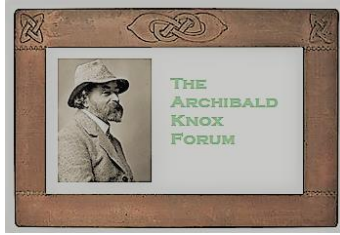


# KNOX



# NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ARCHIBALD KNOX FORUM

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The AK Forum was one year old on 18 January 2018 and the members' only website was launched on that day.

So far we have 47 members, four life members, two sponsorships, and 171 recipients of the newsletter.

Much of the last 3 months has been taken up with the website that contains up to date information about Knox and well over 1,000 images covering all aspects of his life and work.

With that preamble over, and the fact that AK Forum is now open to membership, this is like an inaugural newsletter for a new period of Knox revival.

It is the directors' great joy and privilege to hand over the next part of this newsletter to Dr Stephen A. Martin (the recognized world authority on Archibald Knox and author of the books of that title published in 1995 and 2001)

## **KNOX REVIVED by Dr Stephen A Martin**

It gives me great pleasure to be part of the inaugural edition of the Archibald Knox Forum Newsletter. As is abundantly clear for lovers of the decorative arts, Knox's genius is being more widely recognized both art historically and commercially. His elegant and magically beautiful objects are included in all inventories of great design of the modern period and the auction houses, those barometers of popular desire and opinion, routinely make new records when a significant piece of Knox design comes on the market. That being said, what is more important about the birth of the Archibald Knox Forum is that a genuinely collaborative platform now exists where Knox lovers can communicate and share passion and knowledge.

From my perspective, having been concerned with Knox's life and work for almost thirty years, there are two particular areas that will comprise how Knox can be appreciated going forward. The first is expanding our understanding of his life and the historical context out of which his genius was born. It is a not infrequent experience for me to be contacted by scholars, collectors and students who are researching these various aspects. And not infrequently I send such seekers on to the Isle of Man, the epicenter of present and future Knox scholarship, to do their primary research and put them in touch with others both on and off the island who are deeply versed in the nuances of this complex man's life and spirit. It is my distinct belief that as more and more information comes to light, Knox will emerge ever more clearly both personally and artistically.

The second central area that will further solidify Knox's place in the pantheon of great modern designers is the evolving connoisseurship of his work that is currently taking place. No longer is this connoisseurship parochial,

or narrow; on the contrary, in line with a trend in how tastes are changing in this digital era, the linear is being replaced by a much more inclusive and comparative approach. Art and object are now being appreciated as part of a greater whole and not as eruptions of individual genius in isolated locations. Put more simply, Knox is a stellar example of an artist who married the ancient and the modern to produce the timeless contemporary by virtue of being in the world of art and design and is recognized as extraordinarily important to the larger development of the field.

I have tried to pace this evolution with the publication of my first volume on Knox in 1995 and then with the second, expanded edition, in 2001. In light of what is more known about him and about his art, a yet more greatly expanding volume is required. To that end, I have been working these last few years on a third edition of my book but it has been slow going because I want it to contain as much varied visual material as possible. It will hopefully be published in this year or next with likely about one thousand new images of Knox's work. It is time to see Knox's creative genius in all possible manifestations.

In closing I urge you to support the Archibald Knox Forum, not only to receive updates on the new Knox publication, or to share insights, interests and discoveries with the ever expanding Knox community, but to support the work of Mary and Chris Hobdell who have selflessly and tirelessly committed themselves to maintaining and enriching the legacy of Archibald Knox, that quiet artistic visionary who entralls us all.

Dr. Stephen A. Martin

Ardmore, Pennsylvania

January 2018

### **How does one follow that?**

Three talks, together with the 2014 Olympia film, and an exhibition of 40 pieces by Knox, were given, during January to All Saints' and St. George's Unity Group, Douglas, a group at St Stephen's Church Hall in Sulby and to Mothers' Union at Marown Church. These were all well attended and enthusiastically received.

A drop-in centre event was also held during January.

### **Write up for 0231 pewter tea and coffee set designed by Archibald Knox for Liberty & Co.**

This iconic tea and coffee set is one of the best known of his designs.

Often one finds parts of the set, either a tea set with three pieces including a teapot, sugar bowl and creamer, or four with the hot water jug, or five with the coffee pot or six with the tray.

There are at least two other items in the set – a slop bowl and side plate(s) which also have the model number 0231.

There are also variations to the finish of this set – bright polished smooth pewter, bright polished "dimpled" ("hammered", "planished") pewter, and then, due to patination over the years, the dark oxidized finishes. This darkening can vary in intensity depending upon the composition of the pewter.

Pewter is an alloy of tin (85% to 99%), copper, antimony, bismuth and lead (although lead was removed from the composition of modern pewter in 1974). Copper and antimony act as hardeners.

