



DACORUM AND
CHILTERN
POTTERS GUILD



NEWSLETTER

NOV. / DEC.

1995

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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 and workshops are organised at various times during the year.

Membership Rates: Family - £16.50
 Single - £14.00
 Student- £ 7.50

Send your cheque to Membership Sec., Digby Stott (address & phone number on p.12)

The Dacorum & Chiltern Potters Guild Newsletter is published bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September & November, being distributed free 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 Guild Members as a whole.

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Closing date for articles for January
Newsletter - 12th December

Advertisements

The Guild is not responsible for the content of individual advertisements printed in the Newsletter.

Reward-Clayglaze are pleased to announce their recent acquisition of PotteryCrafts Ltd.

The two companies will now trade under the banner of PotteryCrafts Ltd, from the present sites in Stoke-on-Trent, Norbury, Rickmansworth and Battersea.

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Norbury, London SW16 4RW
Tel: 0181 679 7606. Fax: 0181 679 9112.

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Herts. WD3 1HW.
Tel: 01923 770127. Fax: 01923 896202

PotteryCrafts, Ltd,
8-10 Ingate Place, Battersea, London SW8 3NS.
Tel: 0171 720 0050. Fax: 0171 627 8290.

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Thrown ribbed and altered pot with handles, by Gaynor Lindsell. Height approx. 20 cm. (see article by Elaine Hudson).

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EDITORIAL

Selecting photographs for the Newsletter is not usually a problem, because the quantity available is almost equal to the number we use. For this issue the choice is harder, because Linda Bryant and others supplied a large number of photographs taken during the Pottery and Ceramics Festival. However, some of these can probably be displayed at the Open Day.

The Festival at Hatfield was a great success for the Guild and, as most of you will know, I really enjoy events which give people a chance to try their hand at some aspect of pottery (with throwing being an obvious choice in my case).

It is always a great pleasure to have some feedback indicating an appreciation of our Guild activity and the fact that so many people visited our stand to buy pots, try out the wheels, or join us as new Guild members indicates that we are probably doing the right things.

Freda Earl is one of our most enthusiastic members and immediately took up the suggestion that we should have another firing to test the effects possible, using "Hyperaccumulator plants". The planned date for this informal event is 17th November, so please phone Freda if you are interested.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Mervyn,

I enclose a brief autobiographical note as requested.

I enjoyed helping at the Hatfield House Show - I thought it was very well run and what an excellent show it was altogether.

Regards,

Gerald Gladstone

FUTURE GUILD EVENTS

Friday Dec.8th, 8 p.m. at Northchurch Social Centre
ALAN PARROTT

Everyone should get a good Buzz from this event as Alan is a beekeeper. If new members are wondering what sort of organisation they have joined, let me just say that it is our custom to have a non-pottery subject for the December meeting, but if you have ever made a honey pot, or would like to do so before then, do bring it along to show others- glazed with a transparent honey glaze, of course (only joking!).

Alan will tell us all about beekeeping and will, probably, bring with him some bees (safely enclosed) and some of his products including, I understand, some honey marmalade.

There will be a mini-Christmas 'do' with mince pies and some fruit cup for refreshments as well as the usual tea and coffee.

Friday Jan.12th, 8 p.m. at Northchurch Social Centre
SUE VARLEY

Sue is a well-known potter who has worked and exhibited in both stoneware and earthenware over a long period of time. She had an article about her work in *Ceramic Review* (Issue 106). Sue teaches at the North London Collegiate School and will talk to us about this and about the projects she carries out with her students. It is a well-known girls' school in Canons Park, Edgware and has a large and flourishing art department. She will show us some slides and share with us some of her teaching experiences.

There will also be a brief practical technique you can try out for yourselves. There will be something for you whether you are a teacher, a pupil, or an individual potter.

Sunday Nov.26th - Saturday Dec.9th
D.C.P.G. MEMBERS EXHIBITION

REMINDER - Handing in at the Cow Byre, Ruislip, Sunday November 26th 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

LIST - It is essential that your lists are on the correct form - pink, enclosed in the last Newsletter. If you have lost it, ring 01442 865661 for a duplicate or photocopy someone else's. Please - no odd sheets of paper. There will be spare copies at the Cow Byre on the Sunday morning for you to use.

DESCRIPTION - Label on each pot with the same details as list - name, description and price. We cannot be expected to know that "Vase £20" is the same as "Green Vase £20". If you have more than one "Green Vase", they must have a number as well, even if the prices are not the same - so "Green Vase No.1: £20" and "Green Vase No.2: £15" is what we need. We cannot display any pot which is not adequately labelled and described and we shall not have time for detective work. We have to have a system as foolproof as possible for your protection.

DELIVERY - If you cannot manage to deliver on Sunday 26th to Ruislip, telephone either Marguerite Moon on 01727 832801 (Colney Heath), or Ruth Karnac on 01895 631738 (Ruislip) or the Earls on 01442 865661 (Berkhamsted), who have volunteered to act as collection points.

PRIVATE VIEW - There will be no private view - attendance at past private views indicate that members do not find it useful.

