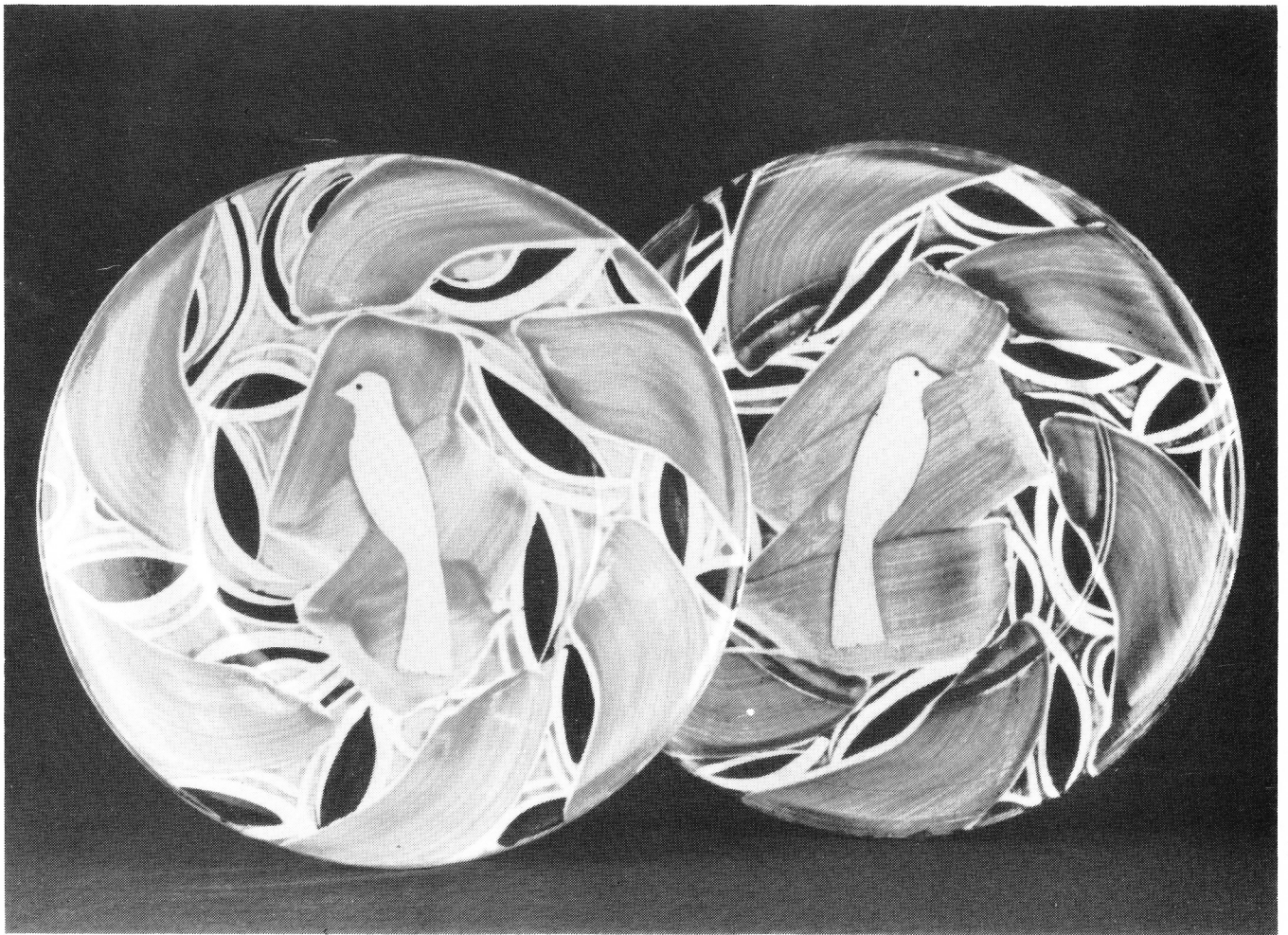




**DACORUM AND
CHILTERN
POTTERS GUILD**



NEWSLETTER

JULY

1993



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FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH: Earthenware Dishes, slip decoration with wax & paper resist by Sophie MacCarthy.

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ABOUT THE GUILD

The Dacorum & Chiltern Potters Guild Newsletter is published bi-monthly, in January, March, May, July, September & November, being distributed to all members of the Guild, other craft groups & organisations. Membership of the Guild is open to anyone having an interest in pottery & offers the members several opportunities each year to see top potters demonstrating their skills. In addition, an Annual Open Day is held, with demonstrations. A Members' pottery exhibition, visits & workshops are organised at various times during the year.

Family membership is £15/year, single £12.50, full-time student £6. Send your cheque to our Membership Secretary, D.Stott, "Broomfield", 36 Box Lane, Boxmoor, Herts. HP3 0DJ.

