



THE FRENCH PORCELAIN SOCIETY



President: Dame Rosalind Savill

Chairman: Errol Manners

Spring 2013



FPS members on an outing to Versailles for the Dodin exhibition, September 2012

Chairman's Report

Finally we have a newsletter up and running again after too long an absence for which we apologise. Catrin Jones has taken on the role of editor and Anne Leeper has agreed to take over from her as membership secretary.

Since our last Newsletter we have organised numerous expeditions, some of which you can read about in the following pages, and of course the symposium in April, organised by John Whitehead in honour of our president Dame Rosalind.

On Friday 14 June 2013 we will be holding a Study Day of lectures at Art Antiques London followed by the AGM at the Polish Club. This year we are thrilled that MaryLou Boone and Meredith Chilton have agreed to give the annual lecture to celebrate the publication of 'Daily Pleasures: French Ceramics from the MaryLou Boone Collection'. The lecture will be followed by our annual dinner.

Nette Megens is working on plans for a trip to some less familiar collections in Holland in April - if all goes according to plan this will also coincide with an opportunity to visit the newly reopened Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

Looking forward to 2014 we are considering ideas for the next symposium which will embrace the wider continental ceramic world and are delighted to announce a steering group led by Sebastian Kuhn to get it going. Professor Timothy Wilson, Oliver Fairclough, Hilary Young and Patricia Ferguson have also agreed to be part of this process.

It is with great pleasure that we report the publication of an important addition to the literature, 'Les Biscuits de porcelaine de Paris', by our member Régine de Plinval de Guillebon for which the Society awarded a grant.

We look forward to welcoming many members to London in June and to events throughout 2013.

*Errol Manners
January 2013*

Committee Members of the French Porcelain Society 2013

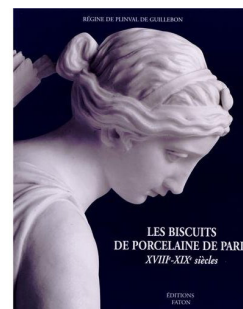
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New Publications

Les Biscuits de Porcelain de Paris: XVIIIè-XIXè siècles by Régine de Plinval de Guillebon

ISBN: 2878441621/978-2878441628

A key text on the fascinating topic of Paris biscuit porcelains, a copy of this book has generously been donated to the V&A's Ceramics & Glass section library.



Daily Pleasures: French Ceramics from the MaryLou Boone Collection by Elizabeth Williams and Meredith Chilton

ISBN: 9780875872155

392 pages, 431 colour illustrations

Catalogue to accompany the exhibition at LACMA, Los Angeles, 6 October 2012 - 31 March 2013. For further details please see Exhibitions section

Meißener Porzellane mit Dekoren nach ostasiatischen Vorbildern by Dr Julia Weber

in 2 volumes ISBN: 978-3-7774-9091-5

Vol 1 240 pages, 60 images, 850 images of marks, Vol 2 460 pages, 660 images



In January 2013 the long-anticipated first part of the catalogue of the Meissen porcelain in the Ernst Schneider Collection in Schloss Lustheim will be published.

The book discusses the origins of Meissen porcelain after Asian examples, and is based on extensive archival research in the Saxon State Archive and the Archive of the State Porcelain Factory of Meissen. An introductory essay explains the role Meissen porcelain after Asian example played in the trade with Paris. The author also explores the role these objects had in the interior decoration of the Japanese Palace.

Available at a reduced price until 31 January 2013, it is a must-have for every porcelain lover!

Forthcoming Events

Holland off the beaten track: 18-21 April 2013

Join us for a tour of the Dutch collections you may not have heard about. Together with Suzanna Lambooy and Nette Megens we will make a tour of smaller museums and collections in Holland from 18-21 April 2013. The much-anticipated opening of the Rijksmuseum is taking place on 14 April, so you can either extend or bring your trip forward should you like to visit the museum.

Please contact Nette if you would like to pre-reserve a place. The price will be made known early this year, as usual, we will endeavour to make it as competitive an offer as we can!

We are able to offer a limited number of travel bursaries to suitable candidates. If you are interested please contact Nette Megens (Nette.Megens@bonhams.com) or Errol Manners (manners@europeanporcelain.com).

Handling Session at the Victoria & Albert Museum

February 27th 2013, 11:00 am, with Adrian Sassoon. Places are limited to 12 people.

Contact Patricia Ferguson (patricia.ferguson@earthlink.net)

Sèvres in Surrey

Visit to a private collection in March. Details to be confirmed.

FPS in Cardiff: The National Museum Cardiff

Day trip to study the French Porcelain in the company of Oliver Fairclough, Andrew Renton and Rachel Conroy. Early May. Details to be confirmed.

AGM and Study Day - Save the date!

Friday 14th June 2013 will see the FPS Study Day at ART ANTIQUES LONDON, followed by the AGM, where we will be treated to a lecture by Mary Lou Boone and Meredith Chilton.



FPS members on a visit to Rangers House

NEWS

Trustees of the Frick Collection acquire Sèvres Vase Japon in Honor of Anne L. Poulet

By Charlotte Vignon, Associate Curator of Decorative Arts, The Frick Collection, New York

The Board of Trustees recently announced the acquisition of a beautiful eighteenth-century vase created at the Royal Manufactory of Sèvres. The acquisition was made in honour of Anne L. Poulet, who retired in September 2011 after serving as Director of The Frick Collection for eight years. The vase is the first piece in hard-paste porcelain from the Sèvres manufactory to enter the Collection and is particularly appropriate given Mrs. Poulet's interest in eighteenth-century French decorative arts.

