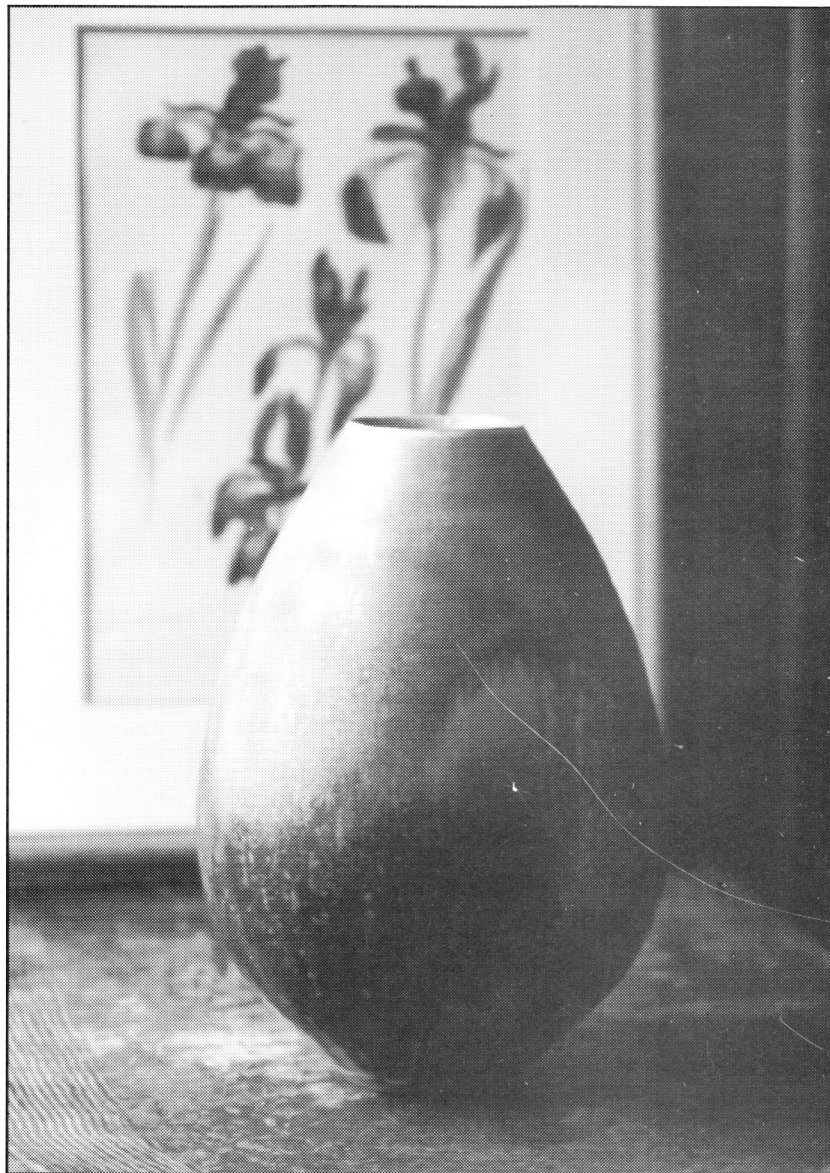


DACORUM AND
CHILTERN
POTTERS GUILD



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY

1995

£1.50



BARTHOLOMEW CRAFT FAIRS

1995 PROGRAMME

B H MON 2 JAN	STANMORE R N O HOSPITAL	SAT 5 & SUN 6 AUG	* HIGH ELMS CRAFT FESTIVAL
SAT 7 JAN	RICHMOND QUEEN CHARLOTTE HALL	FRI 11, SAT 12 & SUN 13 AUG	AT HIGH ELMS COUNTRY PARK, FARNBOROUGH, KENT
SUN 8 JAN	ALDRSHOT PRINCES HALL	SAT 19 & SUN 20 AUG	* HAINAULT CRAFT FESTIVAL
SAT 14 JAN	WALLINGTON PUBLIC HALL	SAT 26, SUN 27 & B H MON 28 AUG	AT HAINAULT COUNTRY PARK, CHIGWELL ROW, ESSEX
SUN 15 JAN	HARLOW MOAT HOUSE HOTEL	B H MON 28 AUG	* CROYDON CRAFT FAIR
SAT 21 JAN	TWICKENHAM YORK HOUSE	FRI 1, SAT 2 & SUN 3 SEPT	DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED
SUN 22 JAN	CHORLEYWOOD ST. CLEMENT DANES SCHOOL	SAT 9 & SUN 10 SEPT	* HARLOW TOWN & COUNTRY SHOW
SAT 28 JAN	CAMBERLEY CIVIC HALL	SAT 16 & SUN 17 SEPT	AT HARLOW TOWN PARK, ESSEX
SUN 29 JAN	WALTHAMSTOW LLOYD PARK THEATRE	SAT 23 SEPT	HERTFORD HAILEYBURY COLLEGE
SAT 4 FEB	CHINGFORD ASSEMBLY HALL	SAT 23 & SUN 24 SEPT	* BEXLEYHEATH DANSON PARK CRAFT FESTIVAL
SUN 5 FEB	WALTHAM ABBEY SWALLOW HOTEL	SUN 24 SEPT	
SAT 11 FEB	TUNBRIDGE WELLS ASSEMBLY HALL	SAT 30 SEPT & SUN 1 OCT	* ESSEX COUNTRY & CRAFT FAIR
SUN 12 FEB	CRAYFORD CRAYSIDE LEISURE CENTRE	SUN 1 OCT	AT NEWLANDS HALL, NEAR CHELMSFORD
SAT 18 FEB	ILFORD TOWN HALL	SAT 7 OCT	* SURREY COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW
SUN 19 FEB	CHIGWELL EPPING FOREST COUNTRY CLUB	SUN 8 OCT	AT HOOK ROAD ARENA, EPSOM, SURREY
SAT 25 FEB	REDHILL HARLEQUIN THEATRE	SAT 14 OCT	CHINGFORD ASSEMBLY HALL
SUN 26 FEB	HAYES BECK THEATRE	SUN 15 OCT	* MIDDLESEX COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW
SAT 26 FEB	HATFIELD RED LION	SAT 21 OCT	AT HANWORTH PARK, HOUNSLOW
SAT 4 MAR	BEXLEYHEATH CROOK LOG SPORTS CENTRE	SUN 22 OCT	POTTERS BAR WYLLYOTTS CENTRE
SUN 5 MAR	HORCHURCH PALMS HOTEL	SUN 22 OCT	CHESHAM ELGIVA THEATRE
SUN 5 MAR	BRIGHTON CORN EXCHANGE	SAT 28 OCT	* BROMLEY COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW
SAT 11 MAR	WOODFORD GREEN HAWKEY HALL	SAT 28 & SUN 29 OCT	AT NORMAN PARK, BROMLEY, KENT
SUN 12 MAR	STANMORE R N O HOSPITAL	SUN 29 OCT	HAYES BECK THEATRE
SAT 18 MAR	CAMBERLEY CIVIC HALL	SAT 4 NOV	COLCHESTER UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
SUN 19 MAR	EDMONTON LEE VALLEY LEISURE CENTRE	SUN 5 NOV	ORPINGTON NEW VILLAGE HALL
SUN 19 MAR	CHESHAM ELGIVA THEATRE	SUN 5 NOV	EDMONTON LEE VALLEY LEISURE CENTRE
SAT 25 MAR	SHEEN THE SHEEN LANE CENTRE	SUN 11 NOV	REDHILL HARLEQUIN THEATRE
SUN 26 MAR	COLCHESTER UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX	SUN 12 NOV	CHIGWELL EPPING FOREST COUNTRY CLUB
SAT 1 APR	ORPINGTON NEW VILLAGE HALL	SUN 12 NOV	WOODFORD GREEN HAWKEY HALL
SUN 2 APR	CRYSTAL PALACE NATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE	SUN 12 NOV	CHORLEYWOOD ST. CLEMENT DANES SCHOOL
SUN 9 APR	HERTFORD HAILEYBURY COLLEGE	SAT 18 NOV	CRAYFORD CRAYSIDE LEISURE CENTRE
SAT 15 APR	TUNBRIDGE WELLS CAMDEN CENTRE	SUN 19 NOV	HARLOW MOAT HOUSE HOTEL
SAT 15, SUN 16 & B H MON 17 APR	* BEXLEY COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW	SUN 19 NOV	TUNBRIDGE WELLS CAMDEN CENTRE
SUN 16 APR	AT OLD DARTFORDIANS GROUNDS, BEXLEY	SAT 25 NOV	HARROW LEISURE CENTRE
B H MON 17 APR	STEVENAGE MOAT HOUSE HOTEL	SUN 26 NOV	
SUN 23 APR	CHELMSFORD RIVERSIDE LEISURE CENTRE	SUN 26 NOV	HERTFORD HAILEYBURY COLLEGE
SAT 29 APR	HARLOW MOAT HOUSE	SAT 2 DEC	BEXLEYHEATH CROOK LOG SPORTS CENTRE
SUN 30 APR	RICHMOND QUEEN CHARLOTTE HALL	SAT 2 DEC	WALTHAMSTOW LLOYD PARK THEATRE
SAT 6, SUN 7 & B H MON 8 MAY	CHIGWELL EPPING FOREST COUNTRY CLUB	SUN 3 DEC	GUILDFORD CIVIC HALL
