

UK Belleek Collectors' Group

Newsletter

Number 24/3
September 2003

Autumn is already creeping up on us but hopefully this latest Belleek Collectors' Newsletter will keep some warmth in our lives, especially with its reminders of our sunny July weekend in Buckinghamshire.

Contributions to the Newsletter will always be welcomed – anything about Belleek, of course, and any other news from the ceramic world in the past or present. It's the way we can share information with everybody in the Group and keep widening our knowledge.

- Gina Kelland

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Our website is administered by Simon and can be found at <http://www.belleek.org.uk/>.



the Summer meeting

Credits

Photographs: Chris Marvell, Gina Kelland, Eddie Murphy

Articles by: Bev Marvell, Jan Golaszewski, Jackie Howden, Gina Kelland, Chris Marvell.

US newspaper article provided by Karen Kincheloe and the author, Jacquelyn Mitchard, who has agreed we may re-publish.

Thanks to members who have helped in many ways, and for their encouraging comments. Belated thanks and acknowledgement to the National Archives Officer at Kew, Tim Hadfield, for agreement to our publication of the registered designs of Belleek in the previous Newsletter 24/2.

Forthcoming Events

18/19 October, Stoke on Trent. Details will be sent to members soon. Plans are not yet fully finalised but we are hoping to have dinner on the Saturday night at Noah's Ark. On Sunday we expect to meet at Portmeirion Factory Shop followed by coffee at Spode where we will have speakers from Spode and Portmeirion. We are very privileged to have Anwyl Cooper-Willis to tell us about Portmeirion's history, designs, and future plans. Anwyl is the daughter of Susan Williams Ellis, the founder and designer of Portmeirion Pottery.

13/14 December, Wilmslow. Chris and David Reynolds will once again welcome members to the Christmas Party weekend – timed to coincide with the Bowman Antiques Fair at Bingley Hall, Stafford.

17/18 April 2004, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. Pat and Brian Russell will host our spring meeting, to include a visit to Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.

10/11 July 2004, Amersham. AGM weekend to be hosted by the Chiltern Chapter.

16/17 October 2004, Hull, East Yorkshire. Hosted by Tracy & Paddy McKee.

Future Plans

December 2004, Wilmslow. Hosted by Chris & David Reynolds.

March 2005, Wirral, Merseyside. Hosted by Sheila & Graham Houghton.

July 2005, Fleet, Hampshire. Hosted by Maire & Francis Kiddle.

October 2005, Derbyshire. Group's 50th meeting, to be arranged by the Committee.

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Wants, Swops, and For Sale

As far as I know there has been no response to this column. However if at any time any member wishes to buy or sell any Belleek then the column can easily be re-activated.

GK

News from the World of Ceramics

Royal Worcester

On a recent visit to the Royal Worcester factory I was intrigued to learn about a method of producing flatware using clay granulate with a low moisture content. This is also known as “dust pressing” and is described as “one of the most advanced of all pottery-forming methods”. A measured amount of the clay granulate is injected into a sophisticated mould and high pressure is applied, resulting in ware that requires minimal finishing. The method is used mainly for plates and bowls.

Unfortunately when I visited the machine was not in use as it was being cleaned, so I didn't see this innovation working except in Royal Worcester's video. It would be interesting if some members could provide any further information on this method and its effectiveness (Linda & Eddie Murphy?).

You might also be interested to know that when I was there the porcelain section was closed to visitors because they were “flat out” producing the Jamie Oliver ranges - described as “The Hottest Stuff in the Kitchen” and apparently selling extremely well.

Poole

Poole Pottery has a factory outlet on the Quay which, apart from selling their own products and showing a brief video about the Pottery's history and its wares, also incorporates a hall selling homewares, a clothes/fashion outlet, a gift shop, and tea rooms. The site where they are – Dolphin Quays – is an award winning development that is currently under construction. Planning approval has been granted for a £20 million redevelopment of the Pottery's factory shop site.

The Pottery has over 1 million visitors a year (it is in a tourist area and by the sea) and intends with this expansion to become the biggest gift shopping experience in the South of England. Also up to £3 million is being invested into a new factory in Poole, where new technology and equipment is being installed.

This seems amazing news when so many other pottery factories are suffering in the economic climate.

Royal Doulton

Following their move to greatly increased overseas production, Royal Doulton have stemmed their huge losses to some extent. Unfortunately however, in spite of widespread retail shop closures and large numbers of redundancies in Stoke on Trent, the company is still loss making – an operating loss of £7million in the six months to September 10th. The share price on September 30th fell to 2.75 pence. Carrying on the most regrettable series of archive sales, a further disposal will take place at Bonhams, Bond Street on 28th October. This disposal is mainly from the company's “reserve collection” of Beswick, but does include some items of Doulton and Minton. This Bonhams sale also contains commemoratives made by Shelley and Paragon. (See articles in Newsletters 23/1 and 23/2 for information on previous sales of Doulton's museum collections).

Belleek

Those on the Internet can keep up with the Pottery by visiting their web site: <http://www.belleek.ie/>. There you will find the latest news, new products, a product portfolio, you can date your Belleek (useful and comprehensive information on all the marks – did you know the current green mark is expected to be used until 2010?), visitor centre information, company profile, collectors' society, distributor locator, links, and upcoming QVC shows.