Despite its name, the *Vase Japon* is an interpretation of a Chinese You vessel from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.– 220 A.D.). Examples of this type of baluster-shaped vessel survive in bronze and earthenware. Documents from the Sèvres archives indicate that the Frick vase was made in 1774 along with two other vases of the same size, shape, and decoration. Each bears the mark of the gilder-painter Jean-Armand Fallot, who was employed by Sèvres between 1764 and 1790. Of the three, however, only the Frick vase is adorned with an elaborate silver-gilt handle and chain, which, like its shape and surface pattern, are directly inspired by the Chinese model. The mounts bear the mark of Charles Ouizille, who, in 1784, became the official jeweler of Louis XVI.

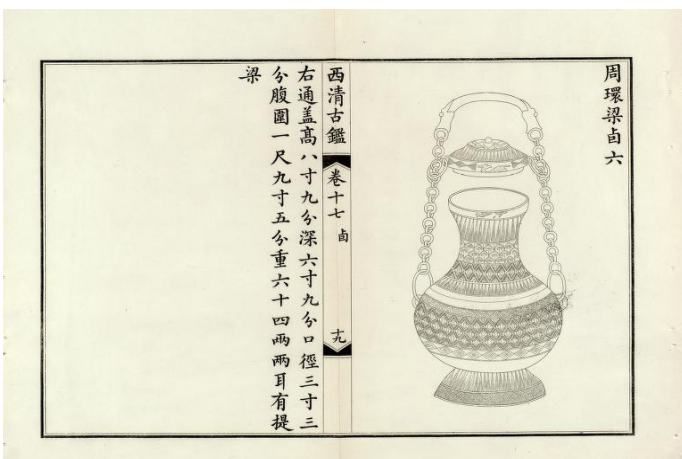
The design and decoration of the *Vase Japon* derive from a woodblock print of a Yu vessel reproduced in a forty-volume catalogue of the vast Chinese imperial collections compiled between 1749 and 1751 at the behest of the Qianlong Emperor (reigned 1736–95). Included are entries for more than fifteen hundred ancient bronze objects—primarily ritual vessels, but also mirrors, lamps, and weapons—each accompanied by a brief description of its size and origin.



Vase Japon, 1774, Royal Manufactory of Sèvres, France, painted and gilded hard-paste porcelain with silver-gilt mounts, The Frick Collection; photo: Michael Bodycomb

Around 1767, a copy of this catalogue reached Paris. It was sent to Henri Bertin by Father Joseph Amiot, a Jesuit missionary working in Peking who regularly corresponded with Bertin. At the time, Bertin was France's Secretary of State and had recently been appointed *commissaire du roi* at the Sèvres factory, an administrative position he held until 1780. It is believed that Bertin played a key creative role in the production of the *Vase Japon*.

The *Vase Japon* is exceptional in that Sèvres did not typically produce objects based directly on antique prototypes. It differs markedly from the manufactory's Chinoiserie production, the decorations of which evoke a fanciful vision of China and the Far East as imagined by artists such as François Boucher. The *Vase Japon* represents an early attempt by the Sèvres manufactory to produce something more authentic, patterned after an ancient Chinese model. Such a distinct antiquarian approach was not widely adopted by French ceramic manufactories until the early nineteenth century.



The vase was modeled after this woodblock print of a You vessel, reproduced in the catalogue of the Chinese imperial collections, c. 1755.

FRENCH PORCELAIN SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA

Our Australian Representative, Peter Burton, summarises a year of Australian FPS activities

The Chairman of the French Porcelain Society has supported a program to encourage more interaction of the Australian members in order to improve the benefits of membership and hopefully attract new members.



FPS members Greg Sewell, Richard Beresford, Barbara Burton, Richard Deakin, Adrienne Wilson, and Rhona Clement enjoy viewing the collection of Greg Sewell.

The first of the activities was a visit to the collection of Greg Sewell in Sydney on Saturday 4th August. Greg has put together a fine collection of Vincennes and Sèvres porcelain which shows his connoisseurship with well researched and selected pieces. There was lively discussion as Greg presented each piece to the group.

We also discussed future activities and Richard Beresford, curator at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, is in the process of organizing a visit to the Kenneth Reed collection with a focus on the pieces of French Porcelain in the collection which has been donated to the AGNSW.

Members in Melbourne can also look forward to a tour highlighting the French porcelain in the National Gallery of Victoria which is rich in white pieces provided through the Peter Wynne Morris collection.

FPS members in Australia held a second gathering to look at the recently opened collection of Kenneth Reed at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney on 12th December. Richard Beresford, senior curator of European art pre-1900 and FPS member, hosted the evening, bringing considerable experience having been a research assistant at the Wallace Collection.

The Kenneth Reed collection consists of over 200 pieces of European porcelain from 27 factories. There is also an important collection of Italian Renaissance Maiolica. While the collection is quite varied it has good depth in the three great factories of Chelsea, Meissen and Sèvres and so Richard introduced us to the French selection first.

There are only a couple of pieces from each of the factories of Saint-Cloud, Menecy and Chantilly but each piece is interesting in being selected for a collection that covers such a broad spectrum.

The Saint-Cloud inkstank is the only recorded example of this rare form and is decorated with insects in underglaze blue. The Chantilly factory is represented by a covered sugar bowl and two tea bowls and saucers decorated with stylised flowering branches in Kakiemon colours contained within an iron red fan-shaped frames. There are also a couple of Menecy figures of musicians decorated in polychrome which are a good example of the modelling skills of the factory in the early years.

