

TRENTON POTTERIES

Newsletter of the
Potteries of Trenton Society



Lenox Will Relocate Corporate Headquarters to Bristol Borough, PA

Ellen Denker

On January 17, Lenox Group, Inc. (formerly Department 56) announced that its subsidiary, Lenox, Incorporated, is relocating and consolidating its corporate operations from sites in Lawrenceville, New Jersey and Langhorne, Pennsylvania to an office complex in Bristol Borough, Pennsylvania, where it will become the anchor tenant in the Island View Crossing office complex. The move is expected to play a significant role in the revitalization of Bristol.

This announcement, attended by Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell, marks the conclusion of a search for suitable headquarters sites that began last summer, when Department 56 bought Lenox from Brown-Forman, Lenox's parent since 1983. Department 56 (now Lenox Group, Inc.) is a well known collectible and giftware company headquartered in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, near Minneapolis.

According to Susan Engel, Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer of Lenox Group, Inc., the company worked closely with the Governor's Action Team, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business & Industry, the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority, the Bucks County Economic Development Corporation, the Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce and Preferred Real Estate Investments, Inc. to put the deal together. "We expect to improve

productivity by having our design, product development, administrative, sales and marketing functions under one roof in a first-class facility," said Engel. Lenox will lease 126,000 square feet of office space at the site, which is the former Dial Soap factory. Lenox plans to occupy the site by May 1 of this year.

An article in the January 20 issue of Newark's *Star-Ledger* recounted the issues that left the city of Trenton out of the running. The city and company had looked into building office space on Trenton's waterfront, but Lenox's April 30 deadline to vacate its current Lawrenceville facility ruled out new construction and tax abatements were not assured. At the same time, the \$1.3 million tax incentive package put together by Pennsylvania made the move across the river look easier. According to New Jersey's Assistant Treasurer Dan Levine the state's hands were tied. "We don't like to lose the headquarters of any company, but they presented us with a time frame and limited us to the choices they were willing to explore," he said. "Try as we might, we couldn't make it happen."

Brown-Forman retained ownership of the Lenox Archives after the sale of Lenox Inc. to Department 56 and has given most of the materials to public institutions for preservation. Gorham records, drawings, and a

(Continued on page 3)

Contents

Lenox Will Relocate Corporate Headquarters <i>Ellen Denker</i>	1
Third New Jersey Ceramics Symposium	2
Rockingham Exhibit Catalog Available	3
Ceramics in America 2005 <i>George Miller</i>	4
Photos of the American Standard Plant	5

The Potteries of Trenton Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of Trenton's ceramic past. Officers: President - Patricia Madrigal; Treasurer - Amy Earls; Secretary - Christy Morganstein. Board: Ellen Denker, Richard Hunter, Jay Lewis, Emma Lewis, William Liebeknecht, George Miller, Brenda Springsted., Rebecca White. Newsletter Editor: Patricia Madrigal

Third New Jersey Ceramics Symposium
"Infrastructure: Making Pots in Trenton, 1750-1950"

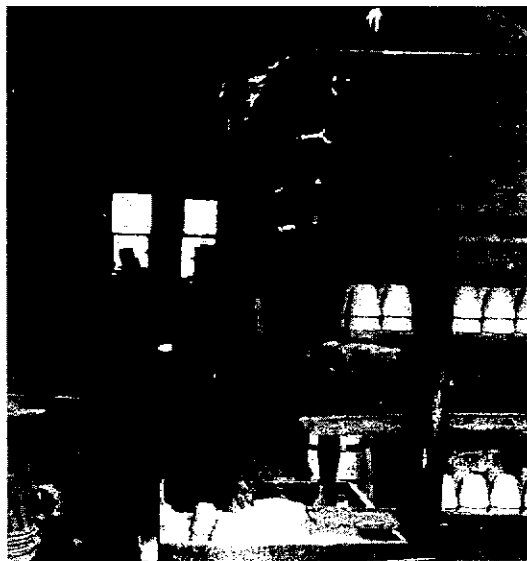
For a third year the Potteries of Trenton Society (POTS) will team with the New Jersey Historical Society (NJHS) to offer a day-long series of lectures on New Jersey's ceramic industry. "Infrastructure: Making Pots in Trenton, 1750-1950" will bring together historians, archaeologists and collectors to discuss the nuts and bolts of making pottery as an industrial product from the early days of James Rhodes' stoneware and John McCully's redware potteries to John Maddock's hotelware and Walter Lenox's fine china dinnerware in the twentieth century. If you ever wondered how your pots were made, this is your opportunity to find out. The program is open to the public.

