

2025 TCC Spring Conference Report

by Scott Hanson

This year's TCC Spring Conference took place in Hartford, Connecticut from May 15th to 18th. Attendees came from across the U.S. and from England. As always, it was wonderful to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones.

The Conference began on Thursday with an optional day-trip to the famous Brimfield Antique Shows in nearby Massachusetts. We were joined on the bus by long-time transferware dealer and Brimfield regular (before retirement) Ann Berard who provided first time "Brimfielders" with an orientation to the 20+ separate shows running for a mile along both sides of Route 20. The bus dropped us at the "May's Antique Market" field and we spread out from there. There was much more than just transferware to see, much, much, more, and even a torrential downpour in the afternoon didn't dampen anyone's spirit. We all got back on the bus with new-to-us treasures.

Figures 1-12: Transferware pieces seen at Brimfield.



The conference officially kicked off that evening with a buffet dinner followed by a very interesting lecture about Bat-Printed Landscapes on Early 19th Century Porcelain by TCC Database General Editor, Len Kling. This process for transfer printing is less well known than the more common tissue paper transfer process. It was a less mysterious process for us all by the end of Len's talk.



Figure 13: A Bat-Printed Plate seen at Brimfield to illustrate Len's Lecture on Bat-Printing.

Friday morning we were back on the bus and headed north to Historic Deerfield in the Connecticut River valley of Massachusetts. In a location first settled and farmed for millennia by Native Americans, British settlers arrived in 1669 and have inhabited the area since. The compact village plan laid out in the 17th century is largely intact, with homes and public buildings extended along a main road with agricultural fields extending out to the sides. Historic Deerfield owns and operates more than a dozen historic buildings, interpreting life in the village from 1669 to the Arts and Crafts era in the early 20th century – when preservation and restoration of the village began.

In a historic white-steepled church that is now Historic Deerfield's community center, we enjoyed two lectures by Historic Deerfield staff members (and TCC members) Amanda Lange and Dan Sousa. Amanda's lecture addressed "Fables, Farmers, and Flirts: Landscape Designs on Early British Transferware." Dan's lecture has a more local focus, sharing "The Connecticut River Valley on Transferware." This was followed by lunch at Champney's Restaurant in the Deerfield Inn.

After lunch we moved to the museum's Flint Center, a contemporary building housing exhibits, archives, and collections storage for "Transferware Treasures at Historic Deerfield." Amanda and Dan had selected a number of interesting transferware pieces from the collection for us to see and discuss in the lecture hall – many of them seen earlier in the two presentations. For the remainder of the afternoon we spread out to tour the museum's exhibits, collections, and historic houses.



Figure 14: Classic Connecticut River Valley entry door at Historic Deerfield.

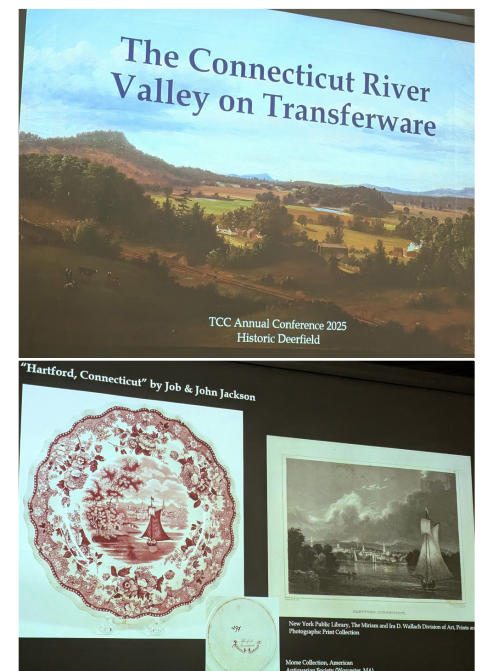


Figure 15 & 16: Dan's Lecture.