SAT 6, SUN 7 & B H MON 8 MAY	* HAINAULT COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW	SUN 3 DEC	STANSTED AIRPORT HILTON HOTEL
SUN 14 MAY	AT HAINAULT COUNTRY PARK, CHIGWELL ROW	SAT 9 DEC	TWICKENHAM YORK HOUSE HOTEL
SAT 20 MAY	HARROW LEISURE CENTRE	SUN 10 DEC	COPTHORNE EFFINGHAM PARK HOTEL
SAT 20 & SUN 21 MAY	COPTHORNE EFFINGHAM PARK HOTEL	SUN 10 DEC	STEVENAGE MOAT HOUSE HOTEL
SUN 21 MAY	TUNBRIDGE WELLS ASSEMBLY HALL	SAT 16 DEC	HORNCHURCH PALMS HOTEL
SAT 27 MAY	* SOUTH ESSEX COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW	SUN 17 DEC	WALLINGTON PUBLIC HALL
SAT 27, SUN 28 & B H MON 29 MAY	AT DAVEY DOWN SOUTH OCKENDEN, ESSEX	SUN 17 DEC	HARLOW SPORTCENTRE
SUN 28 MAY	CHORLEYWOOD ST. CLEMENT DANES SCHOOL	SAT 23 DEC	STANMORE R N O HOSPITAL
B H MON 29 MAY	CHINGFORD ASSEMBLY HALL		BRIGHTON CORN EXCHANGE
SAT 10 & SUN 11 JUN	* LEE VALLEY COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW		SHEEN THE SHEEN LANE CENTRE
SAT 17 & SUN 18 JUN	AT LEE VALLEY SHOW GROUND, WALTHAM ABBEY		EDMONTON LEE VALLEY LEISURE CENTRE
SAT 24 & SUN 25 JUN	POTTERS BAR WYLLYOTTS CENTRE		ALDRSHOT PRINCES HALL
SAT 1 & SUN 2 JUL	HAYES BECK THEATRE		BROMLEY CIVIC HALL
SAT 8 & SUN 9 JUL	* NORTH KENT CRAFT FESTIVAL		TUNBRIDGE WELLS ASSEMBLY HALL
SAT 15 & SUN 16 JUL	AT STONE LODGE FARM PARK, NEAR DARTFORD		CAMBERLEY CIVIC HALL
SAT 22 & SUN 23 JUL	* HIGH ELMS COUNTRY & CRAFT SHOW		CHELMSFORD RIVERSIDE LEISURE CENTRE
SAT 29 & SUN 30 JUL	AT HIGH ELMS COUNTRY PARK, FARNBOROUGH, KENT		HAYES BECK THEATRE
	* GRAVESEND SHOW CRAFT VILLAGE		WALTHAM ABBEY SWALLOW HOTEL
			BEXLEYHEATH CROOK LOG SPORTS CENTRE
			CHIGWELL EPPING FOREST COUNTRY CLUB
			HATFIELD RED LION
			CRYSTAL PALACE NATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE
			RICHMOND QUEEN CHARLOTTE HALL
			CHINGFORD ASSEMBLY HALL
			CROYDON ROYAL RUSSELL SCHOOL
			HERTFORD HAILEYBURY COLLEGE
			COLCHESTER ESSEX UNIVERSITY
			ILFORD TOWN HALL

EVENTS MARKED WITH * ARE MAJOR OUTSIDE EVENTS IN MARQUEES

All fairs are vetted for quality and avoid excessive duplication. Public opening times are generally 10.30am-5pm (some Saturday fairs until 4pm). All fairs are extensively advertised and clearly signposted.

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FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH: Stoneware "egg vase" by Doug Jones, entitled Bizen Rain, with study of irises in the background.

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ABOUT THE GUILD & THE NEWSLETTER

Membership of the Guild is open to anyone having an interest in pottery & offers the members many opportunities each year to see the 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.

The Dacorum & Chilterns Pottery 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. 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.

Please contact our Membership Secretary, Digby Stott, for more details; phone 01442-250 540.

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Closing date for items to be published in the March issue is 5th February.

EDITORIAL

Are you suffering from a lack of stress? Is your work going too smoothly? The answer is to launch yourself on a major project, such as building an extension on the house. During the past three months virtually all my normal activity has been at a standstill in favour of diggers, skips, bricks, rafters, a bewildering array of builders & several thousand cups of tea.

Guild activities have continued (even though the Newsletter had been in danger of sinking out of sight), with the Exhibition being successful & Martin Cook giving us a most interesting evening with his slate

carving. Our recent workshop & another evening meeting were somewhat unusual, due in one case to the absence of members & in the other to the absence of the lecturer.

