ADFAS LECTURE SERIES 2011

All Volunteer Guides of The Johnston Collection are either Full Members or Associate Members of the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS).

If you are an associate member only, then each lecture will incur a small fee. The Melbourne Society holds its lectures in the Theatrette, University of Melbourne, Hawthorn Campus, 422 Auburn Rd, Hawthorn at 8pm

Please contact Sue Flanagan if you wish to attend T: (03)9817 1646

27 July 2011
Berthe Morisot and Edouard Manet: an Extraordinary Relationship / Mr Michael Howard, MA Courtauld BA Hons

10 August 2011 - Half Study Day-Lecture
Behind the Scenes / Mrs Gwenda Robb, MA

7 September 2011
Wine, Women and Song? Dutch Genre Painting by Vermeer and his Contemporaries / Dr Sophie Oosterwijk, MA MA PhD FSA

5 October 2011
The Shakers of North America / Mr John Ericson, BA (Hons) CertEd MEd

9 November 2011
7.30pm Annual General Meeting
8.00pm Behind the scenes on the Antiques Roadshow Mr Paul Atterbury

ADFAS YARRA

Morning lectures start promptly at 10.00 am. Afternoon lectures start promptly at 2.00 pm and are held at the Theatrette, Glen Eira Centre, cnr Glen Eira and Hawthorn Roads, Caulfield South.

4 August 10am and 2pm
The Art of Armenia: How and why it survived / Mr Andrew Spira MA BA

1 September 10am and 2pm
“Once Upon A Time”: Children’s books through the ages / Mrs Elizabeth Merry MA BA PGCE

29 September 10am and 2pm
Meet Me At The Waldorf: The extraordinary story of two iconic hotels built on Astor feuds, fortunes and patronage / Ms Mary Alexander MA BA

10 November 10am only followed by the AGM
Scandinavian Art and Design/ Mr Paul Atterbury

FRIENDS NEW MEMBERS 2010-2011

Brown, Neil
Bult, Anne
Cantwell, Kate
Churches, Valerie
Clifford, Diane
Craig, Sarah
Cromwell, Elizabeth
Croisie, Bernard
Crowther, Marlene
Davey, Pam
Davidson, Caroline
Des Cognets, Carol
Eager, Gabrielle
Gerrard, Brian
Golding, Pam
Grace, Sue
Hall, Judith
Halpin, Angie
Herman, Greg
Hirst, Hilary
Hirst, John
Hoyle, Donna
Jordan, Jane
Knight, Richard
Macleod, Rosemary
Marshall, Bernice
Marshall, Jo
Mason, Pamela
McInnes, Sally
Morgan, Barbara
Morris, Peter
Nicholson, Julie-Ann
O’Malley, Joan
O’Neill, Maxine
Oxley, Graeme
Palmer, Jim
Paradise, Mary
Parkin, Mary
Perry, Susan
Petautschnig, Sara
Porter, Barbara
Roberts, Prudence
Simmonson, Jane
Skinner, Kaylene
Stipanov, Matthew
Stipanov, Rosemary
Sutton, Elaine
Toomey, Margaret
Von Landau-Gruningen, Alexandra
Walsh, Julie
Walters, Gabrielle
Webb, Liane
Webb, Richard
Wells, Roslyn
Woolley, Suzanne
DIRECTOR'S DESK

FAIR HALL TO GLAD PARLOUR: The Flower, Its Beauty and Meaning in Art and Ornament and The Garden of Ideas have now opened. This marks the beginning of a new series of lectures, study days and workshops.

As the house museum tour has shown us, numerous items in the Collection are richly decorated with flowers and foliage. We know very well of William Johnston’s interest in gardening, especially with his purchase of his country property, Chandpara, and his subsequent creation of the surrounding gardens.

With this in mind, Anne Glynn has devoted this issue of Fairhall to look at various botanically based themes and objects. It is a delight to explore, from another viewpoint, the interests of William Johnston evidenced through so many items that celebrate all things botanical.

Dorothy Morgan has bought new insights into the Collection with the Fair Hall To Glad Parlour house tour. I’d like to thank her and her team for the huge amount of research and work put into developing the tour and rearranging Fairhall.

Concurrently, the Gallery is hosting The Garden of Ideas, curated by garden historian Richard Aitken. His inclusion of Nasymth’s painting of Alva House, Scotland in the AGHS national touring exhibition gives this work a wider context. The accompanying lecture series, developed with Christine Reid, adds further understanding to the ideas, depictions and interpretations of landscapes and gardens over time, and I hope you will make the most of the engaging range of speakers she has invited to the programme.

We are pleased to have been selected as one of the 75 venues participating in the Melbourne Open House programme this year. Please see www.melbourneopenhouse.org/ for more information.

Congratulations must go again to all those involved with this issue and please support the newsletter by not only considering but contributing to Fairhall.

Louis Le Vaillant
Director | Curator

EDITOR’S REPORT

The exhibition The Garden of Ideas has generated a lot of interest in the community. It is an exhibition that comes to us from Adelaide and can be seen in our gallery space from July until late October.

The corresponding house tour, Fair Hall to Glad Parlour: The Flower, Its Beauty and Meaning in Art and Ornament, has been curated by guide, Dorothy Morgan and focuses on flowers on furniture, porcelain and objects within Fairhall.

This edition of Fairhall is thus themed around flowers and their meaning in the decorative arts.

