

# THE GADROON

Newsletter of the South Carolina Silver Society, Inc.

SUMMER 2019

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## SCSS TO MEET AT McKISSICK MUSEUM IN AUGUST

Members and guests of the South Carolina Silver Society are invited to meet Saturday, August 24, 2019 at the University of South Carolina's McKissick Museum to view a new exhibit of several recently acquired pieces of 19<sup>th</sup> century silver made in South Carolina. Christian Cicimurri will lead those attending through exhibits highlighting three pieces.

The McKissick Museum is located at the eastern end of USC's historic horseshoe. Parking is available streetside on Bull and Pendleton Streets, or on the lower levels of the Pendleton Street Garage. SCSS members that day will have free parking in the gated parking circle on the north side of the building, at the intersection of Bull and Pendleton Streets.

## A NOTE FROM CATHERINE HOLLAN

Catherine Hollan who is working on a new, updated book on South Carolina silversmiths sent the following and asked that it be shared with members of the SCSS:

*I wanted to let you know that the South Carolina Silversmith update is progressing well. I am looking at images for inclusion now and wondered if any of you had anything more I should be aware of that might be included in text or image. Any rare marks, hollowware, tongs, unusual engraving or presentations, medals, etc.*

*I came across the winner of the Charleston Horticultural Society medal that I showed in my talk to the South Carolina Silver Society last year. Someone I would never have connected with South Carolina in general. Silver can be a small world sometimes.*

*If you are sending out a notice to members, could you ask if anyone has something of interest to contact me -- by email is best, or mail is okay, too.*

Catherine Hollan can be reached by email at [cbhollan2@gmail.com](mailto:cbhollan2@gmail.com) or by regular mail at 8109 Touchstone Terrace, McLean, VA 22102.

## RIZZOLI ANNOUNCES NEW BOOK ON GORHAM SILVER

Rizzoli New York has announced a new survey of what the company describes as America's preeminent maker of fine silver and its legacy of exceptional design and innovation in the decorative arts. *Gorham Silver: Designing Brilliance, 1850-1970* was released last spring. Edited by Elizabeth Williams with contributions by Gerald M. Carbone, David L. Barquist, Jeannine Falino, and Amy Miller Dehan, the new book is the latest offering from the publishing house renowned today for high-quality, lavishly illustrated books.

Established in 1831, the Gorham Manufacturing Company adeptly coupled art and industry, rising to become an industry leader of stylistic and technological achievement in America and around the world. It produced public presentation pieces and one-of-a-kind showstoppers for important occasions, as well as tableware for everyday use. Its works trace a narrative arc not only of great design but also of American ambitions. In this volume, insightful essays are accompanied by gorgeous new photography of splendid silver pieces along with a wealth of archival images, design drawings, casting patterns, and company records that reveal a rich heritage of a giant in decorative arts and silver manufacturing. Produced in collaboration with the RISD Museum, which has the world's most significant collection of Gorham silver, this major new book casts new light on more than 120 years of grand aesthetic styles in silver, innovative industrial practices, and American social and cultural norms. The following give more information about the book:

Elizabeth A. Williams is the David and Peggy Rockefeller Curator of Decorative Arts and Design, Rhode Island School of Design Museum.

- Publish Date: April 30, 2019
- Format: Hardcover
- Category: Antiques & Collectibles - Silver, Gold & Other Metals
- Publisher: Rizzoli Electa
- Pages: 288
- US Price: \$75.00
- ISBN: 978-0-8478-6252-8

## **UPDATED WEBSITE FEATURES INFORMATION ON THOUSANDS OF SILVERSMITHS**

William Erik Voss, moderator for the SMP Silver Salon, has updated as of June 2019 his major reference website on American silversmiths, jewelers, watchmakers, and other craftsmen. These pages are a quick reference for collectors and contain information on more than 8,300 individual craftsmen. The site can be found at <http://www.americansilversmiths.org/makers/index.html>

## **RICHLAND COUNTY LIBRARY DIGITIZES OLD LEDGER**

The Richland County Library now has a digitized version of the account ledger for watch repair by P. H. Lachicotte & Co. Philip Howard Lachicotte (1856-1928) was a jeweler whose store was located on Main Street in Columbia. The ledger covers the time period September 1883 to January 1895 and includes watches by Wm. Glaze, Gregg and Hayden, and other familiar names. The ledger can be accessed at

<https://localhistory.richlandlibrary.com/digital/collection/p16817coll11/id/6176/rec/28>

## **WALL STREET JOURNAL PUBLISHES ARTICLE ON HOTEL SILVER**

*The following appeared originally in the Wall Street Journal. It is reprinted here with permission from the SMP Silver Salon Forums. For more information visit the SMP website at <http://smpub.com/ssf>*

There was a nice little column in today's (May 30, 2019) Wall Street Journal about a collector of hotel silver plate. The author was setting up house with her partner and was looking for some accent pieces. A visit to mom resulted in a large platter that was put into service to hold the mail. The glimmer of the tray beckoned her to research the inscriptions and markings on the tray. It turned out to be from an old hotel called the Parker House that her family had frequented years before and had a bit of an illustrious past. Thus began the author's fascination with old hotel silver and the history represented. It was fun to read about someone getting hooked on the shine of old silver and the stories it can tell.