Of the early Vincennes pieces, there is a pair of *vases à oreilles* painted by Vielliard after Boucher and a cup and saucer (*tasse à quatre pans ronds*) with flower painting derived from Meissen. Sèvres is well represented in the collection and covers all of



FPS members at AGNSW viewing the Kenneth Reid Collection.

the second half of the 18th century. A very rare piece is a small bust of Louis XV (c1762-63) in hard paste porcelain which has a signature of the Hannong family. It appears to be an example of the experiments by Paul-Antoine Hannong to demonstrate the hard paste formula he was trying to sell to the factory. Naturally when confronted with a large selection of Sèvres, the issue of later decoration is raised and there was enthusiastic discussion about one piece with possibly suspect blue and green ground colours on which no consensus was reached.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales has produced a catalogue of the porcelain collection, which can be viewed online. The hard copy is available from the AGNSW bookshop at:

<http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/shop/item/9781741740820/>

If FPS members are visiting Australia and would like to make contact with Australian members or curators please contact pburton@bigpond.com.au

SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF DAME ROSALIND SAVILL

Mia Jackson reviews day one of the FPS symposium, Friday 13th April 2012

The symposium in honour of Dame Rosalind Savill took place at the Wallace Collection, in the Goodison Lecture Theatre. This space was created by the Centenary Project, one of the major material transformations undertaken by Ros during her tenure as director of the Wallace Collection. The collection therein of so many interested amateurs, dealers, collectors and curators sharing their discoveries and excitement could almost be said to be tribute enough in itself to Ros's brand of visionary scholarship.

We started the day on a personal note, as author and dealer Adrian Sassoon shared tales from his thirty-five year friendship with Ros, beginning at the Wallace Collection when she was a museum assistant in 1978. Their mutual passion for Vincennes and Sèvres meant that Adrian's paper showed some of the most exciting discoveries in the field over the last four decades, usually because one or the other was involved. It set a tone of friendship and scholarship, which was present throughout the symposium.

Bernard Dragesco, dealer and art historian, delivered a brilliant and ground-breaking paper on the paste of Saint-Cloud porcelain, presenting for the first time his discovery in the Archives Nationales of factory documents and recipes. He was followed by Antoine d'Albis, former chief scientist at the Sèvres manufactory, who presented some intriguing thoughts on the identification of painters and their work at Vincennes, including Liot, Taunay père and fils, and painters from Saxony. He traced trends in the first dozen years of the factory's life. Errol Manners, our Chairman, turned his attention to chinoiserie produced at Vincennes and in particular, a seated chinaman, leaning on a vase decorated with relief flowers. In a breath-taking canter through nearly 50 slides in 20 minutes, showing dozens of rare comparable pieces, Errol pointed out similarities in enamel colours, caterpillar-painting, flower-moulding, firing cracks in figures and so on, convincingly attributing the figure to Vincennes.

After much-needed caffeine, we returned to the lecture theatre for Professor Maureen Cassidy-Geiger's fascinating talk on a group of watercolours she discovered in the archives at Meissen, showing designs for figures of children in Turkish costume. The sheets are inscribed with the names of Parisian *marchands-merciers*, such as Gilles Bazin, Jean-Charles Huet and *veuve* Lair and bear witness to the market for Meissen that continued in Paris despite the Seven Years War. Not only was this a fantastic subject for a symposium for Ros, with her great interest in the influence of Turks and turquerie in France in the mid-eighteenth century, but we were kept amused by spotting Ros transformed into a Meissen figure or Madame de Pompadour, thanks to Maureen's photoshopping skills and Isabella Savill's collusion.



Crowds gathered in the Goodison Lecture Theatre

Collector and author Pamela Roditi's paper was an in-depth examination of a rare shape in French porcelain, variously described as a *vase à oignon* or a *lampe de nuit* and so rare, in fact, that only seven examples are known. She investigated the two possible uses, drawing on similar models in silver, Delft and glass. The *pièce de résistance* was her demonstration, using a real silver model she had brought with her, of how a *lampe de nuit* was a safer and more economical alternative to a candlestick. Candle stubs, useless in traditional candlesticks, could be floated in scented water in a *lampe de nuit* and would extinguish themselves safely.

Andreina d'Agliano, art historian and lecturer, masterfully demonstrated the linking of archival documents and objects in her excellent paper on the collection of the dukes of Parma showing pieces now in the Quirinale in Rome, the Palazzo Pitti in Florence and the Parma Galleries and their mention in previously unpublished bills and inventories. Professor Alden Gordon also treated us to original archival research with his paper on Madame de Pompadour and the Duke of Newcastle and their diplomatic exchange of gifts in 1751.

After lunch, we ventured into the sumptuous world of *frises riches*, with a paper by Catrin Jones of the V&A on the links between textiles and Sèvres decoration from the 1760s onwards. Using a variety of sources, such as portraits showing textiles, pattern books and remnants of the fabrics themselves, Catrin retraced the connections between these two quintessentially French areas of luxury production as deftly as did Méraud *le jeune*. We stayed with the subject of decorative motifs with Marie-Laure de Rochebrune, Curator at Versailles, who concentrated on the variety of antique vases one can see on French decorative art in the early neoclassical revival in France in the 1750s and its presence on virtually all types of decorative art. Concentrating on one motif was a ingenious way to show connections between the many branches of the decorative arts.

SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF DAME ROSALIND SAVILL

The Dame herself was the next to step up to the lectern, and as usual she did not disappoint. Talking with enthusiasm on one of her many specialist subjects, the English as collectors of Sèvres porcelain, she told us about an exceptional early collector of Sèvres, the Sixth Earl of Coventry, of Croome Court. Lord Coventry's papers survive in the Worcester Record Office and contain some bills for his purchases of Vincennes and Sèvres, some of which can be matched with pieces still in the Croome collection, for example, an eye-wateringly expensive *déjeuner du roi* with pastoral scenes painted by Dodin, which Coventry bought from Bachelier in 1764, and a white-ground garniture of a *cuvette Mahon* and two vases *pot-pourris feuilles de mirte*, bought four days later also from Bachelier.