I’m sure you have received your What’s On brochure, detailing events at The Johnston Collection for the remainder of the year. There are so many interesting lectures and study days coming up that will keep everyone happy, entertained and educated.

There are some wonderful outings organised by The Friends. Those who went to the Western District in April will attest to the delightful weekend so well organised by Jane Morris. A highlight trip planned for September is a visit to Chandpara, the former weekend country estate of the late William Johnston.

The Friends of The Johnston Collection contribute enormously to the museum, organising a stimulating range of social activities, and putting the money raised back into the collection. See page 5 for details about their latest contribution.

The newsletter cannot exist without the support of all The Johnston Collection family, so if you have any ideas for an article, please contact me: anneglynn@netspace.net.au

Anne Glynn
Newsletter Editor
The Friends of The Johnston Collection

President's Report

Today I have just returned from the most delightful morning at the charming house of Bill and Judith Davis. Not only do the Davises have a wonderful collection of Georgian furniture, Persian rugs and other treasures, but Bill (an Ambassador of The Johnston Collection) is an expert on and has a fine collection of glass. All the glass was beautifully displayed and labelled and we were given an enlightening description of its beauty and history. Many thanks to Bill and Judith for this great morning, and the committee for another delicious morning tea - we all loved it.

At the time of my writing Melbourne is looking superb after a summer of just the correct amount of rainfall and then some very cold weather – the autumn leaves are truly beautiful. How fortunate we are to live in this city or visit it and of course one of its true highlights is The Johnston Collection. Speaking of gardens, the garden at the Collection always looks wonderful both north and south, so take note during your next visit.

I know I have touched on the trip to the Western District in my last report but I would like to say how lucky we were to have Jane Morris organise such a splendid event. We visited some amazing and historic properties, which you will read about in a separate article. All of them were fascinating in different ways, and of course we met their charming owners and enjoyed their boundless hospitality. As usual with The Friends, we had lots of fun, including a wonderful party given by The Friends of the Hamilton Art Gallery and a superb dinner at Darriwell Farm Restaurant.

I was speaking to Francis Dunn at the Antique Dealers' Fair held at the Royal Exhibition Building, and he said he was delighted with the response to his re-arrangement of Fairhall. Many people came to his stand and said they had seen his work and were full of praise.

In the April issue of English House & Garden there is an interesting article about enticing new visitors to the English National Trust houses. Simon Jenkins, the well known President, is trying to breathe new life into the houses by increasing public access and creating “atmosphere rooms”. Needless to say this made me think of our Collection where we have been doing it for years – hence its great success!

Below you will find details of our upcoming events which I know you will enjoy – we are incredibly fortunate to be asked into so many interesting houses.

Don’t forget to tell your friends when encouraging them to join The Friends of The Johnston Collection that they will be asked to a new members’ night, which is a lovely drinks party followed by a viewing of Fairhall. Our recent party was voted a great success.

If any of you have an interesting collection or would like to write an article about decorative arts, travel etc., please submit it to our editor, Anne Glynn for possible inclusion in Fairhall. I am sure many of you have a lot to contribute.

The Committee and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Robert Thomson
President
The Friends of The Johnston Collection

Friends' Events

We look forward to your involvement in the upcoming events conducted by The Friends of The Johnston Collection. These events have three aims: to assist with fundraising for the Collection; to provide access to events, specialists, locations and homes that may not normally be available to the public; and to develop a convivial social programme that brings together individuals with similar interests.

Friends Annual General Meeting – 23 August 2011 at 6pm

‘At Home at The Johnston Collection.’ In typical Friends style, the AGM is an opportunity to connect with fellow members and enjoy refreshments. Susan Scollay will give a brief talk about her upcoming study tour to Transylvania and Bukovina. Papers will be distributed closer to the event.

Garden Visits in the Macedon Ranges – 17 September 2011
PICTURED ABOVE | The Garden at Chandpara, 2010

Do not miss our ‘Daffodil Day’ which is being conducted in conjunction with The Garden of Ideas Exhibition at The Johnston Collection. We are having a Spring visit to two fabulous gardens. Firstly Chandpara the former country home of William Johnston, near Woodend, where we shall have morning tea, and then lunch at Neil Robertson’s rambling and delightful country garden, Westport at New Gisborne. The daffodils will be in full bloom in both gardens.

Private Preview at Sotheby’s Fine and Decorative Arts Auction – 19 October

Christmas Party – 1 December

BOOK ONLINE: THANKS TO THE FRIENDS

Another important milestone in the history of The Johnston Collection will take place on 1 August 2011 thanks to the generosity of The Friends of The Johnston Collection.

From that date all visitors to the Collection will be able to book online and receive immediate confirmation of their booking, whether for a Fairhall house tour, Gallery exhibition, lecture, workshop or special event.

According to Director | Curator, Louis Le Vaillant, “The community-at-large has embraced online bookings and has come to expect the continuous access, flexibility and convenience this service offers. Any organisation in the business of issuing tickets, whether it be to an exhibition, the opera, a seat on an airplane or at the tennis, should offer the choice of an online booking service to its visitors.”

Since the Collection first opened to the public in November 1999, advance pre-paid bookings have been essential to visit Fairhall museum complex.

The launch of The Johnston Collection Gallery in 2007 saw the introduction of additional activities to choose from - The Gallery exhibition and talk, the double programme, and an increased and extensive lecture programme.

