

Bisque headed fairy
doll. 1930.



DCPG NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1990

Hope everyone enjoyed the Open Day. Thankyou very much for being so cooperative and not kicking and screaming too much when I asked for a write -up! This year one or two non-members and non potters reviewed the event. The first of these reviews is in this issue. There are more to come.

Anyone with games, competitions, cartoons (particularly cartoons!) or puzzles for the next Bumper Fun Issue of the Newsletter, please let me have them by DECEMBER 14th.

Pauline O'Dell (0727-869383)
35 Pondfield Crescent, St.Albans, Herts. AL4 9PE.

GUILD EVENTS

Guild Christmas Party

Friday 14 December at Northchurch Social Centre
Northchurch, Berkhamstead

See below for details

THE GUILD CHRISTMAS PARTY

This has proved to be an hilarious event in the last few years. This year should be better than ever. A QUILLER will teach us how to do it. (Never heard of 'quilling'? - Come and enrich your lifestyle!)

Also there will be a MEMBERS' POTS COMPETITION:

Enter one, or all of the classes:

- Smallest pot
- First or earliest pot
- Heaviest (in relation to its size)
- Funniest
- Sauciest

Bring along lots of pots for a really jolly show.

The inner person will not be forgotten - there will be lashings of punch and mincepies too.

The following report was held over from the last newsletter because of the early deadline.

PETER ANDERSON

(Friday 5th October)

Dick Pope

Peter Anderson is a curly haired Australian of medium build who is over here to review ceramics in Europe. He delivered his lecture at a brisk, staccato pace, keeping everyone awake and making your scribe bemoan his lack of shorthand.

Originally, Peter had learned pottery with Rod Pedler, a fine potter but, according to Peter, an inadequate teacher. Rod claimed that he himself had learned by doing, rather than from formal instruction.

Later, Peter went as a trainee to the 'Jam Factory'. The disused jam factory had been acquired by the South Australian Government who converted it into a craft training centre. It housed ceramics, glass, leatherwork and furniture.

Trainees, mainly post graduates, are paid about \$45 per week. They have to meet demanding work quotas and the allowance is withheld if the quotas are not achieved. Initially, trainees produce the factory standard ware, but they are encouraged to develop their own styles and lines.

After leaving the Jam Factory, Peter set up a studio with several other potters and worked there for two or three years. Following this period he re-established his own workshop and also became Head of Workshop (ceramics) back at the Jam Factory. This period ended when he embarked upon his current tour and when he returns to Australia it will be to work as an independent potter.

His slide show contained numerous examples of ceramics by many potters - the only common denominator being that Peter felt them worthy to be included in his collection. The range was vast with: minute to massive; exquisite to erotic and for some, perhaps, obscure to obscene. They were all presented at the same cracking pace.

My apologies to anyone who feels that the piece: that they particularly liked or disliked does not appear in the following selection.

Alison Cooper:

Black soup tureen and bowls with terracotta rims were quite striking , so was a bowl with orange flowers.

Anne Lars:

Porcelain landscape bowls giving vivid images in orange and red.

Sylvia Standsfield:

A superb painted bowl reminiscent of a Dutch painting.

Stephen Brown:

Painted plates with a pictorial quality.

Peter Anderson's pots:

Large new pots with a peeling effect reminiscent of the Paper Bark Maple. Peter covers his pots with throwing slip to get an uneven surface, using a chrome red glaze. Although he claimed he had taken a well known glaze recipe and had just added lithium for a matt surface, during conversation afterwards he was reluctant to divulge further information.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening was brought to a close by a few slides showing leatherwork made by Peter's wife.

BERKHAMSTEAD ART SOCIETY -

would be pleased to accept new members working in pottery or sculpture. The Society has demonstrations, talks and trips, rather like DCPG. It holds two exhibitions a year, the next one is in Summer 1991.

Subscriptions are £7 and should be sent to:

Jim Hing
4 Bourne Road
Berkhamstead

REVIEWS OF THE POTTERS' OPEN DAY.

ANNA LAMBERT

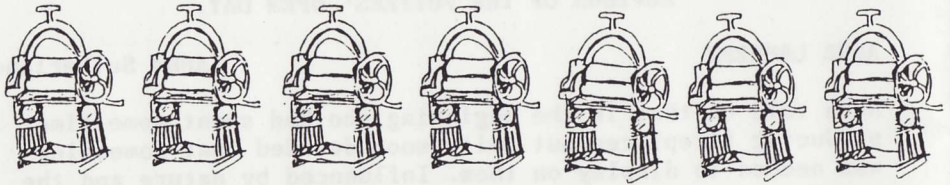
Anne Sutherland

Anna told us that in the beginning she had spent some time producing fireplaces but quite soon decided that something was needed to display on them. Influenced by nature and the rural scene, she began hand building a variety of items such as bowls, platters etc. much decorated with birds or fish. Soft colours played an important part in producing the charming overall impression which makes her pots very much in demand.

