

**London Ceramic Circle at Morley College**

**Programme for the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar**

*The rise & fall and stumbles  
of English ceramic factories*



**20 & 21 October 2018**

**Front cover:** New Jazz' a stoneware and porcelain thrown and assembled sculpture, from the 'Isolator' series, Johannes Nagel, Germany, 2014.

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**Saturday 20 October 2018**

10.00	John Sandon LCC President	Welcome and Introduction
10.10	Anton Gabszewicz	<b>The Minnie Holdaway Memorial Lecture:</b> Three Pioneers of English Porcelain
11.10	COFFEE	
11.45	Felicity Marno	The Rise of Derby, Fall of Rockingham and Stumble of Lord Dudley
12.45	LUNCH	
14.00	Jacqui Pearce	The inexorable rise of the medieval Surrey whiteware potteries
15.00	Robin Emmerson	Artistic Ambitions and Business Realities in Wedgwood's Ornamental Ware
16.00	TEA	
16.30	John Democratis	Spode: "Bad Taste". "Vulgarity". "Neat when ... least pretentious". "Hideous". "Commercial success evidently enormous."
17.30	WINE & CHEESE PARTY	
18.30	EXIT	

**Sunday 21 October 2018**

10.00	Jonathan Gray	The rise and fall of the Swansea and Nantgarw Potteries focusing on 1764-1823
11.00	COFFEE	
11.45	Chris Brown	Caughley - The Factory that Vanished
12.45	LUNCH	
14.00	John Sandon	Where Worcester went wrong
15.00	Maurice Hillis	The Varied Fortunes of 18th- Century Liverpool Porcelain Factories
16.00	John Sandon	Closing Address
16.15	TEA	
17.00	EXIT	

**Anton Gabszewicz Saturday 10.10**

**The Minnie Holdaway Memorial Lecture:**

**Three Pioneers of English Porcelain**

It is remarkable that the three men who were most involved with the early years of the English porcelain industry should have made their names first in other disciplines. Nicholas Sprimont, a silversmith and designer from Liege; Charles Gouyn, a Huguenot jeweller and former partner of Sprimont's and Thomas Frye, an Irish portrait painter. Thus the factories of Chelsea, St James's and Bow had a mixed heritage. This lecture follows the sometimes-precarious progress of these entrepreneurs and their commercial products.

The result was each factory had its own strengths; Sprimont keen to promote his Continental taste to the aristocracy and landed classes and Gouyn very much interested in selling up-market trinkets to society, while Frye and his partners formed a commercially successful campaign of approaching the middle market. They were all successful in their different ways, but there were difficulties en route.

**Anton Gabszewicz** is the former Director and Head of European Ceramics at Christie's, London has been an international specialist in English and European Ceramics for over 40 years. He appeared on the first BBC 'Antiques Roadshow' and remained on the show for over 10 years. His books include: - Made at New Canton: Bow Porcelain from the Collection of the London Borough of Newham - Bow Porcelain: The Collection Formed by Geoffrey Freeman - A Selection from the Nigel Morgan Collection of English Porcelain (co-author Errol Manners) - Isleworth Porcelain (co-author Roderick Jellicoe).

He has published many articles on English Porcelain and is an internationally respected authority, especially on Bow Porcelain. He has lectured extensively around the world, including USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. He regularly wrote for and lectured at The International Ceramics Fair & Seminar, (AAL) in London. He has been an accredited NADFAS lecturer since 2003, now retired.

**Felicity Marno    Saturday 11.45**

### **The Rise of Derby, Fall of Rockingham and Stumble of Lord Dudley**

At a time of great change in fashionable society and the porcelain industry there were opportunities for its entrepreneurs to revolutionise their wares, resulting in some of the most beautiful and spectacular porcelain produced in England. However, like Icarus, some makers flew too high and fell, leaving a legacy of which we can only admire their technical accomplishment and ambition. This talk will look at the successes and heroic failures, in the context of the technical advances and social changes of the period, with special emphasis on Derby, Coalport, Rockingham and Minton, but with other factories or personalities discussed where relevant and interesting.

