Bellaigue, Royal Collection, cat. no. 163) indicate that the both savoury and dessert pieces were produced but for the comte d'Artois only traditional elements of a dessert service were chosen. Unusually, however, 24 soup plates were also included. Of the original 180 pieces, there are 138 in Belgrade; the most significant lacuna being the punch bowl now in the MFA in Boston, which was already separated from the service in 1922 and was purchased in Paris in 1948.

The service has a unique blue-green ground colour and is decorated with reserves of individual birds copied after the hand-coloured engravings for the 9-volume *Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux* of Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon. The Artois service is the first to use these illustrations as its source, but the decoration proved popular at the factory until the time of the Revolution. Who was the service originally intended for? It has been suggested that it may have been a present for the Princess of the Asturias (granddaughter of Louis XV) who had given birth to a daughter in July 1782. How and when it made its way to London, when it is next documented in 1922 is also a mystery.

БИФОН СЕРВИС
СЕВР ПОРЦЕЛАН
ИЗ БЕЛОГ ДВОРА

THE BUFFON SERVICE
THE SÈVRES PORCELAIN
FROM THE WHITE PALACE



Under Tito, the White Palace was used as an official government seat and guesthouse and I assumed that the service was one of the many diplomatic gifts presented to the former president of Yugoslavia. However the service came to Belgrade in 1935 as a purchase of Prince Paul of the Serbian Karageorgevich dynasty, while he was Regent of Yugoslavia (1934-41).

Prince Paul was born in Saint Petersburg in 1893 and his mother was a member of the Demidoff family of collectors. Although his parents divorced when he was only three, perhaps that collecting gene survived in him as he became the only member of the Karageorgevich dynasty to avidly pursue collecting and clearly had aspirations to create a royal collection, buying mainly through the services of the Duveens.

He had excellent connections with Britain. He married Princess Olga of Greece and Denmark, sister of Marina, Duchess of Kent, and George VI was the best man at the wedding in Belgrade in 1923. He was educated at Oxford, and became a Knight of the Garter in 1939. Crvenković has discovered that he was determined to purchase the service for several years, even building the display cabinet (still extant) in the formal dining room for its display before actually acquiring it. It is possible that he was familiar with it from his time in England, perhaps first seeing it when it was sold at Christie's in 1922. The service had belonged to Baroness Burdett-Coutts (d. 1906), who was the sole inheritor of the immense fortune of her grandfather Thomas Coutts, the banker, and was reputed to be the second wealthiest woman in Britain after Queen Victoria. The sale of her possessions took place after the death of her (37-years-younger) husband in 1921. It would seem that the service was bought by the acclaimed Parisian dealer Isaac Founes as it was bought for Prince Paul at the liquidation of his stock in 1935.

The catalogue sets out to achieve several goals and will interest various audiences. Its primary aim, of course, is the publication of its existence which has been hidden for so long. Equally important in the view of Crvenković, is the education of the local population about porcelain in general, its importance in 18th-century dining culture and the esteem in which it, particularly Sèvres, is held. To put this in context, Belgrade's Museum of Applied Art was only founded in 1950. In Zagreb – an outpost of the Austro-Hungarian Empire - the museum, based on the model in Vienna and ultimately the V&A, was established in 1880. Even the Serbian Ministry of Culture was astonished at the monetary value placed on the service when a loan request was

submitted by the Musée de Nissim de Camondo for its recent Buffon services exhibition (the service ultimately did not travel).

For Sèvres porcelain enthusiasts, we have a magnificently illustrated catalogue: there is a large image of each piece plus an additional one of the underside, showing the inscriptions with the names of the birds and all the marks. From the study of this group, it is now clear that François Bouillat was responsible for painting the small reserves with butterflies, while Aloncle, Evans and Chappuis *l'ainé* were responsible for the birds. We know from David Peters' work that Mereaud *l'ainé* was responsible for painting the inscriptions.