Some regular visitors and general enquirers have voiced their frustration at being able to telephone during business hours only, sometimes involving several phone calls, at times needing to leave a message and await a return phone call. Visitors now have the convenience of booking online and at their leisure. It also makes it easier for international visitors who are planning their trips in advance. This practical measure means a better service to visitors.

Investigation and assessment of online booking systems began some 15 months ago. The system finally selected has been funded by The Friends of The Johnston Collection.

The Jewel Reservation System selected is much more than just an online booking system. It has enormous benefits in other areas of Collection activities. It will:

- provide increased after hours enquiry access to book activities at the Collection
- manage the Volunteer Guides roster
- generate a wide variety of visitor statistics to assist with future planning
- provide direct marketing with the ability to email e-newsletters and other information quickly and efficiently
- assist with our retail shop

Telephone booking fees will not apply to members of The Friends of The Johnston Collection for the first twelve months.

Members will be provided with a Promotional Code to enter/advise when making a booking to ensure they are not charged a booking fee.

Our thanks go to members of The Friends of The Johnston Collection, not only for their support of this project, but also for their highly valued continued support of The Johnston Collection.

REMINDER

Friends are welcome to make use of the Davidson/ Copland reference library. Please contact us to make an appointment: friends@johnstoncollection.org (03) 9416 2515
DISCOVERING THE WESTERN DISTRICT
Ken Barnes

After a long period of above average rainfall, the Western District was able to put on its very best green outfit for this tour on 1 and 2 April, 2011.

The Western District’s prosperity was created largely from the efforts of sheep farmers, so it was not surprising that the properties we visited were those of pioneering families who had settled there in the 19th century.

An hour further west near Wickliffe lies Narrapumelap, a Gothic Revival homestead built in the 1870s by John Dickson Wyselaskie, who had moved from Van Dieman’s land to lay claim to 40,000 acres adjacent to the Hopkins River.

The first of these was Mawallock, south of Beaufort, which dated back to the late 1850s. A long tree-lined entrance led to the impressive Arts and Crafts style homestead surrounded by impressive dry-stone walls and a magnificent garden. From the terrace one could appreciate the wide expanse of lawn that led to the tranquil Monash lake, an inspiring vista reflecting William Guilfoyle’s flair for landscape design.

The present owner of the house, Mr Kevin McIntyre, conducted a tour of the house and garden. The impressive bluestone villa is guarded by life-size cast iron lions and is topped by a three storey tower. Restoration undertaken by McIntyre over the past two decades has clearly been a labour of love.
On we journeyed to Hamilton where we stayed at the comfortable Botanical Motel. We enjoyed an evening reception at the renowned Hamilton Art Gallery, one of the state’s finest, and were treated to a viewing and talk by the Director, Daniel McOwan. We saw works by the 18th-century English artist, Paul Sandby, as well as other interesting paintings, ceramics, glass and silver *objets d’art.*

Those who were quick off the mark the following morning had time to stroll around the Hamilton Botanic Gardens, surely one of the state’s most picturesque and well designed gardens.

The next property visited was Toolang homestead east of Coleraine, where we were greeted with warmth and generous hospitality by the present owner Mrs Fleur Gibbs. In this elegant Italianate style stone house we admired well chosen artworks and tasteful furniture. The surrounding lawns and gardens complemented the house and were visible from every window.

We continued onto Mount Rouse where we had a panoramic view of the countryside. Timothy Hubbard, a heritage conservation consultant, gave us an interesting talk on the factors relevant to the siting of Western District homesteads by the early settlers.

Our last stop was at Devon Park a property settled by Silas Harding in the 1880s. We had an informative introduction by the present owner, Mrs Susan Clarke, on the history of the property. The house was an imposing bluestone structure and the interior welcoming and homely. It was with great reluctance that we boarded the bus for a three hour journey back to Melbourne.

The Western District experience had been a truly memorable one, thanks to a number of generous property owners and to the careful and sensitive planning of Jane Morris and others of the Friends’ Committee.
DESIGNS ON THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION – A PROJECT BETWEEN TJC AND RMIT
Lisa Arrowsmith

The Johnston Collection has been engaged in a project with final year Textile Design students from RMIT. The students have been invited to design and develop a prototype of a product that could potentially be sold in our retail area.

PICTURED ABOVE | Sarah Strickland with her Garden in a Teacup

Twenty-five students visited Fairhall in May and have been developing their projects since, inspired by patterns and objects in the Collection. As you might expect, the objects from which they took inspiration were many and varied, from the patterns on the kitchen tiles to the ever popular Victorian toilet! Products include bookmarks, wheat bags, tea cup planters and scarves.

PICTURED ABOVE | ‘Posh Dog’ design for a scarf

Guides and volunteers from TJC will be working on the stand, informing visitors all about the museum. The students will also be there, discussing their project and their studies.

Design:Made:Trade promises to be an opportunity for The Johnston Collection to increase our brand awareness to a design-savvy, youthful, vibrant demographic. Other exhibitors at the exhibition include jewellery and homewares designers, lighting designers and product and textile designers among others.

The show is trade only on Thursday and Friday and open to the general public on the weekend, which we expect to be very busy, with thousands of visitors coming through.