**Felicity Marno** studied Chemistry and Fine Arts at universities in Sydney and has the Diploma from the Study Centre for Fine and Decorative Arts in London. In 1980 she founded Stockspring Antiques where she is a Director, and a partner in Stockspring Ceramics Consultants, specialising in antique ceramics.

She has co-curated and been joint author of the catalogues of several academic exhibitions, including ‘Tea, Trade and Tea Canisters’, and, with the English Ceramic Circle, ‘The Ceramics of Vauxhall’ (2007). In 2015 she co-curated the important loan exhibition Sir Hans Sloane's Plants on Chelsea Porcelain, and co-edited the catalogue.

Felicity was a member of the Committee and is an Honorary Vice-President of the English Ceramic Circle. She contributed a number of papers to the journal *ECC Transactions*. She has lectured in the UK and overseas and was the programme organiser of the ECC Baroque and Rococo seminars in 2011 and 2013 respectively, and the Neo-Classical seminar in 2016.

**Jacqui Pearce    Saturday 14.00**

### **The inexorable rise of the medieval Surrey whiteware potteries**

Spanning much of the medieval period, from the 13th century onwards, and still going strong in the 16th and 17th centuries, white-bodied, glazed earthenwares in the so-called Surrey whiteware tradition played a prominent role in ceramic developments of the London region and south-east England. Manufacture is known to have taken place in several locations across the area in which white-firing clays could be sourced, as attested by documentary research and archaeological excavation. Using written sources, excavated finds and museum collections, this paper looks at the various different production centres that played a prominent part in supplying the region over almost 500 years, tracing their development and influences, the range of their varied output and their eventual decline.

**Jacqui Pearce** is a senior ceramics specialist with MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology), having joined its predecessor, the Department of Urban Archaeology (DUA), in 1977. She is the author of numerous major papers and books, including four parts of an extensive Type-Series of London Medieval Pottery, the first part of a series on the pottery of London c.1500–1700 and a study of the 16th-/17th-century pottery kiln site at Farnborough Hill in Hampshire. She has wide experience of the medieval and later pottery of the London area and also specialises in clay tobacco pipes and glass. She is a frequent speaker at conferences and to specialist groups, and has been teaching regular evening classes in archaeological finds work since 2001.

Jacqui served as Assistant Editor, then Co-Editor of *Medieval Ceramics* over 10 years, and was Joint Editor of *Post-Medieval Archaeology* from 2009 to 2014. She is the current President of the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology. She is also a long-standing committee member of the English Ceramic Circle, and was appointed Joint Editor of *ECC Transactions* in 2017.

**Robin Emmerson    Saturday 15.00**

**Artistic Ambitions and Business Realities in Wedgwood's  
Ornamental Ware**

The story of Josiah Wedgwood's business is often told as a tale of relentless successes. The more ambitious the business, however, the higher the level of risk, along with the likelihood of some spectacular mistakes.

The Ornamental Ware was where Josiah took most risks, and where his commercial misjudgements reveal most about his business and artistic aims. Some of his greatest technical and artistic triumphs were in themselves commercial failures, but they may not have harmed his business and may sometimes have boosted its fame.

**Robin Emmerson** is Chair of the Northern Ceramics Society. He was until retirement Curator of the Decorative Art Department at National Museums Liverpool. He wrote *British Teapots and Tea Drinking 1700-1850* (HMSO 1992), a selective catalogue of the collection at Norwich Castle Museum.

His published articles include work on Wedgwood and on the development of dessert wares. In 2014 he selected and curated the British loans to the exhibition *Unrivalled Wedgwood* for the national museums in Moscow, and wrote that portion of the catalogue. He thinks that sadly this may be the only time that President Putin pays him for doing a job.