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome. Opinions expressed in items published do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Committee or the Guild members as a whole. Advertising space is available for future issues, or a leaflet distribution service is offered.

Please contact the Editor for details. Closing date for items to go in the September issue is 12th August. Please mention DCPG when replying to advertisements in the Newsletter.

EDITORIAL

At the time of writing, we have just completed another very successful Sculpture Workshop. Successful, because all participants agreed that they had enjoyed it enormously & learned a little more about the subject (see article by Brian Bicknell in this Newsletter). Our May Newsletter was delayed at the printers, so the notice of the Workshop date was very short indeed. I do hope that we did not miss anyone who wanted to attend.

Well, what next ? I am sure that another Sculpture Workshop will be in prospect, but some Guild members have requested a Slab Building Group, so have we got any other volunteers to run or participate in such a group ? Please drop our Secretary a line, or talk to any committee member & give them your views. I will be glad to publish any letters received relating to Guild or pottery matters, so do pick up your pen if you have something to say.

Currently Tony Stevens is unwell, so part II of his series on Glazes will appear in the next issue. I am sure you all join me in wishing Tony a speedy recovery.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

PROJECT PLOUGHSHARE

Letter addressed to the Guild by Lynne Rogers, Marston Pottery, Lower Cefnfaes, Rhayader, Powys, LD6 5LT:

I am writing to you on behalf of Project Ploughshare, a small Scottish based overseas aid charity in the hope that your membership may be able to help us raise some much needed funds. As you may have heard, Peter Beard, myself and Phil Rogers, my husband, recently visited Ethiopia on behalf of this charity. We spent two weeks there in February carrying out a feasibility study for the establishment of a pottery at Gondar, the ancient capital of Ethiopia.

Project Ploughshare is concerned with supplying the means for people in the third world countries to earn their living rather than becoming evermore dependant on continuing aid from the West. This particular project will eventually employ up to thirty Ethiopian women who at present find themselves the unlucky 'victims' of the aftermath of the recently finished civil war. Gondar has been a garrison town. When the fighting ceased the soldiers went home, leaving behind a large number of women, many of whom were pregnant or had dependant children. These women, who have no means of support, have turned to begging and prostitution to keep themselves and their families. It is to alleviate their poverty and restore their dignity that Project Ploughshare will create a pottery that will not only provide an income but will care for the children during the working day and supply basic medical welfare.

Phil and Peter's job was to survey some existing equipment and to forage for clay supplies and materials with which to make glazes. They were also asked to make recommendations concerning production, training, marketing, layout of the buildings and provide a job description for a potter/manager who will go out initially, for approx. six months to enable the project to get off the ground. The good news is that in their opinion the project can and should go ahead.

Traditional pottery in Ethiopia is stunning in its quality; the problem is there is not enough of it being made. For centuries the Falasha Jews were associated with pottery and passed on their skills from generation to generation. Recently the majority of these people have emigrated to Israel as a consequence of the civil war and the famines, so leaving a huge gap in the market especially in this area of Gondar, which is rich in history and ripe for the tourist trade (you may have seen Michael Palin's 'Pole to Pole' when he visited this area). We found little pottery on sale in the markets and what there was had been brought in from the villages up to 100 kms. away.

The site that has been allocated by the Ethiopian Government for the pottery is 3 kms. from Gondar at a village called Wolleka and has been until recently a Falasha pottery which before the war was a part of the 'tourist' route. In fact there is one woman still there making small animal forms from the clay dug from a stream cutting and then fired in a shallow pit.

The pottery buildings will be set in a field curtained with mature eucalyptus trees. The view from the pottery site across the valley in the hills and mountains beyond is magical. It must be one of the most beautiful settings for a pottery anywhere. There is water from a well which is on the site and there will soon be electricity. There are also ample supplies of suitable materials which Peter and Phil are in the process of testing, including a red earthenware clay and a white kaolinitic clay, stone dust from a local quarry and various wood ashes for stoneware glazes. Hopefully within the year the pottery building will be constructed and a potter from the U.K. will be brought in to see the project off the ground and to initiate the training of the women. Eventually the intention is to have a workshop, showroom and refreshment area all on the site to take advantage of the re-emerging tourist industry and enable the pottery to become self-financing.

Unfortunately, although some funds have been raised for the capital expenses, we still need to raise money to enable us to pay the women a small wage to keep themselves and their children during the first year, while they are training. This is where we are hoping your members may be able to help us.

What we have in mind is to ask each pottery association or group to hold an event or activity organised by themselves that would raise a sum in order to cover the cost of one woman's wage for the first year. We have calculated with the help of the project organiser, Revd. Charles Sherlock, that this would amount to £300.00 each woman. I know at this time things are difficult for everybody and if this sum seems a lot we would be grateful for any amount which your members could contribute.

If you require any further information on this project please don't hesitate to contact us at the above address. It seems very appropriate that we who are associated with pottery and who gain so much enjoyment and fulfilment from the craft can help these unfortunate women become potters and all the benefits that that will bring to them and their children.