- Gina Kelland and Chris Marvell



THE 5th JULY'S BOUQUET OF DELIGHTS

A decade and a half of wonderful Belleeking adventures have wetted my appetite for many more years of exciting experiences to be shared with very special friends. Throughout those years, every single gathering has been a special event full of treasured memories - this occasion was no exception.

That early Saturday morning last July greeted me with the usual Belleeking emotions of anticipation and excitement. Having showered at speed, packed my bags and downed a strong cup of coffee, I dashed out to greet a smiling Joanna



who was collecting me from home. Car boot packed,

we took off heading towards the M25. Joanna drove whilst I attempted to navigate us to our first Belleeking destination - Anne and John Brancker's home for a 'light' lunch.



Adrenalin pumping through our Polish veins, we drove up the middle of Epping Forest onto the motorway. The yearn to Belleek drew us even closer as we threaded our way along the winding roads set deep in the heart of the Chiltern countryside. Passing through nature's blaze of magical colours we talked fondly of friends we were about to meet. On our journey we passed road signs which pointed towards towns and villages where I had spent many happy childhood years.

Anne and John's Garden, the gracious hosts and other group members



Inevitably our conversation was packed full of nostalgia. Arriving in their charming village near Aylesbury we parked the car outside Anne and John's beautiful period cottage. Bearing gifts we entered their



home where we were warmly greeted by their welcoming hugs and kisses. All routes through their home led to their lovely garden. Passing through I was distracted by their fascinating and varied china collections which adorned their comfortably furnished home. The Belleek was mind-blowingly beautiful! Stepping out into the bright sunshine, each and every Belleeker was greeted by more hugs and kisses from all assembled on the patio. Indeed we had 'arrived' into the warm bosom of camaraderie and enduring friendships.



The hot sun smiled upon us as we chatted, either sitting under the shades of umbrellas, or wandering along the length of the garden identifying the abundance of flora. The flowering urns and stone goddess overlooked us all with an air of gracious hospitality.



Group Members at Anne and John's house – and some of the Belleek



Anne and John's lunch was a continental delight Italian inspired, we were served with all manner of delicacies which included delicious meats, dips, olives, salads and locally baked Italian bread. Italian wines flowed as we enjoyed a culinary crescendo to which many of us returned for seconds.....and even thirds. We mingled with drinks in hand and cameras clicked to record for posterity our magical afternoon - may

future generations of Belleekers reach the dizzy heights of such superb hospitality. As the afternoon drew to a close, individually we expressed our heart-felt appreciation and thanks to our wonderful hosts. We rejoined our cars to head off and meet up again later that evening at the Upper Thames Sailing Club in Bourne End.

Saturday evening at the Upper Thames Sailing Club

The Sailing Club is nestled in seclusion down a long private road which leads to the banks of the



Thames. The still evening was balmy as cows grazed lazily by the water's edge on the opposite bank. The sky was awash with wonderful pinks as the sun bid its farewell. Eventually the pale moon emerged with its silver light flickering on the River - its waters meandering effortlessly past the Sailing Club. In the distance we could hear the faint explosions from the Henley Regatta fireworks display. The evening's setting was a pleasure to behold.



We are indebted to Sailing Club Members, Jackie and Jim Howden, who for the second year in succession were able to secure the use of these superb facilities exclusively for ourselves. Belleekers assembled on the veranda of this magnificent Victorian wooden built Club House and all posed for a group photograph.



Jim served generous measures from the Club's subsidised bar as we continued to mingle and admire all around us. In true family tradition we dined on a long table which had been beautifully decorated by our Chiltern Members. Once seated, we gave a toast to all present and to absent Members. The food was excellent, abundant and served to our table. Our Chiltern Members arranged a table raffle which was great fun.



At the end of our dinner we paid our traditional appreciative compliments to the assembled chef and his crew. Afterwards we retired to the bar for more drinks and to catch up with one another's news and to recount our varied experiences. It is true to say that collecting is a passion which we all enjoy and share.

Group members at the Upper Thames Sailing Club – David in his boater (bottom left) and Jackie and Jim at the dinner table before our onslaught (top right)



Alas, time stops for no-one. Eventually we had to depart and go our separate ways to our various places of overnight rest. However, Joanna's and my adrenalin was still high. So, on our return to our hotel, we enjoyed a few traditional Polish night-caps at the bar whilst reminiscing appreciatively about the day's memorable events, and looking forward to the next day's AGM. Without doubt we had experienced Belleeking at its very best - none of which could be possible if it were not for you all. Our Chiltern Members had done us proud.

Jan Golaszewski



View of our banquet table inside the Sailing Club and Belleekers celebrating...

Sunday 6th July



After 3 years in the stunningly beautiful Latimer House venue overlooking the River Chess Valley, it was felt it was time for a change. Thanks to the researches of Anne and Ray Parsons the Group was able to book "The Hit or Miss" 17th Century coaching inn on the edge of the tiny village of Penn Street, near Amersham.

