

DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD

NEWSLETTER

No.6

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NORTHFIELDS STUDIO	LITTLE WINCH	231 LEAGRAVE HIGH STREET
TRING, HERTS.	CHIPPERFIELD	LUTON
	KINGS LANGLEY	LU4 ONA
	HERTS.	

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CALENDAR

Saturday 27th September RAKU FIRING to be held at Ray Phipps, 23 Hall Park, Berkhamsted. Kiln building starts at 3 p.m. Kiln firing at 5 p.m., reaching temperature at 7 p.m. (hopefully). Food and drink (alcohol?) will be welcome.

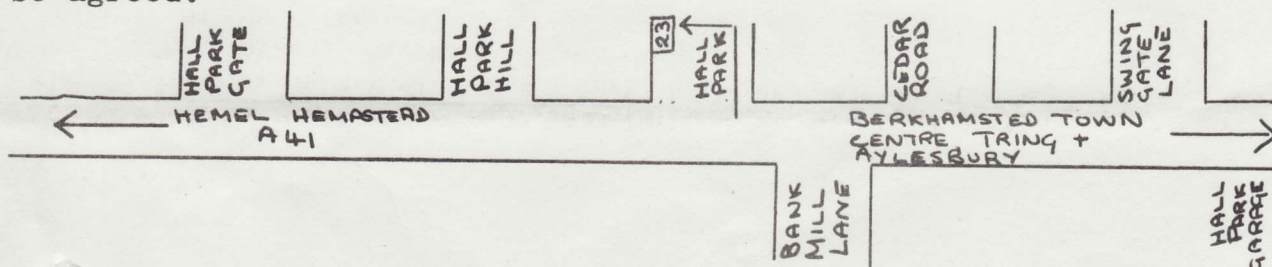
Friday 10th October ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at Henderson Hall, High Street, Abbots Langley at 7.30 p.m. Frank Hamer has been invited to speak.

Wednesday 22nd October TOOLMAKING An exhibition and discussion with demonstration by an expert in this field. Members are requested to bring their own tools. Venue to be fixed. Members who participated in the Roman project are invited to bring their photographs, records and pots to this meeting.

Friday 28th November SOUNDS SLIDES AND READINGS meeting to be held in the Barnet area. Members invited to contribute readings etc. as they wish.

Thursday 4th December INFORMAL EVENING at 18 The Horseshoe, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead. Exchange of ideas. Summer visits. Bring any slides of interest (they don't have to be related to pottery). Coffee will be available.

CHRISTMAS PARTY to be held at The Goat, St. Albans. Date is to be agreed.



Introduce a new member to the Guild.

Name .....	To: Hon. Secretary
Address .....	Dacorum & Chiltern
Postcode .....	Potters Guild
Profession .....	Northfields Studio
	Pitstone Hill
	Tring, Herts.

I enclose remittance of £2.00



FROM THE SECRETARIES DESK.

We commence our second season of activity with a paid-up membership of 203. Now, we have only three months to achieve our aim of a membership of 1000 within the first twelve months since the inaugural meeting. We know such a potential exists in our catchment area.

Until our full membership is reached an event in any particular locality is only likely to take place once each season. Members are reminded that since we formed, events have been as widely spread as Mentmore, Rickmansworth, St. Albans, Dunstable, Aldenham, Tring, Beaconsfield and Codicote. One at least of these events we trust was in reasonable travelling distance of a large proportion of our members.

We are fortunate that we do not have such an acute problem of gathering frequently as the National Organisations have. The Welsh and Scottish potters have such a problem, so do the Devon potters. Never-the-less it has proved to be difficult especially for our teacher members who lead such a hectic life at the end of the Summer Term. Many have regretted missing these meetings.

A larger membership in your locality will mean more events locally organised, besides giving realisation to our primary aim of increasing the awareness of crafts values in our area and thereby not only improving the amenity of the area for the community in general but our own position as craftsmen within it.

We hope our members will continue to be patient with us during our stages of development. Remember that our Guild is based entirely on part-time voluntary workers. The work-load has been spread little by little through sub-committees but then problems of communication can occur in a widely scattered fraternity. We hope to increase active participation so that every member will ultimately be making a small contribution to the running of the Guild. The first stage in this development will be the information that the new Membership Secretary, Jennifer Bourne will be asking for, about yourself. There will be an experiment for the post-Christmas season in which members in localities where there are strong groups of potters, (St. Albans, Rickmansworth and Harrow, Chesham and Amersham, Beaconsfield and Barnet are examples) will be invited to organise an event on behalf of the Guild. Another way in which we are seeking to obtain active participation from members of the Guild is the "at home" informal gatherings to discuss or demonstrate a particular aspect of pottery. The Chairman is setting the ball rolling at Berkhamsted with his raku firing. Let us have your discussion, demonstration or informal talk suggestion that you would like to see take place in your home school or college. (How many people could you accommodate?)

M.F.

