

Back Together Again – An Overview of the Philadelphia, PA 2024 Annual Meeting

by Juliana Falk



Figure 1 – Debbie Miller shared an assortment of transferware produced in Philadelphia in the late 18th and early 19th century.



Figure 2 – Attendees had time to explore The Philadelphia Show.

It is always a pleasure to gather to discuss transferware with fellow enthusiasts, but it was especially satisfying to do so in person after several years of virtual meetings. The TCC hosted its 21st Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, April 26-28, 2024, with a program that focused on the local ceramic market and the multitude of Philadelphia connections to British transferware.

The meeting kicked off Friday morning at the Sonesta Philadelphia Downtown Rittenhouse Square with Dr. Neil Ewins' lecture, *Reconstructing Philadelphia's Ceramic Supply and Demand*, which incorporated findings based on his study of surviving invoices from the early 19th century. If any TCC members have or come across invoices from the early 19th century, especially the 1820s,

Neil would appreciate seeing them.

Debbie Miller, Curator at Independence National Historical Park, provided fascinating insight into the local market in her lecture, *Transferware in Philadelphia, 1770-1830*. She discussed the range of British and domestically produced transferwares available and how these wares were used (Figure 1). She shared findings from the extensive archaeological excavations at the site, including some which challenged assumptions about who owned and used the best objects.

In the final lecture of the day, Dr. Anne Anderson explored the positioning of motifs in *Going Japanese: W. S. Coleman and Christopher Dresser – Adapting Japanese Design Motifs for British Transfer-Printed Wares*. The day concluded with a visit to the

Philadelphia Museum of Art which included a tour of the collections as well as an opportunity to peruse the offerings at the Philadelphia Show (Figures 2, 3, 4). Alas, there was no time for a group photo with the Rocky statue (Figure 5).

On Saturday morning, participants ventured out to the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library in neighboring Delaware. The visit commenced with a lecture by Winterthur Curator Emerita of Ceramics and Glass, Pat Halfpenny, *A Staffordshire View of Philadelphia* which explored the manufacturers of these scenes with a focus on wares from the 1820s. In honor of the 200th anniversary of Lafayette's visit to Philadelphia during his triumphant tour of the nation, Ron Fuchs, Editor of *Ceramics in America*,

Continued on next page



Figures 3, 4 - There was a fascinating array of items for sale at the show.



Figure 5 - There was a long line of people waiting to have their photo taken with the Rocky statue at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Figure 6 - Ron Fuchs shared some of the commemorative wares made for Lafayette's tour of America.



Figures 7, 8 - Some of the Lafayette wares featured in Ron's presentation are in the Winterthur collection.



Figure 9 - The tour of the house included a visit to the dining room with a lovely lusterware service.



Figures 10, 11 - Attendees had the opportunity to view some of the vast range of transferwares on display at Winterthur.

ANNUAL MEETING

Continued from previous page

presented *"The Nation's Guest and Our Country's Glory" Lafayette on Ceramics* (Figure 6). Ron explored the wide range of commemorative ceramics that were manufactured to celebrate the occasion as well as the implications of purchasing and displaying these wares (Figures 7, 8).

After lunch, attendees enjoyed a tour of the house (Figures 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) and free time to explore the galleries (Figure 14). The highlight of the afternoon was a visit to the study collection with Senior Curator Leslie Grigsby who shared a fascinating array of transferware from an unusual advertising platter to a handsome Portobello ware jug (Figures 15, 16). The evening concluded back at the hotel with a wine and cheese reception sponsored by TCC members Klaus and Marcia Zech, followed by dinner.

The last day of the conference began with David Hoexter's lecture, *Pot Lids for the Philadelphia Trade* which explored Philadelphia's role as one of the primary producers of consumer products sold in transfer printed containers made in England. David also discussed the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial International Ex-



hibition, including transferware developed for or related to the exhibition. The final lecture was Adrienne Boggs' exploration of the stylistic elements of Aesthetic transferware in *The Aesthetic Movement Comes to America: Art for Art's Sake and the House Beautiful Introduced at the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition*.

The Annual Meeting concluded with the ever-popular raffle and transferware sale (Figures 17, 18). A special thank you goes to Terry Majewski for organizing the meeting, Loren Zeller and Jaap Otte for coordinating the speakers,

Heather Cline for arranging the transferware sale, Nancy Parks for obtaining and presenting the raffle, and finally, to our sponsors, Klaus and Marcia Zech, Jeffrey S. Evans & Associates, Hanson Historic Consulting, Pook & Pook Inc, Teresita Majewski, and a generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous – while we all appreciated the extraordinary efforts of the TCC to keep us virtually connected during the pandemic, gathering in person truly was a delight after all these years, and everyone is already looking forward to the next in-person annual meeting!



Figure 13 - The rooms off the former badminton court housed more Lafayette commemorative wares.



Figure 14 - This transferware ice pail was just one of the many ceramics featured in the galleries at Winterthur.



Figure 12 - The tour of the house included some of Winterthur's 17th-century ceramics collection.



Figure 15, 16 - Leslie Grigsby shared some unique pieces from the study collection at Winterthur.



Figures 17, 18 - Attendees had the opportunity to add to their collections at the transferware sale on Sunday.