We hope many of you will come and visit too!

see website for more information:

We gratefully acknowledge the support of The Friends of The Johnston Collection towards the production and distribution of Fairhall
THE GARDEN OF IDEAS
Richard Aitken’s journey to find the voices and images behind the making of gardens
Barbara Summerbell

Behind every exhibition there is an inspiration which feeds an idea. For gardening historian Richard Aitken, inspiration for researching the narratives behind the historical design of gardens arose from a fascination “with the original voices and images which emerge out of primary sources. I am as happy in a ruined garden as in a restored landscape.” This fascination is evident in his current exhibition in The Johnston Collection Gallery, The Garden of Ideas, which is part of the Australian Garden History Society’s touring exhibition.

Richard, who trained as an architect, complemented his primary degree with a Masters degree in History and Philosophy of Science. He also, like the current Director of The Johnston Collection, Louis Le Vaillant and previous Director, the late Nina Stanton, attended the highly regarded Attingham Summer School in the United Kingdom. He drew on all of these theoretical and practical strands of study in curating The Garden of Ideas.

Both the exhibition and the accompanying lecture series look at gardens and garden-making through art, architecture and literature. Richard concentrates on the Georgian and Regency aspects of garden design, demonstrating how they influenced the ideas which formed Australian gardens in his series of talks held in conjunction with the exhibition. It is here that inspirations coincide. For the benefactor of The Johnston Collection, William Johnston, the ideal eras in decorative art were the Georgian and Regency periods. His inspiration for a career in the decorative arts grew from the gift of a small Georgian period Minton tea cup decorated with pink and blue flowers.

The Garden of Ideas coincides with the Fairhall tour, Fair Hall to Glad Parlour, which explores the symbolism of flowers and foliage on porcelain, furniture, glass, and in paintings and engravings within The Johnston Collection.

However, there is another source of inspiration for Richard within the Collection. Some years ago he became fascinated by the oil on canvas painting of Alva House, Scotland, the seat of J.R. Johnstone Esq. Attributed to Nasymth, (circa 1830) this painting was often used by William Johnston to imply a narrative of his own family through the family surname, although the spelling is different. The original owner of the property was Lord Alva who sold it to J R Johnstone in 1775.

Whilst Alva House is now demolished, Richard Aitken has been researching the painting. He has discovered that landscape gardener and designer Charles Smith, who arrived in Kyneton, Victoria, from Scotland in the 1850s, Smith, who specialised in the utilisation of hothouses, had a connection with both Alva House and the home of Australia’s first governor-general, Lord Hopetoun, Hopetoun House in South Queensferry, 20 km from Edinburgh. Richard will discuss the artist, the owner of the property and the purchaser of the painting in a talk* which uncovers not only the rich heritage of Scottish gardening and painting but the role of an emigrant gardener within the history of Australian landscaping.

* Nasmyth, Alva and Mr Johnstone with Richard Aitken. Thursday 11 October.
ORNAMENTATION

Acanthus
The stylised leaves of this plant are the most widely used plant forms in European ornament. Acanthus leaves were popular with both Greeks and Romans on capitals in architecture, and for decorative purposes. The Roman version is more realistic than the Greek and Byzantine, which was stiffer and more formal. The leaves are symmetrical in Baroque decoration, while in Rococo they were generally twisted to one side, in keeping with the asymmetry typical of the Rococo style.

Pictured above
ENGLAND
mirror, circa 1755
pine and gesso, glass
2000 x 1000 mm
The Johnston Collection (A0751-1989)

Fleur-de-Lis
The fleur-de-lis is a stylised emblem of a French lily widely used as ornamentation in heraldry and the decorative arts. It consists of three petals, the centre one is upright and the other two curve right and left away from it, but joined by a band towards the base. This emblem has become important due to its association with the French Royal Arms. There is a legend regarding the Frankish King Clovis. (466-511 CE). He was the first barbarian king to become a Roman Catholic and his kingdom dominated much of Western Europe. At his baptism the lily, which is a sign of purity, was sent from heaven in the shape of a dove descending, symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

Festoon
Loops of flowers and fruit bound together with ribbons and leaves were common in Classical Roman ornamentation on friezes of temples. It became popular for interiors and on furniture in the 17th century and was used frequently by Gibbons. The Neoclassical style saw it presented in a lighter form on furniture, and was very fashionable as decoration on ceilings in the dining room. It was also used as decoration on silver and porcelain.

Pictured above
WEDGWOOD, Etruria Works, (manufacturer)
Staffordshire, England, est. 1759
wine ewer, (Sacred to Bacchus), June or September 1871
stoneware (black basalt)
The Johnston Collection (A0181-1989)

RECOMMENDED READING
Edmund de Waal, The Hare with Amber Eyes: A Hidden Inheritance, Chatto and Windus, 2010

When the renowned English potter, Edmund de Waal inherits a collection of 264 Japanese netsuke, he is determined to find out more about them. Netsuke are miniature carvings in wood and ivory of animals, plants and people, no larger than a matchbox and used as kimono sash toggles.

The collection of netsuke becomes a catalyst for de Waal’s inquiry into his family’s history. The netsuke were bought in Paris in the 1870s by de Waal’s relative, Charles Ephrussi. He was a member of the wealthy and respected Jewish banking family, originally from Odessa, that settled in Vienna. Charles gives the netsuke as a wedding present to his cousin living in Vienna, and this is where they stay and survive during Hitler’s regime of anti-Semitism and World War II. De Waal travels the world to stand in the buildings his forebears once owned.
This is a fascinating family history told through the collection of Japanese carvings.