Your Committee continue to plan a full Event Calendar & are always open to suggestions for new Guild activities, or improvements in planning current activities.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

THE LAST NEWSLETTER ?????

This could be the last Newsletter you will receive -- unless you have paid your MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION.

If you have not paid your membership subscription, then please send your cheque AT ONCE to Digby Stott, whose address is on page 12 of this Newsletter.

Your Committee have agreed that sending out individual reminders & phoning members to persuade them to pay their subs. are both time consuming & expensive, so we prefer not to do so.

The Guild gives excellent value for money on all fronts, so your subscription can be regarded as an excellent investment, with a superb return -

- * six Newsletters *
- * free access to our evening meetings *
- * a whole host of other opportunities *

LOST PROPERTY

After the exhibition, we had one unclaimed pot. It was small, straight sided, made of buff clay with transparent glaze & with a design of trees on the side. It had a small stamp on the bottom of three overlapping circles & was marked "No.9". If it is yours, please contact Lesley Risby (see Committee list on page 11).

S---O---S

Will anyone who collected their unsold pots from the exhibition please search their boxes to see if they have a brown planter belonging to Suzanne Graham.

LETTERS

Dear Members,

I am writing to apologise for failing to arrive on Friday Nov.11th to talk and show slides at your meeting.

The circumstances of the day were exceptionally frustrating and after well over a year of looking forward to addressing your assembly since Hanna first asked me at 'Art in Action', words can hardly express my disappointment and anger at not being with you.

Taking the precaution of trying out the car on Thursday after not using it for a week I found it would not start - damp and so on. Ordinarily of course it's reliable. First thing on Friday I tried again to no avail and I was forced to call out the garage. The man who regularly services the car could find no fault, but it would not start.

New plugs, nothing, new rotor arm, new points, still nothing. We had petrol flow and a spark - all, I am told, that was necessary, but no vroom! At 5.30 (I had planned to leave at 3.00 to miss the rush hour), I became a bit panicky, knowing what Friday traffic in London is all about and whichever way I would go I would cop it. The car was towed away and at 6 o'clock I was on the verge of ringing Hanna to say I could not get there. All afternoon I'd been trying to arrange the most ridiculous alternative transport via borrowed vehicles, and then the car re-appeared, and running. Without stopping to ask questions I set off for Watford. I left the studio at 6.15.

Heaven knows how I was on the outskirts of Watford at five to eight, after what I can only remember as 2 hours of compounded stress, I cannot imagine making the journey much less quickly at any time of day. I have never visited the venue, don't know the area having only once been there with someone else driving. I was lost.

The traffic was heavy, there was no-one around to ask the way, I went round and round on a network of dual carriageways with the little map I'd been sent. I stopped at a junction with a take-away and two petrol stations, the only payphone was out of order and no-one had heard of the Orbital Community Centre.

At 8.35, in a state of anxiety and exhaustion, I gave in and took the sign for London. I understand now that your members were still around at 10 o'clock, but after the events of the day, had I found you, my nerves were so frayed I cannot imagine the mess I would have made of my demonstration.

Of course I feel completely responsible for letting you down. I can only apologise to those people waiting around in vain and particularly to the organisers of the event who were further inconvenienced by providing the wheel and so on, but most of all to Hanna Christianson who invited me and who has gone to great lengths to ensure things went smoothly only to face the embarrassment of my non-arrival. I am sorry not to have met you all.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Cordy

FUTURE GUILD EVENTS

Friday Feb. 10th 8 p.m. at Northchurch Social Centre

Peter Phillips runs two workshops with his wife, one in Kent & another in the Dordogne (France). He works in stoneware & porcelain, using various glazing techniques to produce decorative & domestic ware.

Friday March 10th 8 p.m. at Northchurch Social Centre

Sue Dyer will be visiting us to demonstrate the inlaid decorative techniques she uses on porcelain pieces.

Friday April 7th 8 p.m. at Northchurch Social Centre

Jacqueline Norris produces most of her ceramics by slab building. She uses T material mixed with porcelain to intensify the colours of her matt & satin oxidised glazes.

VISIT TO BOVINGDON BRICKWORKS

This is planned for a weekday during the first week of March 1995. Les Cook could not give an exact date since the workload varies, so a final date will be set during late February. Please confirm or re-confirm your interest by dropping a brief note to Brian Bicknell, who is co-ordinating this interesting event.

POT CRAWL - see page 10.

OTHER EVENTS

Feb.16th - March 12th: Recent Work by Paul Tierney & Linda Gardner. Stables Gallery, Gladstone Park, London, N.W.2. Open Thursdays to Sundays. Further information from The Stables on 081 452 8655

An exhibition of contemporary studio ceramic teapots, coffee pots & related items will be held at the Bramah Tea & Coffee Museum, Butler's Wharf, London in conjunction with the Craftsmen Potters' Association from May-August 1995. It will be a selling exhibition. For further information ring Gaynor Lindsell on 081 449 5288.

Crafts Council announce that, in future, only those makers who join the new Register of Makers will receive *Maker's News*. Currently, there are 17,200 members. For further information contact Barclay Price, Editor, at the Crafts Council, 44a Pentonville Rd., London N1 9BY.

OPEN DAYS: Doug Jones will be holding Open Days during 1995 on the following dates (all Sundays): 19th March, 18th June, 24th September, 17th December.

Guild members & their friends are very welcome at these events which will be held at Riverside Cottage, 114 Norfolk Rd. Rickmansworth, Herts. (phone 0923 770913) beginning at 11.00 a.m., continuing until the last person leaves. Coffee will be provided, but please bring your own food & wine, etc., or alternatively Simone will provide a lunch, for which a donation to a designated Charity will be expected.

TALK & DEMONSTRATION **BY MURRAY FIELDHOUSE - OCTOBER 14TH**

Murray decided not to give us a lecture but instead to share with us his skills in working with contrasting colours of slips to produce marbling, feathering and a multitude of other effects. In fact he did spend some time, whilst demonstrating, explaining what he might have talked about had he not been so busy sorting out matters of rubbish disposal on adjoining property and the building of an Oriental Anagama kiln (the type which has several chambers arranged climbing up a hillside) with his friend Gas!

What he talked about was his belief that the year 1958 was of great significance to the direction of studio pottery as we know it today. Some of the important happenings were:-

1. The first conference of the American Craft Council was held and the imminent expansion of craft work was mooted.
2. The Brussels Fair showed American potters' work - the first showing of multi-cultural pottery.
3. Purchase tax was introduced which resulted in potters getting together to promote and sell their work - the eventual result being the Craftsmen Potters Association.
4. "On the Road" was published, resulting in 'hippies' taking over the alternative society label which had previously been held by potters.
5. Schools started to use short cut ways of making pots e.g. clay tubes made by wrapping clay sheets around cardboard tubes. Previously all pots had been wheel thrown.
6. A second pottery magazine "The New Zealand Potter" was published.