**John Democratis    Saturday 16.30**

**Spode: “Bad Taste”. “Vulgarity”. “Neat when ... least pretentious”. “Hideous”. “Commercial success evidently enormous.”**

This selection of quotations is from W B Honey, writing about Spode in 1918. An exploration of the transformation of Spode from the modest potworks in Stoke that Josiah Spode I acquired in 1776 to the pre-eminent business that it was by death in 1828 of his son, Josiah II, seen from the perspective both of the Spodes’ business acumen and of the technological and market developments during the period. From the factory’s pattern books, advances in gilding and ground-laying are demonstrated, as are the negative effects on decorative style following the departure of Henry Daniel in 1822.

The enormous variety of products made at the factory is discussed, both in terms of the wide range of ceramic bodies and the different markets addressed. While the factory was exceptionally successful overall, some of the inevitable mistakes and setbacks are also illustrated.

**John Democratis** specialises in the chinaware of the early Nineteenth Century. He has been a Trustee of the Spode Museum since 2007 and was the Trust’s Chairman from 2008-2014. His published articles on Spode have followed his researches into some of the early Spode enamellers and Henry Daniel, and he has given lectures on Spode to collectors’ societies and other groups.

**Jonathan Gray    Sunday 10.00**

**The rise and fall of the Swansea (Cambrian) and Nantgarw Potteries with a focus on 1764-1823**

Some authors have considered the output of the Swansea or Cambrian Pottery as a generally improving trend in terms of quality between the granting of a lease in 1764 and 1817, when Lewis Weston Dillwyn inherited his father-in-laws estate and withdrew from the manufactory.

In reality, the economic and political environment during the reign of George III opened and closed key export markets, led to various workmen joining the fight against the French and led to ebbs and flows in output and production quality. Rather than a gentle upward improvement in product, the wares ebb and flow in line with the general economic and political position. Some of the main themes will be discussed along with the wares, together with a possible revised chronology.

**Jonathan Gray** is an Honorary Research Fellow at the National Museum of Wales and Meetings Secretary for the English Ceramic Circle. He is the author of *The Cambrian Company 1806-1808* which details the opening and closing of their Fleet Street London Warehouse, with Christie's selling the contents in 1808. He is also a contributor and Editor of the two Welsh Ceramics in Context seminars held in 2002 and 2003. He is a member of the London Ceramic Circle, Northern Ceramic Society, American Ceramic Circle and other groups in the UK and internationally.

**Chris Brown    Sunday 11.45**

### **Caughley - The Factory that Vanished**

In the early 1770s, a porcelain making factory was established in the fields of the Caughley Estate in rural Shropshire. By the 1780s and early 1790s it had become one of the most productive porcelain producers in Britain with warehouses in Bridgnorth and Lincoln's Inn in London. It employed local people, workers from other porcelain producers in England, France and Belgium. Its products brought Chinese sophistication and French chic to dining tables in Britain, Holland and America.

In the 1790s the factory declined and was taken over. The factory was demolished in 1814 and its products almost disappeared from scholarship for 150 years. The reasons for the rise and fall are a complex mixture of personalities, rivalries, a betrayal, fashion, macroeconomics, dubious business models, crime and the weather. The talk will explore these factors and touch upon the story of its re-emergence in the last 50 years.

**Chris Brown** is a retired statistician and local campaigner. In 1989 he bought an unidentified polychrome jug at an antique fair and was told that it was Caughley and has been researching Caughley ever since. Chris collects mainly polychrome Caughley and is a member of The Caughley Society. He curated the 2005 Caughley in Colour Exhibition at the Ironbridge Gorge Museums. More recently he was one of the authors of the Society's Caughley Blue & White Patterns and wrote the ECC paper on Joshua Cristall, China Painter He writes about and lectures on Caughley and edits the Caughley Society quarterly newsletter.

## **John Sandon    Sunday 14.00**

### **Where Worcester went wrong**

Geoffrey Godden liked to rib Henry and John Sandon about the excellence of Caughley and Coalport and relished showing them pieces of Worcester that were anything but a credit to the city. Thinking about this, John has put a talk together expanding on this theme. Just for a change, he focusses on bad pieces of Worcester, factory seconds, commercial failures and just the downright ugly. Even the great artists tried out some truly weird designs that hardly surprisingly, nobody bought. Geoffrey loved to show us the worst Worcester jug ever made. He was wrong! John has found far worse pieces made at Worcester, at different times when they thought they knew what the market wanted. Chamberlains Worcester false teeth, anyone?