Also recommended:
Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, *Mrs Delany and her Circle*, Yale University Press, 2009

OBJECT FROM THE COLLECTION
Anne Bell

The embroidery by Margerette Spottiswood that featured in the exhibition *Oh Do Grow Up...* and was the cover page in the last edition of *Fairhall*, is also displayed in *Fairhall* during the current tour.

Styrene’s *Sentimental Journey* falls under the genre of Sentimentalism which exemplified an emotive perception of and response to people and situations, ranging from melancholy to optimism. For example, Yorick discovers he left Dover, without a passport. There is a danger he will be thrown into the Bastille which he convinces himself will be akin to home confinement because he can purchase food, pen, ink and paper while incarcerated. However, the sight of a caged starling leads him to contemplate the misery of captivity, so he decides to try and get a passport through a French acquaintance, a duke at the court in Versailles. By the end of the 18th century this literary genre was falling out of favour.

Dorothy Morgan, guest curator of the house tour *Fair Hall to Glad Parlour: The Flower, Its Beauty & Meaning in Art & Ornament* also writes about this embroidery:

The flowers in the embroidery are interesting from several points of view. The figures, animals and lemon tree are largely to scale. However, the two birds, the butterfly and the flowers are larger than one might expect. The pansy, primrose, daisy and clover are represented in a manner often found in old herbals and even in medieval tapestries, growing vertically out of the ground, occupying a circular or oval space with spread leaves filling the bottom half and the flower heads (and sometimes buds) describing the arc of the top of the oval. The complete clumps of the pansy, primrose and daisy are shown, while only the clover flowers peep above the bottom of the composition. By contrast the much larger carnation is shown as a single flower head on its stem lying almost horizontally on the grass, almost as if plucked from its bush or a bouquet and flung carelessly on the ground.

PICTURED ABOVE
Margerette Spottiswood
England, 18th century
untitled (scene from Laurence Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey*), 1796
silk, silk thread
signed and dated ‘Margerette Spottiswood, Age 14, 1796’
The Johnston Collection (A1011-1989)

It was worked by Spottiswood when she was 14 years old in 1796. In the bottom right-hand corner she references Lawrence Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey* published in 1795. It is reasonable to suggest that she had read his account of a gentleman, named Yorick, travelling through France and Italy, because her sampler portrays a scene from the book: Maria dressed in white, is sitting under a tree, playing her pipe with her pet goat next to her. (Actually, when the encounter with Yorick occurs, the goat has died and been replaced by Sylvio, the dog but I think we can allow Margerette some artistic licence.) Close by are Yorick’s chaise with the postillion astride the left horse and his resourceful manservant, La Fleur. However, Yorick walks with Maria and the dog the short distance to Moulins where her widowed mother lives.
Why this difference? One possible answer might be that the first four were common field or hedgerow flowers that might be found growing, as in this example, in many parts of the countryside. The carnation, however, was one of the popular ‘florist’ flowers of the 18th century. The term ‘florist’ was originally used as early as the 17th century to describe plantsmen who grew and bred plants for the beauty of their flowers rather than simply for their medicinal, culinary or other useful properties - it was only towards the end of the 19th century that the word took on the meaning we understand today. Thus Margerette may have known carnations as highly bred and therefore prized flowers to be admired, picked and displayed, whereas the other simpler flowers were literally part of the landscape.

This embroidery was probably purchased as a design printed onto its silk ground. However, whether designed commercially or by Margerette herself it is entirely possible that the choice of flowers was deliberate and considered. Every flower had a particular meaning which everyone understood, so even complex and subtle messages could be conveyed in the particular arrangement of flowers in a bouquet or painting. A pansy meant ‘you occupy my thoughts, think of me’. The primrose signified modest worth, silent love, early youth and ‘I cannot live without you’. The daisy could have a number of meanings depending on variety and colour: if white it means innocence, loyal love and purity, however this particular flower, with its touches of red or dark pink appears to be a single field daisy signifying ‘I will think of it’. Again the meaning of clover depends on its colour: purple for providence, red for industry, while a four leaf clover signifies ‘be mine’.

The five flower heads embroidered by Spottiswood appear to be white, even allowing for some fading of the original colours, and thus signify ‘I promise’ or ‘think of me’. Generally carnations indicated pure and deep love, pride and beauty, or fascination, although again each colour also had its own significance, the pink of this particular bloom sending the message ‘I’ll never forget you’.

So perhaps there is a hidden message in this embroidery. Margerette may be saying ‘I’ll never forget you, I cannot live without you, think of me’.

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**FLORA SYMBOLICA: THE MEANING OF FLOWERS**

Christopher Bell

O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm,
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

William Blake, *Songs of Experience*, 1794

In 1974, Kenneth Clark wrote that ‘the average man had become progressively less able to recognise the subjects or understanding the meaning of works of art of the past’. What was required, he continued, was a guide which ‘will tell him the meaning of subject which every amateur would have recognised from the middle ages down to the late 18th century’ The meaning of specific flowers whether in literature or art, including porcelain, would have been clear to educated people in the 19th century. By the 20th century, the reason why an artist introduced flowers into paintings would have seemed mere decoration without a guide to explain the symbolism.

Many floral symbols go back as far as the Romans. Myrtle, which featured in a recent wedding bouquet, signified purity as well as love. Pliny recorded that Romans and Sabines laid down their arms under a myrtle, and then purified themselves with its boughs. Orange blossom, mostly artificial, found in many a 1930s bridal head-dress and bouquet, signified chastity, a rather old-fashioned concept in the 21st century. Everyone knows that the rose, the mystical flower, signifies love, and hence the cliché of giving red roses on Valentine’s Day. It is also a symbol for the Virgin Mary in Christian mythology - the red rose also symbolises martyrdom, and the white purity. The rose is sacred to Venus, and is her attribute in Renaissance and later art.

