



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Report from the Committee
- Directors Desk
- An Amazing Museum in Hobart
- The Archambo Hot Water Kettle

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NEWSLETTER

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REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE

Since the Newsletter of Spring 2008 we have had several successful functions which have, we hope, cemented in the minds of our valued members the benefits of being involved with the Friends of The Johnston Collection.

The Kozminsky function in October was well attended with 74 people being tantalised by the splendours that Kozminsky's have to offer. Kirsten and Ben Albrecht and all the Kozminsky staff were most welcoming and were pleased with the success of the evening. Sotheby's was another example of the benefit of being a Friend as the invitation to the Friends was near exclusive; an interesting evening viewing the items on offer from Sotheby's current catalogue of furniture and decorative arts.

In November The Johnston Collection Trustees hosted a cocktail party at the Athenaeum Club to honour Nina Stanton for her enormous contribution as Director/Curator of The Johnston Collection and to welcome Louis Le Vaillant as the new Director/Curator.

The Friends Christmas party this year was 'At Home'. We were delighted that, for the first time since the inception of the Friends of The Johnston Collection in 1999, we were able to have our celebration at the premises which is the *raison d'être* for the Friends.

Events for 2009 are looking exciting, with some still in the 'pipeline'. As this newsletter goes to print, we recently visited Mt Macedon to see Mr Rodney Davidson's house and garden *Wentworth* and the fine *Duneira Estate*. We had a terrific response to the day.

We shall be visiting John D Dunn Antiques in May. This firm specialises in 16th, 17th and 18th century continental furniture and interesting decorative items pertaining to those eras such as paintings, screens, tapestries, and *objet d'art*. The furniture mainly consists of sophisticated provincial furniture of walnuts with an emphasis on proportion, colour patination and originality.

We congratulate Robert Thomson who has been elected President of The Friends of The Johnston Collection Committee. Robert has again very kindly offered his beautiful home for either a cocktail or afternoon tea function in November (details to be confirmed).

We also propose a trip to Tarrawarra in the Spring when the Yarra Valley is looking its most beautiful. There will be other functions included in the 2009 Events Calendar and we shall advise when these have been finalised.

Continued Page 2 ...



The Friends funds have supported conservation works on pieces of furniture from the Collection. Recently we have made funds available to purchase a digital camera for the Collection, so objects can be appropriately photographed for cataloguing.

We welcome two new members to your Committee: Wendy Babiolakis, whom many of you will already know from her volunteer work at The Johnston Collection, and Jane Morris who is the Friends Secretary.

We are always seeking new members to join our happy group, and we encourage present Friends to promote this organisation to their friends and acquaintances. We are very keen to tap into the knowledge of the Friends for suggestions regarding events and outings. Please don't hesitate to contact any of the Committee Members with your thoughts and ideas.

Finally we would like to apologise for the delay in getting the newsletter out on time. Due to the extensive maintenance work in Fairhall and massive changes and re-organisation of the collection Olivia Gill, our Assistant Curator, and Robert Thomson, have been kept extremely busy. Once you have visited to view the new arrangement you will understand why, you will see such a complete transformation, so book a tour and prepare to be surprised.

Looking forward to another wonderful 2009.

Jane Morris
Committee Member

DIRECTORS DESK

It's been just over four months since I started at The Johnston Collection. First of all I'd like to extend a big thank you to everyone who has made me feel very welcome. I must admit to being a little overwhelmed in my early days however the support shown by the Friends has been absolutely wonderful.

My first week involved my initial meeting with the Friends Committee. What an enjoyable way to start. The Committee provided me with a further understanding of The Johnston Collection and what you are doing to benefit the wishes of Mr Johnston.

A Day in the Country was the first event I got to participate in and what a wonderful introduction to what the Friends can achieve. I've had great feedback about the day and the enjoyment of visiting the Stoneman Foundation's *Duneira* as well as having the opportunity to visit Rodney Davidson's country property *Wentworth* at Woodend. Together they are quite different and made a striking contrast of house, garden and collections. The hospitality shown at both residences was very generous and, I am told and I know, that the Friends made brilliant guests.