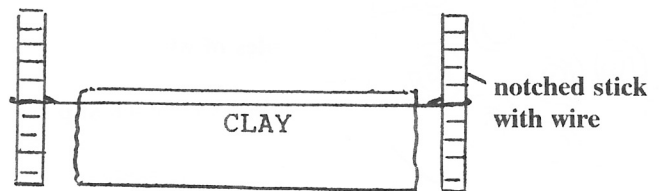
7. "Clays and Glazes for the Potter" by Daniel Rhodes was published. This changed the climate among potters from one of secretiveness to one of open discussion of techniques and glazes.

8. There was a change in fashion among potters who abandoned earthenware and turned to oxidised stoneware.

9. Hans Coper stopped making tableware and became an "artist" potter.

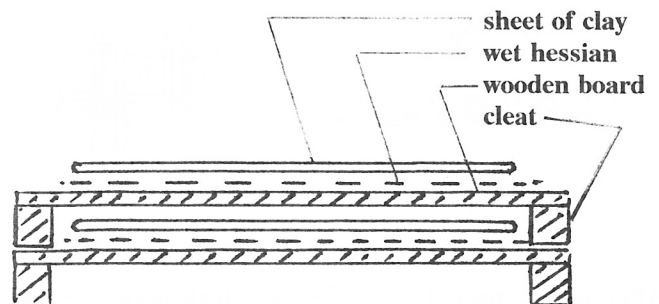
10. "Parkinson's Law" was published.

Whilst talking to us, Murray demonstrated his method of making flat sheets of clay using either a harp or notched stick with wire across it (*see diagram*)



Clay

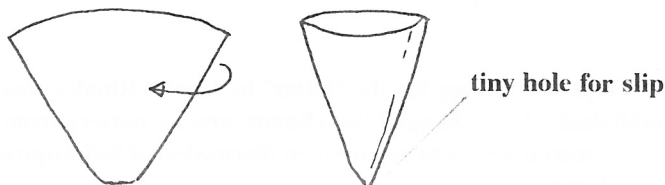
He flattened the clay further by rolling it between two guide sticks and then laid the sheets on to wet hessian on square wooden bats with cleats between them. These are used to support the clay whilst the slips are drying. (*see diagram*)



White slip is made of 60 ball clay to 40 china clay and the black slip from 8 red clay (powder) to 1 manganese. The slip is either whisked or put through a 30 to 40 mesh sleeve.

Feathering

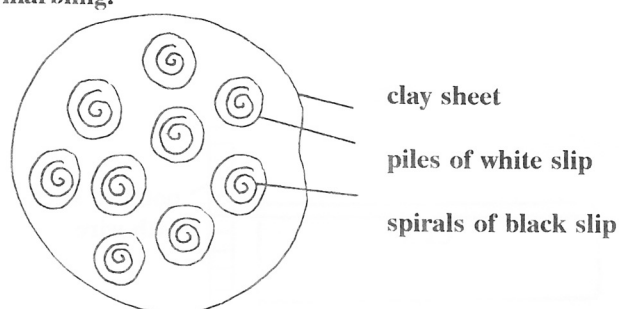
Black slip is poured on to the clay, tilted to cover the whole and any excess poured off. White slip is put into a bulbed slip trailer or one of Murray's "specials" made from a polythene sheet made into a funnel (*see diagram*).



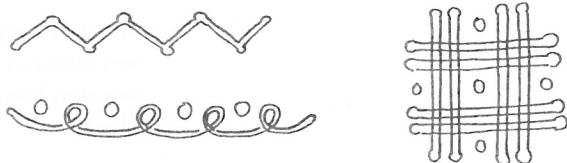
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Line of white slip are trailed on to the black slip whilst it is still wet, the board is tamped down and then a needle or feather pulled across the lines to produce an effect like the icing on Bakewell tart. No matter how close the lines to each other, they invariably do not blend.

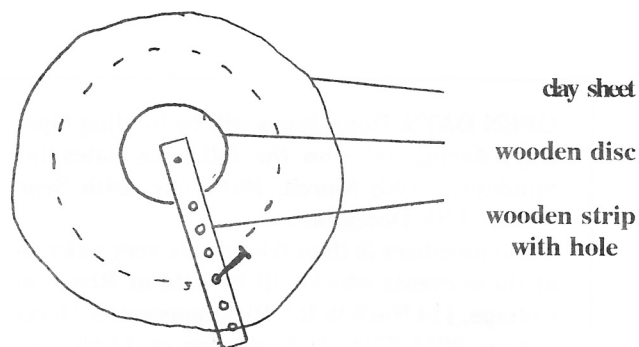
Murray also showed us the technique of marbling which involved building up quite high blobs of white slip with a slip trailer and then trailing on to them spirals of black slip (*see diagram*). He then tamped the clay against the table top and tipped and tapped it to produce marbling.



He showed us examples of many different styles, three of which are shown below. He also showed us several traditional slipware plates ranging from precision work to more loose and free. His view was that the "slapdash" slipware won the day.



After about three days of drying, which occurs evenly because of the wet hessian underneath, the sheet of decorated clay is upturned on to a hump mould. Later on a rim is added. Traditionally, red lead or Galena was used in a glaze but because they are so poisonous we now use lead bisilicate frit with about 3% iron oxide or red clay to give the honey colour. If a matter glaze is required then whiting is added. Murray finally showed us his gadget for cutting out circles from clay slabs. It consists of a small flat disc of wood with a hole in the centre from which is attached a strip of wood with regularly spaced holes drilled through. By placing the wooden disc at the centre of the clay, putting a nail through a hole and cutting round in a circular motion, different sized discs can be cut out (*see diagram*).



Elaine Hudson

IN UGANDA WITH THE SEDGLEYS.

I received this very interesting letter, printed below, from Jean & Bob Sedgley in December '94. I thought other Guild members would be interested to read it too.

Jean & Bob were active Guild members right from the beginning. They very kindly allowed their Watford house to be used for committee meetings which made it a very pleasant way of conducting business. As a bonus, we could look at their varied collection of pots & at Bob's first-rate paintings - he is a professional artist.

Naturally, we were dismayed when they said they were intending to emigrate to Spain. Their misfortune & our good luck was that it took over 2 years to sell their house (how selfish can you be?). Well, of course, at last they went & set up their pottery & art studio in Sagra, Alicante in '91/'92 where, as I understand, they are now successfully established.

Ruth Karnac

I am beginning to write this at Entebbe airport, following the most remarkable 3 weeks of the year, & perhaps of our lives. We have been visiting our friend Gill, from Sagra, working as V.S.O. in Uganda as a nurse tutor. It is a beautiful country, lush & fertile with rust-red soil, & although we have seen African countries on television, nothing prepared us for the surprise & even shock of seeing a country that in some ways is so close & in others so distant to the English way of life. Having lived in Spain for almost three years, perhaps these contradictions were more apparent to us. It was good to be able to communicate easily. The education is in English, although not all parents can afford to send their children to school, so that most can speak a little English. For some, however, it has not progressed beyond, "How are you?" & "Mzungu! give me money", Gill usually replies, "No, African.

You give me money!", but was embarrassed once when one child did. Ugandans are very polite, friendly & quietly spoken. Only once did I encounter any unpleasantness. While taking photos in a village market a man came up & told me angrily that I needed a permit from the government. I think he was a leftover from Obote's oppressive regime & some of the other people around were a little shocked, some of them had been asking me to take their photographs.