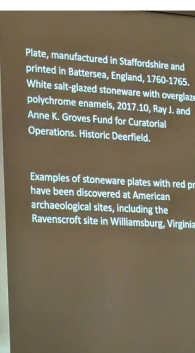


Figure 17 & 18: Amanda's Lecture. Figure 19: Amanda showing creamware plate seen in 18. Figure 20: Close up of plate seen in 18.

Back at the hotel in Hartford, a wine and cheese reception was followed by a buffet dinner and then our traditional “Show and Discuss” session, where attendees showed and talked about pieces they had brought to share – most purchased at Brimfield the day before.



Figures 21-25: Some of the items shown and discussed at the Flynt Center.



Figures 26-30: Views of transferware in the Historic Deerfield collections storage gallery.



Figures 31: View in the kitchen of an 1802 house museum at Historic Deerfield.

Saturday morning's lectures were at the hotel. Jonathan Gray led off with "Landscapes on Welsh Transferware" and Dick Henrywood followed with "The 'Transferware Recorder' and a potted history of documenting views on transferware." Jonathan's subject took us beyond the usual focus on the Staffordshire potteries and gave us a glimpse of potters in Wales. Dick's talk started with 19th century efforts to record information about views on transferware and continued up through the 20th and into the 21st century – speaking from personal experience on such efforts in the past 45 years.

After lunch, the group bussed into downtown Hartford and were welcomed to the Wadsworth Atheneum by Philippe Halbert, Richard Koopman Associate Curator of American Decorative Arts. Founded in 1842, the Wadsworth is the oldest continuously operating public art museum in America. In addition to extensive holdings in ancient Egyptian and Classical Bronzes, European Baroque art, French and American Impressionist painting, Hudson River School landscapes, Modernist masterpieces and contemporary art, the museum has collections of early American furniture and decorative arts. There was something of interest for every attendee!



Figure 32: Jonathan Gray lecturing on Saturday morning. Figure 33: Dick Henrywood lecturing on Saturday morning.



Figure 34: The Wadsworth Atheneum. Figure 35: Philippe Halbert welcomes our group to the Atheneum.



Figure 36: View in Atheneum gallery. Figures 37-39: Some transferware pieces seen at the Atheneum.



Figure 40: Dr. John Chenoweth speaking on Sunday morning.

On Sunday, our last lecture by University of Michigan professor John Chenoweth was titled “Transfer Prints, Archaeology, and AI: The Transferware AI Project and Possibilities.” John talked about his own journey in the field of archaeology and how it led to his involvement in developing an AI program to identify transferware patterns from sherds, in partnership with the TCC and our Database of Patterns and Source Prints.

Wrapping up the conference, President Scott Hanson provided an update on club activities with help from several committee chair board members and Past-President Loren Zeller unveiled plans for the TCC to return to England for the 2026 Spring Conference. Nancy Parks and Sara Brydges sold the final raffle tickets and the lucky Raffle Winners were drawn before the annual Transferware Sale. Dealers Karen Beare, Leslie Bouterie, Joy Hanes, and Dennis Rolander had a large and varied selection of pieces available for sale and many attendees found treasures to take home. Thanks to Heather Cline for organizing the sale!



Figure 41: Scott's Report on TCC Activities.



Figure 42 & 43: England 2026.

No conference happens without an enormous amount of effort by TCC members, Volunteers, and Donors. Many thanks to Loren Zeller and Dan Sousa for putting together the wonderful program, all the excellent speakers named above, Nancy Parks and Sara Brydges for organizing the raffle, and Heather Cline for organizing the sale! And great appreciation to donors Marcia and Klaus Zech, Prudy Noon, Jeffrey Evans & Associates, Hanson Historic Consulting, the Connecticut Ceramic Circle, Terry Majewski, and the Richards Foundation Research Grants Fund.

Thanks to the Richards Foundation Fund, all the conference lectures have been recorded on video and are available to all members on the TCC Website. <https://www.transferwarecollectorsclub.org/news-information/lecture-series/videos#annual-meeting-videos>

Photos credit: Heather Cline and Scott Hanson



Figure 44: The Raffle items.