

MALING

COLLECTORS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 27 June 2005

They made it, and we love it

One of the joys of attending a collectors' day is meeting some of the people who made our cherished Maling. Sadly, many others have passed away unrecognised, unrecorded and not knowing what pleasure their "day job" has left for future generations. This newsletter celebrates not merely the pots, but the people who made them (see below).

Again we thank David Johnson of Tyne & Wear for a snippet of Maling history. This advertisement appeared in the Newcastle Evening Chronicle in August 1949. It reads:

Vacancies for boys and girls aged 15 to 17 and a half years for training in the many processes connected with the making and decorating of Pottery.

Applicants are invited to call for an interview, when they will be given an opportunity of seeing how pottery is made, and they will be advised the job for which they are best fitted.

44 hour week. Full pay whilst learning. Holidays with pay. Interesting work. Permanent employment for suitable applicants. Helping export drive. Good pay and conditions.

(Our "Maling Memories" video suggests that perhaps not all employees would have spoken so enthusiastically! The video is still available at £15, and DVDs can be produced if required. Please contact us for a price for the latter.)

Collectors' Day 10

Apologies, but our plans for a collectors' day at the Beamish Museum have been put on hold. The logistical problems of shepherding forty or so members around such a huge site were more than we could hope to cope with, as we would need to meet in one place and eat at another - a considerable distance away.

Proposed date is now Saturday, 10th September at a pub venue in Newcastle. Details to follow.

Kathleen salutes a "great" aunt and paintress

Kathleen Veitch neatly ties together two stories which appeared in the last newsletter. She writes:

In the March issue of the newsletter you may have spotted the article about the "Jazz" tea service which appeared to be a "one-off" and possibly decorated outside the factory. Well, perhaps we can shed some light on this subject.

In 1931, Lily Graham, still only a teenager, applied for a job as a paintress at Malings. To prove her artistic capabilities she was asked to decorate a

cup and saucer in a design of her own choice. It was a simple one, with blue red and orange flowers and green grasses. She got the job and, apart from a short break during the war when she "did her bit", worked at Malings until it ceased production. Her test piece cup and saucer took pride of place on her work bench and currently takes pride of place on our kitchen dresser.

Lily was my maiden aunt, my dad's sister, who lived with us for as long as I can remember. Through her connection

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VACANCIES

**FOR BOYS & GIRLS
AGED 15-17½ YEARS**

FOR TRAINING

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★

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C. T. MALING & SONS LTD.
Potters since 1762
**FORD POTTERY, WALKER ROAD
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, 6**

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with the pottery not only myself but also my sister Brenda and her daughter Kathryn, have all become avid collectors.

It was Kathryn who heard the story first hand from Lily. They were chatting one day when Lily recalled how she had been working away at her bench, in her early days, when a member of the Maling family had stopped to chat and admire her cup and saucer (unfortunately we don't know who this "Maling" person was).

To Lily's amazement they asked her to paint a tea service in the same pattern for their own use. She was, of course, highly honoured and duly carried out the work. The tea service was neither seen nor heard of again until September 2004.

Kathryn was Maling hunting on eBay when she spotted a design that was totally different from "normal" Maling and yet had a familiar look. A quick family conference ensued and we decided that it just had to be "the" tea service. (The strangest coincidence was that only a couple of weeks earlier I had attended my first Maling Collectors Day and had presented Lily's cup and saucer for discussion.) Anyway, Kathryn took charge of the bidding and was eventually successful, although there was strong interest from elsewhere which did test the piggy banks.



The vendor lived in Norfolk so, being the nearest, I drove from Leicester to collect it and the following weekend Brenda and Kathryn came down to admire the purchase and by coincidence, help me celebrate my 60th birthday.

The first thing we did was to look for Lily's mark on the bottom but unfortunately there was no indication at all as to whom had painted it. We came to the conclusion that as these items were not going out as normal production then it would probably not have occurred to Lily to put her mark on it. However, (as can be seen from the photograph) the style and colours of the flowers on both

sets were so similar and so distinctive that we were a hundred per cent certain that we had indeed, found that very special Maling tea service painted by that very special lady. Our only regret was that Lily was not there to see it.

Sadly, she passed away in 2002 at the age of 86 leaving a gap in our family which will never be filled. But at least we can all take comfort in the fact that wherever she is, our Auntie Lily will be delighted to know that "her" tea service has come home.