Heartfelt thanks to Nina who has been so generous with her assistance and guidance about the Collection. Helping out as well was, and is, Robyn Ives who stood in as Acting Director before I arrived. She was also unstinting in her guidance - and leaving good notes for me to follow.

Robyn is also curating for The Johnston Collection Gallery *An Astonishing Revolution - Porcelain 1640-1840* that will coincide with the annual *Mr Johnston - His Residence & Collection* tour which has now commenced. Robyn (and it must be mentioned Nina) have put an incredible amount of work into developing the exhibition. We're really grateful for the links they have made with private collectors to seek out an incredibly special selection of works for the show.

As we go to print we have successfully completed our major maintenance project of *Fairhall* including a new lighting system, some rewiring and a tidy-up. It's been a big job so far and Olivia and her band of helpful Guides, Volunteers and Friends have made the decant of *Fairhall* seamless and effortless - and undeniably enjoyable. It was little strange to see the House empty and a little forlorn however the new lights will invigorated the viewing of the Collection, especially the Christmas Tour.

PAGE 2



Robert Thomson
President of the Friends of The
Johnston Collection

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sotheby's Viewing
20 May 2009 at 5.30 pm
(details following)



**Visit to
John D Dunn Antiques**
9 June 2009 at 6.00 pm
(details following)



**The Johnston Collection
House Tour**
*Mr Johnston -
His Residence & Collection*
14 April to 24 July 2009



**The Johnston Collection
Gallery Programme**
*An Astonishing Revolution:
Porcelain 1640-1840*
14 April to 24 July 2009

Robert Thomson led the team for the return of the Collection to the House and his new vision for the arrangement is superb.

I hope you've also had a chance to look through the programme of events brochure. There's a good range of talks arranged with some of our favourite speakers returning with new topics and interests. I hope a balance of subjects to think and talk about. If you have seen the *Empires & Splendour* publication, then to hear Martyn Cook talk about The David Roche Collection will be a delight. In talking about collections, I hope to that there will be a stimulating conversation about collecting with Robyn Ives.

There are a few 'hands-on-history' practical activities with Susan Scollay (on understating oriental carpets) and Ben Hodgetts (on looking at furniture in the Collection) that will help understand the making and meaning of pieces.

Please remember that entry for any Friend who brings a paying guest to the *Mr Johnston – His Residence & Collection* (14 April – 24 July 2009) tour is free. I do hope you come and enjoy the next Tour, Gallery experience or Double programme options. All will be fascinating, inspirational and informative.

Louis Le Vaillant
Director / Curator
The Johnston Collection

AN AMAZING MUSEUM IN HOBART

Almost hidden away in a corner of the State Library of Tasmania in Hobart lies a real treasure. The Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts comprises a wide collection of early ceramics, glass, silver and furniture, as well as colonial era paintings, prints and books.

The collection comes from the family of Henry Allport, on whose death in 1965 the museum and library were created. Various members of the Allport family settled in van Dieman's Land in 1831 and became influential members of the community. Unfortunately, it was apparently impractical to house the collection in the Allport home, *Cedar Court* in Sandy Bay, so it was established in the modern tower building of the State Library.

The museum comprises the following elements:

- ◆ A gallery, with changing exhibitions of pictures from the collection
- ◆ The museum, with permanent displays set up to suggest the rooms of a gentleman's residence. These are arranged chronologically, based on predominantly English furniture from the period 1680 to 1825. Display cases hold European ceramics, silver and glass
- ◆ The library and print room, holding the extensive collection of books and prints, much of it housed in Allport's bookcases

Henry Allport's bequest included funds that have enabled further acquisitions to be made.

