

THE GADROON

Newsletter of the South Carolina Silver Society, Inc.

Early Spring 2022

2022 ANNUAL DINNER HELD

Friday, February 11, 2022 found twenty-seven members and guests of the SCSS at Columbia's Palmetto Club for the Silver Society's annual dinner and business meeting. As always, it turned out to be an enjoyable evening and a highlight of the year for SCSS members, especially since due to the COVID-19 pandemic, last year's event had to be canceled. A special tribute was given by Dr. John LeHeup to the late Roger Powell, a noted collector of South Carolina silver and a charter member of the SCSS.

In addition to members bringing silver goblets to use during the dinner, there were many interesting and unique silver items brought for the traditional "show and tell" that the members always enjoy.

During the business meeting the treasurer reported on the society's finances, and the officers who had served during 2021 were reelected.

Mark your calendars now for the 2023 dinner scheduled for Friday, February 10, 2023.

SCSS HOLDS FALL MEETINGS

The SCSS held its first fall meeting of 2021 on Sunday afternoon, October 10th, at the Columbia Museum of Art. Guest speaker for the day was Dr. Tony Chibbaro, author of the book *Merchant Trade Tokens Of South Carolina*. This newly-published work is a complete history of private tokens issued within our state. Dr. Chibbaro shared his wealth of knowledge on the subject. Items from his personal collection along with a power point presentation on silver tokens from South Carolina gave many their first glimpse into this fascinating area of silver.

Dr. Chibbaro's other books include *Images Of America: The Charleston Exposition* and *Images of America: South Carolina's Low Country*.

The Society's second meeting was Sunday afternoon, December 5, 2021 at the Chapel/Meeting Room of Columbia's historic Elmwood Cemetery. Dr. Jack Meyer, foremost authority and historian on the life of William Glaze (1815-1833) and author of the book *William Glaze and the Palmetto Armory*, presented a fascinating program on the life and times of Glaze, a silversmith who, in addition to having his own company, William Glaze & Co. worked in various partnerships to include Veal & Glaze and Glaze & Radcliffe.

Dr. Meyer brought several examples of Glaze's work that included both silver tableware and examples from Glaze's later work with firearms and swords. Several members of the society brought items from their collections to add to the examples to be studied. The meeting adjourned with a quick walk to the Glaze family plot where the silversmith and several members of his family are interred.

LONG AWAITED BOOK ON SOUTH CAROLINA SILVER RECENTLY PUBLISHED

Collectors and others with an interest in South Carolina were delighted with the publication of Catherine Hollan's newest book, *Hidden Treasures: Re-Assessing South Carolina Silversmiths and Related Artisans to 1861*. Released last fall with nearly 1,000 pages with 73 pages of footnotes, this hardbound book updates and enlarges Milby Burton's classic work *South Carolina Silversmiths*. The book has been described as "A great research book with numerous photos of marks, advertising, and

contemporary portraits of the craftsmen. There are hundreds of photos of South Carolina silver items, and hundreds more of their marks. There are numerous new marks with carefully researched attributions. This is the best and most authoritative information available. Old mis-attributions are corrected, carefully researched attributions are made. A stunning book and a must for anyone buying or selling American Coin Silver. *Hidden Treasures* is available through Amazon and eBay at \$100 plus shipping. For a limited time this book can be purchased through the SCSS at a discounted price. Contact Judy Anderson for more information.

LONG-TIME ATLANTA SILVER STORE CLOSES

Many silver lovers and collectors were surprised by the announcement in February that the Beverly Bremer Silver shop in Atlanta would close after forty-seven years. At one point in her life, needing some extra cash, Beverly Hart Bremer tried to sell her set of Reed and Barton's Francis 1st to a pawn shop. When she realized how little she would realize - meltdown value - she thought it possible that others who may be missing a piece of their silver pattern perhaps would be interested in purchasing pieces to complete their sets. With that idea, and starting with her own flatware, she began selling silver at an Atlanta flea market. Thus began a business that expanded to a 3,000 square foot store with twenty employees in Atlanta's Buckhead section. In addition to flatware with more than 1,200 patterns in stock and silver hollowware, she sold jewelry and other gifts. Annual sterling Christmas ornaments were especially popular. Customers came from all walks of life and from all corners of the world, and included the likes of the late comedian Paul Lynde to the Crown Princess of Thailand who, according to one employee, "came to the store in a yellow Fleetwood Cadillac that matched her yellow sheath dress."

Beverly Bremer died in 2017 at the age of eighty-five. Her daughter, Margaret, assumed operation of the silver shop, and it was she who

announced the store's closing. She was quoted as saying "It's time to retire."

Beverly Bremer, in a 2011 interview said about silver, "It's a fantastic product: beautiful, not perishable, and it never goes out of fashion. And, every fifty years or so, it goes up about ten times in value."