MANNING THE EXHIBITION - **ALL** exhibitors are expected to do one session - if you find this difficult and can't persuade a friend to do it for you, it may be possible to find someone willing to do it on your behalf for payment.

Freda Earl

PITSTONE GREEN FARM MUSEUM - RAKU & SMOKE FIRING PROJECT & ADVENTURE PLAY-GROUND FOR POTTERS.

Building works so far done by Jean Halsey, Mark Wiggins, Frances Levy, Dorothea Patterson, Freda Earl, Linda Bryant and Victor Earl. Frances brought the best sponge cake I've ever tasted and that, with the charm, wit and beauty of the workers has got us a lot of help from the Museum people. This is a good co-operation which will be to the benefit of both the DCPG and the Museum. The next job will be roofing as soon as the timbers are ready - volunteers please phone me on 01442 865661.

Freda Earl



Cartoon by Freda

OTHER EVENTS

CHELTENHAM - Dec.16th-17th

C.P.A.'s Christmas fair with 60 leading potters demonstrating, including Wally Keeler, Jane Hamlyn, David Frith, Anna Lambert, etc., etc. At the Pittville Campus, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Ed.

"SMASHING POTS" - Museum of Mankind until Feb.3rd

Again, I would like to bring this once-in-a-lifetime exhibition to your notice. It will be a very long time before you see another collection of pots like these. They are superbly arranged and the whole thing is a feast. It is even FREE. I know the fare into town is a lot of money, but I guarantee you will not be disappointed.

Take a notebook and pencil and a camera if you can. For those who haven't visited this museum before, it is just behind the Royal Academy in Piccadilly. Go right through the Burlington Arcade, turn right and walk a few yards and it is there on your right. The nearest tube stations are Green Park and Piccadilly Circus. You could even end up having tea at the Ritz - though that isn't free!!

VISIT TO KANTHAL WORKS

A visit to the Kanthal works at Stoke-on-Trent is being organised by Keith Cherry of Midland Potters Association. Kanthal are probably the best known suppliers of electric kiln elements and materials in the country. If you are interested, please phone him on 01203 329114, or write to: 104 Shakespeare Drive, Nuneaton, CV11 6NW.

LARK IN THE PARK

June 26th was the fourth 'Lark in the Park' in Hemel Hempstead. This is an event that drew several thousand people to generally have some fun on a summer's afternoon. There was music, food, theatre, farm animals, face painting, St. John's Ambulance, and much, much more. Tucked away in the Craft Village was the Guild with two wheels on the go almost non-stop from 12 until 6 p.m.

Some 90 people came to have a go - and more were disappointed as they couldn't get near us. If the power hadn't failed mid-afternoon, even the Mayor of Hemel Hempstead would have taken a turn at the wheel. However, fail it did for about 20 long and frustrating minutes, whilst the organisers found a replacement generator for us - and then they forgot to switch it on!

All was not lost: once the power was back on, we were again inundated with would-be potters. Time and again people mentioned the film "Ghost" looking around for the handsome young man sitting behind them. We didn't have many handsome young men, but we did have willing helpers.

Luckily the sun shone - a little too much as we all got ever so slightly burnt. The day was hard work, but very worthwhile. My thanks go to those stalwart souls who helped out - Pam Bishop and her neighbour Martin (who isn't a Guild member), Tony Stevens, Mervyn Fitzwilliam, John and Pirette Beckley. Our efforts have added extra funds to the Guild's coffers, as well as introducing lots of people to the joys of clay.

Linda Bryant

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Lesley Reeves is currently working on saggar firings, using metallic salts; many of our members will have seen her work at the Hatfield House National Pottery and Ceramic Festival.

Chris and Lisa Brewchorne have re-joined the Guild. Chris was the man responsible for the initial concept through to the opening of the above mentioned festival. He deserves our congratulations for an event in which many Guild members participated and a total of approximately 7000 people attended. Lisa also worked hard on this event & is also to be congratulated. We welcome Sandra Chipperfield, a teacher and pottery student, presently studying City & Guilds and having a strong interest in all aspects of pottery.

Elizabeth and John Linton have re-joined the Guild. They have the Dragon Gallery at Market Hill in Buckingham and "enjoy everything to do with pottery". Digby Stott informs me that Elizabeth and John were on the Mexico trip in 1983. (Also on this expedition were Tessa Fuchs and other Guild members Ruth and Harry Karnac, Stan Romer and, of course, Dorothy and Digby Stott).

Paul Marshall is a new member; he is a school-master with a strong interest in both stoneware and earthenware, particularly thrown forms.

A new member who joined us at the Hatfield House Event is Anneli Mohlin. Anneli is from Sweden, now living with her family in Rickmansworth.

According to the records received, we have had a virtual flood of new members joining the Guild recently together with some past members who have re-joined. We extend a welcome to Jane and John Branch, Iris Bryant, Anita Cheasty, John Drury (who owns the land on which William Staite Murray's original kilns and workshop still stand and has promised to write about them for us), Elizabeth Foster, S. Goodwin, Jeffrey Hawkins, Margot Hill and Elaine Wells.