The most exciting discovery was a jug and basin commissioned by Coventry via Bachelier, painted in elaborate *frises riches* by Méraud *le jeune*, an up-to-the-moment decoration which caused a sensation at court. The story gets even better, as when the jug and basin arrived in England, Coventry commissioned Robert Adam to design a piece of furniture to display them in his newly decorated tapestry room, with which elements of the decoration of the porcelain correspond wonderfully. A drawing survives for a first idea for the stand, before Adam had seen the porcelain, but so does the stand itself, made by Mayhew and Ince. The National Trust has recently acquired Croome Court and it is hoped that many of the original contents will return to the house for which they were intended.

Vincent Bastien discussed a garniture of five *beau bleu* Sèvres vases, decorated with subjects after Greuze, formerly at Harewood and now dispersed, making use of factory archives to identify and reunite them, albeit virtually.



The pot-pourri commissioned for Ros from Kate Malone, with Jo Gwilt's pot-pourri made to Madame Menjaud's 18th-century recipe

Our next speaker was Isabella Savill, Ros's daughter. As a student of classics at Cambridge, she had the inspired idea of combining her love of Sèvres porcelain with her knowledge of Greek and Roman myth, which she did in a remarkable way, examining all the bas-relief scenes on the plates of the Catherine the Great Service and investigating their relationship with classical mythology, using an unpublished document detailing the iconographical programme for the service from the Sèvres factory archives. Surprisingly, she discovered little correspondence between the 287 extant dessert plates and the 1778 iconographical programme (to the extent that a whole section from the document – Greek mythology – was discarded) and in her paper she discussed some of her findings and put forward suggestions as to why the service does not follow more closely the factory's plan.

Selma Schwartz was sadly unable to deliver her paper on the Maria-Theresia service, but it will be published in the next Journal along with the rest of the proceedings. John Whitehead nobly stepped into the breach and brought the first day's proceedings to a close with a highly entertaining paper on a book he had discovered. From 1881 to 1940, the École Normale Supérieure de Jeunes Filles occupied the original factory building, along with the l'École Normale des Professeurs-Femmes de Sèvres. The *jeunes filles*, under expert tuition, were wont to dress as Falconet biscuit groups on high days and holidays, and John shared some of these charming (and often hilarious) pictures with us. It would be highly appropriate were the committee to follow these sage demoiselles' example at the next AGM. Watch this space.



Ros addresses a captive audience

Dr Juliet Carey, Curator at Waddesdon Manor, gave a captivating paper on Sèvres *caillouté* ground patterns and the links with mineralogy, showing a number of plates from eighteenth-century publications illustrating microscope slides, and drawing parallels with the gilded ground patterns of Sèvres. She also explored how ideas of the elements influenced the decoration of Sèvres porcelain. She was followed by Sir Geoffrey de Bellaigue, Surveyor Emeritus of the Queen's Works of Art, who spoke eloquently and wittily on two recently rediscovered late eighteenth-century biscuit figures, Fidelity and Sensibility, which were probably acquired by George IV and are still in the Royal Collection.

SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF DAME ROSALIND SAVILL

Marlen Grohmann reviews the second day of the FPS symposium, Saturday 14th April 2012

Day two of the fully-packed programme started with “The importance of being rose” by Samuel Wittwer, Director of Palaces and Collections at the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg. His charming presentation about a garniture of three rose Sèvres vases from 1757 with paintings by Jean-Louis Morin (1732-1787) was illustrated with enchanting and amusing pictures of Rosalind Savill.

In former times, the vases belonged to the royal household of Prince Henry of Prussia, younger brother of Frederick the Great. The Rose Pompadour and putti paintings were admired by the Royal Porcelain Manufactory Berlin (KPM), which tried to adopt the Sèvres rose colour on their own porcelain. But unfortunately the colour was incompatible with the Berlin glaze. During the 19th century the garniture belonged to the Braunschweigische Galerie in the Berlin City Palace. After the Russian Revolution in 1917 the set became famous when the communist party interfered over compensation for the Hohenzollern family. A political discourse about the unknown whereabouts of the vases started, but since 1950 they have resided in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



*Vase “Boileau”, 1757–58, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson*

Afterwards, a fascinating foray through the rich oeuvre and great influence of the Sèvres manufactory was given by prominent lecturers such as Aileen Dawson from the British Museum, who spoke about two Sèvres portrait medallions. The former archivist of the Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres, Tamara Préaud, discussed the chronological irregularities in catalogues of the 18th century. Ulla Houkjaer, Curator at the Design Museum Denmark, discussed the origins of porcelain production in Denmark.

Linda Roth, Curator at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, chose a little-known period of the factory’s history for her concluding presentation and gave a lecture about Sèvres in the midst of World War I.



*Vase l’Adour, 1917, Wadsworth Atheneum
The Goodwin Art Purchase Fund, 2006.23.1*

Based on a stoneware vase from 1917 which was designed by Léonard Gébleux (1883-1920), she gave a remarkably captivating overview about this fascinating period in the manufactory’s history. The audience heard a vivid account of the circumstances of the defence of Paris, when dormitories were installed in the factory and people faced problems with transport, payment and the preservation of jobs. The factory began producing, among other things, stoneware containers for making explosives.

Nevertheless the designers tried to reach their studios in order to continue creating. Stoneware was their preferred material at that time and the quality of the wares they produced reached a new peak. Prisoners from Germany were used to help with the production of industrial stoneware.

All these interesting stories and facts will be published in more depth in the society’s Journal, which will be with us in 2013.



*Dame Ros Savill with the beautiful Kate Malone pot-pourri presented to her
at the end of the symposium, a gift from FPS members*

Preparations are already underway for our 2014 Symposium, as well as the Study Day on Friday 14th June 2013...