The village has two pubs and a cricket green – which game has inspired the name of the inn and the memorabilia to be found in the bar. It opened as an inn on 1st June 1798, so we were following in a long tradition. It now has Irish owners and an Irish chef – very appropriate for the Belleek Group!



Some pictures of the AGM

It was a lovely day and we met in a private dining room which opened on to the lawn and patio so we were able to enjoy the sunshine when there were breaks in our schedule. Renewed thanks to Anne Parsons who provided cakes and biscuits to go with our tea and coffee.



Once we had all arrived the morning was taken up with the Annual General Meeting – minutes will be published of the wide-ranging discussions. Lunch was served at 12.30, and everybody seemed to enjoy the special menu prepared for the Group; the highlights were probably the mixed Mezzo Plate, the traditional roast beef, and the superb desserts especially the Bailey's Coffee Mousse, and the totally delicious Lemon Tart.



As we were in a smaller venue than the Latimer one we had to make room for the Silent Auction tables. Once we had done the rearrangements members put out their wares.

- Gina Kelland

Silent Auction

122 lots were entered for the Silent Auction – the final tally showed that only 30 lots were sold – a lot of interest but not so many buyers!

- Bev Marvell



To bid or not to bid... that is the question!



Auctioneer Graham (above) displays the very impressive ware and (below) announces the results of the auction. Tracy and Paddy McKee deliberating (left)



To round off the day we had a "Bring & Tell".

THE BRING AND TELL

The theme at our July meeting was "Trivia" and a number of items were assembled on a table ready for the "tell". Brian Scott explained he had another item to add but he wanted to keep it under wraps until the last moment – very mysterious.



So, as usual, Jan started the ball rolling by picking the first item from the table and asking the owner to tell us more about it. This item was a pretty saucer but it had a large piece missing and Gina Kelland explained that it had been given to her but as she could find no record of the pattern in any of her books it was likely it would have to stay that way. But what remained was decorated with beautifully painted pheasants and was too nice to simply throw away and

was therefore just a piece of trivia.

Next to be selected was a cup and saucer owned by Pat Tubb. She told us about the unusual legend written on the base, it read "Reproduction of first Lenox piece Designed 1889 Limited Edition" - very curious.



Then it was the turn of Gina again. This time she showed us two coral bases -the ones usually supporting a Cardium shell. Only one of them was marked and as the dealer would not separate them she had taken pity on them and taken them home. Two bases with nothing to support.

Ann Parsons was then asked to tell us about a little dish she had spotted in a charity shop. It was white glazed porcelain around 4-5" across and decorated with cactus like shapes and looked vaguely similar to other pieces she had seen in Anne and John Branker's home. It was priced at £4.50 but as no one had any change Ann ended up paying £5.50 by Credit Card. Ann then explained how she had found an impressed mark which identified the little dish as a piece made by Moore Brothers between 1880 – 1910 and was worth around £80-£120! A trivial purchase that turned out to be not so trivial after all.



Jan then selected a small pewter cylindrical container 2.5 inches high and 1 inch in diameter it had a screw on lid with holes in it - this belonged to me. I explained that Jim & I were at a fair and while he examined the larger pewter pieces I had gravitated to the other end of the stall to where the bent spoons, crushed measures and battered plates and other bits of trivia were assembled. I spotted this little container and loved the decoration of butterflies, flowers and leaves impressed around the sides. I had to buy it, but we could only guess at its age and purpose, salt or sand perhaps? Anyway I took it along to the next Pewter Society meeting where we have a table for unusual/unidentifiable pieces and members write their comments and opinions. I was amazed to learn that it was considered to be a late 17th early 18th century container for Holy oil. The top had been pierced at a later date, probably to be used as a spice pot, a very nice example of a collectable object! So I considered my "find" to be not so trivial after all.



Jan's piece of trivia was in fact two vintage luggage labels! He explained he collects picture postcards of Co. Fermanagh and on one of his hunting trips he came across these luggage labels printed with the name - "Great Northern Railway Co - Belleek"

So, trivial they may be, but he could hardly resist them could he?



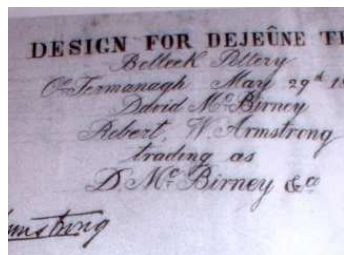
Now it was time for Brian Scott to reveal his piece of trivia. He held up what looked like an old exercise book and read out the title of the work "A Manual on the Art of Repairing China, Glass & General Pottery Wares with instructions" produced by J. J. Davies & Sons Newbury, established 1847. He then alluded to Gina's restoration methods and amidst great mirth he then proceeded to regale us with extracts and a list of the suggested tools needed for any proposed restoration - files, drills, wire, where and when to use rivets, screws and nuts and the use of something called "coaguline" One can only guess at the results obtained! Brian then proceeded to present the manual to Gina, accompanied by loud applause.

Our judges for the day, Paddy and Tracy McKee, had no hesitation in declaring Brian the winner with a truly memorable piece of trivia!

- Jackie Howden

Belleek Pottery – King of the Déjeuner Set?