But no-one argued - Ugandans are reluctant to complain, as in the past, the man you complained about might have had a cousin in the army.

Before a question, it is important to go through the ritual of asking how someone is & how is their life, & then if you are asking directions they are quite likely to take your hand & accompany you part of the way. They set great store by appearances & are mostly remarkably well dressed & clean, considering that many of them live in mud huts, or tiny one-room houses with very few possessions, & that all their water has to be carried in jerricans, perhaps from a local tap or maybe many miles from a well or stream.

Many women wear the traditional *gomes* dress, or all-purpose wraparound *kanga*, but most men will wear western shirt & trousers, never jeans, & in remote villages, along dirt roads, look as though they are on their way to the office. Taking a pride in personal hygiene & appearance are important, even the simplest & scruffiest restaurants (& we went into a few) will have a washbowl & soap as everyone washes their hands before eating. It is unfortunate, therefore, that some *mzungus*, especially Americans, dress so sloppily as the Ugandans will, quite rightly, take this as an affront to their sense of dignity.



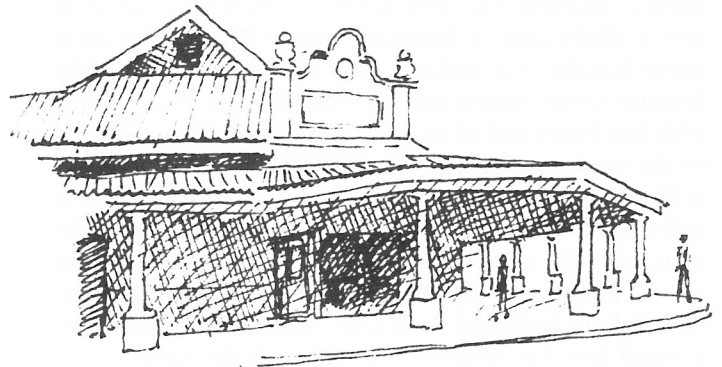
Bicycle taxis are a common sight

Most of the white people we encountered are in some way connected with aid agencies. No doubt the agencies are doing useful work but one is a little alarmed at reports of aid workers & their families staying at the Kampala Sheraton at over £100 a night, & hearing of a fleet of brand-new 4WD UNICEF vehicles doesn't inspire a

response to their appeals for donations! This profligate use of aid money, it has to be said, does not apply to V.S.O. Kathy, whom we met, once an administrator in a British university, now teaching office skills several miles up a dirt road, with no electricity or running water in the village, was given a second-hand motorbike for transport. Gill, who lives close to the hospital and only some 10 kms. outside Kampala doesn't qualify for even that & has bought her own 4WD, paying for it with a sackful of 1,000 shilling notes (1,000 shillings = 70p).

Most of the hotels that we stayed in - in the Uganda Hotels chain, but now being sold off - were good standard although sometimes a little run down & a room for two with breakfast and evening meals costs around £25, so it is possible to travel around at a reasonable cost & in reasonable comfort. However, an unfortunate consequence of the U.N. aid convoys passing through the country from Kenya to Rwanda earlier this year is that the price of rooms in second-class hotels has been forced up to that of the better hotels, & the owners are reluctant to accept that the golden goose is no longer laying in their area, & although bargaining is the order of the day

in shops & markets, prefer to turn custom away from a near empty hotel rather than accept a more realistic offer.



Typical shops on a street corner, Jinja.

Although there are signs of economic revival, most of the people are still very poor; a teacher that we gave a lift to earned 40,000 shillings per month - we paid more than that for one night's accommodation in a hotel! Yet they are very dignified & without a shred of envy & are very curious to know about the rest of the world. I found myself giving a brief run-down on the cause of the Gulf war to a small boy on a street corner in Jinja.

Considering the wars & all the problems associated with two ruthless dictatorships, government corruption & neglect, it is marvellous & re-assuring to discover how generous-hearted and good-natured the people are; & we heard nothing but good spoken of President Museveni (whose picture is in every shop, restaurant & hotel) whose system of non-party government with local committees reaching down to grass roots level has at last brought stability & a tremendous desire to revive business & industry & renew the economy. The roads, however, are in a frightful condition, particularly around Kampala. The traffic veers from side to side to avoid the potholes, the pedestrians & the bicycles carrying boxes pronouncing "fresh meat deliveries", or with bunches of bananas or

perhaps roofing materials tethered to the verges. Smoking lorries, rusting mini-buses & crazily driven, overloaded pick-ups weave & dart along, honking at anything in the way. Amongst the muddy streets & broken footpaths, the ill-maintained shops with dirty windows & rusting iron rooves, there is a keen energy & spirit of enterprise. New buildings are going up, new restaurants are opening. The Maharajah & the Fang Fang provided us with the best Indian & Chinese meals we have ever eaten.



Almost everywhere we went outside of Kampala we were objects of curiosity. I soon got used to an audience of 10 or 15 children & adults whenever I stopped to paint or draw in the street; & a crowd would gather to watch us drink our sodas sitting outside the little *hoteli* (restaurant) of a village when we were on our travels. But nowhere that we went did we feel threatened or at risk. There is a slight

risk of intruders at night but all the hotels had an armed guard at night - more for show & to give employment to ex-soldiers, I thought - & Gill was provided with an askari, complete with bow & arrows, by V.S.O. There is also a slight risk of highway robbery if travelling on a *mtatu* (minibus) at night or early in the morning, mainly because businessmen may be travelling at those times with briefcases full of money, banks not being geared up to the modern economy. However, no physical violence is likely to be offered to a *mzungu* as it would lead to a police investigation & a lot of trouble & killing a white man would be a capital offence; it has been many years since a European was killed, & that was during the wars. Gill & Jean both had their bags opened in a market by a small boy but nothing was taken & the culprit was marched off out of sight by several stall-holders - what happened to him next, we only guessed at.

It is also re-assuring to know that if one's car broke down far from town, a short walk into a village would find willing helpers & hospitality for the night if necessary & that possibly the greatest risk to the person would be from drinking the water & eating the goat meat & possibly even the greater risk of offending would be to refuse them!



Moses, Gill's askari, getting ready to defend her from intruders

We did two trips out from Kampala. Gill drove us to Mbale where we stayed with Grant, another V.S.O. We did a drive out one day to see cave paintings & were due to go to Sipi Falls but as we had heavy rain during the night, we decided to forgo the journey up a winding mountain road on the back of a pick-up, & looked round the town instead. Then returned to Jinja by bus, an experience in itself, accompanied by a travelling pharmacist selling pills & cure-alls from a suitcase to the passengers.

Jinja, close to the spot which Speke declared to be the source of the Nile, is an attractive town despite being rather run-down, with a very interesting market. It has many old colonial style houses & reminders of a once thriving Asian community - just beginning to return. We returned to Kampala by *mtatu*, but though fast & cheap (about £1 for the 50 mile journey), a near collision with a lorry, saved by the skill & incredibly fast reactions of our driver, rather dampened our enthusiasm for this mode of transport. However, safety aside, they are an excellent means of transporting large numbers of people around, Operating on a fill-up & go basis, they are very economical. While in Jinja, we tried the other form of cheap transport - the rather more sedate bicycle-taxi when returning to our hotel.