Crvenković is the first to admit that more remains to be done. Her work has been limited by the relative isolation of Serbia, the lack of access to primary sources and to funds. She is indebted to David Peters, on whose work she has relied and who has generously collaborated with her on the catalogue and to Sylvie Legrand-Rossi.



32. *Soucoupe à pied* (тачна за сервирање шoljaца за сладолед)
1781. година
Etienne Evans, Etienne Henry Le Guay l'Ainé
сигн. марка фабрике укрштено душло „L“ са датум писмом „dd“, ознака за спикара у облику мача, ознака за позлатара „LG“
натпис: fourmillier [Fourmillier] grivellé de Cayenne. / Fourmillier [Fourmillier] femelle. / fourmillier [Fourmillier] tocheté de Cayenne. / Merle de mindanao [Mindanao].
H 3,6 cm, R 22,7 cm

32. *Soucoupe à pied* (tray stand for serving ice-cream cups)
Year: 1781
Etienne Evans, Etienne Henry Le Guay l'Ainé
Signatures - factory mark: interlaced double "L", with letter date "dd", painter's mark shaped like a sword; gilder's mark "LG".
Inscriptions: fourmillier [Fourmillier] grivellé de Cayenne. / fourmillier [Fourmillier] femelle. / fourmillier [Fourmillier] tocheté de Cayenne. / Merle de mindanao [Mindanao].
Height 3.6 cm; diameter 22.7 cm
Inv. No. 13/1/9.4

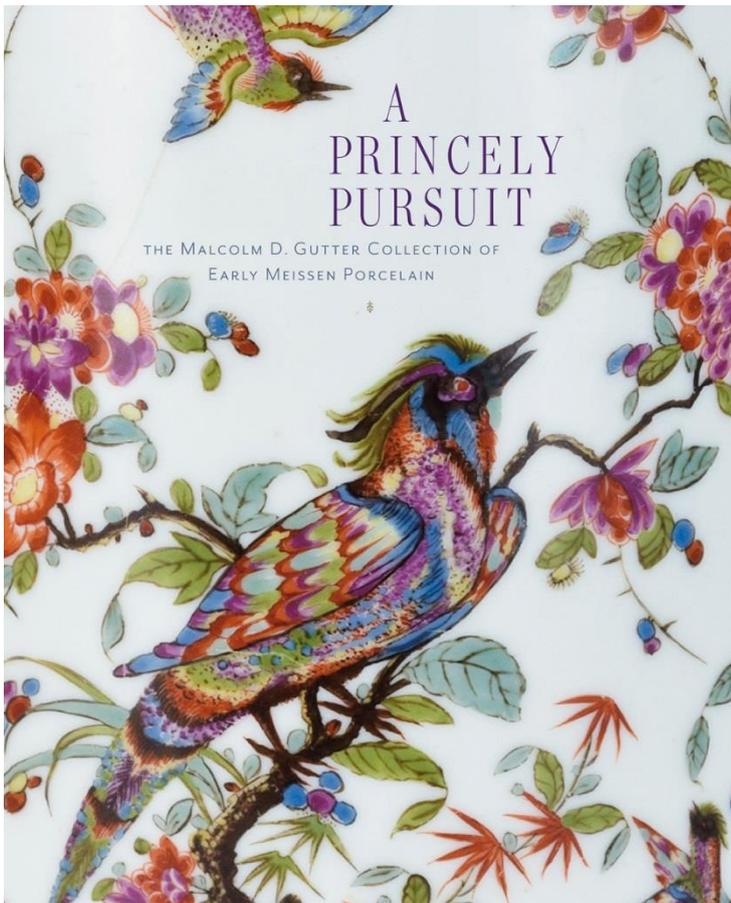
The book does not have a distributor. We are trying to work out a way in which members can purchase a copy and will send an announcement when this has been worked out. Errol Manners has kindly agreed for me to deposit my copy in his shop, which will be available for interested parties to look at from February 26th. If you are interested in purchasing one (the cost will be around 50 euros),

Biljana Crvenković, *The Buffon Service, The Sèvres Porcelain from the White Palace*, Belgrade, Museum of Applied Art, 2017. (186 pages. ISBN 978-86-7415-196-9)

Selma Schwartz

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The Gutter collection of Meissen published



A catalogue of Malcolm Gutter's collection of Meissen has been published by the University of Chicago Press.