Potter Mark Shapiro will demonstrate how the early potters produced vessels on the potter's wheel without benefit of the modern machinery in use today. Jean-Pierre Dion, professor at the Université du

Québec à Montréal and author of several publications on Canadian potteries, will present "The Potter's Craft in a Changing Environment, 1800-1920," an overview of the potter's work in preparing and manipulating the clay using the wide variety of machines that were invented in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In his talk, entitled "Movers and Shapers: Trenton's Pottery People, ca. 1750-1950," archaeologist Richard W. Hunter will examine the broad range of people involved in making Trenton's pottery industry successful, from owners and investors to clay diggers and salesmen, and take a look at how the shops were organized to design and produce ware.

After a break for lunch, the symposium will resume in the afternoon when archaeologist William Liebeknecht describes and compares some of the many kilns used in Trenton from the eighteenth century through the twentieth in his talk entitled "All Fired Up: Kilns for All Occasions." Archaeologist Rebecca White will take a look at kiln furniture, the critical large and small pieces that separate and protect ceramic vessels during firing, in her talk "Cones & Rings & Props, Oh My!: Interpreting Trenton's Kiln Furniture." Historian Ellen Denker will finish the program with "In the Clay and Over the Glaze: Decorating Trenton's Pots, 1750-1950," an exploration of the many ways that Trenton's pots were decorated from the incised and impressed designs used by the early stoneware potters to the careful painting and decal decorating that characterize modern dinnerware.

(Continued on page 3)



This illustration from a stereograph card, ca. 1920, shows the firing room in one of Trenton's major potteries, including a large periodic kiln in the background and workers in the foreground preparing and loading saggars for placement in the kiln. Photograph courtesy William Liebeknecht, Hunter Research.

Ceramics Symposium

(Continued from page 2)

The symposium will be held on Saturday, April 8, 2006, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the New Jersey Historical Society, 52 Park Place, Newark. Advance registration is \$20 for members of POTS and NJHS or \$25 for the general public. This includes the potter's demonstration and all lectures, a continental breakfast, and wine reception at the end of the day. For further information and travel directions, visit the websites of these organizations (www.jerseyhistory.org

and www.potteriesoftrenton.society.org) or call POTS president Patricia Madrigal at 609-695-0122. The POTS website includes a registration blank to print and mail. Advance registration will be accepted by mail only with payment by check or money order until April 1st. No telephone registrations can be accepted. Admission without advance registration will be \$30 for all at the door. Please register early as seating is limited.

Lenox Move

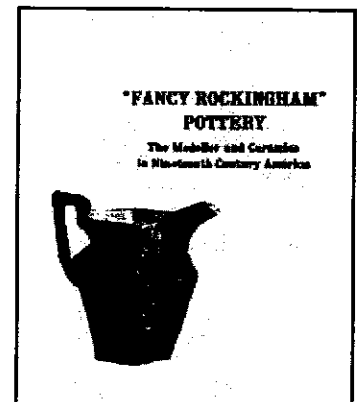
(Continued from page 1)

large design resource library were sent to Providence, Rhode Island, institutions including the John Hay Library at Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design. Both institutions had acquired portions of the Gorham archives previously. Kirk-Stieff materials joined the bulk of the Kirk-Stieff archives at the Maryland Historical Society. Archival materials pertaining to Lenox Crystal, produced in Mt. Pleasant, PA, were given to the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Pittsburgh for the Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center. The vast Lenox China Archives is being acquired by a consortium of New Jersey institutions, including the New Jersey State Museum, the Newark Museum, and Rutgers University Special Collections. The goal throughout the donation process has been to preserve the archival materials in the geographic areas where they were originally produced.

