

From Abbeville, South Carolina to the U.S. Capitol: Discovering, and Authenticating, an Historic Treasure Trove in Your (Front) Yard

Themes:

Recognizing: Documenting Local History and National Relevance

Protecting: Restoration and Long-Term Stewardship

This session explores the discovery of the largest-known private collection of Janes, Beebe and Company cast iron garden ornaments still in existence, and the research that led to its authentication. Janes, Beebe and Company is significant as the foundry that cast the dome of the U.S. Capitol building. The 14-foot-tall cast iron fountain in the yard of the Robertson-Hutchinson House, Abbeville, South Carolina is only the fifth extant Janes-Beebe fountain to be found in the United States and shares the distinction, with the Forsyth Park fountain in Savannah, of being the oldest remaining example of the company's decorative fountains.

The grounds of the Robertson-Hutchinson house in Abbeville, South Carolina were landscaped between 1848 and 1861 by Colonel Jehu Foster Marshall. Marshall purchased 12 acres in the middle of the village of Abbeville in late 1847, built a house, and began arranging for the landscaping of the gardens, a process that continued throughout the 1850s. The decorative cast iron he purchased, and which remains on the grounds, includes: Two greyhound dogs, two large urns, a settee (which bears the Janes, Beebe mark), a chair and the bottom halves of two additional chairs, and the basin from an additional smaller fountain. The design of the sculpture on top of the fountain (two distinctive figures with dragon heads, voluptuous female bodies, wings, and entwined mermaid or fish tails) has been traced to the French foundry of J.J. Ducel. Janes, Beebe is known to have sent a representative to the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851, to get ideas and patterns for decorative ironwork, and Ducel exhibited his decorative ironwork there.

The gardens--which were described in a reminiscence: "In all my travels throughout the world, not excepting the famous gardens of Versailles, have I seen anything to equal it" --were planted with specimens purchased from Summers Nursery in Pomaria, South Carolina. Still standing beside the fountain is the redwood tree Marshall planted, now recorded as the oldest and tallest redwood tree in South Carolina (and, possibly, the oldest and tallest east of the Mississippi).

This is a tale of dogged research that travels from the little village of Abbeville in the 1850s to the contentious political seas in Washington, DC in the decade prior to the Civil War to London's Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 to the iron foundry in France that cast the Bartholdi Fountain (U.S. Botanic Garden) to the White House, New York's Central Park, and Cusco, Peru. Along the way, there are: A serendipitous meeting in the streets of Capitol Hill (Washington, DC), a box of unexplored documents, and the stitching together of a family history which ends up connecting Abbeville to Starbucks, the Paris Metro, and the very origins of decorative cast ironwork.

The session is enhanced by archival photos of the fountain (1885 to the present), as well as photos documenting the restoration process; images from the 1855/58 catalogs of Janes, Beebe and Company and the 1850 catalog of the French foundry of J.J. Ducel; copies of historical documents relating to the ironwork and gardens; and a bibliography of sources.

The presenter is Ann Hutchinson Waigand, whose great-grandmother purchased the house (with cast iron garden ornaments) from the estate of J. Foster Marshall and whose mother is the fourth generation of her family to live in the house. The presentation will also discuss the long-term stewardship of the house and grounds by the Robertson family and its descendants as well as the house's tradition of passing down through the female line (a tradition that will continue through Waigand and her sister, Jean Robertson Hutchinson, and on to Waigand's two daughters).

Ann Hutchinson Waigand is an independent researcher, editor, and freelance writer who contributed a column to the New York Times Syndicate for five years. She has worked as a developmental editor with The Teaching Company, coaching professors in presenting recorded courses, and spent 20 years in the field of educational and cultural tourism, working with a diverse range of clients including the Smithsonian Institution and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

May Robertson Baskin Hutchinson will participate in the question-and-answer session. The fourth generation of her family to live on the property in Abbeville (she sleeps in the bedroom in which she was born), she is responsible for the restoration of the house and fountain. She served on the Executive Council of the Confederation of South Carolina Historical Societies and as Vice Chairman on the Commission to Implement Abbeville's Historic Properties Protection Ordinance at its inception; co-founded HATS, the Historic Abbeville Tour Service; wrote the Fitness Walk Tour of Historic Abbeville; was Project Manager for two grants to restore the McGowan-Barksdale-Bundy House; was curator for the Abbeville Historical Society's headquarters for nine years; originated and led Erskine College's/Abbeville's Elderhostel (1987-94) focusing on Abbeville County history and Victorian decorative arts; and is Curator for the Abbeville County Museum.

Research sources include:

Carol Grissom, Smithsonian expert and author of *Zinc Sculpture in America, 1850-1950*

Susan Brizzolara Wojcik, art historian and author of *Thomas U. Walter and Iron in the United States Capitol: An Alliance of Architecture, Engineering, and Industry*

Barbara Israel, author of *Antique Garden Ornament: Two Centuries of American Taste*

Barbara Wolanin, Curator of the U.S. Capitol

William Creech, National Archives

Lydia Tedrick, Office of the Curator of the White House

Margot Gayle (founder, Friends of Cast Iron Architecture) Papers, University of Maryland Special Collections

- c. 1858 Janes, Beebe and Company catalog, New York Public Library
- c. 1855 Janes, Beebe and Company catalog, Athenaeum of Philadelphia
- 1870 Janes, Kirtland & Co. catalog (reprinted 1971 by Pyne Press)
- c. 1850 catalog of J.J. Ducel, Réseau international de la fonte d'art (RIFA)
- c. 1892 catalog of Val d'Osne, Athenaeum of Philadelphia
- Dominique Perchet, RIFA















1971



1987



1992



2011































No. 10.