Some of the attributes of flowers are obvious – magnificence for the magnolia, cheerfulness for the crocus, modesty for the violet, oblivion for the oriental poppy – but others less so. The tuberose could mean dangerous pleasure to the Victorians, and basil, hatred; foxgloves for insincerity.

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2 ibid
clematis for artifice, and the wallflower meant fidelity in misfortune. Young women who failed to find a dancing partner at 18th and 19th century balls and hence doomed to stay beside their chaperones were known as wallflowers.

Carnations, particularly red ones, once signified a betrothal. Today one would hesitate to offer a bunch of carnations as a gift, so déclassé has the flower become in the 21st century.

Kate Greenaway (1846-1901) illustrated a language of flowers, with over 700 examples. This was republished in London in 1978, an indication that an interest in flowers and their meanings continued into the 20th century. The 19th century saw a revival in the use of floral subjects in poetry by writers who have slowly faded, like Mary Howitt, into the past.

The Victorians also published descriptions of flowers required for composing symbolic bouquets. A posy of plum-blossom, sweet pea, convolvulus and forget-me-not sent to a young woman meant ‘Keep your promise to meet me tonight. Do not forget’. A bouquet to symbolise ‘To love is a pleasure, a happiness which intoxicates’ required 14 components:

- Dianthus: Pure love
- Ivy: Joy
- Sweet sultan: Happiness
- Vine leaf: Intoxication
- Pink: Cessation of love
- Lucerne: Cessation of life
- Wheat ear: A purchase

Considering the amount of sentiment and knowledge required to compose and commission such a flowery tribute, it is perhaps not surprising that today’s bouquets are composed for appearance rather than significance. As Kenneth Clark wrote in 1974, all that matters is form and colour.

**MONNOYER’S FLOWER PAINTING**

**Julia Armour**

This still life, painted around 1700, is thought to be of the school of Jean Baptiste Monnoyer. Monnoyer was born in 1634 in Lille, France but he went to Antwerp where he studied the Dutch still life tradition of painting. He also worked on the decorations of various royal palaces including Versailles and the Louvre, and was invited to England by the Duke of Montagu to help decorate Montagu House, Hampton Court, Kensington Palace and Windsor Castle. The Duke of Montagu remained his principal patron and many of his works are still to be found at Broughton House, Northamptonshire in England.

We now take for granted an arrangement of tulips, narcissus, carnations and peony flowers, but in the 17th century it was a sign of wealth and opulence. The artist would not have been able to afford a vase of flowers like this and in addition, these flowers would not have been in bloom at the same time. He would have sketched in minute detail each flower at its prime and then painted an imaginary group.

The central axis of this painting extends from the red peony at the bottom to the striped tulip at the top. The arrangement is symmetrical and balanced. Look at the size of the vase in comparison with the height and the weight of the flowers. In real life the vase would topple over. The dark background also accentuates the flowers.

The tulip was introduced into Western Europe from Turkey in the second half of the 16th century. The tulipmania of 1636 is regarded as the first great speculative crisis of modern capitalism, whereby one tulip bulb was worth as much as the cost of a house! Tulips thus became symbols of foolish and covetous behaviour. Peony roses are known for their large and showy blooms, so symbolise voluptuousness, and also because of their short life span, transience.

Here the artist has conquered time as real flowers will wither and die, but painted flowers will last forever.
References:

CHANDPARA
Helen Raftis

Chandpara - a most attractive, substantial and productive property, located in easy travelling distance of Melbourne - ideally suited to those in search of a gracious, spacious and comfortable country home with significant productive capacity, being equally suited to beef cattle, woolgrowing, fat lambs or horses. It features a gracious 2 story brick and weatherboard homestead with 7 bedrooms, large drawing room, dining room, morning room and office, kitchen, in ground swimming pool and tennis court, all substantially renovated and redecorated.

Pictured above
Chandpara, 2011
(photograph courtesy of owner)

Such was the description of Chandpara, which attracted the late William Johnston when it was offered for sale. Thus in 1977, Mr Johnston acquired his place in the country not far from Melbourne at Tylden near Woodend. There, he could enjoy himself as the gentleman in residence and continue to run the 800 acre property in the manner of an English Country Estate for stud cattle, as had been planned and developed by Arnold Caddy from 1913 on.

Arnold Caddy (1866-1948) during his career spent time as a surgeon in Calcutta. Rather than returning to England, and having married an Australian girl, he left the medical profession, preferring the life of a gentleman farmer breeding Redpoll cattle at Tylden. He chose the country well - slightly undulating, ranging from black creek flats to rich volcanic rises, being constantly watered by the Milking Yard creek and a water race from the Campaspe River. In 1912 Arnold Caddy took up residence with his family in a hotel at Riddells Creek, and from there he travelled each day in a pony and trap to supervise the skilled Italian tradesmen employed in the building of the homestead which was completed in 1913.