There is a serious theme running through this talk. At its best Worcester made some truly fantastic porcelain. But success led them to try making the same thing cheaper. We look at what happened when they decided to cut corners, and the competition that made them do it. Ultimately it is the reason why Royal porcelain is not made in Worcester anymore.

**John Sandon** is an acclaimed international expert and prolific author on ceramics and glass. He is best known as a regular expert on the BBC's Antiques Roadshow, which he joined in 1985. For John, ceramics is as much a hobby as a profession. As a schoolboy, he helped his father, Henry Sandon, to excavate the site of the Worcester factory. He later went to work at Phillips in London where he quickly established himself as a porcelain specialist.

His books include: 'The Dictionary of Worcester Porcelain: 1751-1851', 'Meissen Porcelain', 'British Porcelain', 'Worcester Porcelain', 'Miller's Collecting Porcelain', 'The Ewers-Tyne Collection of Worcester Porcelain at Cheekwood', and 'Starting to Collect Antique Porcelain'. Since 1988 he has been the International Director of European Ceramics and Glass at Bonhams auctioneers in London. He is a world authority on English and European porcelain, and has written over a dozen books and articles on these subjects. John is the President of the London Ceramic Circle at Morley College.

**Maurice Hillis    Sunday 15.00**

**The Varied Fortunes of 18<sup>th</sup>- Century Liverpool Porcelain Factories**

This lecture will discuss the various porcelain factories that were set up in Liverpool in the second half of the eighteenth century and describe and analyse the different approaches taken by their owners to the management and operation of the works. Consideration will be given as to how these differing factors may have contributed to their success or failure.

The Liverpool porcelain factories will be discussed within the general context of the development of the port of Liverpool and its expanding export markets and, also, as a new development within an already existing manufacture of fine ceramics in the town.

The nature and quality of the porcelains produced by the different Liverpool factories will be examined and an attempt made to decide whether such considerations have any bearing on why some factories were long lived and others quickly failed.

**Maurice Hillis**

Maurice is President of The Northern Ceramic Society, having previously been its Chairman from 2001 until 2013. He has been researching and writing about ceramic history for over 30 years. His ceramic interests are extremely varied and he has published numerous papers on eighteenth and nineteenth century English pottery and porcelain.

In 2011, he published the definitive history of the Liverpool porcelain factories: *Liverpool Porcelain 1756-1804*, which is considered the Bible for Liverpool porcelain collectors. The American Ceramic Circle named it as their book of the year in 2012. Maurice has lectured extensively on ceramics in the UK and North America.

# NOTES

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## **THE LONDON CERAMIC CIRCLE AT MORLEY COLLEGE WARMLY WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS**

**Would you like to meet with enthusiastic ceramic collectors and attend lectures to extend your knowledge?**

The Circle is dedicated to the study of British and International Ceramics (both porcelain and earthenware) and its development up to the present day. We enjoy lectures, visits to places of ceramic interest, and a two-day Seminar in October each year.

Before lectures, members and the speaker gather in the College Canteen for coffee and to chat about pots, and share their experiences. Whether you are just starting out, or are experienced in Ceramics, you will be made very welcome! You 'may try before you buy' - attend up to two meetings before committing to annual membership which costs £15 (SINGLE), £20 (JOINT) and £10 (STUDENTS).

Call Charles Dawson on 07887 540 469 for the date of the next meeting or view the Programme on the website: [www.londonceramiccircle.com](http://www.londonceramiccircle.com). Just come along and introduce yourself.

Lectures are at 7 PM on Friday evenings (15 throughout the year) at **Morley College, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7HT.**

The College is 12 minutes walk from Waterloo Station, and a short walk from Lambeth North Underground Station and Elephant & Castle tube stations, and on numerous bus routes.