The second trip that we did with Gill was to the west. We stayed first at Mweya Lodge at Queen Elizabeth National Park, where cheeky bright yellow weaver birds steal sugar from the tables on the terrace. Sunday morning we took a boat trip on the Kazinga Channel, which flows between Lake George & Lake Edward, & photographed hippo, water buffalo, Uganda cob, many varieties of birds & a monitor lizard, & also passed a fishing village with flocks of pelicans amongst the boats drawn up on the shore. Mweya Lodge is very comfortable & attractively situated overlooking the Great Rift Valley with distant views of the snow-capped Rwenzori mountains, the legendary 'Mountains of the Moon'. Later that day, we saw elephants & more buffalo on our way to see the ancient craters. These extinct, volcanic features, a mile or so wide, some with lakes at the bottom, create a dreamy Eden-like landscape of lush greens & soft blue shadows receding to the horizon. Elephants can sometimes be spotted climbing down their steep & overgrown sides. The next day we went north, crossing the Equator, to Kasese. From the balcony of the Margherita hotel, close to the Rwenzories, little plumes of smoke could be seen in the late afternoon, high up in the foothills of the mountains. These identified the isolated houses where the passion fruit growers live, some of them for more than a 100 years, above the altitude where insect-borne diseases can strike, coming down only to take their produce to Kampala. Kasese itself was a

dusty, wild West feel, & a large painted notice proclaims 'Pepsi-cola welcomes the Pope' since his visit last year. I was quizzed a little suspiciously by a plain-clothes policeman (he showed me his warrant card when I asked to see it, so he was genuine) while making a drawing of the local shops, but he was quite friendly when he realised that I was up to no harm.

From Kasese, where we picked up Kathy, we returned to the south-west corner of Uganda, near the border with Rwanda, to Kabale, possibly the most fertile, varied & beautiful region of the country, with small banana plantations intersected with other crops, & brown patches of ploughed fields. Little clusters of round thatched huts dot the valleys & gentle mists roll up the hillsides. From the attractively-situated White Horse Inn overlooking the



town, we went by the *murram* (dirt) road for 120 km. into the impenetrable forest to Bwindi National Park where we stayed two nights at African Pearl Lodge, a collection of huts served by an outdoor African kitchen. Basic, but very comfortable, with proper toilets & ingenious hot showers constructed from bags with watering-can roses fitted to the bottom.

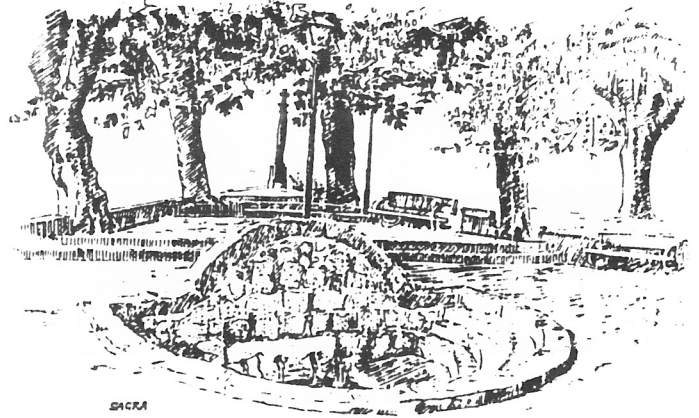
The day between we were gorilla tracking so had to be up early to be briefed. The rules are strict: no-one to get closer than 5 metres (we hope that the gorillas know this), no flash photography, no litter, no eating in their vicinity & no-one allowed who is ill. And if a 'call of nature' is required, all faeces & toilet paper to be buried at least 30 cm. - the guide will dig you a hole! The guide & porters were superb, we clambered up & slithered down the densely covered hillsides, pushed from behind & pulled from in front, we got our panting, overfed & unfit bodies deep into that remote & primæval landscape. There were six in our group, the maximum allowed, plus trackers & porters, Gill & us, a farming couple from Cornwall &, fortuitously, a professional photographer, Paul Joynson-Hicks, who has just published a very nice book of photographs of Uganda, so we hope to get some better pictures than our instamatic snaps. We were well-shod but still stumbled & grasped at branches for support at times, while the trackers & porters in wellies or barefoot would, quietly & without fuss, put their feet behind ours to give us a firmer grip when the going was steep & slippery. In about three hours, we found the troop - a large silverback male & his family. We were treated to an acrobatic performance by three youngsters scampering up & down the trees. Eventually the mother took them off & the male moved up to join them, passing within feet of us. No-one moved - entranced - no-one took a photograph! To be so close to these beautiful creatures, so primitive yet so nearly related to us, was a moving & memorable experience. After an hour we returned to the lodge & a welcome shower. In the afternoon, a tropical rainstorm drenched the forest.



Kitchen - African Pearl

We had a few days left in Kampala which we spent saying goodbye to new-found friends & shopping for craftwork. In Uganda Crafts, by chance, we found the farming couple also looking for souvenirs.

On the last morning, before sunrise, we set off on the 40 km. drive to Entebbe, set on a long finger of land on the north shore of Lake Victoria.



Kampala is beginning to wake up. The askaris in their blue uniforms are on their way home, rifles over their shoulders. At the airport we meet again some Norwegians who had been at Q.E. National Park & who we had occasion to be grateful to as they literally helped us out of a hole on the crater road. Sitting in front of us in the plane was Tanya, a bubbly much-travelled girl with a strong Irish accent, whom we had previously met on our first evening at African Pearl. She had already been to the gorillas so reassured us that it wasn't too difficult. She was on her way home to Berlin, we promised to look her up - one day. Next to her was a charming young Zairean travelling on to his new home in Boston. He would like us to visit his country & kindly lent us his thesis to read - it tells another tale of mismanagement & shocking political corruption - he assured us that the people are friendly, there is no robbery. We talked about the Rwenzories - his cousin is the owner of the Margherita hotel, whom we had also met (the biggest jam & sauce manufacturer in Uganda!); we urged him to tell his cousin not to spend too much on refurbishing his hotel, & thereby making it too expensive for us to stay in again. He also knows the family of Paul, the photographer. This is like a story where the characters meet up again at the end - as if things are moving in a circular pattern. Africa does not want to let us go so easily. Uganda, Uganda - we have touched the rim of Paradise - we will not forget you!

Bob Sedgley
(who also did the drawings)

1994 GUILD EXHIBITION

This year at the Cow Byre, the Guild exhibition was varied and interesting; the members' pots showed the great variety of work we do, & once again I have to thank the professional potters who supported us by showing their work. Unfortunately, in the present economic climate, it is difficult to sell pottery at professional prices. However, the exhibition was visited by a very large number of the general public & we sold £952.50-worth of pottery.