A Princely Pursuit presents more than one hundred significant pieces from the collection, which focuses primarily on early Meissen, particularly the royal collection that Augustus II (1670–1733) commissioned for the Japanisches Palais in Dresden. Other rare and important objects include many examples of early red stoneware (Böttgersteinzeug) as well as numerous pieces created under the direction of Johann Höroldt (1696–1775). San Francisco curator of decorative arts Maria Santangelo provides a comprehensive history for this important collection and its key pieces while delineating the early development of the manufactory. "A Princely Pursuit" also features a general history about Meissen collecting by Meissen specialist Sebastian Kuhn, as well as an introductory text and stories about individual pieces by the collector himself which capture, in Gutter's own voice, his determined hunt for Meissen porcelain around the world, as well as the legendary figures he has met and worked with along the way.

256 pages | 120 colour plates | 9 1/2 x 11 3/4 | © 2018

Cloth \$65.00. ISBN: 9783777429847. Published July 2018. For sale in Canada, Mexico, and the USA through the publishers and the Legion of Honor Museum, San Francisco, and in the UK from Potterton Books at £50.

Visit to Petworth and Goodwood



The FPS made a return visit to these two great Sussex houses on 24 June. At Petworth we shown privately by Caroline, Lady Egremont some of the Sèvres acquired by the 2nd and 3rd Earls of Egremont in the mid-18th century. Ros Savill, who arranged the visit, presented the pieces and shared her extensive research on them. They included the punch bowl and *mortier* from the Nivernois service, received by duc de Nivernois in January 1763 while he was in London negotiating the peace that ended the Seven Years War. Thrillingly, we found that the *mortier* bears the j mark for 1762. It was given with the bowl to the 2nd Earl of Egremont, the British Secretary of State. His son, the 3rd Earl, was also a patron of the factory in the 1770s. Surviving elements from a service (Peters 74-4) ordered direct in 1774 included soup bowls and glass coolers decorated with rose sprigs. Much of his *bleu celeste* ribbon service (Peters 74-5) acquired through the banker, the *chevalier* Lambert in the same year also remains at Petworth.

This pattern was used on several services between 1769 and 1775, three of which were acquired by British patrons. Egremont's purchases also included Meissen.

In addition, James Rothwell of the National Trust led a tour of the house including some rooms not usually seen.

At Goodwood, the house was kindly been opened to us by special permission of the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, and we were shown round by Marilyn Humphreys, Hilary Sloane and Lucinda Creswell.

The Society famously visited the house in 1988, when curator Mireille Jottrand observed Stonehenge in the background of an image of a great bustard painted by François-Joseph Aloncle (1734–81), on a bottle cooler from the green-ground Sèvres service made in 1766 for the 3rd Duke of Richmond. Aloncle visited the duke's residence in Paris, the Hôtel de Brancas, to copy from George Edwards' *Histoire Naturelle de Divers Oiseaux* (1745–8). The service is discussed by G. Zelleke, *From Chantilly to Sèvres: French Porcelain and the Dukes of Richmond* (FPS Monograph VIII, 1992). We also visited in 2001 and there is more about the Sèvres at Goodwood in our autumn 2001 Newsletter which is on our website. The Richmond service is remarkable for its unique mix of blue and green ground colours and the 17-piece table centre of vases and bough pots with equally rich decoration on both sides.



An Evening of Italian Porcelain

The French Porcelain Society encourages its members to appreciate French porcelain in the broader context of European ceramics, so we were pleased to support, together with the British-Italian Society and Kirker Holidays, a lecture on the Fiordalisi collection of Neapolitan porcelain, prior to its dispersal at auction.

Sally Kevill-Davies reports:

On the evening of 5 December 2017, members gathered at Bonham's in Bond Street for an evening of Neapolitan culture.