From the archives...

CHANTILLY - NOVEMBER 2011

Patricia Ferguson on a French adventure for the FPS



An enthusiastic group of FPS members met in November to view the exhibition *Singes et Dragons, la Chine et le Japon à Chantilly au XVIII^e siècle*, at the Musée Condé (September 14 2011 – January 1 2012). Following a splendid drive through the forest surrounding the château, home to the hunts of the princes of Condé and Orléans, we were greeted by Nicole Garnier-Pelle, conservateur général du Patrimoine chargée du musée Condé, Château de Chantilly, author of the recent publication, *Livre de dessins Chinois: modèles de Jean-Antoine Fraisse pour les manufactures du duc de Bourbon, 1735* (St-Rémy-en-l'Eau, 2011), a facsimile of the original album acquired by the duc d'Aumale in 1891, which includes a valuable partial transcription of the 1740 inventory of Louis Henry, duc de Bourbon, prince du Condé, who founded porcelain, lacquer and *toiles peintes* manufactories. The exhibition, and beautifully illustrated catalogue, *Singes et dragons, La Chine et le Japon à Chantilly au XVIII^e siècle*, was organized and authored by Nicole Garnier-Pelle with the invaluable assistance of Manuela Finaz de Villaine, also the FPS's French Representative, who generously agreed to give us a tour of the exhibition and Château de Chantilly.

After a brief explanation of the history of the internationally important paintings, Manuela introduced us to the exhibition, which brings together Chinese and Japanese porcelain, faïence, lacquer, textiles and the coloured engravings of Jean

Antoine Fraisse, along with Chantilly porcelain treasures from the musée Condé, the musée des Arts Décoratifs, musée du Louvre, the Ville de Chantilly, acquired from the Jean de Cayeux collection in 2009, and other loans from FPS members, documented in the catalogue. Arranged by themes according to motif, one of the most delightful cases was devoted to animal groups. The catalogue records many of the significant provenances, such as the large Chantilly jar, ca.1735-40, and its Japanese prototype, ca. 1690-1700, with simple gilt brass mounts, both of which were inventoried in 1740 and in 1852 removed to Orleans House, Twickenham, when the duc d'Aumale was in exile.

The tour ended on a mischievous high note with an intimate viewing of Huet's recently restored Grande Singerie, the antechamber to the princely apartments, with its delightful allegories of the Five Senses and Four Continents, depicting family members in the guise of monkeys. Would that Huet had turned his brush to porcelain decoration!

Following multitudinous remerciés and adieus to our gracious guide Manuela, our party retreated to La Capitainerie restaurant in the 17th century kitchens to enjoy the local beverage and collation, followed by a spirited walk round the on-going restoration of the canals and parterres and exiting through the soon-to-be reopened Jeu de Paume.

FPS VISIT TO FLORENCE

Patricia Ferguson describes the FPS trip to Florence, 30 November to 3 December 2012

With FPS Chairman Errol Manners as our tour leader, we began immediately upon our noon arrival at the Museo del Bargello. Here, we met curator and maiolica scholar Marino Marini, who, thanks to Justin Raccanello, agreed to allow us late admittance. A veritable survey of the history of maiolica, all presented in one enormous room. The collection's great appeal is that many of the 'grotteschi'-decorated wine cisterns, ewers, flasks and dishes, ca. 1560-80, manufactured in the Fontana and Pantanazzi workshops in Urbino, had at one time graced the tables of the Medici: the decoration had obvious parallels with the contemporary frescoes in the Palazzo Vecchio. The Medici porcelain included a large blue-painted dish with St. Mark the Evangelist, ca. 1580: in the 19th century, the dish was returned to the Grand Ducal collection by Alessandro Castellani. There was also an interesting selection of 17th century and later wares from Montelupo, Savona and Cantagalli.



Outside the Palazzo Pitti



The Bargello

The afternoon was spent in 'The Treasury of the Medici' (Museo degli Argenti) in the Palazzo Pitti. The collection was displayed in magnificent baroque rooms with richly inlaid floors and colourful frescoes, rivaling surviving Treasuries in Dresden and Paris. There were four large Guadalajara jars ('Boccaros'), displayed on early 18th century gilt wood mounts possibly by Foggini. An exceptionally rare crucifix with Meissen Böttger porcelain figures, which entered the Medici collection in 1719, was later brought to our attention by the Italian ceramic scholar Andreina D'Agliano, our gracious hostess, who arrived especially from Rome and provided invaluable contacts. That night Livia, the vice-president of the Associazione Amici di Doccia, and Luigi Malenchini hosted a wonderful dinner in their home beside the Arno, the Palazzo Malenchini-Alberti.

On Saturday, we began with a tour of the Palazzo Ginori, built between 1516-20, the private home of Marchese Lorenzo Ginori Lisci, a descendent of Carlo Andrea Ginori (1702-57), who founded the porcelain factory at Doccia in 1737. Our guide was Italian furniture specialist Fausto Calderai. The collection is rich in Doccia sculpture after Roman and Baroque models, and included a stunning porcelain fireplace (a second example was in the Doccia Museum). The family porcelain, including a Chinese export service, ca. 1690-5, ordered through agents in Lisbon, was displayed in several cabinets, as well as a unique cupboard with doors on the narrow sides, opening to reveal rows of beakers and cups illustrating the manufactory's greatest patterns.

Most interesting was a group of Sèvres and Vincennes plates purchased by Bartolomeo Ginori in Paris in 1771, presumably as samples for the factory to use for inspiration. Fausto Calderai also explained the wonderful custom among the Ginori family of finishing a formal dinner with the placement of a beautiful 18th century plate, known as "remonte", which we had experienced the night before. Of particular fascination was the original huge 'burning' glass that Carlo Ginori had used in his early porcelain experiments.