Although Anna has part time help in her studio, she herself, carries out the finishing, decoration and final assembly of the work. The clay comprises one third 'C' material (recently substituted for the cheaper 'T' material) and two thirds Potclays 1141~ white earthenware, biscuit fired to 1090~.

We were delighted to watch her whilst she built one of the popular candelabrum, decorated with leaves and a cockerel. Anna certainly had a captive audience and although it had taken some time for her to agree to come to the Guild, her visit was well worth waiting for.





'WRITE AN ARTICLE' SHE SAID
'I'M NOT A MEMBER OF THE GUILD', I SAID
'DOESN'T MATTER', SHE SAID
'I'M NOT A POTTER EITHER', I SAID
'THAT'S O.K. TOO', SHE SAID

SO.....

A NON-POTTERS VIEW

Pip Jacobs

I watched the people who were inspecting the pieces on the stage. Wonder if they look different to other people. They don't.

JIM ROBISON

Comes from Michigan. Has become a pseudo - Brit. Works with warmth and feeds off the landscape. Has a sense of humour which shows in his work. What also shows is his care about the origins of the areas in which he works. He has a happy personality and is interested in everything. He has a way of deriving so much from looking at people in everyday settings (next time you're passing Debenhams in Cambridge - look up.) Also offered us a helpful hint on freighting. "pack things in whiskey crates - people take lots of care of those!"

SANDY BROWN

Told us that the shapes she uses started with her love affair with Japan. Feels very strongly about pots and their link with everyday life. She puts a lot of emotion into her pottery - not so much a shape - more an affirmation. Very concerned that pots will be used. She talked about an emotional experience through clay and outside influence which she demonstrated later.

ANNA LAMBERT

Very gentle person. Makes candlesticks. The gentleness of her personality shows through. She likes the smoothness of her work. Her home reflects her peace of mind - shows fulfilment. Nature is everywhere - in her colours - in her shapes.

Coffee and very moreish bikkies (forget the figure!)

Demo. SANDY BROWN Using white stoneware clay.

It must be very 'tension making' having to sit in front of two hundred and odd people and produce something awe inspiring. However, she did it.

She plonked down a huge lump of clay and made asymmetrical bowls, layer by layer, plus a huge platter style dish with handles, in about five minutes. (makes you sick doesn't it?) When it came to glazes, she said that each decorative process is an entirely new process. Useful hint - to use creative half of brain - look at hand as if it belongs to someone else (does one claim responsibility for the results?) Someone in the hall suggested if that was so , why didn't she decorate with eyes shut, which she duly did with stunning results. As the decorating became more spontaneous, it became increasingly hazardous to be seated in the front row.

SCRUMPTIOUS LUNCH - and such pretty colours.

A Japanese gentleman whose name I do not know showed us a selection of antique Japanese pots that were made for daily use. They were lovely. Made you feel as if you wanted to get up and touch them. What stuck in my mind were the pots that were made for married women to dye their teeth black!

Demo. JIM ROBISON

The last thing I expected to see at a Potters' demo was a mangle! He rolled out sheets of clay, using sheeting for the top, and perspex or hardboard base. Folded clay and rolled back again to produce layered and patchwork pieces. Just what a blowtorch is for! He showed us how to achieve a rich variety of textures, I found out things I never suspected about doilies - Grandma's antimaccassars beware!

TEA -more delicious homemade noshables.

Demo. ANNA LAMBERT

Shown us how she makes candlesticks with oak leaves. She needs very few utensils to create these beautiful pieces. The heat from the lights made things difficult but not

impossible. Her work is very painstaking and she admits to a now rounded thumb and a flat finger. In addition to the natural woodland effect in her candelabra, she produced a finely - worked strutting cockerel at the base. Hint for underglaze - when dry, rub with finger to lose brushmarks.

CONCLUSIONS

Clip on mike was tested to destruction - discovered it does not work so well in a bucket of water and did expect it to emerge between the rollers in one of Jim Robison's pieces!

I will never throw away a jam jar, toothbrush or front door mat again!