Rockingham Exhibit Catalog Available

Fancy Rockingham" Pottery: The Modeller and Ceramics in Nineteenth-Century America. Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature, University of Richmond Museums. Foreword by Richard Waller, Executive Director, University of Richmond Museums, catalogue by Diana Stradling, Emma Lewis and Richard Waller and essay by William B. Liebeknecht. 2005. 96 pages, 81 illustrations, 74 color plates, softbound. ISBN 0-9713753-5-6. Exhibition dates: September 9, 2004 - June 26, 2005. \$25.00

To order any of this or any other University of Richmond Museums publication, please e-mail: museums@richmond.edu or call (804) 287-6424



Ceramics In America 2005

George Miller

Congratulations to Robert Hunter and the Chipstone Foundation for another finely edited and produced edition of *Ceramics in America 2005*! This is the fifth annual volume in the series and every volume has provided well-researched articles with new insights that are accompanied by superb color photographs by Gavin Ashworth.

Ceramics in America 2005 focuses on salt-glazed stoneware from factory sites located in New York, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey and Ohio. Much of the American salt-glaze stoneware is not marked, and thus it is quite wonderful to see the range of wares from the pottery sites. In addition to the pottery wasters a large number of marked and dated vessels were illustrated from private collections, which goes a long way to help gain a better feeling for the chronology of these wares.

Along with these articles on the American stoneware is an article by Ivor Noël Hume on the sprig-molded brown salt-glaze stoneware of English potter John Bacon. If your research involves stoneware, this is an important volume to add to your library. My favorite article in this issue of *Ceramics in America* is by John Austin on the English designer and potter Palin Thorley. This article combines information from interviews with Mr. Thorley, pictures of pieces designed by him and some of the artwork involved. His career began as an apprenticed painter at Wedgwood's in 1906. He later became art designer and decoration director at the Simpson pottery in Staffordshire. Around 1924 he was hired as the Art Director at Allerton and Sons in Longport,

Staffordshire. Mr. Thorley describes meeting a Mrs. Wooley who was still painting lusterware in 1925 at the age of 86. She had begun working at Allerton's at age eight and had always painted lusterware. When asked who taught her she said, "Old Diana taught me." This suggests that Mrs. Wooley was a "second generation" painter of lusterware that was probably introduced in around 1810. In 1927 Palin Thorley immigrated to the United States where he was employed as an art director by some East Liverpool potteries. John Austin's article provides a rare insight into the way English and American potteries worked and it is a very good read.