Lily spent her retirement years living close to my husband and me in Leicester and this gave us a wonderful opportunity to draw on all her knowledge and enjoy her lively company.

And there's one last thing. We are hopeful that this is not the end of the story. It would be nice to know which member of the Maling family commissioned the tea service in the first place. What is its history? Who else owned it and where has it been all these years? Perhaps someone out there can help us?

David adds: *There seems no doubt that the "test" cup and saucer on the left of the photo are an identical pattern to the "Jazz" shape items on the right. What a wonderful find - and story. It was Kathleen who also supplied the photos of paintresses which appeared on page 1 of the last newsletter. Here's another one, and we are pleased to pay tribute to another talented Maling paintress. Lily Graham is in the centre of the front row, holding the book.*



Flowers make a fit

A correspondent writes: Whilst clearing a recently deceased relative's house I found a box containing 9 saucers, 4 plates and 4 tea cups by Maling. The cups carry only the Made for Harrods stamp, but the plates and saucers all carry the factory mark.

They are all marked with the same pattern number, but every piece has a slight difference to the flowers.

My partner who has worked in the high class china industry for 15 years (Wedgwood, Royal Worcester) tells me that this would have added significant production costs meaning that this may have been a 'one off' service or a limited edition.

From looking at your site I believe that the pattern number indicates a date of manufacture of 1920-29. Perhaps you can confirm this, also provide a pattern name and any other information that would be useful.



David adds: As there's a pattern number, it's unlikely that this would have been a one-off. I'm not surprised by the variations in the transfers. The engravers would have produced a large sheet of transfers, of varying sizes. The transferrers would have used their own initiative to apply whatever seemed the best fit. I've seen plenty of "matching sets" of table wares which display these subtle differences when examined closely.

The photo suggests a date of the early 1900s when Maling were importing china "in the white" and decorating it themselves. (From the look, this is almost certainly china, not pottery.) The Harrods connection dates back to at least the 1902 coronation, for which Maling produced marked Harrods souvenirs.

Double troubles

Sometimes questions sit staring me in the face until an impromptu query sets me thinking.

Take this mark, which was e-mailed with the following query: "My attached photos. are of a number 42 vase with black ground. The height is 9". The pattern number is hard to read but appears to be 5231? The paintress mark seems to be a small gold cross.

"I would be grateful for any information on this item, in particular where could I research the shape, pattern and paintress."

Substantially right, but so many points to pursue. Yes, the big impressed numbers represent the pattern shape, so it's a 42 shape vase. The pattern number has either been damaged or hastily painted, but we suspect it's 5223 - "Orchard on black ground".

The "X" would probably be a gilder's mark, so we are left to wonder whether the two dots to the left of the picture are the mark of the paintress. (And why are they there, rather than closer to the pattern number?)

More interestingly, we come to the question of why pieces are "double struck". You may be able to make out a faint smudge

underneath the Cetem castle mark. On a full-size photo, this turns out to be a second mark.

We know that "Cetem" was introduced in 1908, and "Maling" reintroduced in 1924. The two names then appear to have run in tandem into the 1930s. It's not the first time I have seen pieces with two marks, but I've never given the subject much thought before. All suggestions welcome.



Net... and nonsense

It's encouraging to see that eBay now usually boasts over 200 items of Maling for sale at any one time. Of course, this simply proves the vastness of the pottery's output and, it has to be said, not all pieces will suit all collectors.

As a member recently commented: "*I am a newcomer to Maling, my interest being sparked by an auction purchase when I was on holiday in New Zealand about 18 months ago. A lot of what I have seen I do not like, especially some of the lustre ware. But it is so interesting now looking around to see what I can find and being amazed at just how varied the Maling brand is. My particular interest is going to be the white wares of which I have some Frank Cooper jam pots and a jelly mould.*"

Whisper this only amongst yourselves, but your secretary, too, has his preferences. They include: early Maling (honest, robust pots for the working family to eat their meals off); Deco wares (Clarice Cliff, who she? The best Maling

Deco easily stands comparison); and, of course, commemoratives (oh no, he's used the "C" word again!)