In Memoriam **Alfred Leon Crabtree, Jr.**

With sincere sadness *The Gadroon* reports the passing of Alfred "Al" Crabtree on Monday, March 7, 2022. Al was a charter member of the South Carolina Silver Society. Along with his wife, Charlotte, a former president of the SCSS, he was owner of The Silver Vault on Charleston's King Street. Al also operated the Brass and Silver Workshop.

According to the Silver Vault's website, "Al's illustrious career in restoration and conservation began in 1963. His brother-in-law was applying for a job as an electroplater and asked Al, who worked in research and development at Westvaco, to help him prepare for the interview. The two studied all weekend and his brother-in-law landed the job. The event sparked Al's interest in metallurgy, and his hobby developed into a new career conserving and restoring metals. Five years later, Al opened The Brass and Silver Workshop in the garage of his house, largely with skills he developed. In 1985 Al collaborated with the Charleston Museum to develop a conservation plan for their preeminent silver collection. He achieved the designation of Master Silversmith when he trained two apprentices enrolled at De Valschool in the Netherlands. In 2007 and 2011, Historic Charleston Foundation awarded Al the Samuel Gaillard Stoney Conservation Craftsmanship Award. His work is on view at institutions around the country like The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA), the Governor's mansions in South Carolina and Florida, The Citadel, Colonial Williamsburg, The Flagler Museum, and The United States Air Force and Navy. Al can be credited with having fashioned the last piece of Charleston silver to be made in the twentieth century when he fashioned

and a blue-cheese bowl that he presented to the Charleston Museum.

UPCOMING AUCTION TO FEATURE SOUTH CAROLINA SILVER

Brunk Auctions in Asheville has several lots of silver with South Carolina connections scheduled to be sold during its March 26-26, 2022 auction. Lot 649 is a Charleston coin silver tray. Dated circa mid-19th century, the 10 1/4 by 8 inch tray shows the mark for Hayden & Gregg and carries an estimate of \$2,000 to \$4,000. Lot 650 is a coin silver oval form tureen from 1853. While made in New York by William Gale Son & Co., marks show it was retailed by Hayden Brothers & Co. working in Charleston from 1852 to 1855. Its presale estimate is \$2,000 to 3,000. Lot 651 is a Charleston coin silver basket by Gregg, Hayden & Co., silversmiths working in Charleston from 1846 to 1852. The basket carries a presale estimate of \$2,000 to \$4,000.

The sale also will feature many other fine pieces of silver from makers from Baltimore, New Orleans, Georgia, Virginia, and others with Southern connections. In addition, there are lots of flatware and hollowware from both New England and “old” England, some in coin silver and others in and sterling.

DID YOU KNOW?

With the popularity of HBO’s new series, *The Gilded Age*, many people have become interested in the time period when there was a piece of silver for almost everything imaginable. Gorham’s *Chantilly*, introduced in 1895 and said to be America’s most popular silver flatware pattern, once offered 37 different spoons, 28 different forks, 18 different knives, 19 pieces of cutlery, 9 ladles and sifters, 10 different servers, and 14 miscellaneous pieces.

Two items conspicuously absent from the list of *Chantilly* pieces were the terrapin fork and terrapin ladle. This is especially interesting since terrapin was an American obsession well into the early 1900s. At one time several companies, including Campbell’s and Heinz, produced canned

turtle soup. Campbell’s continued with what it labeled “Mock Turtle Soup” until the 1960s. For anyone fortunate enough to have terrapin forks or spoons and wanting to taste the authentic delicacy,

the famed Commander’s Palace in New Orleans will ship its legendary version, on its menu since 1893, nationwide via GoBelly.

President William Howard Taft, who occupied the White House from 1909 to 1913 and later became chief justice of the United States Supreme Court, was so fond of terrapin that he had a special chef charged with making what became known as “Taft Terrapin Soup,” always served piping hot with chilled champagne.

Not only did many silver patterns feature terrapin forks, there were special terrapin bowls, including bowls in sterling silver complete with turtle feet and other applied turtles decorating the handles. A Google search of “sterling terrapin bowls” will reveal several beautiful - and costly - examples.

UPCOMING COLUMBIA AUCTION TO FEATURE ENGLISH AND AMERICAN SILVER

The upcoming Charlton Hall Auction (April 1, 2022) will feature several lots of English and American silver. Of special interest are four lots of Chinese export silver including a ca. 1900 Zee Wo cocktail silver from Shanghai. It carries a presale estimate of \$300-\$500.

SCSS MEMBERS ASKED TO SUBMIT IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

Members are asked to submit ideas for articles or other information that could be included in future issues of *The Gadroon* to Frank White at fewwhite.50@gmail.com.

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