Please help if you can.
(Signed: Lynne Rogers for Project Ploughshare)

FUTURE GUILD EVENTS

SATURDAY JULY 31ST - from 12 noon - Project Ploughshare (see article below).

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10TH - 8 p.m. at the Balmoral Centre, Marigold Austin: "Cut-out decoration

FRIDAY OCTOBER 8TH 7.30 p.m.- A.G.M. - and Ruth Karnac on "Myth & Magic in South American Ceramics"

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 13TH - OPEN DAY - Details later, but please put the date in your diaries now.

SUMMER EVENT SATURDAY JULY 31ST FROM 12 NOON.
at Holtsmere End Farmhouse, Redbourn, St. Albans - A map is with the Newsletter.

This year we are doing something a little different. We are co-operating with a painters' group - one-time mature students at Herts. College of Art - in a fund-raising effort for a cause which should be right up our street. This is to support the project to set up a working pottery near Gandar, Ethiopia as reported elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The main project for the day is to make a ceramic tile panel as a group activity. Everyone will have the opportunity to decorate and raku fire some tiles and later take part in arranging the tiles in a panel. We will also be asking you to sponsor a tile for the Ethiopian project.

We will provide equipment, glazes & biscuit tiles but it would be useful if people could also bring biscuit, unglazed tiles with them - we hope to have 200-300 in all. Your tiles should be based on a 6"x6" module so that we can manage them easily, and be made of a suitable body for raku - either "crank" or other off-white clay containing at least 50% grog.

We hope to arrange other activities as well, including a bring-&-buy stall for donated pots (not 2nds) & pictures (framed or unframed) and participation in sketching & painting projects. Please bring food & drink which we can all share for a picnic meal in the evening. We also hope to have a barbecue so you could also bring food to cook if you wish. The event will be at Virginia & Gerald Corbett's home near Little Gaddeston. Virginia belongs to a painters' group. They have a lovely house & garden in the country with shelter if the weather should let us down.

Do please help us to make the Guild's contribution a good one. Bring as many of your family and friends as possible and we're sure it will be a lively event.

Arrive at any time from 12 noon onwards - there is plenty of parking space.

Admission charges will be £3 for adults, £1 for children (under 7s free). bring food, wine or other drink, something for the bring-&-buy stall, but above all YOURSELVES.

OTHER EVENTS

KENTWELL 1593 - A re-creation of Tudor domestic life June 20th to July 18th: open to the public Saturdays, Sundays and Friday July 16th 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., no admission after 3.30 - Kentwell Hall, Long Melford, Suffolk CO10 9BA. Tel: 0787 310207.

This is a re-creation of the costume, the crafts, the people & bustle of the year 1593, some 200 participants pursuing the activities in a faithful reproduction of Tudor times.

THE BARNET COLLECTION; Saturday 12th-26th June, exhibition at Upper Floor, The Spire, Barnet. Demos. every day 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

SATURDAY JULY 3RD - Raku Workshop with Ian Byers. For tickets (£10) & details, ring 081 441 0904

MONDAY JULY 5TH - Lecture by Phil Rogers & Peter Beard about *Project Ploughshare*. 7.30 p.m. at The Studio, Old Bull Art Centre, Barnet. £1.50 at the door.

SOPHIE MacCARTHY VISIT 14TH MAY

Sophie began the evening with a collection of slides, cataloguing the progress of her work. She produces earthenware, the large oval platters are press-moulded, everything else is thrown. It was very noticeable that these thrown pieces were quite thin in relation to the overall size. Sophie explained that she works very closely on the shapes & turns her pieces to obtain such thin sections.

All decoration is carried out on the dried clay which is a stoneware body, 1118 from Potclays. A mishap during the demonstration indicated the fragility of such thin sections, although Sophie told us that breakage at this stage is very rare in her normal work environment. The slip used for decoration is made from the base clay mixed with body stains. The level of colour is set empirically & Sophie obviously had a lot of experience, casually adding an extra dash of stain to obtain the strength of colour desired at one stage.

The decoration technique uses paper stencils made from "elephant hide" paper, supplied by Faulkeners Fine Papers of Holborn. The stencils, copies of real leaves, are carefully cut to shape with a scalpel. Sophie has found that this paper is ideal for her work since it does not break down when wet & can be re-used many times. Liquid wax from Ceramatec is used as the wax resist.

For her first demonstration, Sophie applied yellow slip to a bowl, using rapid brush strokes with a hake (water colour brush available in various widths up to 3") followed by red, then blue, then a second application of blue. As she proceeded, Sophie explained the effect she was looking for with areas of colour planned to show through in layers or singly on the final design. The stencils were damped with water & blotted on a towel before being applied to the bowl. A black slip was brushed over the stencils, which were then lifted with a pin & moved to a different position, then again brushed over. In this way the design progressed across the bowl each stencil being used several times. The leaf veins were added sgraffit style, using a pin & finally red slip dots were added to complete the design.