On view was the celebrated Collezione Fiordalisi which the owners had started modestly in 1970, with a few Real Fabbrica Ferdinanda (1771-1786) cups. Over time their collecting became more knowledgeable and discerning and, as with all serious collectors, a library was built and international contacts with other collectors and dealers were formed.

The Capodimonte porcelain manufactory was established just outside Naples in 1745 by Charles III of Naples and Sicily, as part of a plan to raise the prestige and income of the Court, just as so many other European rulers had already done, and were doing. The early glassy soft-paste porcelain is exceptionally white and translucent, and early wares and garnitures of vases were painted under the direction of Giovanni Caselli (d. 1752) with still lives,

Watteauesque figures and battle scenes in a distinctive stippled style. The latter two subjects were represented in the Collection. Also represented were the rare figures of Giuseppe Ricci, the Florentine chief modeller, who in spite of a somewhat undefined and anatomically inexact modelling technique, imbued his characters with an extraordinary vitality and zest. Notable among these was the group, 'La Conversazione Galante' of c. 1750, only one other example of which has been recorded. This parodies the contemporary craze for gaming among the haute-monde.



The production of porcelain in Naples was revived by Carlo's son, Ferdinando IV in 1771, and a cabinet cup with his portrait (c. 1815-18) from the later Poulard Prad period of the Factory formed part of the Collection. Also represented were wares painted with local views, designed to appeal to the vulcanologists and English 'milordi' who visited Naples and its porcelain factory as part of their Grand Tour. These, along with depictions of regional costumes, were painted on wares covered with a glaze rendered opaque by the addition of tin oxide. This showed off to perfection their fashionable

pastel colours and the thick, luscious gilding of the borders. Small figures and groups, either in biscuit, glazed or enamelled, of the 1790s satirised Neapolitan townspeople promenading along the 'Passeggio Reale', or Royal Walkway, with their noses in the air and attired in fashionable dress, which was periodically opened to the public. As many as 75 of these figures formed an accompaniment to the 1792 'Servizio delle Vedute', to form a park-like centrepiece entitled the 'Real Passagio' This was a time when nationalism and the not-so discreet charm of the Bourgeoisie was on the rise throughout Europe. Indeed it was Napoleon's rise to power after the climactic French Revolution, and the subsequent invasion of Naples in 1806 by the French, which heralded the end of the royal Naples factory.



We were treated to an informative handling session of representative pieces from the collection, led by our own Sebastian Kuhn and Nette Mehgens, to a background of music by the duo Settembre. The highlight of this remarkable evening was an illustrated and deliciously personal lecture by the doyenne of Neapolitan porcelain, the eminent Angela Carola-Perotti, who had fastidiously guided the purchases of the owners of this scholarly and comprehensive Collection.

Symposium *from St Cloud to Bernadaud*



Our October 2017 symposium, convened by Aileen Dawson and held over two days at the Wallace Collection, was organised to showcase new research on the many, mostly smaller, French porcelain factories which operated largely outside royal or state control. At times overshadowed by the royal manufactory at Sèvres, some of these factories have recently received attention from a new generation of scholars, especially in France. The symposium was a major event and provided a fascinating opportunity to hear about their work, some of which is currently unpublished. The two days were a wide-ranging survey of French porcelain manufacture from the late 17th century, taking in the 18th century factories of Mennecey, Villeroy, Chantilly,

Strasbourg and Niderviller, and those of Dihl and Dagoty in Paris. We also heard about the exhibition and manufacture of porcelain in 19th century Paris, about collecting French porcelain in the later 19th century, and about the technical brilliance and creativity of Limoges today.