Although we let people take away their purchases as they made them, we still had a nice display of pots at the end and, due to having plenty of pots available for replacement (see picture).



Photograph by Ruth Karnac

I would have liked to have had more of our members entering at least one pot, but we did manage to show a new aspect of the Guild's activity by displaying some experimental pots from Doug Jones' 'firecord' firing in September - I hope you all saw them.

Not many members came to the Private View so perhaps you would let us have your thoughts as to whether a Private View is desirable. Thanks to everyone who took part & do please let us know if you can think of changes or improvements for future exhibitions.

Marguerite Moon.

LETTERING WITH MARTIN COOK - (Dec.10th 1994)

This evening was somewhat different to the usual. Instead of another potter, stone letter cutter. Martin Cook passed his 'A' level in Art & three years later he took up the carving of letters in slate, Portland limestone & marble as his main employment. He worked with Michael Harvey, carver of the lettering in the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery in London.

The chain goes back to Alec Peever, Kinderley & to Eric Gill who carved the War Memorial at Bisham, Prospero at the B.B.C. & the magnificent Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral. Many of us know of Eric Gill who lived at Piggotts Wood near High Wycombe. Martin's family has been cutting stone since the 1720s, so this is a case of handing down tradition within a family.

Martin's interest is in the beauty of line & shape of letters. The first letters were either the work of a brush or that of a chisel in the hands of a mason. The famous column of Trajan in Roman has defined the shape of capital letters to this day. These are thought of as being painted on first & the stone cutter with mallet & chisels following on behind. Whichever way the order went, the letters were designed so as to facilitate the chisel. Light & shadow do the rest. Strong Italian sunlight created the forms that could be read from the foot of the column with ease. The beautiful lower case developed out of the use of the brush & pen. Simplified forms were created by our Saxon forefathers, so as to speed up the process of writing.

So as to save space on precious parchment, the letters were condensed either in the German manner or in the Italian by sloping the letter forms & packing them in closely. This is a very condensed history, but it does explain the variety of styles used throughout the centuries.

The start of the meeting was a demonstration of letter cutting with a tungsten tipped chisel. Before the advent of modern chisels, the cutter employed men to constantly sharpen the chisels. The design is first produced on paper in a very detailed manner & then pounced onto the stone surface. Pouncing is the transferring of the image by the use of carbon paper under the original design & traced through. Errors on the stoneface cannot be corrected, so spelling, design & space have to be right.



Above: Martin carves one of his slate memorial plaques.

Below: He discusses his work whilst members try their hand at lettering.



Photograph by Ruth Karnac

This was followed by slides on the screen, showing work in progress & that already completed on municipal buildings, to plaques commemorating famous people & events. Perhaps the most beautiful were the gravestones in various country churchyards made of slate & limestone. Many of these were carved on both sides, with chamfered edges & naturalistic leaves & flowers.

The object of the evening was to show the almost obvious, we have lettering all around us. On buildings, newsprint, street signs & a multitude of other things. Well designed lettering is not only a pleasure to see - it is an art form as great as any other - but also of great practical use.

For those who dared to try out the skills of cutting, Martin allowed us to cut our own with strange but readable results. It is not the power of the mallet or chisel punching into the stone that creates beautiful lines & shapes. It is the gentle tap, tap, tap onto the chisel that is held lightly between the index & little fingers, with small adjustments to take the chisel to the left or right.

During my apprenticeship I had to draw lettering for adverts & posters, so I understand the complexities of lettering & design. The display this evening has shown that the art of good lettering, whether on stone, glass or paper, is still alive in the era of computer imaging, & long may it be so.

The evening concluded with punch & mince pies.

Brian Bicknell

P.S. Should any members wish to contact Martin Cook, his new studio is at 11 Station Road, Loudwater, High Wycombe, Bucks.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The following people have joined the Guild since we published our last Newsletter:

Fior Angela, Val Bennet, Val Dudding, Christine Griffin, Hannah Harris, Jennie & David Kirk, Suzanne Phillips & P. Simmonds.

We are delighted to welcome so many new members & look forward to meeting them at our evening events, visits & other activities.

Some sad news for the New Year; Ken Morrice, who joined the Guild in 1993, died instantly from a massive heart attack on 6th December 1994. We send our condolences to his widow, Kay.

PROFILES

I was lucky. I went to a secondary school where there was a pottery room with a wheel up in the attic - so I lost myself frequently up there where no one could find me! My father, an academic scientist, couldn't cope with this, or the fact that his daughter wanted to join the Bohemian set, so I was guided to a teachers' training college, where the craft lecturer was delighted to have a volunteer skivvy to pack the kiln, and I quickly learned the necessary tricks. Then I went into primary education, married & started a family - the pottery bug still gnawing - I went to a further education class with a totally disinterested pottery tutor & I thought I could do better, so I applied for a job. Then in 1970 such a post fell into my lap & I started working for the London Borough of Barnet for two evenings a week.



The love of clay began to flourish once more & I started working in my garden shed, playing with earthenware clay, gaining commissions. Then in 1975, I attended the Guild's inaugural meeting & the enthusiasm there fed my hunger until I attended my first Raku firing. This was so exciting that I ran home to build my own Raku kiln. From there on, as a fire potter, I built various kilns both wood & gas fired, & my

love of Raku deepened & expanded. I continued teaching, bringing up my family, running my studio in St. Albans, by now open to the public, & in 1985 (I think) I was persuaded to become the Chairman of this splendid Guild. Exhibitions, both shared & solo & work selected for the Eastern Arts Touring Exhibition, all served to encourage me to work in Raku porcelain until 1989 when, alas, I lost my studio set-up & my world fell apart.

This year saw the completion of a video film about the making & firing of my Raku porcelain in my new set-up in Harpenden, & now encouraged by Bonhams' acceptance of my work, I am beginning to make more again. It is a love/hate relationship, loving the pieces that possess the life quality but hating the horrendously high loss rate, but it is, nevertheless, a relationship I cannot imagine living without.

Pauline Ashley

THE FLOATING WORLD OF DOUG JONES



Why Floating World? For someone who spent many years living & touring the country with a pair of old wooden boats, & is amused by the Zen concept that "this is a floating world & the next is real", the name seems more than apt. Now living & working astride the river Chess in Hertfordshire, Doug Jones is in the heart of the country where the sun rises & only minutes from the metropolis & the

major motorways to the rest of the compass. His work is like his conversation, it flows in a steady stream & is just as varied. It has never been his ambition to refine again & again a few ideas, but to have many. Once he found it difficult to produce cheap domestic pottery, yet now it is part of his daily routine to make it available to the public alongside the more individual items. Doug likes to think that *Floating World* has no 'house style', the variety of work is more extensive than most potters, yet regular customers can discern his work with ease as the form & colour apparent in the cheapest coffee beaker has links with his more expensive dishes & sculptures.

Doug Jones has been making one kind of pottery or another for over 30 years, for the first 20 he was also a visiting lecturer at several London Art Colleges. His work has been exhibited in some of the major capitals of the world, but he prefers the personal approach where he has a chance to meet his public & hopefully introduce a new generation to the joy of owning & using a piece of handmade work, whether made by his hand or someone else's. All of the work is stoneware or porcelain fired in a down draught gas kiln which is sometimes heavily reduced with the use of pine at the end of the firing.