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**\*agm 10th oct.\***



## **eds bit.**

### DACORUM AND CHILTERN APATHY GUILD

Your response to our requests for help in the last newsletter has been overwhelming. I have been inundated with replies. The post man has been straining under the loads of postal answers. My, how reluctant you are to become involved. Verily I say unto you the response has been pathetic. 200 people receive newsletters. How many read them? I have had four offers of help. Are any of you hiding behind your morning papers sympathetic to this worthy cause? Perhaps we will get a true measure of interest at the A.G.M. Where have all the people gone? It seems that the majority of Guild events are being organised and supported by the same nucleus of interested folk. The survey and programme committees need YOUR help. Contact the Secretary..... Is the apathy going to persist?????????

### BRICKMAKING AND FLOWERPOTTING

Jeff Hawkins of Pitstone Green Farm (and Museum) has offered the Guild use of a stable (at present shoulder-deep in junk, cobwebs and dust) for conversion to a brickmaking and flowerpotting display/museum. It is hoped that eventually a complete working area will be established incorporating as many relevant items as space will allow. The area will be used on open days (hopefully by members of the Guild) for demonstration purposes. MF has offered to loan his genuine flowerpotters wheel. Unfortunately it has been sadly neglected but is ripe for restoration. The Guild will need other items with which to furnish this area. If you can help in any way please contact your friendly neighbourhood committee member or Murray Fieldhouse.

ED.

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## ***pgf museum openday.***

This interesting and informative exhibition drew a steady stream of people throughout the day. Those who came were treated to some marvellous demonstrations of traditional crafts. These included spinning, lace-making, wood-turning, blacksmithing and the Guild's contribution to the days events, brickmaking and flowerpot throwing using local clays.

Mary Ann Spilman and Maureen Benjamin used boxmoulds made by Derek Tattersall and Ed Broadbridge to make a variety of bricks. They were using clay from the Ley Hill pit near Chesham, which was used to make bricks for the Roman Kiln Project.

Derek, Ed and Freda Earl, threw a variety of flower pots to fit any nook or cranny, using both the Ley Hill clay and some London clay. The Ley Hill clay proved to be very short for throwing but it was possible to throw quite well with the London clay which is much finer and plastic. Two kick wheels were used. Both the clay demonstrations attracted much attention and prompted interested inquiry.

I was particularly interested and pleased to see the wood-turning demonstration. The lathe was of the treadle variety. I am reliably informed that it is called a 'chair bodgers lathe' and was powered by a spring branch positioned above the frame of the lathe.

The farm itself is a beautiful place and a unique museum, overflowing as it does with old farm machinery and incorporating a working mill. There are fully equipped workshops for both a wheelwright and a smith.



Ray Phipps.

Has chaired the steering committee for the past twelve months. He is interested in all things artful and agricultural. Ray started to pot at Scunthorpe Technical College in 1964 and also learnt under Murray Fieldhouse at Dacorum College. He grows grape vines but is yet to be rewarded with grapes and wine. He is Industrial Relations and Personnel Director of Electrolux Limited, President of a local St. Johns Ambulance Brigade and a local J.P. (not deterred even by rates defaulters) He is married with three children and has recently moved house where he will once more have room to establish his own pottery. (See 'Who's Who'.)

Murray Fieldhouse.

After winning the Second World War, the nobility of a corrupt, secure, conformist, pedestrian occupation (in which he might be expected to do would not coincide with what he believed) did not appeal. He became a drop-out and went on walk-about with a rucksack of philosophical books. Thought he might like an Oxford scholarship but Oxford did not concur, so he attended 1240 short conferences and courses at the Pendley Centre of Informal Education for 13 years apart from a year, when he lived on mint tea and wholemeal porridge on a Cornish moor. Finally the Master told him "You will never make a potter. You would do better to take up pottery teaching") He ignored this advice for a while and made thousands of pots which he sold to London Department Stores.

In 1951 he wrote a pottery book and in 1952 he gave copies to Hamada, Cardew and Leach at Dartington. There was no noticeable improvement in their work!

In 1954 he founded and edited Pottery Quarterly and in 1959 a sister journal 'Crafts Review'. 1960 and the print unions silenced marginal literature for two years until offset inplant printing emerged. Pottery Quarterly survived but Crafts Review did not.

In 1961 unable to remember his lines in the Shakespeare Festival and finding it difficult to converse at table with the 500th. management course, without alcoholic stimulus, even at breakfast, he retired from community life and lived on his compost-grown vegetables. His Masters advice caught up with him and he found himself free-lance teaching in state educational institutions, until the administrators began to outnumber the workers by 5-1. He retired again in 1973, with an obsessional dislike of bureaucrats which remains unabated, as their cancerous growth threatens to stifle the life-force of a dispirited nation.

He has served on numerous local, national and international crafts committees, but not for long because he does not understand compromise and tends to betray them when they lose sight of the initial vision that prompted them.

ANON.

Mary-Ann Spilman.

