

# Shelley GROUP

JUNE 2015 NO 115



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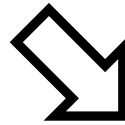
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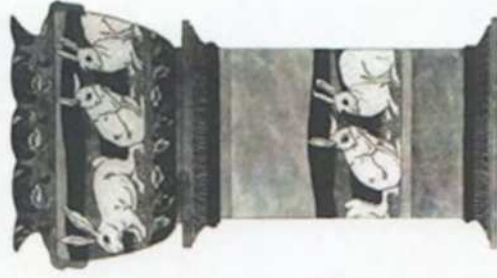
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3226



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# Let's Put Intarsio on A Pedestal!

By Chris Watkins

**No this is not** a quote from Frederick Rhead, nor a proposal for the Club when organising exhibitions, but a wander through some of the largest shapes of Intarsio, travelling with cranes and geese.

**My introduction** to this area was 35 years ago: not long before the book and exhibition were launched. I was driving through a part of North London when my eyes were wrenched into the window of an antique shop I had never seen before. In the middle of the window was an Intarsio stickstand with cranes flying into the sun (pattern number 3155). I went in and bought it for £120, to celebrate the fact that I had recently become a full-time employee! I immediately took it to the Geffrye Museum, where we were working on the exhibition layout. My co-author Harvey said *"Wonderful what they could do with sewage pipes"*! (you can see that comment has stuck). We made a dais for it right at the entrance, and it stopped some visitors in their tracks.



*(Umbrella stands deserve their own article)*  
"Shelley Pottery an exhibition of ceramics by a Staffordshire family of potters at various works, 1774-1966" Geffrye Museum, London, 21 November 1980 -25 January 1981, followed by Bristol, Edinburgh and Stoke-on Trent.

*"Wonderful what they could do with sewage pipes"!*

**That effect on my eyes** was not the first with Intarsio pieces. I was originally a devotee of art deco bone china Shelley, and still remember wandering round an antiques Market in Alexandra Palace in 1976: my eye was strongly drawn to something I had no knowledge of so had to turn over - to find the Wileman backstamp - Intarsio tryg pattern number 3626. Thank you Walter Slater.

**But the attraction** of large Intarsio items such as stick stands, pedestals and so on is not the size - it's the movement. The sweeping shape of jardiniere 3103 is more than complemented by the action of the swirling panels of flowers. And the challenge of placing this on a pedestal is amply achieved by pedestal 3119.

**The next pedestals** we know of had the simple cylindrical shape (3155, 3156, 3166), but here the movement is created by the pattern: cranes flying up to and in front of sun, above water lilies, a design which had been registered in 1898 (RD no 330299) but only used in a very different way (vase with a brown background 3056) before this. The animal theme continued to make the movement: geese walking towards the left (RD no 330400, pedestal 3191) and hares in all directions on a new small pedestal (3192, which I've only seen in the pattern book) which was also done with the geese pattern (3194).

**There are not** clear records of how many such pieces were produced, or for how long, but the number coming up for sale over recent decades has been few.

**Towards the** end of Frederick Rhead's patterns in Intarsio, some different colourways were tried: 3224/5 was in greens like the 3103 had been in blues: 3226 used the cranes like the 3156 and is described in the pattern book as "in greens". Can anyone shed any light?

*With thanks to Les Foley, Robyn & Barry Cox*