We have all seen, and in my case lusted after, absolutely wonderful examples of what we all normally call “Cabaret Sets”. The Cabaret Set, or more properly **Déjeuner Set**, or



using the terminology used originally by Armstrong himself: **Dejeune Set** (thanks here to Brian Russell, this comes from Armstrong’s original descriptions on the Belleek design registrations – see picture) is a simple concept. It is a small tea set on a tray. Simple; so why do I (and a good number of other collectors) get excited about it? I don’t think it as easy as just “to see it is to love it” although personally, I *do* sometimes get carried away! A

less emotional assessment is that the Dejeuner Set exhibits the *design* of a tea set in a way no other combination can: all the shapes are there, teacup and saucer, milk jug, sugar bowl, teapot, sometimes a slop bowl and of course the tray on which the other items were made to stand. To be effective, the design of each individual item has to be functional and decorative, but the effect of the whole set needs to “work” when all the pieces are together – then, truly the whole is greater than the sum of the parts!



Echinus “Dejeune Tray” as registered by R.W. Armstrong



Sèvres Déjeuner Set (Soft Paste Porcelain) 1767-1772

As the end of the 18th century approached, the Sèvres style was copied by Meissen in Germany and lesser companies in France and their counterparts across the continent, but in general, the British remained resolute and were not much swayed by this slightly “degenerate” foreign taste for teaware only suitable for intimate tea parties. The major British companies at the time; Wedgwood, Spode, Chelsea/Derby, Swansea, Lowestoft and Worcester (represented by Flight and Barr, Chamberlains and Graingers) made countless shapes for teacups and teapots, huge ranges of complete large tea sets, and only relatively few déjeuner sets!

The Déjeuner set (or Cabaret set, as the terms are often used interchangeably, although my opinion is that “Déjeuner set” is normally more correct) is, as the name implies, a French invention. The Sèvres Royal Porcelain manufactory, providing the most exquisite porcelain to the French royalty and aristocracy from early in the 18th century, can be said to have invented the genre. When cost was no object and fashion the driving force - for tea drinking was just as fashionable in 18th century France as it was in early Georgian Britain - Sèvres had, at the time, no equal. They produced, usually to special commissions, exquisite tea sets with trays, always very expensive and intended to be used by those at the highest levels of society for intimate afternoon tea.



Sèvres Déjeuner (Breakfast) Set (Hard Paste Porcelain) 1813-1815

The French revolution largely put a stop to the “frillery and luxury” implied by use of the déjeuner set – in any case, King Louis, his family and a large proportion of the French aristocracy went to Madame la Guillotine, so there was no longer the customer base in France for this type of product! Sèvres fell on hard times but did not go out of business as Napoleon himself, having got rid of the aristocracy which *had* been buying Sèvres products, rather liked the ware they produced, so he just made a decree that they should now produce their fine porcelain for him! You can imagine the Sèvres potters breathing a sigh of relief – Kings might come and go, but this was business as usual.

It's easy to form a mental picture of Marie Antoinette taking tea with one of her admirers, *of course* using a beautiful Sèvres Déjeuner set – and her famous (but taken out of context) “Let them eat cake...”, is a powerful and most probably correct image of the French pre-revolutionary aristocracy.

After Wellington's victory at Waterloo in 1815, with the banishment of Napoleon, the Sèvres Royal Porcelain Factory's decline accelerated. In fact, a lot of undecorated Sèvres ware found its way to England and elsewhere, where elaborate pre-revolutionary styled decoration was applied and the pieces were passed off as “genuine” 18th century Sèvres with a forged Sèvres mark. Without the support of the French Royal family or Napoleon, the business was in financial jeopardy and although they *had* been buoyed up by major orders from other country's royalty, such as Catherine the Great of Russia, following the fall of Napoleon, Sèvres were effectively finished as *the* major force in world ceramics. It took another thirty years or so, but by the time of the Great Exhibition in 1851, the *British* were the new world leaders.



Worcester Déjeuner Set – Parian, 1862. A possible forerunner of Belleek's Sea-inspired teasetts ?



Worcester Bone China Déjeuner set c. 1880

It was really not until after the start of the Victorian age in 1837 that the Déjeuner set made a real comeback.

The end of the Georgian period in Britain, the coming of the railways and general industrialisation opened up the market for good quality ware for sale to a new middle class. The great exhibitions starting in 1851 accelerated this. The French revolution had finished off the French aristocrats and removed much of Sèvres' market, but the new Victorian middle class opened up the market for good quality porcelain in much larger quantities. Of course, Queen Victoria herself and the upper

So what of the déjeuner set? Did it die when the fashion in France for it died at the hands of the French Revolution, or was the end of Napoleon its death knell? Well, these factors contributed to its decline. It still carried on being made in France by Sèvres and by many lesser companies in Limoges and elsewhere. The British potters were really traditionalists at heart and although the British were now to take the lead in porcelain design, the pottery business there was still dominated by old traditional companies such as Flight and Barr in Worcester and Spode in Stoke on Trent these kept on with designs largely based on eighteenth century shapes. Any déjeuner sets produced largely copied earlier French designs.