The second demonstration was on a smaller bowl and started in similar fashion, yellow then red slip, followed by the definition of bold open leaf shapes painted in wax, with the veins also afterwards defined in wax, spiral whirls were added in wax, a few rapid strokes of blue then green slip, more wax to preserve blue areas, fast overbrushing with black using a 3" hake & finally dots of green on the black.

For her third demonstration, on a 15" plate, Sophie used a 4B pencil to draw an outline female figure. Proportions were excellent & the drawing was very fast. Next the outline of the figure were waxed, a rapid sweeping brush stroke of blue was made over the figure, which was then waxed over to preserve it; green slip was next brushed all over the bowl & Sophie explained that the figure would have dark irregular outlines due to the overlapping slips. Wide wax lines over the green & then black slip finally picked out in red completed the design.

The last piece decorated was a jug. Red slip was used to produce strawberry shapes, two brush strokes to each berry & wax was then added carefully over each one. Three pin strokes defined each stalk & green slip was then used to cover the whole surface. Wax defined each stalk, more green slip, then black all over, with strawberry leaf stencils used progressively, preserving the green leaves. Veins were added, using a pin. The pin was also used to produce dotted "seeds" on the strawberries & this completed the design.

Sophie fires her decorated greenware to 1000 C., adds a clear glaze & fires at 1100 + in a Cromartie 30 amp. top-loading kiln.

She draws inspiration from nature, landscape, classical or modern art, or anything that takes her fancy, interpreting her observations into, more or less, abstract designs. The overall impression that the work gives is rather "Art Deco" & her strong brush work has particular appeal.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

TORSO MAKING TWO - 15TH MAY 1993.

It is a pity that so many of our members are not using what, in other art forms, would be classified as Master Classes. For those who did attend the day at Rudolph Steiner School, it was a time of fun and learning by looking at the ever-changing planes of the human body. Luckily we all have one, be it the shape dictated by fashion magazines or one that holds the life and soul together. Familiarity does not mean that we know just how all the pieces fit together and how they react to stress.

The day started by making a small ten minute model from pellets of clay in a form of a seated figure on the floor, with legs tucked to one side and the weight of the inclined body held on the arms and hands. The purpose of this was to see how the body reacts to folding and forward stress. Then we rolled out a piece of clay and created the illusion of a figure under a sheet much in the style Rodin used for the statue of Balzac.

Meanwhile the cylinder of 'T' Material some four inches in diameter and a foot high was drying slightly, needing damping now and then. We all have our own ideas of how we look, fantasies perhaps. To translate the human form into clay from a cylinder by pressing from the inside and suggesting that the skin has muscle and bone behind it, is not easy. The clay has a tendency to sag, adding years to the nubile young maid so earnestly being coaxed into existence. Fortunately for me, this one is the third piece so far, so I knew enough to fend off the encroaching slump by using less water. It really did not matter how the torso looked, whether Venus de Milo had been recreated or a homely matron more akin to Rubens, it was the making and appreciating the many positions possible. As potters, we were able to explore what can be done with clay. In itself a formless mass yet so plastic and forgiving in the hands of any of us. We had one model and ten versions. To breathe life into a shape that looks so uncompromising initially and, with help and words from Doug, a figure takes shape slowly. Surely this is reward enough.

May I thank the following people for supporting us on Saturday 15th May: Carol Crawley, Judy Menges, Linda Bryant, Tracie Heffernan, Sonia Waterton, Mervyn Fitzwilliam, Jan Parrott, Junko Tobin and her father, Rokuro Tsujita.

A very good day was had by all.

Brian Bicknell



Hard at work. Carol Crawley (left) and Judi Menges.



Tracie Heffernan (left) and our model Anne Smith (right) with Linda Bryant studiously hiding behind her sculpture in the centre.

FIPPLING ABOUT WITH OCARINAS

The meeting on April 16th wasn't advertised as a workshop but when volunteers were called for, there was almost 100% audience participation. They were managed and directed by Len Stevens.

Finding his 'true vocation' on a ceramics Diploma course at Goldsmiths, Len immediately resigned from his teaching post and became a potter. Not only that - he became a 'rare breed' potter, living entirely on the proceeds of his work, though teaching was still in his blood as the enemy was to prove.

Ocarinas figure greatly in Len's life, and he can play them too - from the large, rather anxious looking bird form down to the miniscule creature smaller than a thimble. Even though his fingers obliterated the tiny instrument, he was able to produce a scale of high, piping notes. He's clearly one for a challenge.

Len gave us a potted history of the ocarina quoting theories from various historians, which he dismissed scornfully. At the same time, he was demonstrating how to make an ocarina and this made it difficult to follow; and by now his audience were at various stages of pinching and squeezing their clay into hollow, rounded forms.