We then drove to the outskirts of Florence to the Museo Richard-Ginori Della Manifattura di Doccia, a purpose-built museum designed by Pier Nicolò Berardi in 1965. The director is Oliva Rucellai. In 1896, the Ginori factory merged with the Milanese Ceramic Company (Richard) and became known as the Richard-Ginori factory. However, the oldest porcelain manufactory in continuous production in Italy, was recently threatened with closure. It was announced in November that it had been purchased by a US (Lenox China)-Romanian business consortium, hopefully securing the future of the Museum.

Amongst the highlights of the Ginori period at the Museum, are many of the surviving wax models by Foggini and Soldani Benzi that were used for sculpture production from the 1740s. The 19th and 20th centuries were represented by, amongst much else, the Egyptian service made for Khédive Ismail of Egypt, 1873-4, and the work of Giò Ponti (d.1979). Lunch was at Trattoria da Rocco, inside the Mercato Sant'Ambrogio, followed by tours of Palazzo Vecchio, and the pleasurable discovery of a Grom's gelato directly across from our Hotel Villani (recommended by J. V. G. Mallet). That evening we visited the fantastically eclectic home of Fausto and enjoyed a truly Tuscan dinner, at Osteria Antica Mescita San Niccolo, hosted by Andreina.

There were some splendid Viennese *solitaire* services, and early Meissen. A surprise was a black basalt 'encaustic' coffee and tea service decorated with the arms of the Leopold II (1747-92), when Archduke of Austria and Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Infanta Maria Luisa of Spain, by Josiah Wedgwood, ca. 1769-81. We then made time to study the famed Sèvres Grand Medici Vase in the private apartments, modeled by Louis-Simon Boizot with mounts by Pierre-Philippe Thomire, ca. 1783-4—another related example is in the Musée du Louvre—before touring an almost deserted Uffizi Gallery, benefiting from our 72-hour Firenze cards. Dinner was at Il Caminetto Ristorante, where we treated our Chairman and his wife Henriette.



The Stibbert Museum

On Sunday, we had an appointment with the Asian scholar Francesco Morena at the Palazzo Pitti, and were enthralled by his research, including details of the 1585 Japanese embassy to Italy. The Medici collection survives, primarily because the last Medici, Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici (d. 1743), Electress of the Palatine, in Dusseldorf, ensured by a 'Family Pact' that all the Medici art and treasures collected over nearly three centuries of political ascendancy remained in Florence for the enjoyment of its people and visitors (almost 25,000 items, however, were sold in an auction in 1772), with later additions from the Houses of Lorraine (1743) and Savoy (1860).

In the company of Andreina, we climbed up to the Casino del Cavaliere, on the upper slopes of the Boboli Gardens, with its panoramic views, to the Porcelain Museum, where the European porcelain has been displayed since 1973. The collection includes many table services of the ruling households of the Pitti, including the Parma Bourbon dynasty. The most famous of the Vincennes and Sèvres items are the unique four oyster stands made up of 18 shell-shaped bowls, with red-painted metal mounts resembling coral.

Monday, we had a three-hour tour of the neo-Gothic Stibbert Museum with its curator, Dominique Charles Fuchs, as Dr. Kirsten Aschengreen Piacenti, the Director, was unable to join us. Primarily a collection of arms and armour acquired in the 1870s by the Italian-born Englishman, Frederick Stibbert (1830-1906), there are over 36,000 artifacts purchased with inherited English East India Company profits. Gasps of delight were heard when we entered the Cantagalli tiled porch, which was featured on the cover of the exhibition catalogue, *The Rebirth of Italian Maiolica: Ginori and Cantagalli*, 2011, written by Livia Frescobaldi Malenchini and Oliva Rucellai, and includes an essay by Dora Thornton and Justin Raccanello. The other highlight was the porcelain collection, including the 'collezione Baron de Marzio Tschudy (1819-91)' of European porcelain with some fine Doccia figures and groups, a collection together since the 1850s, and the Stibbert family ceramics.

Time for one more *marrons glacés gelato*, before setting off to the airport in Pisa.

From the archives...

SYON HOUSE - JUNE 2011

John Whitehead guides us through the FPS visit to Syon House in West London

It was a small, select and intrepid group which set out from the Park Lane Hotel on a cold and blustery day for a marathon of three country house visits, under the expert guidance of Patricia Ferguson.

Our first sight of the almost austere crenellated West front of Syon House was scarce preparation for the magnificence of Robert Adam's lavish suite of formal reception rooms, beginning with the great double cube room, fashioned as a Roman style temple and decorated with over life size marble sculptures of Roman worthies, heavily restored in the eighteenth century. Here our guide, Chris King, expounded on the history of the estate, especially on its great Tudor past, destroyed in the eighteenth century.

Though amongst the most elaborate English late eighteenth century interiors on a small scale, and furnished with some beautiful specimens of late eighteenth and early nineteenth giltwood seat furniture and console tables with inlaid marble tops (some obviously from the impossibly grand Northumberland House, demolished in the nineteenth century to make way for Charing Cross Station), these rooms are clearly unlive-in and unloved, as witnessed by the startling arrangement of Sèvres and "Sèvres" on the red drawing room chimneypiece.