Part Déjeuner Set – bone china by unknown British maker c. 1880

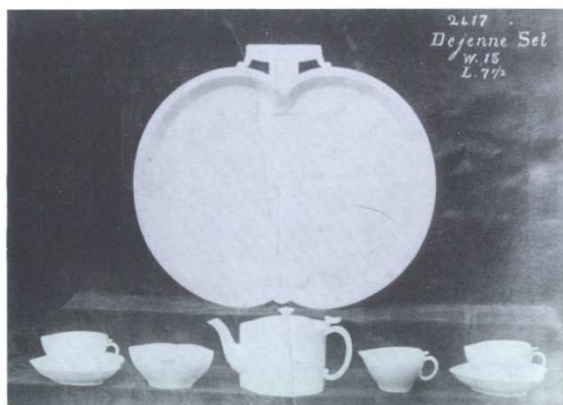
echelons of British society were still very important to the British ceramics companies and in fact endorsements by royalty and success at the Victorian-inspired "Industrial Expositions" became vital to the success of the major pottery firms.

Another element was also by now becoming important, and this was *design*. It is said that 1870 onwards (to the present day) is the age of design. Maybe today, when faced with designer *everything*, we might think this has now gone too far, but back in early Victorian days, led by people like Prince Albert himself and Henry Cole at the then new South Kensington Museum (the V&A), design came to be thought to have paramount importance – there was not yet the "cult of the designer" the first designer to attain this cult status was probably Christopher Dresser in the 1870's – but design, taste and the desire to educate and refine became very important to the middle and upper classes of Victorian society.

So came the resurgence of the *déjeuner* set. Tea was fashionable again – actually, it had never been out of fashion - but now taking afternoon tea with one's friends (indeed "Five o'clock tea" – see below) became very popular. The middle classes now had money and free time in which to enjoy the rewards of their endeavours, and so, the *déjeuner* set was back – it allowed the Victorian middle class to imagine themselves taking tea as the French aristocracy would have done 100 years earlier. The designers of the day could also indulge themselves – the *déjeuner* set was indeed a good vehicle to show off their tasteful and intricate designs. Many pottery companies took advantage of the trend and by the early 1860's cabaret sets were being made in a large variety of designs by major and minor companies in Stoke, Worcester, Derby and elsewhere.



"Déjeuner" Set (Chocolate Set) – Bone China by Minton's c. 1880



The Five O'Clock déjeuner set, c.1880.

Five O'Clock Set

An intriguing reference to a five o'clock tea set, with handles shaped as a figure 5 and the tray as a double 5, was published in the magazine *Decoration* in June 1883. This can be found in the shape book, along with a *déjeuner* set of similar shape comprising tray (15in. wide) teapot, sugar and cream, and two cups and saucers. Both sets were first made in about 1880. The teaset tray, which is oval, is less obviously formed from a double 5.



Two versions of "5 o'clock tea" Minton's c. 1880 (left) and Belleek post 1891 (right)

So, what of Belleek – finally to get to the point of this article! Belleek were somewhat slow off the mark, merely by dint of not being in operation until the early to mid 1860's, but once parian production was in full swing, they made *beautiful* déjeuner sets. The first examples were Artichoke and Echinus sets, then Chinese, Tridacna, Thorn and Grass pattern. All these designs are truly magnificent, particularly if in their highly decorated form. Belleek generally made the déjeuner trays as an adjunct to their “normal” teaware, as it only required the addition of a tray to make a “normal” tea set into a déjeuner set. This is true, but I believe that Belleek did not just design the tray as an afterthought. In the same way as the Sèvres sets, Belleek sets have the appearance of being designed as a *complete set* – a great deal of thought having been given to how the various shapes and designs fit together to make a complete set. Most British companies made their teaset from the now “standard” bone china body, Belleek (and also to some extent Worcester) made theirs from the Parian body which was very suitable for the intricate moulded shapes which are so distinctive to them and so necessary for their quirky and idiosyncratic shapes!



Belleek Full coloured Chinese and Thorn déjeuner sets – note the Thorn Tray and one of the cups and saucers is a different colourway to the rest. Both sets first period (1863-1891)



Belleek Grass Pattern déjeuner set (solitaire set as made for one person on a small tray, first period)

So why are the potters of Belleek the “Kings” of the déjeuner set? Well, as the fashion for parian declined towards the end of the 19th century, Belleek Pottery, towards the end of its first period and going into the second, now designed and produced such a bewildering plethora of teaware and déjeuner sets, in a huge variety of original patterns, that they eclipsed all other manufacturers! It seems that they were oblivious to the changes in fashion and taste, but the sheer number and variety of the teaware patterns they produced is remarkable – they also produced a déjeuner set version of almost all of their general teaware patterns – it makes a collector's mouth water! This was the golden age for Belleek teaware. Some Belleek déjeuner

sets pictured here (on the next page), Lily, Low Lily and Thistle are good examples of the care and attention to detail that Belleek pottery brought to the design of the pieces in each set. It is quite remarkable that they found it necessary to come up with *two* variants on the “Lily” theme, though clearly they took elements from their water lily designs that already existed and added other elements from the leaves of the lily – a flower then much in vogue through the popularity of the

Aesthetic Movement in the 1880's and 1890's. The Thistle set truly shows the unity of design of all pieces of the set, even the tray with its out-turned crinkly edge, surely impractical and prone to damage!