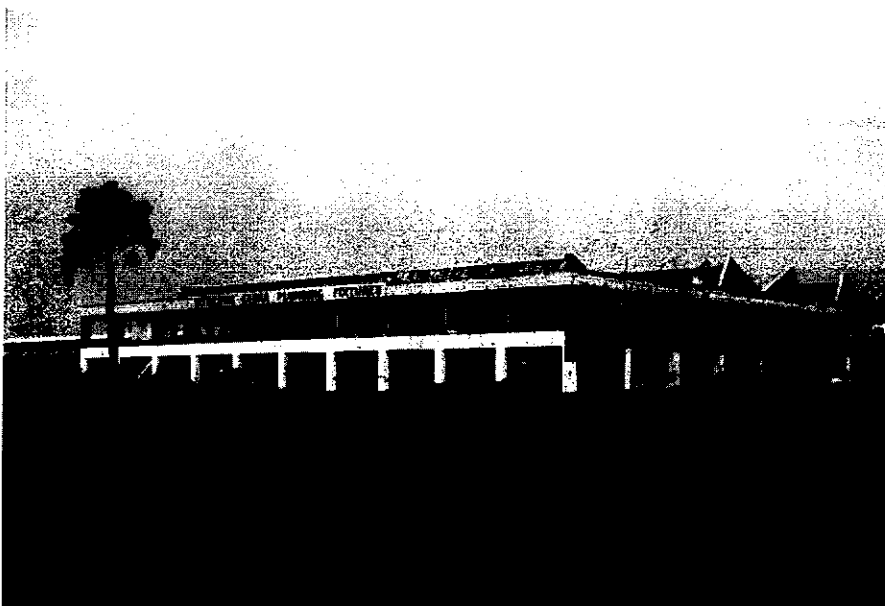
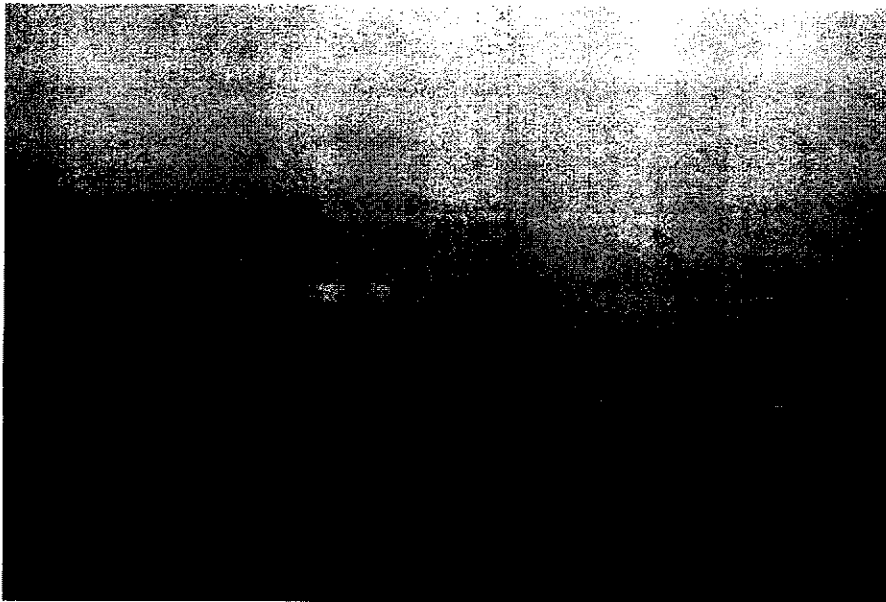
In addition to the above articles the journal contains a number of "New Discoveries" edited by Merry Abbott Outlaw. These are short descriptions of interesting ceramics finds and new data on wares and pattern. This issue has thirteen new discoveries pieces on topics that include delft, printed wares, importer's marks, more stoneware and architectural terra cotta.

Amy C. Earls edits the book review section and compiles an annual bibliography of recent ceramic books, articles and exhibits. Eight books and one exhibit are reviewed in *Ceramics in America 2005*. *Ceramics in America* provides a healthy mix of contributions by archaeologists, curators, collectors and social historians. The journal is published by the Chipstone Foundation and printed by the University Press of New England. The list price is \$60.00, but it can be gotten with a nice discount from amazon.com. You may want to visit www.chipstone.org to see some previous articles online.

Photos of the American Standard Plant

The American Standard Plant in Hamilton Township was built in 1924 by Thomas Maddock's Sons Company. In 1929 the firm was purchased by the Standard Sanitary Manufacturing Company, which later merged with the American Radiator Company, forming the company known as American Standard. The Hamilton plant was closed in 2000 and is currently being converted into office space.

These photos were taken by POTS board member Brenda Springsted in the fall of 2004. "Standard Sanitary Manufacturing Co." can be seen in the top photo, and "Vitreous China Plumbing Fixtures" is visible in the bottom photo.



Phone: 609-695-0122
Fax: 609-695-0147
Email: madrigal@buntenresearch.com

120 W. State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Potteries of Trenton Society

POTS Membership

Membership in the Potteries of Trenton Society is open to all interested in Trenton's pottery industry and the ceramic products manufactured here. We welcome pottery workers, historians, archaeologists and collectors. Your contribution is used to support newsletter, lecture, meeting, and conference costs.

Annual Memberships:

___ Regular (\$20) ___ Couples (\$25) ___ Students (\$15, with ID) ___ Seniors (\$15)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

email _____

Please make your check payable to the Potteries of Trenton Society and mail to:

Potteries of Trenton Society
Amy Earls, Treasurer
P.O. Box 121
Florence, NJ 08518