Side by side were a pair of redecorated seaux à verre with gilt bronze mounts of the type recently published by Geoffrey de Bellaigue as being the work of the Paris dealer Maelrondt (died 1820), and a splendid pair of vases Daguerre with an all-over blue ground and gilt bronze mounts, of the same general model as a pair in the Wallace Collection (C338-9) with mounts attributed to Jean-Claude Duplessis fils, probably dating from 1782-3. Though a few other examples are known, these appear to be the only ones which correspond exactly to the drawing in the pictorial inventory of the collections of the Duke and Duchess of Sachsen-Teschen at the Palace of Laeken in the 1780s. The couple (he was a son of Augustus III, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and she was a sister of Marie-Antoinette) were governors of the Austrian Netherlands (the country known for the time being as Belgium) and they must have purchased extensively from Daguerre in Paris, as witnessed by the number of drawings of furniture decorated with Sèvres plaques which feature in the pictorial inventory, which is now in the Metropolitan Museum.

Since we know from the baronne d'Oberkirch's memoirs that Daguerre was exhibiting in his shop in 1782 a "buffet de salle à manger d'un travail admirable" intended for the Duke of Northumberland, it is just possible that the vases were purchases made at the same time.



On to the delightful long gallery/library, with its precious hidden little end cabinets. This is Adam's reworking of the Tudor long gallery, and it is decorated with motifs clearly taken from Raphael's Vatican Loggia, perhaps through the same set of Volpato's engravings which inspired Sèvres' arabesque service of 1782 and following years.

After that we came into some more rooms, which, though equally lavish, are clearly lived in. A pleasant contrast.

There we were able to see a rather curious construction: a Regency table of marvellous quality by Morel and Hughes, cabinetmakers to George IV, into the top of which was set a Sèvres plaque of large size painted with Carel van Falens' Halte de Chasseurs. We know two further uses of this painting, one on another plaque in the Metropolitan Museum of 1760-61, and another on a pot-pourri Hébert at Waddesdon (catalogue 51). The date and authorship of this plaque posed question. Clearly not the work of Dodin, it was perhaps painted by Asselin or Caton. Its fine Louis XVI gilt bronze frame of around 1775-85 might suggest that the plaque itself dates from that period rather than earlier.

We also saw a beautifully painted pair of caisses carrées with B date-letter and Vieillard's mark, with bleu camaieu decoration of children in landscapes with "chairs colorées", which prompted the comment that whereas Dodin, who started at about the same time, gets better and better, his colleague's work seems to have gone steadily downhill after promising beginnings.

And to please the (multitudinous) amateurs of the crescent painter, there was a fine seau à liqueur ovale with bleu céleste ground and birds, with date-letter D and Armand's mark. This had been mounted probably by Baldock, as similar gilt bronze dolphins are to be found on the pair of vases Fontaine at Boughton bought from Baldock in 1830.

For the more broad-minded among us, some Chelsea of the gold anchor period was noticed on the chimneypiece in the private dining room; a pair of tall vases and a pair of bouquetières, both with what Vincennes amateurs would call a bleu lapis ground, the bouquetières with beautiful figure scenes which our chairman felt were the work of Henri-Joseph Duvivier.

The relatively large number of redecorated or fake Sèvres pieces with early nineteenth century gilt bronze mounts, whether obtained in Paris (Maelrondt?) or London (Baldock?) must have been bought at this period to go with the top quality Regency furniture scattered about the house, and no doubt also with the Cucci cabinets made for Versailles and now at Alnwick.

On to the grand staircase, with the undoubted star of the Sèvres in the house, the huge and magnificent Sèvres vase Médicis with a gold ground and a polychrome continuous band painted by Etienne-Charles Le Guay with Le combat des nymphes de Diane et des Amours. This was presented to the third Duke by the French King Charles X in 1825, when the Duke came to France to attend Charles's Sacre (coronation). Because of the role played by the British in welcoming Charles X (then the comte d'Artois) during the years of the Revolution, this was the most lavish present given to any foreign dignitary attending the ceremony. Presented on the same occasion, and also in the staircase hall, a Sèvres clock with scenes of a summer's day in Paris in 1823.

Clocks at Sèvres at this period often had time as a theme, and this was no exception. Develly has painted on to this one appropriate snapshots of Paris life: morning at the flower market, a promenade at the Champs Elysées in the middle of the day, and an evening scene outside a theatre. Perhaps it was felt that this would encourage English tourists to flock to the French capital... (See Barry Shifman, "Sèvres porcelain given in 1825 by Charles X to the Duke of Northumberland", Burlington Magazine, March 1993, pp. 215-219).

Our tour concluded with the obligatory passage through the shop for a little reassuring retail therapy, including large quantities of jam.

EXHIBITIONS

Daily Pleasures: French Ceramics From The Marylou Boone collection 6 October 2012 - 31 March 2013, LACMA, Los Angeles

Featuring more than 130 pieces from the finest collection of French faience and soft-paste porcelain on the West Coast. The ideal fusion of the useful and the beautiful that is found in these French ceramics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the essence of what inspired MaryLou Boone to assemble her outstanding collection from the foremost manufactories of the era. Although originally made to emulate Asian hard-paste porcelain imported into Europe, faience and soft-paste porcelain ultimately became distinctive and sought-after ceramics in their own right. The collection includes wares for dining and taking tea, for storing the many toiletries necessary for a stylish appearance, and for preparing mixtures that comforted in time of sickness. Emphasizing myriad aesthetic influences, chronicling advances in technology, and reflecting the rhythms of domestic life, these objects provide a unique view of French customs and culture and continue to bring pleasure to daily life.

From lacma.org

Forthcoming exhibition:

The French influence of Sèvres on Doccia between 1800 and 1830 19 March - 23 June 2013, Museo degli Argenti, The Pitti Palace, Florence



From the archives...