We heard a very pretty musical box-like rendering of a piece by Beethoven played by an ocarina group, so knew what we were driving for. However, the real business of constructing the instruments so that they would produce notes was even harder than one might imagine. All the time Len talked, gestured and demonstrated with boundless energy, accompanied by sounds of slapping, poking and gouging as people beat their clay into submission.

Having produced a hollow form, the accuracy of the hole punching was crucial. Len asserted that he had simplified and improved upon Neil Irons' methods of construction, but it was still a difficult procedure to grasp in such a short space of time. He embarked on a lot of technical stuff involving *fipples* and the angle of air blown across a hole. This rendered a few members mildly hysterical and I, at least, was distracted by the potter next to me performing rather odd mimes with her rather odd clay form. I shan't attempt to describe keyhole cutting (maybe a member can elucidate in the next issue of the Newsletter ?).

By now, the room was filled with grey-lipped faces blowing wet clay from which emerged rather doleful hootings. Then, gradually, more musical sound came from the people who could, followed by the wet scrunch and thud of the people who couldn't, throwing down their clay in frustration. At this point, even Len got confused and cut a hole in the wrong side of his ocarina. Undaunted, he repaired and re-cut it without once ceasing his running commentary.



Len Stevens instructing (left to right) Pauline Ashley, Marion Franses and Ruth Karnac.



It works ! Pauline Ashley tootles on her part-finished ocarina.

Gosh, it was exhausting but at the end of the evening a large part of the audience was tootling away on an assortment of birds, rats and other indeterminate creatures. A brilliant outcome considering the short time, the complications of making an instrument, the hilarity and the wet clay. Perhaps there will be a Guild Ocarina Ensemble on the Open Day ?

Meanwhile, the flock of Len's bird ocarinas on the table regarded the activity with gravity, as well they might, for they were tunes, fired & complete. Some were domestic fowl, others more elegant & exotic types. They had all been once fired with various decorative effects including sgraffito, impressing & resists. He uses slip made from his Cambridge garden clay & paints them directly onto the dry clay, waxing the finger holes to prevent clay from filling them. He prides himself on his use of simple, basic materials.

I hope members manage to fire their ocarinas and that we can have a look (and a listen!) to the finished pieces.

Pauline O'Dell

LINDA BRYANT

My interest in pottery was kindled many years ago by an excellent and enthusiastic pottery teacher, Mr. Pitt. He guided me, successfully, through the pottery element of A level art and left me with an enduring love for getting my hands dirty !

Since those far-off schooldays, I have potted my way around the country, attending classes in Harlow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Leeds, Leicester and now Hemel Hempstead. At each venue I have picked up new ideas and new techniques - flask production using two identical moulded dishes from Leeds, spraying glazes and raku from Leicester, throwing and enamelling from Hemel, on top of my all-time favourite of coiling and carving.

I have a dream that one day I'll be able to give up being a wage-slave in order to attend a full-time ceramics course and, eventually, to have my own workshop. However, until that day (if ever it arrives), I'll continue to work part-time as a Training Officer at the University of Hertfordshire and for the rest of the time I'll run my own business producing made-to-measure tailored clothes for women. In between, I'll somehow fit in evening classes, Potters' Guild meetings and the occasional workshop to keep my interest going.



Linda at the *Gazette*
Leisure & Hobbies Day on
27th March this year.

GARY WORNELL ON SOLID CASTING

Gary began the evening by demonstrating how he filled the mould. With solid casting, it is very important that no air is trapped in the cast. Using a funnel made from a lemonade bottle which fitted snugly into the hole in the plaster, he filled the mould. As the funnel was deep, he was able to top up easily. He pointed out the importance of the mould not narrowing at all and how the thinnest part should be at the edge or rim.

The original shape was textured on top and included feet on the base. This decoration took two days to achieve but once the moulds were made, he was able to make two in each of them each day.

The slides were then shown and at the end of the evening he was able to remove the cast, having topped it up once. He showed many slides of Japan and Finland, countries where he has had the opportunity to work, doing "his own thing" with assistance from the workforce.

Some of the slides were of his early work which I had seen in 1985 in Aldeburgh; fragile crackle-glazed porcelain with cut rims, raku fired. He used an electric front-loaded kiln, employing leather - not plastic - gloves rather than tongs, because of the fragility of the pieces which were reduced in sawdust. He found that the cut rims were prone to spring apart and overcame this by using biscuit fired porcelain pegs over the edges.

I can vouch for the fragility of these pots because at Aldeburgh in 1985, a friend of mine broke one by handling it too enthusiastically. Gary had been preparing work for an exhibition and a rather lively Australian friend picked up a pot, which broke. She was aghast but assured him she would buy it anyway. He was calm and extremely polite and whilst we continued to wander around the workshop, he repaired and carefully wrapped the pot, which eventually arrived safely in Australia.