Much of Mary-Anns pottery background has developed directly from Murrays enthusiastic part-time classes which she first joined ten years ago, having been earlier influenced by visits to Godfed May's pottery shop in Padstow and by seeing potters in Normandy throwing vast terra-cotta flowerpots. Mary-Ann is attracted by the possibility of achieving both satisfying three-dimensional form and reasonably utilitarian pots.

At present she finds part-time primary teaching fits in nicely with pottery interests. Working in one-day recreational classes at St. Albans (Herts, college of Art & Design) is a fine prescription for losing weight!



Ruth Karnac.

Feeling a need somewhat late in life, to broaden her interests Ruth Karnac joined painting and pottery classes at Classio College, Watford and immediately became severely addicted to pottery. After a couple of years she took "A" level painting and also started potting on a small scale at home. She obtained a job teaching pottery as occupational therapy at Napsbury Hospital. Gradually she realised that the relationship with the patients is of prime importance and the pottery, though undoubtedly therapeutic in itself is mostly a medium through which to make contact with people. Ruth began to want to pursue pottery in greater depth and was accepted for the two-year full-time course at Harrow - a most valuable experience. After this she worked at home for a year gaining experience - mainly by ruining a great many pots! Ruth converted her garage to a pottery and two months later was offered a teaching job at Hatch End College of Further Education. So now she is in her third year happily potting and teaching pottery. She agrees that she would never have got this far without her husband's unfailing encouragement and support... he has never been an M.C.P.

Did You Come Across Any Interesting Craft Activities  
Whilst On Holiday.?

Miles out in the middle of Wales, a long way from any other habitation, I came across a craftsman making hand-made furniture and gift-ware of an extremely high standard. He comes from this area, having been brought up in Potten End. After being swamped by people in Norfolk where he initially set-up his workshop, he bought a derelict farm in Wales in the hope that he would be able to work on larger pieces without interruption. However, there is no hope of this, for in the past year 27,000 visitors have called at this remote spot.

The craftsman concerned is Peter Gardiner and his workshop and home is at Cefn Coch. Peter and his wife have established a lovely craft-centre. Not only does he sell his own craft wares but others craft articles. He tells me that he would very much like to see a potter establish himself at Cefn Coch as the presence of another craftsman with another craft would ease the pressure on him. The shop would provide a marvellous outlet for the potters own activities. Anyone intersted should write to Peter at Cefn Coch, Near Llanfair Caereinion, Welshpool, Powys.

R.P.



Special Events Calendar.

## September.

1-29. Kimpton Art and Craft Centre. An exhibition of Historical Discoveries from Local Places. Shown as part of a general display. Tues. Sat. 1100 to 1500. Sun. 1400 to 1700. Free.

1-27. Kettering. Westfield Museum, West Street. Romano-British Pottery. Wed. and Fri. 1000 to 2000. Weekdays 1000 to 1700.

20, 27. Northampton. Abington Park Museum Courtyard. Art and Craft October. 4, 11. Market. 1000 to 1800. Details from College of Art.

## October.

2-6. Buckinghamshire Pottery and Sculpture Society Annual Exhibition. Amersham Town Hall. 1000 to 1800.

Advertisements and Announcements.

500 glass pottery slides  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$  in twelve drawer wooden cabinet plus wooden carrying case. No longer required by retired lecturer. Price. £25. Murray Fieldhouse, Northfield Studio, Tring, Herts.

A comprehensive range of pottery materials, tools etc. are kept in stock at Clayglaze, 1, High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts.

June Waite is prepared to buy clay in bulk. Is anyone interested in joining in with this scheme. One suggestion is to buy stoneware clay from Greys of Kettering, but type/s of clay can be arranged. Phone June on Hemel 3768.

One Day Pottery Seminar. to be held in Rickmansworth on Saturday 11th of October. Lecturers - Harry Fraser and Barry Gabbott. Fee £5.40 incl. V.A.T. For further details please write to Clayglaze. 1, High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts.

Digswell Arts Trust. is keen to receive applications from artists and craftsmen of any discipline in real need of living and working space. Contact the Administrator, Bill Parkinson at Gordon Maynard Gallery, 22, Parkway, Welwyn Garden City.

Y.P.A.C.T. Young People's Art Centre Trust. 1A, Spicer Street, St. Albans. (Tel. 63899) has a large studio to offer to three potters one thrower and two hand-builders - interested in establishing at the Arts Centre a professional practice. The studio is provided rent free, with water, light and heat laid on. There will also be an electricity allowance. A modest teaching commitment, equivalent to one working day per week, but spread over the week, will be required within the studio. Work surfaces and storage will be provided. The centre will contribute three old wheels and a small kiln. There is a kiln room inside and there are plans to build another outside. The studio should be in operation by January with potters moving in at the end of 1975. Elsewhere on the premises there will be several other practising artists and craftsmen as well as a theatre, and the situation might be described as multi-media in outlook. Contact the Director.

P.Q. My spies have informed me that, specially for all you budding ware enthusiasts, the next edition will contain a definitive article on Samian ware, by Philip Simpson - the first British Potter to produce ware equal in quality to that produced by the Romans at LEZOUX.

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**don't forget it.**