

Shimming & Shamming

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Preservationist

The in-vogue, 1990s expression for how our dinner looks to us is presentation. This is a definitive word because almost as important as how our food tastes is the aspect of how our food looks. And this is not a new idea. If the visual part of eating were not important, we would dine on some form of dried baby food giving us all the needed ingredients.

In part, presentation is the vessels on which our food and drink are served and the styles change. However, personally, anything tastes good to me if served on a blue and white plate (or cooked by someone else).

At first, we Americans depended on the English pottery produced in Staffordshire. They imitated blue painted Oriental porcelains. Blue keeps its color well in the firing. In the early 1800s someone discovered the process of transferring engraved scenery from books directly to pottery. This was an inexpensive way to decorate table ware.

By the 1840s, other colors were intro-

duced such as black, brown, mulberry, green and even bright red. But after 1842, a copyright law protected book engravings and transfer drawings had to be produced by an artist. But the style was romantic, with a temple or pagoda or castle on a lake with mountains in the background and people in the foreground.

When English potters decided to put transfers on more durable iron stone pottery, they did today's collectors a favor because the iron stone has lasted to our time. However, the Mason iron stone has thicker bases and handles. It is less fragile. Very early ware has a darker blue but a muddier glaze. The mid-18th century brought a clearer glaze.

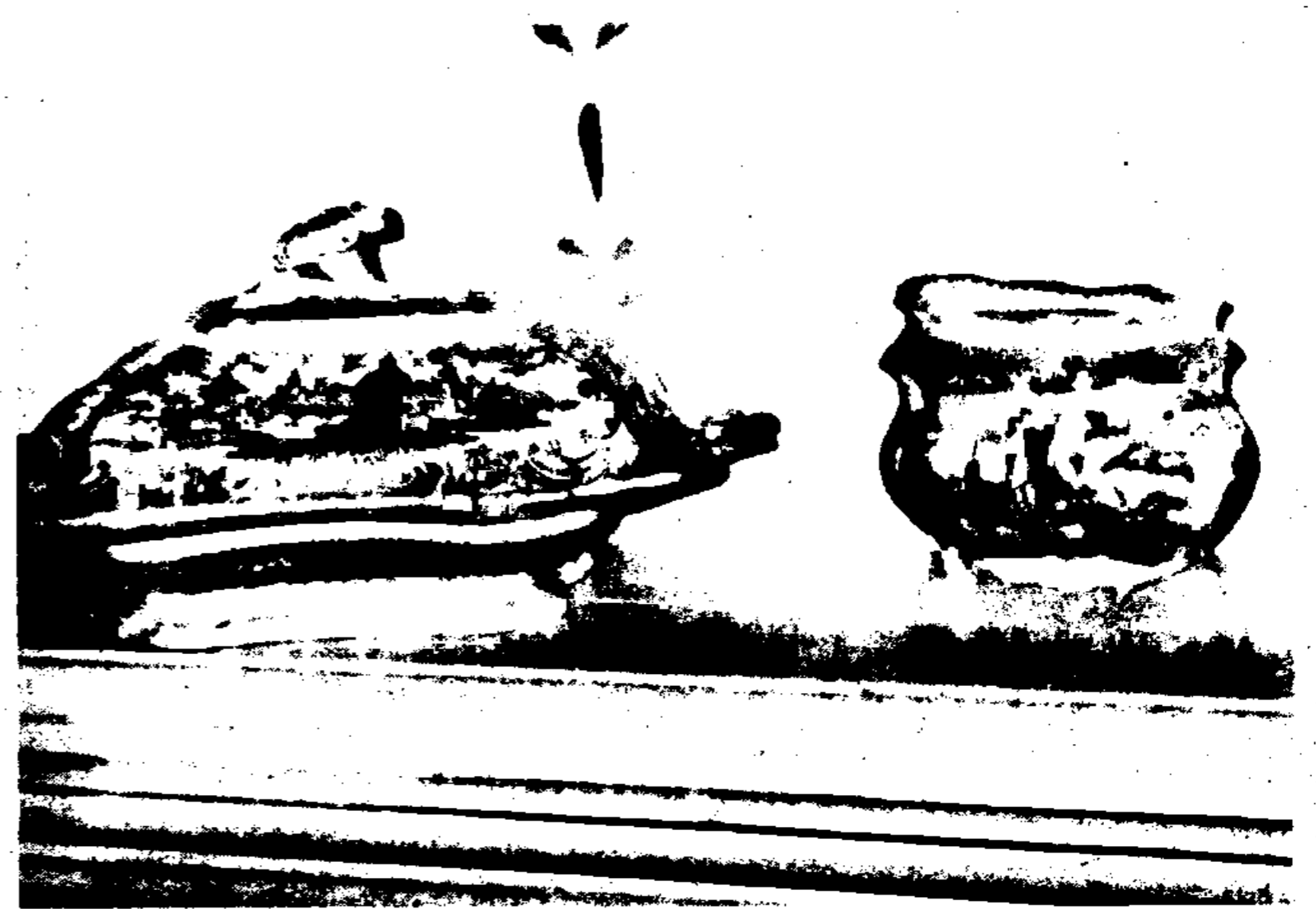
Still, the best part is the color and the second best is the shape. If you have a colorful antique tureen, even canned soup tastes better served from it!