Over the years, with its continual development, the property took on a park-like appearance enhanced by its scattered variety of timbers of eucalypts, acacias, and shelter belts of pine and cypress trees, poplars and willows. The homestead too was surrounded by 3.5 acres of magnificent well established gardens of English and native trees, shrubs and lawns. This may have been Chandpara’s most endearing feature for Johnston, where it is said, he spent many enjoyable hours working on its improvement and keeping the garden in shape. Yet, the English and Indian connection of the Caddy family would have also appealed to Johnston, but perhaps it may have simply been the name Chandpara, which is an Urdu word for ‘Silver Home.’

Chandpara continues to operate as a stud, but rather than Redpoll cattle the present owners breed Southdown sheep. Fortunately its inherent character as a gentleman’s residence still remains to this day much the same as it was during the time of the Caddy family.

MY COLLECTION:
MY TINY TEACUPS
Gabby Walters

As soon as I was old enough to notice, I was drawn by the contents of my grandmother’s special treasure cabinet in the drawing room. I would pour over the contents and long to touch them. I was particularly fascinated by two very old Crown Derby miniature cups and saucers that sat in the centre of the cabinet. As a treat I would be permitted to have a little cup of tea and drink out of them. Thus began my search for fine miniature cups and saucers and an addiction to Earl Grey tea.

My search has led me all over the world and it’s so enjoyable to pair exploring a new city with scanning the inner recesses of cabinets in antique
shops looking for good quality miniatures. I have become adept at the rapid detailed scanning of cabinets.

My main source of miniatures has been England. I believe that travelling porcelain salesmen used to take miniature tea sets on the road as a demonstration of the larger stock. It always gives me a thrill when I suddenly spot a beautiful cup and saucer. I then have to casually admit interest in it and then the bargaining process begins. I have collected about 90 quality pieces over about 40 years. Miniatures are always more expensive to buy than the regular cup and saucer because the detail is so much finer.

Collecting china is a bit of a quiet obsession. It's something that can lay dormant for a while until I suddenly spot a tiny piece and the adrenaline and longing kick in. I found a beautiful Royal Worcester hand painted fruits tea set in the Lake District just down the road from Wordsworth's home. As well as the blue and pink Wedgwood designs, I am fortunate to have found a black basalt tea set in miniature. I have many Coalport and Minton designs.

Needless to say my grandmother's treasure cabinet is now mine. My collection has meant that I have had to acquire a couple of treasure cabinets of my own. I think it's important in life to be able to admire beautiful things in order to take us away from the difficulties around us.

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE: Sudden shower over Shin-Ohashi bridge and Atake

Christine Newcombe

Guides who showed visitors through The Johnston Collection when it was rearranged by Akira Isogawa last year would have noticed this Japanese woodblock print placed casually on the library table in the Dressing Room but, like me, may not have had much to say about it. Yet several people who came on my tours recognised the print and piqued my interest in it.

The print is one of a series by Hiroshige called *One Hundred Views of Edo* (an earlier name for Tokyo) which was produced from 1857-59. It is considered to be the undisputed masterpiece of the series. It depicts black clouds bursting into sheets of heavy rain, scattering the huddled people on the bridge spanning the Sumida River. A solitary boatman poles his log raft downstream past the area known as Atake. The print so impressed Vincent van Gogh that he did his own version of it in oil, *The Bridge in the Rain*.

*Ukiyo-e*, or woodblock printing, originated in China but was greatly improved by the Japanese due to the skill of the craftsmen and the use of washi paper, which can absorb colour and withstand repeated printing. The first *ukiyo-e* prints in the 17th century were simple monochrome black, but full colour prints were developed by the mid 18th century.

Making woodblock prints was a collective effort involving drawers, carvers, publishers and printers, supported by a host of skilled craftsmen producing the equipment needed for the process, which is as follows:

- An artist makes a design with brush and ink lines on transparent paper, indicating the required colours.
- Separate woodblocks (made of cherry wood) are carved for each colour, sometimes taking the carver months to complete.
- Coloured ink and glue is applied to a block with a brush.
- The cartoon of the print is applied to the block and a balen (pad) is used to press the paper to the block.
- These steps are repeated until all the colours are applied. The first prints are usually the best.
The word *ukiyo-e* means “pictures of the floating world”. This form of art was created for the contemporary masses and depicted images of urban life and natural scenes that ordinary people could relate to. Many early *ukiyo-e* prints functioned as sex manuals for brides and courtesans, depicting erotic scenes pertaining to the red-light districts of Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto. They were mass produced and regarded as disposable in Japan but were highly collectable in the West. Claude Monet and Frank Lloyd Wright were two notable collectors.

Hiroshige (1797–1858) is regarded as one of the great landscape artists due to his unique style of intimate, small scale works of famous places which were often inspired by his own travels. He was famous for his unusual perspectives, seasonal allusions and striking colours. Hiroshige started life as a low-ranked Samurai, an hereditary retainer of the shogun. In particular, he was an official within the fire fighting organization whose duty it was to protect Edo Castle from fire. His duties gave him time to draw and study art. According to legend, Hiroshige was inspired to become an artist by Hokusai, his contemporary, whose image of the Great Wave is one of the most famous graphic images in the world. Eventually, Hiroshige passed on his official occupation to his son and pursued his art. In 1856, Hiroshige retired from the world and became a Buddhist monk. This was the same year that he began his

**One Hundred Views of Edo.** It was published posthumously and was immensely popular. He died aged sixty-two during the great Edo cholera epidemic, and is now regarded as the last great *ukiyo-e* artist.