As the second period progressed, patterns were withdrawn and simplified – Fred Slater (from the famous Stoke-on-Trent Slater family) came up with some new designs but also vandalised others – for example, he took the feet off the Limpet Pattern and simplified other early designs so as to largely destroy their balance and unity. Unfortunately, this trend continued in the 20th century, with “difficult” designs, such as Shell pattern, being modified to “New Shell” and losing its intricacy and integrity (and its feet!).

The fashion for the déjeuner set was carried on into the twentieth century in the USA by manufacturers of American Belleek. A good example produced by Willetts is illustrated later in this article: it is interesting to note that Willetts sourced the tray (at least) from Limoges in France, so it may have been added to the teaset as an afterthought – the decoration being applied to the tray to match that already on the (standard teaware shapes) of the other pieces.

From 1900, the trays for the sets were produced less and less, production finally stopping altogether in the mid 1920's as new fashions (Art Deco) began to predominate.

In the 1920's innovative designs were again introduced with the new Celtic patterns. This was the last gasp of the déjeuner set. There is **ONE** recorded example of a tray (yes, only *one* tray) made for the Low Celtic teaware, owned by a very fortunate collector in Northern Ireland. This was the last tray produced in “normal” production – so the end for the déjeuner set at Belleek came in the mid 1920's – or did it? Belleek Pottery have now reproduced a Grass pattern tray to complete a modern Grass pattern déjeuner set; there was talk and even a promise that the Chinese Tray would be reproduced to make a modern Chinese déjeuner set possible by combining all the “collectors” pieces of Chinese ware which have been made in recent years (sadly now lacking *their* feet!): unfortunately it turned out to be impossible to produce the tray, so it now really looks like the end of the line for the Belleek déjeuner set.



Three Belleek déjeuner sets – Lily 2nd period (top), Low Lily 2nd period (middle) and Thistle 1st and 2nd period (bottom)



American Belleek (Willetts) déjeuner set c. 1900, with tray sourced from Limoges (see mark)



'Low Celtic' Tray. Third Period. 1926-1946

The fabled one and only example of the Low Celtic Tray, early third period c. 1926

Rather than end on this gloomy note, it is much better to look back on the glory of Belleek déjeuner sets available towards the end of the 19th century. As I have said, although other manufacturers made déjeuner sets, in quantity and of good design; Worcester, Minton, Derby and Doulton being amongst these companies, Belleek were unrivalled in the sheer quantity of patterns, the quirky inventiveness, the unity of design of the sets, the fineness and originality. Its difficult to ascertain whether Belleek made a commercial success of their forays into the déjeuner set: it seems rather unlikely, as contemporary sources at the time of Armstrong and McBirney's deaths reported that McBirney had "lost heavily by the [Belleek Pottery] venture" and that following Armstrong's death a few months after McBirney's, that "The company was no longer prepared to pour money into continual experiment and invention". Let's just be glad that Armstrong *did* do all that experiment and invention, or we wouldn't now have the gloriously individual designs that are Belleek déjeuner sets!

- *Chris Marvell*

Appendix: Belleek Teaware Patterns available as déjeuner sets (A tray being available)

Aberdeen	Artichoke	Blarney	Chinese	Cone
Echinus	Erne	Fan	Finner	Five o'clock
Grass	Harp Shamrock	Hexagon	Lace	Lily
Limpet	Low Lily	Neptune	Ring Handle	Scroll
Shamrock	Shell	Sydney	Thistle	Thorn
Tridacna	Victoria			

In addition to these 31 patterns, where trays were definitely available, it is known that at least one tray exists in Celtic Low pattern (this may be a prototype that did not go into production) and early bone china déjeuner sets were made decorated in the Sèvres style.

References:

A Dictionary of Minton: Paul Atterbury and Maureen Batkin. Antique Collectors' Club 1990
 Sèvres, Porcelain from the Sèvres Museum 1740 to the Present Day: Marie Noëlle Pinot de Villechenon. Lund Humphries 1997
 Belleek UK Convention 1997 Exhibition Catalogue

How the Willow Pattern came to Buckinghamshire

There was a wonderful lady living in Great Missenden called Basia Watson Gandy who was a renowned hand painter on china and porcelain. Sadly she died in 2001, but she will always be remembered for her wonderful talent, courage, and sense of humour.

She taught at Missenden Abbey Summer Schools, and in 1990 the course on Blue & White China adapted the traditional Willow Pattern to Great Missenden.

The picture of the design (which was hand painted by Basia in quantity) shows

- Centre Right: Missenden Abbey showing the old cedar tree and the Misbourne River in front

- Upper Right: Little Missenden Church

- Top Centre: 2 balloons flying high, a regular feature in the area

- Top Left: Great Missenden Church

- Centre Left: the lake at the Abbey with two swans (a swan is incorporated in the arms of High Wycombe)

- Lower Left: the bridge over Great Missenden bypass with 3 people representing local activities – tennis (holding a tennis racket), management training (holding a briefcase) and artist (holding a palette and brush)

- Lower Right: a Chiltern Railways train with the railway bridge, representing the commuters from 'Metroland' to London

- Basia used a butterfly as her logo; can you spot it in the design?