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POT CRAWL - JUNE 17TH 1995

This year, I am proposing a two-day trip to Nottinghamshire. Before I go ahead with my plans, I need to know whether I have the support of the membership.

Saturday 17.6.95. (By coach). Three pick-up points: High Wycombe, Chorley Wood & Hemel Hempstead or St. Albans.

Travel to Rufford Craft Centre in Sherwood Forest for viewing, rest and a meal.

To see Jane Hamlyn at Everton, near Doncaster; she will demonstrate her method of making pots (salt glazing).

Next day we will visit Chris Aston at Retford and possibly James Newbould, who throws replicas of mediæval pots (about 4 miles away). Journey home via A1 or M1.

The more I can fill the coach, 30- or 52-seater, the more economical in cost it will be.

Information on accommodation will be notified in the next NEWSLETTER

This is an outline & can be adjusted to fit the majority of members. PLEASE RESPOND EARLY AS ACCOMMODATION IN JUNE WILL NOT BE EASY IF LEFT TOO LATE.

Brian Bicknell, 41 Coates Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP13 5ET

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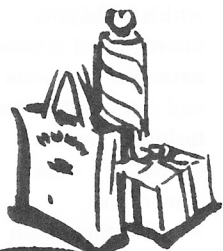
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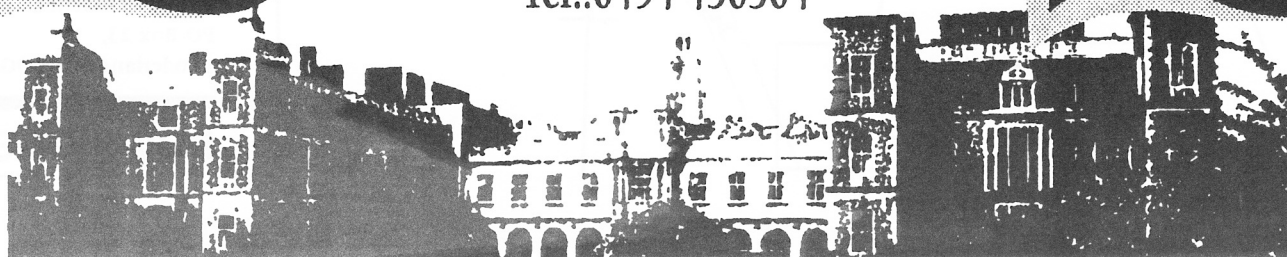


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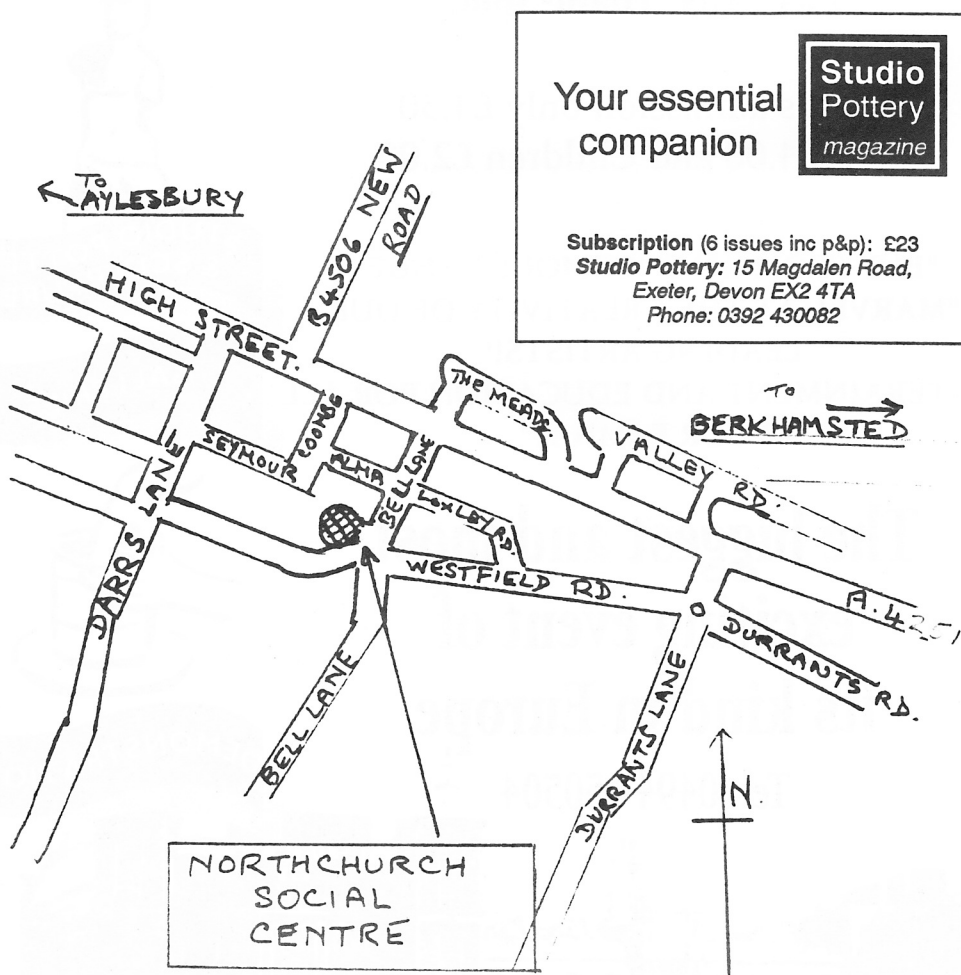
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Send your artwork or advertisement to G.A.Stevens (Advertising Manager), 84 Kings Rd., Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 3BP. Tel: 0442 863146

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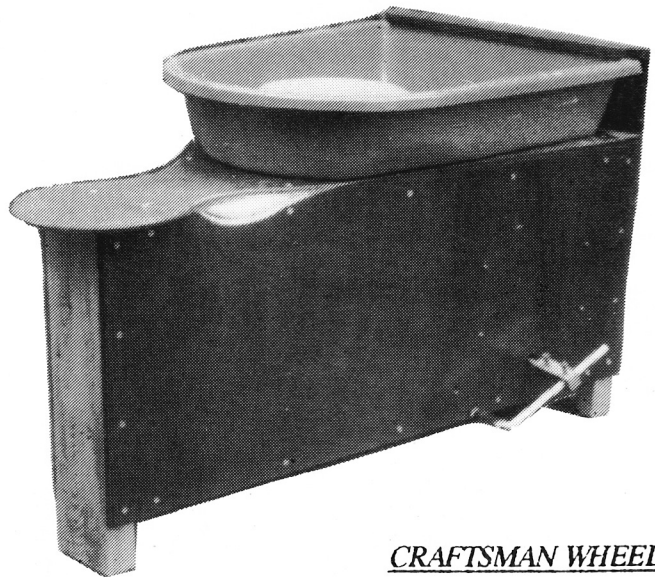
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