## **SILVER-PLATED PIECES FROM THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY'S FANCIEST HOTELS MAKE FOR USABLE, EVOCATIVE TREASURE**

By: ANNIE P. QUIGLEY

The last time I was home in Maine, I went shopping in my parents' basement. I was moving in with my boyfriend from a New York City rental to a place of our own, and I wanted to bring a few things my mom had been keeping for me.

What I was looking for, in particular, I found in a Rubbermaid bin: a large, silvery oval platter so heavy I had to hold it with both hands.

Even in the basement light it glinted. But there was also something hardy about it, largely unembellished and crosshatched with scars. The tarnish looked like storm clouds rolling in. "I bought that at a tag sale in Boston for two dollars," my mom said, rummaging in a box. I wrapped it up to take with me.

When we moved, I put the platter on our only table and we began tossing mail there. But even under a pile of envelopes it held a certain charge. One night I dumped off the ConEd bills and examined it.

A marking, barely legible on the back, read "Parker House, 1927." A quick Google search led to an excerpt from "Built To Last: 100+ Year Old Hotels East of the Mississippi," by hospitality historian Stanley Turkel. Parker House, opened in 1855, hosted Boston's illustrious Saturday Club, whose members included Emerson and Longfellow. John Wilkes Booth was a guest a week before he

shot Lincoln, wrote Mr. Turkel, adding that Malcolm X waited tables and Ho Chi Minh baked there. And that JFK proposed to Jackie in the hotel restaurant.

Looking at my platter I felt a tingling possibility: Who touched it, ate from it, carried it? I stayed up late, searching for photos online, hoping to spot it, before I gave up and went to bed.

That weekend, I visited Tudor Rose Antiques, an vintage-silver shop in the West Village. Owner Myra Donowitz inspected the platter like a forensic pathologist. "It's silver-plated nickel," she confirmed, peering through a lens. "It's Gorham. They were one of the better makers." Turning it over: "See the cut marks? That's from carving-I would guess meat, because they're deep."

Back at my apartment, I found a 1927 Parker House platter on eBay for \$66. But when I searched "hotel silver," dozens of pieces from the world's grand hotels popped up, most of it silver-plate, on eBay, Etsy and antique retailers' sites: a 104-piece flatware set, each knife and fork inscribed with a cursive "Ritz Carlton"; a covered pot emblazoned with a starburst from the Beverly Hilton in California, perhaps used to keep room service hot, now a suitably theatrical way to serve a side dish at a dinner party. I fell for a diminutive creamer from New York's Waldorf-Astoria, \$25, with a beaked spout that made it resemble a bird ideal for a small spray of flowers.

Another click revealed a cache of serveware from the Carlyle Hotel in New York, for sale by Connecticut liquidators Black Rock Galleries. I called the outfit's founders, Grant Panarese and Christie Spooner. A few years ago, Mr. Panarese said, the Carlyle was consolidating storage and Black Rock was called to take the hotel silver. "Laundry bins full," he said. "They didn't want to use it. It's not in keeping with new trends."

Some buy Carlyle pieces for their utility, Ms. Spooner said. For others, a piece is a memento. That's true for my mom. She and her siblings went to the Parker House as kids for Christmas dinners after their dad died.

I'm in search of another piece of hotel silver, something tarnished and dented. "You can't put a value on this," Ms. Donowitz said of my platter. She told me not to have it replated, adding, "Who knows who made this score mark? Maybe the waiter walked over and JFK said, 'I want that end piece right there.'"

## Q & A

**Q:** Each spring I go to the Carolina Cup steeplechase horse races. For the first time I noticed the beautiful silver trophy awarded to the winner. What do you know about it?

**A:** The owner of the winning horse of the Carolina Cup steeplechase, in addition to a \$75,000 prize purse, receives the coveted Carolina Cup, a two-handled sterling silver trophy created in 1704 by Irish silversmith Alexander Sinclair. According to the National Steeplechase Museum, it is considered to be one of the oldest and most valuable trophies in U. S. sports. Rather than receiving the original cup, the owners of the winning horse have their names engraved on the base of the cup and are given a replica to keep. The original 1704 cup is kept at the National Steeplechase Museum in Camden. The museum also houses the Ambrose Clark Collection of silver racing trophies and the Colonial Cup trophy.

**Q:** The SCSS Newsletter is called "The Gadroon." How did it get its name?

**A:** The name of the newsletter, "The Gadroon," was chosen from several suggested by the late Christine Beiderwell, one of the charter members of the SCSS. The dictionary defines "gadroon" as "a decorative edging on metal, especially silver, or wood, typically formed by inverted flutings."

## SCSS MEMBERS ASKED TO SUBMIT IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

Members are asked to continue to submit ideas for articles or other information that could be included in future issues of *The Gadroon* to Frank White at [frankwhite@bellsouth.net](mailto:frankwhite@bellsouth.net).

### SOUTH CAROLINA SILVER SOCIETY, Inc.

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