Basia Watson Gandy executing her Missenden Willow Pattern design



The Missenden Willow Pattern

*from
BASIA*

- Gina Kelland

Values

The July/August edition of *Antique Collecting* (the Journal of the Antique Collectors' Club) contained its annual price review and David Battie contributed two articles – the first on 19th Century British Porcelain and the second on 20th Century British Ceramics.

In the first he considers what has made little headway in value over the last 20 years, or even fallen if inflation is taken into account. He says “Worcester figures, Belleek, anything white is a death knell (except parian)”. I think by ‘parian’ he means the unglazed biscuit porcelain first introduced at Stoke-on-Trent circa 1846 (included in the illustrations with the article is a Copeland Parian figure with the date code for 1862), rather than our general use of the word to describe Belleek white porcelain wares.

Collectors may be surprised by the suggestion that Belleek has not increased in value, although there must have been fluctuations over the last 20 years. Recent auction results (with the exception of Sothebys Irish Sale in 2002) seem to show an upward trend. What do you think?

If anybody wants to see the complete article(s), please contact me.

- *Gina Kelland*

... To provide some measure of contradiction of David Battie’s assessment of the failure of Belleek prices to increase, on the following page is a table of eBay auction results, showing prices realised. All the items are antique Belleek, all have been sold in the last month by a single important American seller. The prices realised seem to be very healthy indeed! Some highlights are:



Boy and Vine Candlestick 1st Period
Waterlily Vase 2nd Period
Shepherd and Dog Candle Holder
Vine Comport 1st Period

\$3,393
\$3,350
\$3,000
\$2,927

Lizard Vase 1st Period
Double Fish Vase 1st Period
Coloured Fan Teapot 2nd Period

\$2,577
\$1,275
\$2,955



These are rare items – you will notice, most of them are coloured, not completely white! Certainly the more decorated items seem to command the highest prices. (In the following list, the Blarney Dejeuner Set remained unsold at \$1,625 and the Globe Amphora Lamp was unsold at \$2,125)

- *Chris Marvell*

Item	Start	End	Price	Title
2650731463	Aug-10-03	Aug-17-03 18:00:00 PDT	\$50.00	IRISH BELLEEK SUN FLOWER VASE 3RD BLACK
2650733767	Aug-10-03	Aug-17-03 18:00:00 PDT	\$52.00	IRISH BELLEEK MASK CREAMER 3RD BLACK
2654822498	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$405.00	IRISH BELLEEK DOUBLE ROOT SPILL COLORED 1ST
2654823344	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$710.00	IRISH BELLEEK CACTUS SPILL COLORED 1ST
2654824311	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$3,000.00	IRISH BELLEEK SHEPHERD AND DOG CANDLE HOLDER
2654825788	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$161.50	IRISH BELLEEK DAIRY CREAMER 2ND MRK
2654826991	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$282.55	IRISH BELLEEK TRI-COLOR NEPTUNE 3 PCS
2654827465	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$51.00	IRISH BELLEEK MASK CUP AND SAUCER
2654837231	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$177.50	IRISH BELLEEK CREAMER COLORED UNUSUAL
2654841751	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$685.00	IRISH BELLEEK CRATE BISCUIT BOX COLORED 2ND
2654866575	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$320.00	IRISH BELLEEK SINGLE ROOT SPILL COLORED 2ND
2654867458	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$1,925.00	IRISH BELLEEK POCKET WATCH HOLDER RARE 1ST
2654868717	Aug-28-03	Sep-07-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$2,125.00	IRISH BELLEEK GLOBE AMPHORA LAMP WOW
2655779236	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$50.00	IRISH BELLEEK MASK SUGAR
2655780339	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$205.00	IRISH BELLEEK TRI-COLOR NEPTUNE 3 PCS
2655782691	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$3,393.00	IRISH BELLEEK BOY AND VINE CANDLESTICK WOW
2655783678	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$2,926.99	IRISH BELLEEK VINE COMPORT, PIERCED PAINTED
2655786071	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$660.00	IRISH BELLEEK FLORENCE JUG GILT NICE
2655787283	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$431.96	IRISH BELLEEK DOUBLE PICTURE FRAME
2655788306	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$2,576.99	IRISH BELLEEK LIZARD VASE COLORED
2655790514	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$1,625.00	IRISH BELLEEK BLARNEY TEA SET WOW
2655791783	Sep-04-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$102.50	IRISH BELLEEK BED PAN
2656781247	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$51.00	IRISH BELLEEK FEATHER VASE 2ND BLACK
2656781337	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$33.60	IRISH BELLEEK FEATHER VASE 2ND BLACK
2656803074	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$635.00	IRISH BELLEEK GRASS TEA KETTLE 1ST BLACK
2656804140	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$51.00	IRISH BELLEEK ABERDEEN VASE
2656805204	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$102.50	IRISH BELLEEK ABERDEEN VASE 2ND BLACK
2656807124	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$3,350.00	IRISH BELLEEK COLORED WATER LILY VASE 2ND BL
2656807872	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$796.96	IRISH BELLEEK DOUBLE RIBBON SPILL 2ND BLACK
2656808258	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$502.02	IRISH BELLEEK CORAL AND SHELL VASE 2ND BLACK
2656809141	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$935.00	IRISH BELLEEK TRIPLE CARDIUM 1ST PERIOD
2656970175	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$2,550.00	IRISH BELLEEK LILY BASKET COLORED NICE 2ND BL
2656970952	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$480.02	IRISH BELLEEK SINGLE HIPPIRITUS 1ST PERIOD
2656972240	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$765.00	IRISH BELLEEK TRIPLE HIPPIRITUS 1 BLACK MARK
2656975209	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$1,275.00	IRISH BELLEEK DOUBLE FISH VASE COLORED 1ST BL
2656977689	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$560.00	IRISH BELLEEK ANGLE FONT KNEELING 2ND BLACK
2656979124	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:30:00 PDT	\$365.00	IRISH BELLEEK LIMPET COFFEE POT 3RD BLACK
2656989668	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:36:21 PDT	\$800.00	IRISH BELLEEK THORN EGG CUP HOLDER 1ST BLACK
2656991326	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:42:24 PDT	\$2,955.00	IRISH BELLEEK FAN TEA POT UNIQUE 2ND BLACK
2656994657	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:53:09 PDT	\$1,500.00	IRISH BELLEEK LILY OF THE VALLEY PICTURE FRAM
2656996469	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 18:59:17 PDT	\$2,000.00	IRISH BELLEEK LILY OF THE VALLEY PICTURE FRAM
2657000663	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 19:10:10 PDT	\$331.00	IRISH BELLEEK MINIATURE TEA SET BLACK MARK
2657002329	Sep-07-03	Sep-14-03 19:15:01 PDT	\$572.60	IRISH BELLEEK CANE SPILL PAINTED 1ST BLACK