HAM HOUSE - JUNE 2011

Patricia Ferguson describes an FPS summer outing



Having survived our waterborne crossing of the Thames under a light mist, we embarked to visit Ham House, near Richmond-upon-Thames, a National Trust property, billed as 'one of Europe's greatest 17th century houses'. The charming Victoria Bradley, House and Collections manager, opened up the house especially for the FPS allowing a privileged meander through the amazingly well preserved original furnishings. Despite being greeted by a Coade stone statue of Father Thames, the house is remarkable devoid of significant ceramics, the singular exception being the Chinese white ware teapot (Zhangzhou kilns, ca. 1650-1670), with silver-gilt mounts, given by the dealer Ronald A. Lee in 1994, who had purchased it in the 1950s from Sir [Cecil] Lyonel Tollemache, 5th Bt, of Ham, whose ancestor was the noblewoman Elizabeth Tollemache, née Murray, Countess of Dysart, and later, on her second marriage to John Maitland, Duchess of Lauderdale (1628-98).

In 1948, the ceramics were dispersed and the house was furnished with Chinese blue and white porcelain from the Victoria and Albert Museum. In 1990, Mrs. Thatcher's government provided an endowment so that the curatorship could pass in perpetuity to the National Trust, who have since built on the ground-breaking work in the 17th century interpretation of Ham by scholars of the Victoria and Albert Museum. A chapter on the ceramics formerly at Ham House written by Patricia Ferguson is in the forthcoming Christopher Rowell (ed.), *Ham House: Four Hundred Years of Collecting and Patronage*, published by the National Trust, the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, and Yale University Press. Having fully immersed ourselves in such august history and atmosphere, we retreated to the Orangerie for a glass of champagne, or two.



Obituary: Ian Lowe

It is with regret that we report the death of Ian Lowe, the inaugural Chairman of the French Porcelain Society. He was one of those to who established and developed the direction that the Society took in its formative years.

After reading English at Oriel College, Oxford, Ian worked at Christie's before taking up the position of Assistant Keeper in the Ashmolean Museum in August 1962. His first years were spent in cataloguing and exhibiting the remarkable gift of British prints by Arthur Mitchell, and preparing an exhibition of works by members of the Camden Town Group. After the departure of the Keeper, Ian Robertson, in 1968, Ian took over responsibility for the porcelain in the Ashmolean and was responsible for numerous acquisitions.

He was briefly director at the Gardiner Museum, Toronto.

From the archives...

GREENWICH: THE WERNHER COLLECTION AT RANGER'S HOUSE AND THE FAN MUSEUM

An account of FPS days out in June and December, by Patricia Ferguson

In June, a group of FPS out-of-town members visited The Wernher Collection, formed by the diamond magnate Sir Julius Wernher (1850-1912), at the time one of the wealthiest men in England, which since 2002, has been on permanent display at Ranger's House, a Georgian villa in Greenwich Park, administered by English Heritage. The visit began with a tour of the house given by Annie Kemkaran-Smith, Curator (Collections), South London. The collection is displayed to suggest the interiors of Wernher's rooms at Bath House in Piccadilly; the first floor contains Renaissance jewellery, enamels, bronzes, maiolica and iznik ware, surrounded by Old Masters.



The Sèvres is displayed in a case on the first floor and in the principal room on the ground floor, a testament to the 'Gilded Age', with a reserve collection in store. A highlight in June was a demonstration of the mechanical table attributed to J.-F. Oeben, kitted out with its Mennecy toilet wares. Annie kindly agreed to bring pieces out of storage for members to handle, not once but twice, as the event was repeated for London members in December. In June, Susan Newell led the handling session, drawing attention to the painters and marks on the garnitures and service wares. In December, Dame Rosalind Savill, author of the article, 'Sèvres porcelain in the Wernher Collection' (Apollo, May 2002), enthused about the collection with the second group. The small, but important, collection, nineteen of which were acquired in one year 1895, are rich in provenance with pieces from the duc de Choiseul, Louis XVI, the Empress Catherine II of Russia and her son and daughter-in-law.



Much discussion centered on the large blue ground tea tray (plateau 'Paris') of 1781 with marine scenes by Genest, a likely gift to the Russian court from Louis XVI, in Count Strogonoff's collection by 1880, and sold in the Goode sale in London in 1895. There is also an interesting group of ornamental vases, the rarest being a vertigo-inducing vase 'à gauderon torses' of about 1768, with it swirling gadroons, marked straight by the neoclassical grisailles 'cameos' in the upper half. Members also had a treat handling the green ground garniture painted with military encampment scenes, of about 1765, similar to a set at Goodwood, acquired by the Duke of Richmond at the same date. An unscripted treat was when J.V.G. (John) Mallet, the eminent ceramic scholar, spoke to the group about the importance of Wernher's Italian maiolica. Great thanks are owed to English Heritage and Annie for making these two events possible.



Request for information: Crépy-en-Valois

A notice from a French Art historian who is preparing the first study on the eighteenth-century soft paste porcelain factory of Crépy-en-Valois.

“I’m looking for any information concerning pieces produced by this small factory in service between 1763 and 1770, including pictures, descriptions, the origin of the pieces, and dimensions.

“The Crépy-en-Valois soft porcelain is in the manner of Mennecy porcelain. It is recognizable by these incised marks: CREPY, C.P., D.C.P., D.C.O. or D.C.V. Several examples are in the international museums. I thank you in advance for your precious help.”

Please contact Julien Pichelin at:
julienpichelin@hotmail.fr



Pair of tobacco jars incised D.C.O. British Museum, London.



*Left: The musicians' children incised D.C.O. Wadsworth Athenaeum.
Right: Tobacco jars incised D.C.P. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.*



CONTRIBUTIONS

Please send comments, news, details of events, acquisitions, discoveries and anything you think is of interest to FPS members to:

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In the next edition of the FPS newsletter...

FPS visit to Boughton

Full update on publications and exhibitions

Full details o 2013 events programme