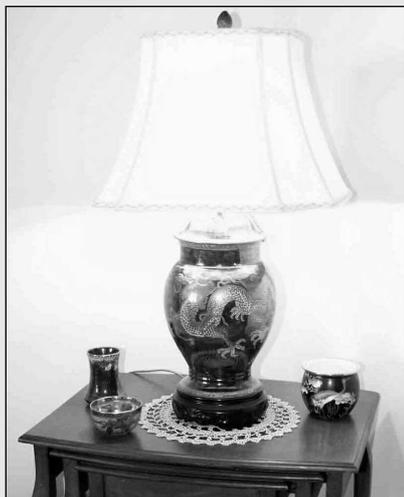
I appear to have digressed, so will return to eBay briefly. It was fascinating to see an "exquisite Maling Japanese scene plate" on offer recently. I am no expert on that part of the world, but I cannot recollect Japan being famed for its camels. Nor for its mosques and minarets. Wouldn't "Egypt" have been a better guess at the pattern?

The correspondent mentioned above also added: "*I love the quiriness of your approach. After all, our hobbies are supposed to be fun, but too often organisation leads to a quenching of lighthearted enjoyment.*"

Well, if we can't get some fun out of our hobby, why are we doing it? And you will generally find that there is more than a grain of truth in my occasionally whimsical musings. - David

Like it? Light it!

We always love to see Maling in use. Michael Goldman writes from Canada to describe the acquisition and restoration of a superb lamp.



"I bought this at an Antique sale in Toronto today. It cost me \$700.00 CAN. 1920's Oriental Dragon pattern, lovely condition. We are going to get it rewired and into use. It apparently came from a mansion in Montreal. Lots of Boulllemier influence in the lustre work.

"Number on base appears to be 128/1142 or 1172". (Which, as I hope we all know, is a "Coronet" number and therefore bears no relation to Maling's standard numbering system - David.) In a subsequent mail Michael adds:

"All the wiring has been replaced, however I have kept the old wiring and plug. It is very brittle, consistent with the plasticiser evaporating over the years. Lampshade was \$100.00, wiring was \$34.00 and you know the cost of the piece.

"We are looking for another one... It does look splendid. A 2" brass riser was fitted to adjust the height of the lampshade and this in time will develop its own patina. I suspect the brass electricals were fitted in Canada, probably by the agents.

"The original brass drawstring switches have been retained as well as the brass screw-in swivel lamp sockets. All in all, a magnificent piece which will give us a great deal of pleasure."

And so it should, Michael.

Missing in action

From time to time we have talked about "missing" pattern numbers and vase shapes. One reason was that, in our youthful and blue-eyed optimism, we hoped to bring out a publication which would update what's already known.

Unfortunately, the money isn't there. The occasional "new" finds appear in the newsletter, but that's about as far as it can go.

However, it may be worth a moment's thought on what is considered "missing". You are, we trust, familiar with the list of patterns published in TMOE and on the website. There are many gaps. But does that mean that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of completely unknown patterns waiting to be found? Probably not.

Take this message from a correspondent: "I collect Maling and have inherited a number of pieces from my grandmother who lived in Newcastle all her life. I checked your pattern numbers and found

my vase was missing - 5369, Kingfisher."

The known list has 5370 as Kingfisher on mauve ground. But a different colour would be sufficient to merit a different number. This example turns out to be blue. Use your knowledge of Maling's background colours to work out how many more "missing" Kingfisher patterns there may be. Quite a few.

Of course, this example is made easier by the fact that the two numbers are consecutive. Would that that were always the case! Identical patterns with different grounds may be separated by a few digits. And we all know Maling's fondness for re-working and reintroducing old patterns. So a description of "Kingfisher" could conceivably appear and reappear almost anywhere in the pattern list.

What we'd really like to know is where the heck are all the patterns in the 4000 range? They surely must exist, but turn up very infrequently. Over to you...

More Hunt history

Sometimes a line of enquiry leads to a dead end. Sometimes it takes on a life of its own and keeps turning up more and more. Again, we have information relating to the Haydon Hunt, whose master was CT Maling. (Not the "grand old man", but his son - 1863 to 1934.)

This may not be to everyone's taste, but it came up at auction recently. It's a horse's hoof mounted in brass and intended as a pen and ink stand. It's engraved: "CT Maling, Esq. Go on, in memory of happy days".



MALING
The Maling Collectors Society
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North Shields
NE30 4YJ

www.maling-pottery.org.uk

Secretary: David Holmes
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