And on the subject of eBay.....

The following article was provided by Karen Kincheloe from a newspaper in the States. The author, Jacquelyn Mitchard, has given her permission for it to be included in the Belleek Newsletter.

“Satan lives, and his name is eBay



The danger, I supposed, when I recently had foot surgery was that I would become addicted to painkillers. I did not. Instead, I became addicted to eBay. I don't know what eBay means, but it should be called 'Home Satan' instead.

A normal person can be drawn into a kind of evil rapture by eBay, if that person is in the slightest bit acquisitive, brakes for garage sales, or ever bought anything sight-unseen from a classified ad. Never have I purchased anything on television from an 800 number – although I came close with the Perfect Pancake. Never have I been tempted, even for an instant, by The Shopping Channel. But eBay is different.

On eBay, if you can ignore a little bad grammar and some challenged spelling, you can actually buy things you more or less need. Such as 'lightly used' clothes for the kids, which they will hate (this being the reason they were 'lightly used' in the first place). And you can indulge your passions.

'What are you obsessed with?' my friend Jill asked me, when she introduced me to the mysteries of eBay. 'Ummm, music boxes', I answered. We typed in the words. A hundred music boxes came up. The crummy piano kind that plays Lara's Theme, but also the gorgeous perforated wheel kind that play everything

from Aida to Stardust. I was dumbfounded. I wanted all of the nice ones.

Since the family is watching violent movies you cannot forbid them from watching, and your husband has fallen asleep on the couch; since you cannot reach the TV remote and you have read all your books; and you have learned that even yelling 'I'm on fire!' has no effect, you have to find some kind of diversion. So you shop.

You learn that on eBay you can buy a bundle of 127 love letters signed 'Donald Duck', the diaries of Calvin Coolidge, a town called Vidal that has some vague connection with Wyatt Earp and is best suited for a 'mobile-home community', a 12-carat diamond ring, a haunted house, and – I'm not making this up – a husband, who is amiable and 'can fix anything', for approximately \$30,000.

The terrible thing about eBay is that it's set up as an 'auction'. That means you are bidding against other people who are presumably unable to take long walks or go to the kitchen for a cheese sandwich. Auctions have a terrible effect on me. Having a competitive personality, I once found myself deep in a silent battle of 50-cent increments with a 10 year old child. A good friend once was so unable to stop she ended up with a red leather recliner emblazoned with the logo of a sports team.

At silent auctions, some portion often goes to charity. On eBay it's simple spite. I have pounded on a table at being outbid by some vandal with a handle like 'RoxyFoxy' who slipped in – one minute to spare – to outbid me by a penny and deprived my child of Nubuck Mary Janes.

Folks I have gotten to know casually through eBay tell me that there are actually people who set their clocks to get up in the middle of the night to check their bids.

The bad part is that, unlike store purchases, which a person can show up wearing and comment lightly, 'Oh, I've had this for ages', eBay purchases are impossible to conceal. They arrive in the mail. The mail carrier has to drive them up to the porch because they won't fit in the mailbox. You are not only a sucker but you're unmasked as one.

It's a lose-lose situation, and I would write more, but I have to check my bids."

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More on "Irish Life"

Yes, life in Ireland has certainly changed...

... this is "Miss Aileen Mac Carthy and her private ass and cart", as the caption writer has phrased it...

Next Meeting: October 18th/19th Stoke on Trent