Later on, we saw his earlier *terra sigillata*. Using commercial coloured slips and burnished, these were lively after the subtle crackle glazes. This work then led to his more recent burnished ware, with richer, deeper colours on simple forms.

Gary showed us on 'the one he had made earlier' how he used the sigillated slip. It was very finely milled and very dense. It did not fall out of an upturned pot! The shine dulled fairly quickly and then he was able to apply other colours before burnishing the surface. He used a sponge wrapped in plastic and it seemed a simple and efficient method - obviously a spoon would spoil any design. The sponge, however, moulded around any raised areas.

There were a few technical examples given e.g. the clay he used was Valentine's Standard Red, which is one of the cheapest available and which could obtain a very smooth finish. He did not like the waste which occurred with the normal preparation of *terra sigillata*, so he ball-milled the lumps and the grittier bits of the slip. The material used to thicken the slip was carboxy methyl cellulose.

The work he had on show were the platters on which he had demonstrated for us, some taller vessels and ovoid shapes, all highly burnished.

Viewing Gary Wornell's work several times over a period of years allows one to see how it has developed. This makes a case for us to see other previous visitors return to DCPG and show their development. There are many that I should like to see again.

Ruth Brown

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

It was reported in the May Newsletter that Shirley Woods McConville had left the Guild; however, owing to further house changing difficulties, she just might be turning up at future meetings !!

Chris Brewis has moved to Surrey and we send our good wishes and congratulations on his recent marriage to Lisa.

We are delighted to welcome the following new members:

Paul Tierney, 27 Mervyn Road, London, W13 9UW

Mrs. Y.M. Boniface, 11 Herbert St., Old Town, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 5HP

BOOK REVIEW

The Work of Craft Carla Needleman. Kodansha International, 1993.
Paperback. 144 pp. £7.99

To be... "content to be content".

This is a new edition of a book first published almost fifteen years ago. It is about the relationship of the individual with the ambient life: it is about inner thoughts and outward gestures: it is an attempt to translate into words the feelings of a 'craftsman' in the making. It is a sensitive, useful and practical work and it will continue to be so in another fifteen years.

Often we have felt inadequate when trying to make, or write, or paint something which has a sharp reality (or at least a general idea) in our mind of what is to be achieved. Here the author writes of these feelings as she begins to make a pot on the wheel, then continues as she carries the operations through to firing, decorating and glazing.

In front of her is a finished pot, a solid representation of an impression in the mind from several days earlier; to be criticised, appreciated, liked or disliked. This is the general theme of the book. The specific subject-sections portrayed are pottery (the main craft), weaving and woodcarving, with a final chapter on the teaching of a craft.

The book is philosophical, psychological and practical. Good days and bad days are described. Introspection, meditation and reflection bring about states of mind and body, which states in turn react with the contemplative thoughts generated. There are those who may think to become potters (craftsmen) almost overnight; and there are those who believe they will never master the craft. But the author describes how the acceptance of just doing the work, and by becoming as if one with it, can gradually produce satisfying and pleasing results. "Failure is a beginning, failure is the spring-board of hope". "... success is a destination". But it is important to have a direction. Crafts and humanity are parallel - and each reacts upon the other.

The author explains in a similar fashion the crafts of weaving and woodcarving. Although material textures are very different, the same mental outlook prevails. Each woven or knotted rug, or carved model emphasising the wood grain, bears a history of thought and appreciation of the work with the specific material.

Finally, the subject of teaching a craft arises. There is a vast difference between instruction and teaching. Instruction merely tells how to do things; teaching oneself helps to understand how to teach others.

Whatever the craft, this book can be read with satisfaction, probably several times. It makes easy reading and can form the basis of discussion. It is a very handy little book, but it doesn't tell you how to do the craft - or does it ?

Stan Romer

BOOK REVIEW

MINGEI: Masterpieces of Japanese Folkcraft. Photography by Yutaka Seki.
Kodasha International, 1991. Hardback, 200 pp. £31.50

Have you ever visited an art exhibition or museum and felt like picking up an exhibit, say, a porcelain or stoneware pot, in order to appreciate fully all the beauties and sensations expressed by that object? Even if, of course, there were notices saying *Do not touch!* - in the interests of safety. So if you can't visit these galleries or touch these objects, what is the next best action?

Just recently, I read this beautifully produced, large-paged book and experienced the sensation of actually being in front of many varied works of art. This would appear to be the initial feeling that the reader would meet when opening this book.

There are only about two dozen pages of text, most informative text: 'a picture tells a thousand words' is true here. But the comparatively few words are used here to explain the celebration of the simplicity and beauty of the traditional folkcrafts of Japan. These are called *Mingei*, a recent (1925) word being the abbreviation of *minshuteki* and *kogei* - meaning simply, 'the art of the people'.