These two pieces, greatly damaged, were purchased at an auction for next to nothing. I couldn't resist the color, rosy red to cranberry, the shapes and the transfer pic-

tures. The sugar bowl, topless but still accommodates a potted plant or dried flowers, has a castle, banner flying, mountain in the background, people in the foreground, cut off at the waist and the whole transfer applied crookedly. The tureen has a scalloped edge with fancy handles and a flower and building trim. Inside the bowl, an elaborate garden scene with two children, two dogs, ornate garden fences and arches with more architecture in the background. The top is similarly printed with a flower handle. "Adams" is pressed into the bottom.

Collectors today must be very knowledgeable because this popular dinnerware is still being produced. If you wish to set a pretty and colorful table wonderful reproductions are available. The ever popular Blue Willow pattern with its romantic story was first printed in 1832. If you wish to acquire antique transfer ware plan to study books on the subject.

Author's Note: I am pleased when I dig up broken blue and white transfer shards from my garden. It is yet another connection with the people who have enjoyed living in this old house.



Antique cranberry transfer printed vessels

Harborfest seeks local talent for 1998 song

Oswego County musicians have the opportunity to get in tune with festgoers by writing the Harborfest Official Song.

This year, the official song will be performed twice before national headliners on the Breitbeck Park Main Stage - once during the festival's Opening Ceremonies on Thursday, July 23 and once prior to the Sunday Closing Concert on June 26. The song may also again be included in Harborfest's broadcast promotions and aired on regional radio stations.

Dave Wolever, who fronts local band Dr. Boogie, won the contest for a third time last year, with "Harborfest '97." His other Official Songs were "Harborfest is Here" and "Come Into The Harbor". Oswego singer/songwriter Peter Banta earned top honors with "Harborfest, All of Our Best." Local singer/songwriter Michael Place, currently with Frostbit Blue, is also a past winner with "Harborfest - Where The Water Never Ends."

The writer (or writers) of Harborfest '98's winning song receive a \$100 honorarium and full program credit. Each entry must meet the following criteria:

1. Maximum length of four minutes
2. The application must include a lead sheet (melody, chord changes, and lyrics)
3. The song may be in any musical style
4. Harbor Festivals, Inc. retains rights to the song selected, including artistic control over all aspects of production and performance.

"We're always honored to hear all the entries, appreciating all the work people put into the song contest," said John FitzGibbons, chair of the festival's volunteer Entertainment Committee. "It seems harder to choose every year. We know we've presented plenty of great Harborfest songs in the past - and will continue to do so in the future."

The deadline for all submissions is April 15. Interested musicians should send materials with name, address, phone number, and song title to: Helene Lawrence; Entertainment Coordinator, Harborfest; 41 Lake St., Oswego, NY 13126. Anyone interested in further information can contact Lawrence at 343-6858.

Harborfest organizers are also looking for a wide range of volunteers to make this

year's event possible. Anyone interested in more information about volunteering - or the event itself may call the Harborfest Office at 343-6858 or visit the Harborfest Port at www.oswego.com. Helping celebrate the City of Oswego's, 150th birthday, Harborfest '98 runs Thursday, July 23 through Sunday, July 26.

Lake Ontario bird festival to be held May 2 and 3

The second annual Lake Ontario Bird Festival Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3, at Mexico Point State Park, will offer birding enthusiasts and nature lovers of all ages an opportunity to experience the sights and sounds of migratory birds along the beautiful shoreline of eastern Lake Ontario.

Each spring tens of thousands of migratory raptors and songbirds fly over the eastern shore of Lake Ontario. As many as 50,000 hawks pass over Derby Hill in the Town of Mexico. In early May, up to 2,500 broadwinged hawks may pass over the hill in a single day.

Mexico Point State Park, the site of the Lake Ontario Bird Festival, is located at Mexico Bay on Lake Ontario, on the Little Salmon River. The festival will feature field trips to nearby Derby Hill and other area birding sites, a wildlife art show and sale, banding demonstrations, wild birds of prey demonstrations, habitat hikes, conservation exhibits and workshops, and a variety of educational activities designed for children.

Promoting the festival are representatives of these groups: Town of Mexico, the Nature Conservancy, Onondaga Audubon Society, Oswego County Department of Promotion and Tourism, the New York Power Authority, Seaway Trail, Inc., New York Sea Grant, and Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park at Flatrock, Mexico.

More information is available by calling Seaway Trail, Inc. at 1-800-SEAWAY-T, or visit the web site at www.co.oswego.ny.us/tourism.



Mistaken identities

The plot revolves around mistaken identities in the ongoing Oswego State University production of *The Robber Bridegroom*. From left are the rich planter (Ben Derby), his daughter (Susan Henses), the title character (Brad Haines) and the stepmother (Susan Biesinger). Performances of the musical will run to March 1 in Tyler Hall's Waterman Theatre. For ticket information, the public may call the box office at 341-2141.

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