An embellishment was also added to the design in the form of enamels. On pewter the enamels have to be added in applied panels (usually onto copper) as pewter melts at a much lower temperature than enamel.

There are other differences in addition to the ones mentioned above and these are mentioned and shown below.

Close up of the tea pot, coffee pot and hot water jug show that one type of the model has just metal thumb guards and the other type has wooden thumb guards on top of the metal. This latter would appear to be an “up market” version with this being borne out by the fact that the hinges on this type are more sturdy.

The final difference that I have found is the 0231 tray without the typical Knox patterning near the hand grips. The example shown in images **O** and **P** below is such a tray which was given as a present by Cadogan to F Stanford Elkington on November 7th 1915. Further research into this tray found that the two men were Gerald Cadogan, 6th Earl Cadogan CBE, who was, amongst things, Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel in the service of the Suffolk Volunteer Regiment and Frederick Stanford Elkington who was born in Suffolk, and was also a member of the same regiment and became temporary Major and County Adjutant on 24th September 1917.

If you have any other observations on this set or points you would like to make on any Knox designs and/or pieces please let us know and they can be published in the newsletter. This is a Forum for people to share, discuss and interact with one another through meeting up, via these newsletters, Facebook, Instagram or commenting on the website pages.

Images A to P below show the differences in tea and coffee set 0231 referred to in the text above.

Images A,B and C below show the various pieces of the 0231 model mentioned above:



Tea and coffee set with tray (A)



Slop bowl (B)



Side plate (C)

Above are the 8 elements of model 0231 tea and coffee set known to me.

All are the polished smooth pewter finish.

Below is a set in polished "dimpled" finish (D) and an example of a "dimpled" side plate (E).

I have found no "dimpled" slop bowl example – so far!



Below are two good examples of patinated sugar bowl (F) and creamer (G) from the set.



The set below (H), at the Manx Museum, is decorated with enamel highlights.



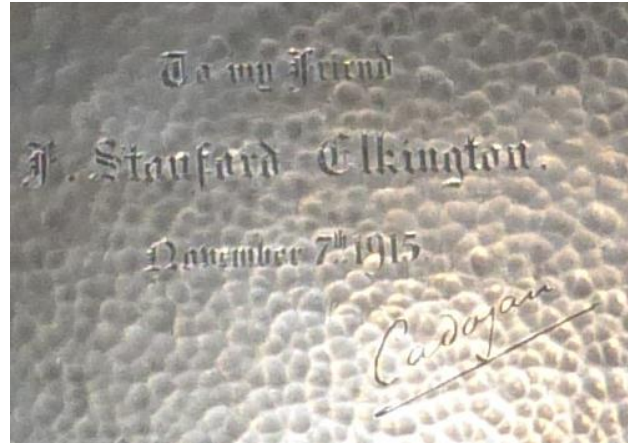
Below are two images showing the “up market” set (I) and a close up of the wooden thumb guards (J).



Below are two images showing close ups of the more robust “up market” hinge (K), (L) and close ups of the standard hinge (M), (N).



Finally, example (images **O** and **P**) given as a present in 1915 by Earl Cadogan to his friend.



**In future newsletters there will be updated news on:**

How the drop-in centre and visits to sites of Knox interest are progressing.

Latest news regarding the new Knox book by Dr. Stephen A Martin which will have over 1,000 new images in it.

Talks about Archibald Knox that will be given on the Isle of Man and, hopefully, further afield.

The progress on research topics and reaction to the new website.

Details regarding new information and images added to the website.

**Your input**

It is important that The Archibald Knox Forum listens to, and responds to, its members and the public to discover what people wish the Forum to be and what topics they would like covered and discussed in the future.

To this end, we would be delighted to receive any ideas, information and suggestions from you and the public in order to make this venture interesting, relevant and, above all, reflect the needs and wishes of everyone.

Our firm belief is that although many people enjoy knowing about Knox - his life, work and legacy needs to be taken to the public as many people's perception is that Knox pieces are too expensive, only appear on "Antiques Roadshow" now and again, and are not for the likes of "ordinary folk." We had that view 10 years ago because much of his work is in museums and private collections. However, The Archibald Knox Forum wants you and the public to see, touch, feel and experience the objects and works that he designed and/or created. We are sure that is what Knox would have wanted.

We have a wonderful cross section of his work, we are custodians of it in our lifetime, we do not "own" it we have possession of it until another person wishes to purchase it and guard it, or until it is passed on to the next generation of admirers and enthusiasts.

If there are Knox places of interest you wish to visit, or you wish to find out more about, please let us know and we will endeavor to answer your questions or arrange for such visits.

We would like to hear from anybody who wishes to help us with any aspect of The Archibald Knox Forum.

**Thank you**

Mary and I would like to thank you for your interest and support over the past year and we look forward to the Knox revival and trying, with you, to make the genius of this man better known and understood throughout the world, as well as on the Isle of Man.



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