Selecting highlights for a brief article is not easy, but they include books by John Gould; T.J. Lempriere's *Maria Island Journal*; Thomas Bock portrait studies; landscapes by John Glover and Conrad Martens; a Chelsea 'Goat and Bee' jug; Nantgarw plates; various drinking vessels and other glass from 1730 to 1850; 16th and 17th century silver spoons; a Cuadale Cup, hallmarked 1661-2; and a bookcase and chairs in the Chippendale and Hepplewhite styles respectively. This is barely a smattering of what there is to see.

A visit to this establishment is highly recommended!

Mark Weller



PAGE 3



Louis Le Vaillant
Director / Curator
The Johnston Collection

The Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts is located in the State Library of Tasmania, cnr Murray and Bathurst Streets, Hobart.

Open 9.30am – 5.00pm
Mon-Fri and 9.30am – 2.30pm last Saturday each month.



THE ARCHAMBO HOT WATER KETTLE (LONDON 1731)

This elegant *Kettle* has been displayed at part of the 1740's tableau of a tea table in the Gallery as part of the *Imbibing Passions* exhibition and more recently featured in the Shopping Experience highlighting tea caddies. Purchased at Sotheby's in October 2007 with funds donated by one of the Friends, it has a number of interesting connections for silver enthusiasts.

PAGE 4

Notable Huguenot goldsmith Peter Archambo (b. ? - d. 1759) was the English-born son of a Huguenot (Protestant) refugee from France. In 1710 he was apprenticed to the Huguenot goldsmith Jacob Margas (circa 1685–after 1730). The sons of Huguenot immigrants were often apprenticed to masters who were of Huguenot origin and absorbed their master's manufacturing skill and designing knowledge and were in a position to develop the ideas and designs brought by their masters from France. Huguenot silver is noted for its fine workmanship and design elements including strap work, cut card work, and cast and applied ornaments and decoration with elaborate engraving.

Archambo's work is described as French in influence and he is credited with helping to introduce the Rococo style into England (popular circa 1725 - circa 1765). After serving his apprenticeship for ten years, Archambo became a freeman of the Butchers' Company on 7 December 1720 (rather than the Goldsmiths' Company which was restricting the entry of foreigners to their Guild). He first registered his mark in London in 1721, his second mark in 1722, his third mark in 1739 and is thought to have retired around 1750 and died around 1767.

Archambo's work is characterised as completed in a more restrained manner than that of some of his contemporaries such as the extraordinary silversmith Paul de Lamerie (1688 - 1751). (Archambo's son, Peter Archambo II, was initially apprenticed to de Lamerie). In 1731 he produced the very fine hot water kettle with a circular body with a finely engraved contemporary armorial crest, now part of the Teaching Collection. Such an elegant item was a key requisite for entertaining in style.

His work is characterised by restraint and often features marine motifs such as the crowned Neptune's heads surmounted on a shell on the 'knees' and the shell motif feet of the tripod stand seen in this work.

Archambo also produced fine quality domestic silver, and a wide range of objects, including cups, candlesticks, cream jugs and cake baskets.

Other works of Archambo in well-known collections include the magnificent wine-urn chased with masks, shells and strap-work and its companion a wine-cistern commissioned by George Booth, 2nd Earl of Warrington (1675–1758) which remain in the notable collection of silver at Dunham Massey in Cheshire. The Gilbert Collection, now at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, has a neo-classical hot water urn and a set of three exquisite caddies with finely engraved decoration. There is also a plain ewer at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

Of interest is that one of his apprentices, Thomas Heming served at his workshop from 1735-1745. Some of Heming's work is distinctly French in character which may be due to the influence his master. Heming was an influential and highly regarded goldsmith and from 1760-1782 was appointed Principal Goldsmith to George III. He was responsible for many pieces of large and important silverware, including regalia and plate for the coronation of George III in 1761.

Andrew Dixon



A Sterling Silver Kettle on Stand, Peter Archambo, London, 1731
Accession Number: T0032



detail of makers mark