FOR SALE:

Electric kiln on own wheels. 12.5kw. K.F. AB 34 HT. 18"x18" very good condition. Offers?

3 shelves.

Automatic Fireman also available.

Electric Wheel - Winslow model, cone drive. (Bill Reid)

• Studded Wheelhead, extra Bats. £200 ono.

Pauline Ashley 0582 461969.

I cannot put a date on the occasion when we last saw Suzy Cree. It was at Abbots Langley. In the interval, I have regularly used a bowl of hers and pass on now some of the methods of working that she demonstrated on that occasion.

Suzy had thrown a number of red earthenware bowls and plates which she decorated using slips and oxides. She used slip made of ball clay rather than china clay as it produced a creamier colour.

The clay was allowed to become almost leather hard before the sgraffito decoration was begun, thus leaving a less jagged edge. The design was kept simple: a line was drawn at the top and bottom; then, with a slip trailer held at a 45° angle, leaf outlines were sketched in freely, and then filled with coloured slip. Suzy added detail with copper brush strokes which enhanced the design. It would be possible to map out the design first with a brush or trailer loaded with dilute food colour which will burn off in the kiln.

The slips used were coloured with 8 - 15% of underglaze colours in the base ball clay slip.

Decoration completed, the pot was dipped into a clear glaze approximately twice the thickness of a glaze used for a pot which has been biscuited.

Suzy was a very generous potter, like many others she allowed her audience to take away her unfired decorated bowls and plates.

I too still have my breakfast in a Suzy Cree bowl. Has anyone news of what Suzy is doing now? [P.]

YOUR TIME IS NOW UP!

Members who haven't renewed their subscriptions will find that this will be their last newsletter. Come on! How can you afford to miss such a wealth of information provided by members through this publication.

Subscriptions will be gratefully received by:

Digby Stott (Membership Secretary)

'Broomfields'

36 Box Lane

Boxmoor

Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0DJ (0442-250540)

or by

Gill Longland (Treasurer)

5 High Grove,

Welwyn Garden City

Herts AL8 7DW

(WGC 323252)

Ex - members who are still receiving the newsletter - a call to Digby to say you're not renewing would be appreciated.

BOOK REVIEW

Stan Romer

'Ceramics - Mastering the Craft'. Richard Zakin. Limp cover, 280 pages. Published by A&C Black November 1990. #22.

This is quite a comprehensive volume and is very well illustrated. The colour pictures (although comparatively few) ably show some excellent work, as do the many black and white illustrations. In the preface the author declares his surprise at his attempt to produce such a vast tome, and indeed he has amassed a great deal of valuable information.

Starting with basics he expounds on the composition of the various materials used in ceramics. He describes the different types of clay and enhances the descriptions with illustrated work of many potters, using all varieties of clay

pots and models. This forms the general theme of the book.

On almost every page there are illustrations of every imaginable type of ceramic work. They show clearly the effects achieved using the many methods described. Essays by some fifty artists are printed next to examples of their work. In using so many different craftsmen, a considerable gallery of exhibits has been staged - mainly those in the forefront of design, including some 'avant garde'.

The small chapter on colour is, perhaps, a little sparse on information. It would have benefited from the use of coloured photographs. Also, the chapter on kilns, although it does have some very useful data on firing temperatures, could have included more details of types of kilns. However, the author has also written a book, 'Electric Kiln Ceramics' (1981) and might not have wished to duplicate this information. The short Appendix showing Celcius/Fahrenheit scales is supplemented by many temperature equivalents and cone -recipe firing scales.

There are other useful appendices, and also a short Bibliography, with a considerable list of modern potters from the U.S., Britain and other countries. The subject index is quite comprehensive.

I liked this book; especially for the exhilarating pictures of potters from N.America, Britain, Europe etc., showing great imagination and artistic skills. Much effort by the author and others has produced a most useful and interesting new book on ceramics.



POTTER'S TIP

John Capes

In just a few weeks time, some members with outside clay stores will be taking quantities of clay into their workshops to ensure a supply in an unfrozen condition. However, this is not a solution for those whose workshops are not well insulated.

I met a professional potter some years ago who kept clay in disused chest freezer cabinets (which he had 'rescued' from a dump). These were outdoors but under cover and he claimed that, even in the coldest winter, the clay remained unfrozen. I must admit that I have not tried this idea as I do not have trouble with frozen clay. For anyone with the problem - it might be worth a try.

Perhaps anyone with an obsolete freezer could put a note in the Newsletter? The St. Albans tip sells them for £2 -£3.

P.