In the West, we are often concerned with either the artistic or the utilitarian aspect of art/craft, especially ceramics. But in Japan, the common utensils used by the people are called *minki*, an abbreviation of *mingei-hin* (quality folkcraft). Hence *mingei* refers to craft of 'ordinary functionality' - but this is tempered with an 'aesthetic truth'; thus the term embraces both artistry and function.

We must go back to Gothic art and William Morris to study the works and life of Soetsu Yanagi (1889-1961), the philosopher and art critic of renown, who was responsible for the coining of the word *mingei*. Kanjiro Kawaii (1890-1966) and Shoji Hamada (1894-1978) both had considerable influence upon their friend, Yanagi. Bernard Leach (1887-1979), who went to Japan to study Japanese art/craft, also added greatly to the rich material which developed into the '*Mingei* Movement'.

The *mingei* objects, all of them unsigned and anonymous: functional, of simple form and decoration, - each handmade, and representative of its original region - are shown in the Japan Folk Crafts Museum (*Mingei-kan*) in Tokyo. During the Japan Festival in Britain 1991/2, there were many of these *mingei* objects on view.

But on to the colour plates in the book. These are sectioned into textiles, ceramics, wood, lacquer, metal wares and pictorial art - the ceramics section is the largest representative group. All objects are beautifully and expertly photographed in true colour with descriptions accompanying smaller black-and-white versions at the end of the volume.

To return to my opening notes: the 'reader' can have the sensation of 'feeling' the exhibits in front of him/her. This book is a wonderful illustration and inspiration to the student, the established craftsman and also the collector. It is second best only to owning each article. Unfortunately, the price may deter many would-be purchasers - one has to pay for such glorious colour! But it may be possible to see it in Art Schools and Libraries, and see it you should!

Stan Romer

INFORMATION AND ADVICE SHEETS

The information leaflets, which are available free of charge from The Visual & Media Arts Department at Eastern Arts Board, Cherry Hinton Hall, Cambridge, CB1 4DW.

Tel: 0223 215355, are:

Setting up Group Studios & Workshops - Training for Visual & Media Artists - Carrying out a Commission - Carrying out a Residency - Organising an Event or Project - Setting up in Business - Promotion & Publicity for Visual & Media Artists - Fund-raising - Organising an Exhibition - Setting up a Gallery - Sources of Touring Exhibitions - Budgeting for small-scale Film & Video Productions - Writing a Film or Video Production Proposal.

SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

WANTED: an electric kiln to operate from 30 Amp supply. Phone Rod Sandy on 0923 254024

WANTED: A large top-loading electric kiln for earthenware. Needed by Tony Clark, so that production can be increased at the Bedford Pottery. 12 to 15 cubic feet desirable.
Phone: 0234 854892

H...E...L...P...!

Danish 3rd-year art school student wants to spend her summer vac. working in a studio workshop with experienced British potter. Has studied throwing, modelling, handbuilding & decoration; would like to learn more about routine throwing. Interested in building a kiln & wood-firing. If you can help, contact Karlina Wiederhold,
Gl. Kongevej 17,
6000 Kolding, Denmark.