JAMES BEESE & Co., 356 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.



No. 43.



No. 44.



No. 45.



No. 47.



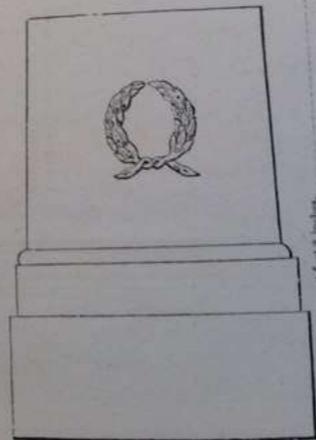
No. 46.



No. 48.



No. 57.



No. 58.



No. 59.

JANES, BEEBE & CO.,
NO. 356 BROADWAY, NEW YORK,
MANUFACTURERS OF
ORNAMENTAL IRON WORK,

Hot Air and Hot Water Furnaces, and Beebe's Kitchen Ranges.



(SKETCH OF INTERIOR OF STORE 356 BROADWAY.)

THEY KEEP ALSO A COMPLETE ASSORTMENT OF

HOUSE FURNISHING GOODS,

FINE CUTLERY; SILVER PLATED SPOONS, FORKS, TRAYS AND TEA SETS,

JAPANNED WARE; COOKING UTENSILS AND KITCHEN FURNITURE.

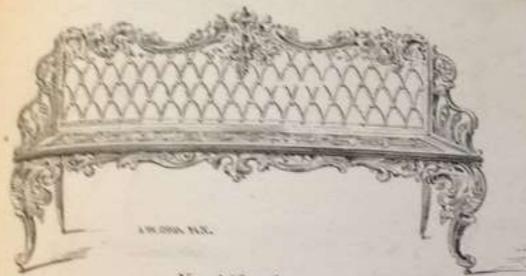
356 BROADWAY, New York.



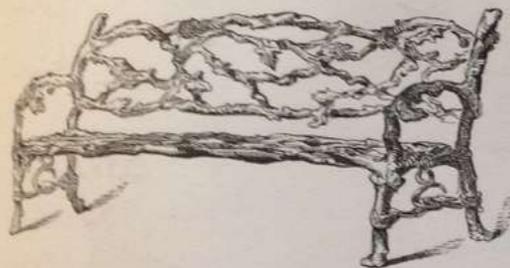








No. 140. 2 sizes.



No. 141.



No. 142.



No. 143.



No. 144.







JANES, BEEBE & CO.,

In addition to their Ornamental Department are prepared to execute orders at their

FOUNDRY,

CORNER OF READE, CENTRE AND ELM STREETS,

NEW YORK,

FOR ALL DESCRIPTIONS OF

BUILDING IRON WORK,

ROOFS, GIRDERS, COLUMNS,

LINTELS, SILLS, CORNICES,

RAILINGS, VERANDAHS,

SKY-LIGHTS, STAIRS, &c.

AND FOR THE ERECTION OF

BUILDINGS ENTIRELY OF IRON,

FOR EVIDENCE OF THEIR ABILITY IN THIS LINE THEY REFER TO THEIR WORK NOW IN PROGRESS
ON THE

Capitol Extension at Washington,

And to the Congressional Library Room, the Ceilings of the New Senate Chamber and House of
Representatives, and other work already completed on the Public Buildings
at the National Capitol.









SOCIÉTÉ ANONYME DES HAUTS-FOURNEAUX & FONDERIES
DU
VAL D'OSNE

Boulevards Voltaire, 58, et Richard-Lenoir, 97, à PARIS

CAPITAL RÉALISÉ : 2,500,000 FRANCS

ANCIENNES MAISONS RÉUNIES

J.-P.-V. ANDRÉ, Fondateur	1833 à 1855
BARBEZAT et C ^{ie}	1855 à 1867
FOURMENT, HOUILLE et C ^{ie}	1867 à 1870
J.-J. DUCEL	1810 à 1878

CRÉATEURS de l'Industrie de la Fonte d'Art.

ADMINISTRATEUR-DÉLÉGUÉ : M. Ch. HANOTEAU,  

Récompenses obtenues : DIPLOMES D'HONNEUR, GRANDS PRIX, MÉDAILLES D'OR

A TOUTES LES EXPOSITIONS UNIVERSELLES

FONTES D'ART

POUR

DÉCORATION DE JARDINS : STATUES, FONTAINES, VASES, GRILLES, KIOSQUES, ETC., ETC.
DÉCORATION DE BATIMENTS : BALCONS, BALUSTRADES, CHEMINÉES, CANDÉLABRES, ETC., ETC.
DÉCORATION DE PLACES PUBLIQUES : VASQUES, CANDÉLABRES, ETC., ETC.
DÉCORATION D'ÉGLISES : AUTELS, CHAIRES, LUTRINS, CHRISTES, VIÈRGES, ETC., ETC.

PARIS

IMPRIMERIE SERINGE FRÈRES ET NOAILLES

NOAILLES SUCCESSEUR

2, Place du Caire

1892







Vente de fer

J. J. Ducloux
Vases & Lampes à Paris

Plaque 57

1434



1435



1436



1437



1438



1439



Ducloux & Co.

Ducloux & Co.













1971



1987



1992



2011