**STAFFORDSHIRE STORY:**
**PASTILLE BURNERS**

The Industrial Revolution in England caused a migration of people into the big cities in search of better wages and better working conditions. For the working class often this resulted in overcrowding in their housing conditions. There was poor sanitation and as you could imagine, smells could be appalling.

Pastille burners were a way of combating these odours by burning pastilles of aromatic substances, which emitted sweet scented perfume into the room. They were made of porcelain or silver for the upper classes and by the late 18th – early 19th century, pottery burners were bought by the middle and lower classes. They were modelled as cottages with a removable thatched roof, tollhouses, dovecotes decorated with flowers and by the 1830s the cottages had open windows so they became night lights as well. By 1840 designs for pastille burners included Chinese temples, Swiss cottages and turreted castles, all of which appealed to the Victorian taste. Pastille burners remained popular for all classes until 1870 when improvements to sanitary conditions were made. In The Johnston Collection there are several burners in the shape of cottages and turreted castles made of pottery.

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*Pictured above|
Utagawa (Ando) HIROSHIGE
Japan
Sudden Shower Over Shin-ohashi Bridge and Atake from the series '100 Views of Edo', 1857/59
woodcut print on paper
The Johnston Collection (A0833-1989)*

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*Pictured above|
Dudson (manufacturer)
England
Pastille Burner (in the shape of a dovecote)
circa 1820–1835
earthenware, glazed
The Johnston Collection (A0867-1989)
THE ART OF DINING:
Part One
Anne Glynn

These days we have a fascination with food and wine, reflected in events such as the annual Melbourne Food & Wine Festival. This series will look at the different styles of dining and their evolution over the centuries.

Part 1
During the Middle Ages, dining was the great diversion of life, and your position at the meal determined your status and demonstrated the social hierarchy.

Feasts were as much about the display of wealth as they were about the appreciation of food. Silver was regarded as too expensive to be placed on the table and used, but rather was displayed on a court cupboard/buffet for all the guests to admire. The number of shelves that you were allowed on your cupboard determined your status. For example, ‘five shelves for a high ranking duke, four for a lower duke, three for a nobleman, two for a knight and one for a mere gentleman.’

The advent of the rectangular trestle table.
Illumination in a French romance, between 1285 and 1291.

Dinner was held in the great hall and the guests sat at trestle tables along one side only. The food served depended on your position in society. ‘Fowl was never to be served to the humblest guests or to the servants’ ‘Lamb and fresh pork were also regarded as appropriate only for the higher classes, while beef and salt meat were good enough for the servants. Everyone however, had fresh vegetables.’ The number of courses one received also showed your status. In 1517 a proclamation decreed that a Cardinal could have nine courses, six for a lord of Parliament and three for a citizen with a yearly income of £500.

In the 16th century there were two meals per day with dinner at 11 am. Every meal began with hand washing and food came in procession. A well laid table would be covered with a number of (preferably) damask tablecloths, removed one by one as the meal progressed. Sometimes a leather sheet would be placed in between so as to prevent soiling the underlying tablecloths.

A large salt would be placed near the lord and most honoured guests, separating them from the others. Rank could be determined depending upon whether one sat ‘above or below the salt’. The drink also reinforced the status of the diners. White wine was considered suitable for ‘brainier upper classes while red was fit for labourers.’ Wine was served from the sideboard by the valet and the goblet was not placed on the table.

The carver served at the top table where the lord and special guests sat. His job was to carve the meat and slice the bread trencher for the medieval lord who was given the ‘upper crust’ only, instead of the hard bottom of the loaf. The remaining trencher was placed on a wooden square, where it prevented the meat juices from seeping through to the tablecloth. At the end of the meal the meat-infused bread was collected and distributed to the poor. The food on the other tables was placed on dishes in the centre of the table, from which one served oneself with one’s own knife and fingers. Spoons were only used for runny sauces and soup. There were no forks.

The quality of entertainment at a feast was important for the prestige of the host and was meant to impress his guests. It could be a spectacle such as a jousting tournament, merriment by court jesters and minstrels, or simply the ritual of serving and carving a piece-de-resistance for the main course. These could be watched by non-dining spectators.

References

Roy Strong, Feast: A History of Grand Eating, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003 (p.82)

RECENT EVENTS:
An Evening at Sotheby’s, March 2011

PICTURED ABOVE | Vanessa Kennedy, Jennifer Gibson (Sotheby’s)
Georgia Hutchinson

PICTURED ABOVE | Barbara Browne and Jayne Simonson

PICTURED ABOVE | Greg Herman and Bruce Trethowan

Morning tea at the home of Bill and Judith Davis, May 2011

PICTURED ABOVE | Roslyn Wells, Judith Davis, Sue O’Flynn

PICTURED ABOVE | Vicky Garrisson and Marlene Crowther

PICTURED ABOVE | Liz Anderson, Pamela Gates, Dani Balmford
Tour of the Western District, April 2011

PICTURED ABOVE
Peter Walsh, Jane Morris, Ewen McLarty

PICTURED ABOVE
Hugh Ratten, Diana Dougall, Robert Thomson

PICTURED ABOVE
Louis Le Vaillant and Daniel McOwan (Director, Hamilton Art Gallery)

PICTURED ABOVE
Donald Hossack, Joan Hossack, Ken Barnes

PICTURED ABOVE
Ian Bult and Anne Bult

PICTURED ABOVE
Lunch and talk by Mrs Susan Clark at Devon Par
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Lawyer – Lawson, Hughes, Peter Walsh

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