DCPG COMMITTEE LIST

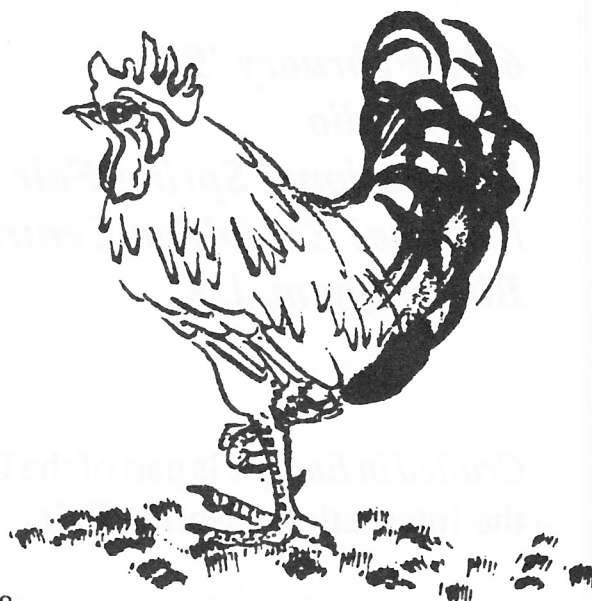
<u>Murray Fieldhouse</u> (President)	0442-85 229
Northfields Studio, Tring, Herts.	
<u>Ray Phipps</u> (Vice-President)	0442-774 138
23 Hall Park, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2NL	
<u>Alan O'Dell</u> (Chair)	0727-869 383
35 Pondfield Crescent, St. Albans, Herts AL4 9PE	
<u>Ruth Karnac</u> (Vice-Chair & Sec.)	0895-631 738
35 Kingsend, Ruislip, Middx HA4 7DD	
<u>Victor Earl</u> (Treasurer)	0442-865 661
32 Trevelyan Way, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 1JH	
<u>Digby Stott</u> (Membership Sec.)	0442-250 540
"Broomfield", 36 Box Lane, Boxmoor, Herts HP3 ODJ	
<u>Hanna Christianson</u> (Programme Organiser)	0707-327 346
14 The Croft, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 4JY	
<u>Mervyn Fitzwilliam</u> (Newsletter)	0442-242 332
"Longfield", Bulstrode Lane, Felton,	
Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 OBP	
<u>Brian Bicknell</u> (Proof Reading)	0494-530 050
41 Coates Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 5ET	
<u>Marguerite Moon</u>	0727-823 801
"The Willows", Church Lane, Colney Heath,	
St. Albans, Herts AL4 ONH	
<u>Lesley Risby</u>	081 907-5600
113 Draycott Avenue, Kenton, Harrow HA3 ODA	
<u>Linda Bryant</u>	0442-233 521
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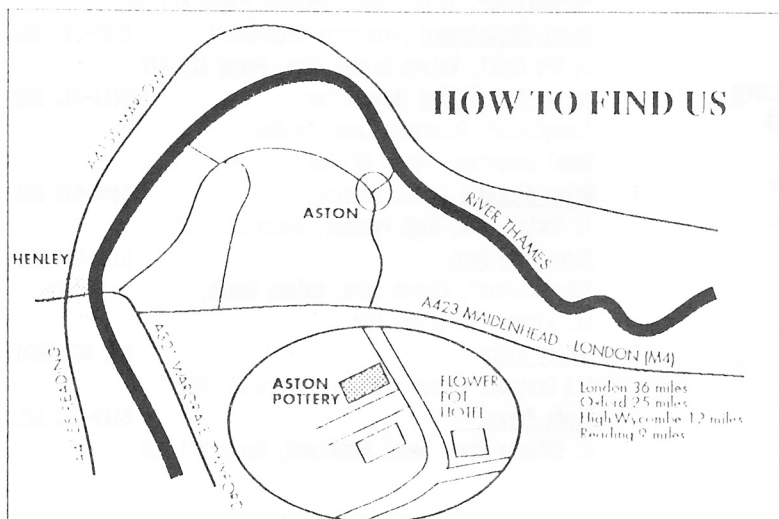
For particulars, please ring Sheena Davis on 0295 730328

or write to me at: Badgers, Main Street, Wroxton, nr. Banbury, Oxon. OX15 6PT

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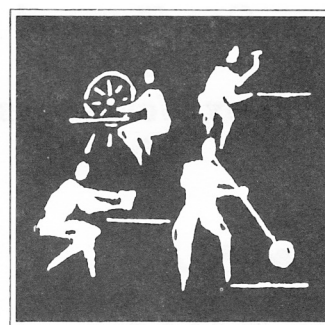
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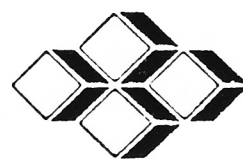
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26 to 31 July	Understanding Glazes & Materials - <i>Harry Horlock-Stringer</i>

SCULPTURE

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SPECIALIST WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

October 1993 to June 1994

Topics to include : Sculpture, Throwing, Raku,
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Brushstroke Decoration, Lettering, Musical Earthenware,
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Further details from :

The Arts Centre, Brunel University,
Uxbridge, Middx. UB8 3PH

Tel : 0895-273482

Fax : 0895-203250

*Nearest tube station : Uxbridge
(Metropolitan & Picadilly lines)*

Nearest BR station : West Drayton



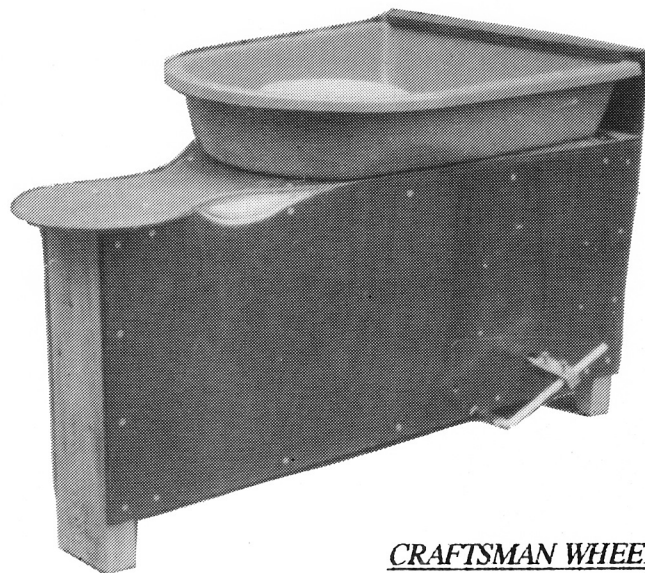
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