Aileen Dawson introduced the story of French porcelain studies in Britain. Speakers from the UK included Errol Manners (early Villeroy porcelain), Mia Jackson (print sources at St Cloud), Diana Davies (a Dihl and Guérhard Vase in the Victoria and Albert Museum) and Pamela Roditi, who focussed on two extraordinary white soft-paste figures, one of Clara the celebrated rhinoceros, and could the other, a seated man, have been inspired by the tale of Robinson Crusoe, which enjoyed early success in France? John Whitehead discussed the multi-talented Piat-Joseph Sauvage, demonstrating his connections to the arts of furniture, porcelain and interior decoration, which included porcelain painting for Sèvres and Dihl & Guérhard. Howard Coutts spoke about French porcelain in the Bowes Museum, which the Society last visited in 2016. The pieces shown covered the whole range of Paris factories, including Clignancourt, Angoulême and Rue Thiroux, as well as examples of Limoges and other provincial factories. This complemented a later paper by Valérie Montens of the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, which presented the French porcelain collections of Emille Lhoest, the sisters Hélène and Isabelle Godtschalk and Gustave Vermeersch.

It was a particular pleasure to welcome and to hear many new speakers from overseas. Iris Moon of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, discussed rococo porcelains and faience from Niderviller. Mathieu Deldicque's lecture explored some new routes for the study of the Chantilly porcelain factory, using plans and unpublished documents and hitherto unknown pieces from public collections and in the trade, that have emerged since Geneviève Le Duc's magisterial *Porcelaine tendre de Chantilly au XVIIIe siècle* (1996). Nicole Duchon has

worked extensively on Mennecy Villeroy, and published *Tendre Porcelaine de Mennecy Villeroy* 2016 (ISBN 978-2-9532793-2-0) and her recent research has dispelled many erroneous views formerly held about the history of this factory. She and her husband jointly gave a fascinating presentation on her work.

Dr Jacques Bastian spoke on the porcelain factories of Eastern France (Strasbourg, Niderviller, Lunéville, and Aprey) and the difficulties they faced following the privilege accorded by the King to the Vincennes porcelain factory which forbade any other concern from making porcelain decorated with figure painting or gilding. Caroline Roelens Duchamp focussed on a unique bouquet of flowers in biscuit porcelain made at the Niderviller factory and recently acquired by the Sarrebourg Museum. This was made for Delphine de Custine, née Sabran (1770-1826), the daughter-in-law of General de Custine, owner of the Niderviller porcelain factory from 1770.

Sadly Régine de Plinval de Guillebon was unable to make the journey from Paris and Aileen Dawson read her paper on Pierre Louis Dagoty and the porcelain factory he established in 1798 in the rue de Chevreuse, Paris, where it remained in production until 1820. Designs for Dagoty porcelain are held by two institutions: the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, already published by the speaker, and some unpublished designs in the Victoria and Albert Museum, reveal new discoveries of shapes and decoration. We were taken further into the 19th century by Tamara Préaud, who discussed the role of Alexandre Brongniart, director of the Sèvres factory, in the 'Expositions des produits de l'industrie française' during the first half of the 19th century. Audrey Gay-Mazuel of the musée des arts décoratifs, Paris, followed with a discussion of Jacob Petit and other Paris porcelain makers and decorators of the rococo revival.

The non-metropolitan French factories of the later 19th century often produced wares of exceptional quality and ambition. Virginie Desrante spoke on Jules Lesme and neo-Renaissance Limoges porcelain in the style of Bernard Palissy, and Sonia Banting introduced us to Charles Pillivuyt, who established a factory at Mehun-sur-Yèvre in Berry in 1854, where he made exceptional art porcelains, winning prizes for pâte-sur-pâte decoration. The last two papers were a fitting finale, and a breath-taking reminder of the creative ambition of Limoges in the late 20th and 21st centuries. Hélène Huret, director of the Fondation Bernadaud, showed how Bernadaud, established in Limoges in 1863, is still developing new products and has recently collaborated with international artists ranging from Jeff Koons to the film-maker David Lynch. Finally Céline Paul, director of the Musée Adrien Dubouché, Limoges, demonstrated how Limoges porcelain still echoes changes in contemporary lifestyles, and examined today's inter-relationship between dining, design and contemporary art at Limoges.

The symposium made clear firstly that there is still a rich world of French porcelain to explore beyond Vincennes-Sèvres, and secondly how much significant research in this field is in progress, especially in France.

