

Members Interest
N/A

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee 14 November 2019

Repair and Conservation of Pattern Books of the Shelley Pottery company

Recommendation(s)

1. That the report is noted for information.
2. That the contribution of the family of Ray Reynolds, The Shelley Group U.K., The National Shelley China Club U.S.A. and the Australasian Shelley Collectors Club Inc. to the repair of the company records is noted with thanks by the committee.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Housing and Community Services (Stoke on Trent City Council)

Background

3. The Minton Archive, comprising the records of Minton and Royal Doulton plc was given by the Art Fund to the City in March 2015. The archive contains the records of Doulton and Minton and over 30 other companies that had been taken over by Doulton or by Allied English Potteries, with which it merged in 1971.
4. Shelley Potteries Ltd., originally Wileman & Co., was one of these companies and surviving in the Doulton archive are 35 pattern books which record the company's production from the early part of the twentieth century through to its takeover by Allied English Potteries in 1966.
5. The company produced a wide variety of ware in both china and earthenware and its products have always been sought after by collectors. The Shelley Group, for British and European collectors, the National Shelley China Club U.S.A. and the Australasian Shelley Collectors Club Inc. are all thriving organisations.
6. The Pattern Books provide essential information for the identification and authentication of the company's production. Since the archive was given to the Stoke-on-Trent City Archives, the Shelley Group have added a study day to their annual conference which is held in Stoke-on-Trent City Archives reading room and at which the pattern books are available for free consultation to members.

7. All the pattern books were to some degree in poor condition, from missing spines and damaged covers, through to complete disintegration of the book structure.

8. In 2018, Ray Reynolds, the last Decorating Manager of the company before its takeover, passed away. His family donated £900 to the Archive Service to enable repair of the three last books, which he had been responsible for keeping up to date.

9 The three collectors organisations in the U.K., America and Australasia collectively agreed to fund the conservation of the remaining 32 books. Individuals who had made a notable contribution to the study and collection of Shelley are appropriately acknowledged in books of particular relevance to their specialism. In total a donation of £10,572 was made.

10 The Archive Service's Senior Conservator made a conservation assessment and drew up a repair specification for all the volumes. The work was carried out by Sycamore Bookbinding of Derby.

11 All 36 volumes have been repaired, conserved and rebound. They will be available for inspection by the committee at the meeting. The books are now a pleasure to look at outside as well as inside and their physical integrity and robustness secured for the foreseeable future.

Appendix 1

Equalities implications:

None

Legal implications:

None

Resource and Value for money implications:

The cost of the work was offset by private donation

Risk implications:

None

Climate Change implications:

No significant implications.

Health Impact Assessment screening:

No significant implications.

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