Oliver Fairclough

Book Sale

Kirstie Gibson is selling a collection of French Porcelain books, which belonged to her mother, an FPS member. These include a number of standard works mostly published between the 1980s and 2000. Payment by PayPal. For a list of titles with prices, contact kirstie.gibson@btinternet.com

Errol Manners recalls two members we have recently lost



Lady Cynthia Postan, 1918 – 2017

The French Porcelain Society knew Lady Cynthia as a frequent and welcome attendee at many of our events and a stalwart of the Ceramic Fair. The Society twice visited her at her home in Cambridge to see her collection on our summer outings.

Her collecting of French porcelain began in the 1950s and developed when her husband, the eminent Cambridge Economic historian Sir Michael “Munia” Postan spent a year teaching at the Sorbonne in 1962. Munia himself had already formed a fine collection of early Chinese ceramics which was later exhibited and sold by Bluett and Sons Ltd in November 1972. During this year in Paris Cynthia was able to haunt the shops of the dealers on the *rive gauche* such as Lévy-Lacaze, G. Bérard and Pierre de Regaini where she gravitated towards the Japanese inspired porcelains of Chantilly and the early wares of Vincennes.

Cynthia was fortunate in being able to acquire a number of important and unique pieces but, in the spirit of a true collector, she also took delight in the less rarefied discoveries, sometimes minor or damaged pieces that were still beautiful or deepened her understanding of the subject. Her collection was dispersed at E & H Manners in 2015.

Due to Cynthia’s modesty most of us in the porcelain world were unaware of her other significant achievements until we read her obituaries. Born the daughter of the 9th Earl of Albermarle, she was the great niece of Mrs George Keppel *maîtresse en titre* to Edward VII and was recruited to MI5 early in the war. Here she worked for her future husband who was on attachment from Cambridge, as head of the Russian section of the Ministry of Economic Warfare. She wrote the definitive chapter on the development of the jet engine in her husband’s *The Design and Development of Weapons* and later published translations of important French works on economics.

Cynthia was on the committee of the rhododendron and camellia group of the Royal Horticultural Society and she edited and co-wrote *The Rhododendron Story* published by the RHS, she received their prestigious Loder Award in 1997. Seeds that she collected in California were propagated at The Cambridge University Botanic Gardens and named after her as ‘*Ceanothus Cynthia Postan*’, it is considered a particularly fine *ceanothus* and is commercially available today.

Lady Cynthia Postan died on November 12th 2017 in her 100th year.



Sir Jeffrey Tate CBE, seen here, centre right, with other members of the Society during our visit to Naples in 2009.

The FPS has lost one of its most illustrious members in the death of Sir Jeffrey Tate. Overcoming the childhood handicap of spina bifida, and other disabilities, he gave up his medical profession after Cambridge to rise to the very top of a career in music as one of the most distinguished operatic conductors of our time. He worked with all the greats from Solti, Pierre Boulez and Maria Callas and everywhere from Covent Garden to The Metropolitan but mostly in Germany and Italy. In 2005 he turned down the position of music director at La Fenice in Venice to take the equivalent post in the San Carlo theatre in Naples. Sir Jeffrey was also the chief conductor of the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra from 2009 and was recognised as one of the greatest interpreters of German music.

Jeffrey and his partner Klaus Kuhlemann formed one of the very foremost collections of Meissen porcelain, focussing on the baroque wares from the earliest period and integrating it with the many varied arts of 18th century Europe.

A high point for the FPS was being welcomed by Sir Jeffrey and Klaus on our trip to Naples in 2009 where we attended a performance in which Jeffrey conducted Mozart's *Il ratto dal Seraglio* in the San Carlo Theatre. To be the guest of the maestro in Naples opened all doors and the very best restaurants.

A bon-viveur and an enthusiast for life Jeffrey often attended our dinners and outings and with Klaus was rarely absent from the great sales. His illuminating 'Desert Island Discs' can be easily found on the BBC website.

Jeffrey was appointed CBE in 1990 and Knighted in 2017.