Editor

AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY AT COLLEGE LAKE WILDLIFE CENTRE

The Warden of College Lake has asked me to express his personal thanks to all members of the Guild who came and supported the fair at College Lake.

The Wildlife Centre has been created out of a former chalk quarry between Tring and Pitstone, and although still only a few years old, it already supports a wide variety of animals, insects, birds, and plants, many of which are rare and at least two of which are officially extinct!

If you like wildlife or just enjoy a quiet walk with spectacular views, I recommend a visit - but don't forget your binoculars. The Centre is still in the process of being created and the Bucks., Berks. and Oxfordshire Naturalist Trust need both funds and publicity to be able to develop it further and secure its future.

The two-day Craft and Country Fair over the Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday was arranged jointly by the B.B.O.N.T. and Aylesbury Vale Leisure Services to support the work at the Centre. Our 'stall' was the open side of a barn with chickens opposite us who provided us all with entertainment, especially a cockerel which Freda is immortalising in clay. Other attractions included a tractor tour of the site, guided tours of the Centre, a display of restored farm machinery and, in odd contrast, a laser war game tent.

It was the first time I had 'manned' the wheel at an event and I was fascinated to see how different people responded to the instructions and to the clay. Some people were 'naturals' while others were, initially, hopeless, but all had fun. It is difficult to generalise but the 8-12 year olds seemed to respond best, willing to take instructions and strong enough to throw pots, unlike younger children - the youngest was 3 years old! The worst people were those who thought they knew what they were doing - clay has a wonderful way of finding our weaknesses and exacting a wobbly revenge.

For anyone wanting to improve one's own throwing skills, an event like this, helping others, is excellent. By explaining to others and occasionally finding novel ways to 'rescue' pots, and also by watching other people throwing and instructing, I learned a huge amount about throwing technique.

The two days were quieter than the organisers expected, which was disappointing for both them and us (although we did take about £120 on the wheels). Speaking for myself, this disappointment was partly compensated for by having had the opportunity of helping a worthy cause (B.B.O.N.T.), while doing something very enjoyable.

In addition to conveying the Warden's thanks, I would also like personally to thank everyone who helped out on both days, especially Linda Bryant who organised

everything, Pam Bishop and Freda Earl who also came on both days, and Mervyn for the hire of one of his wheels.

I'm looking forward to seeing the finished cockerel !

Sue Taylor

THE NATIONAL POTTERY AND CERAMICS FESTIVAL - Hatfield House, Herts. 11/12/13th August, 1995.

This was a superb first National Festival - five marquees and the grounds around them full of potters from across the country - what more could one want?

As the local Guild, we made our presence felt in many ways. Not only were we featured on B.B.C. Three Counties Radio prior to the festival, but also appeared in several local newspapers after the event.

As the organiser for our stand, I would like to thank the 26 Guild members who turned out over the three days to make the event a tremendous success, despite the searing heat. Most especially, thanks to Mervyn Fitzwilliam for providing us with wheels and tea, doughnuts, ice cream and the 'Tardis' for display use.

In addition, I would like to thank Freda Earl with Pam Bishop who designed, set up and organised the superb sales area and Victor Earl, who ensured that the correct money was taken and paid out again to the right people.

We provided entertainment and the opportunity to 'have a go' to some 300 visitors using 3 wheels on Friday, 5 on Saturday and 7 wheels on Sunday! In the process we earned £450 gross for the Guild. Ten of our members took the opportunity to sell their pottery and took over £1000 between them.

To top all this, we enrolled a number of new members - many of whom didn't even know of our existence before this festival.

The rest of the exhibitors and the festival in general were a tremendous success. I could have spent many thousands of pounds on pots - if only I'd had the money and many more hours than I could possibly spare, talking with and watching all that was going on. There were so many potters worth noting. I'm sure everyone had their favourites; mine were Bridget Drakeford making fine green and gold ware - such beautiful shapes and colours; Doug Jones throwing fabulous bottles on his Japanese wheel; the Kent Potters' smoke-fired ducks and geese; the incredible waterfalls of Christine Ann Richards; all the raku work in the open at the festival and, by no means least, the work of our own members. I had a difficult choice deciding how I was going to spend my money, but finally came down on the side of mugs and a platter by Beryl Singh glazed in a beautiful titanium glaze in blue/mauve/white and green (the real thing was much better than my description).

The competitions hosted by our stand and organised by Chris Brewchorne were an absolute hoot! We were represented by various members:-

Rena Green threw blindfolded.

Doug Jones threw one-handed.

Tony Moody threw in the 'tallest pot' competition along with Doug.

I'm sure with success like this the Guild will want to be involved in next year's event. Like an idiot, I seem to have volunteered my services for organising our stand.

We will make an even bigger and better splash next time, I'm sure - with even more Guild members taking part. (All offers of help and ideas will be most gratefully received).

My one regret was that I managed to miss all the demonstrations in the stables, since I was 'on duty' all the three days (I got that one all wrong!).

Thanks again to all those who helped, it was a great pleasure meeting you all. I learned a lot about throwing just watching you all teach other people- so thanks for that, too.

Linda Bryant



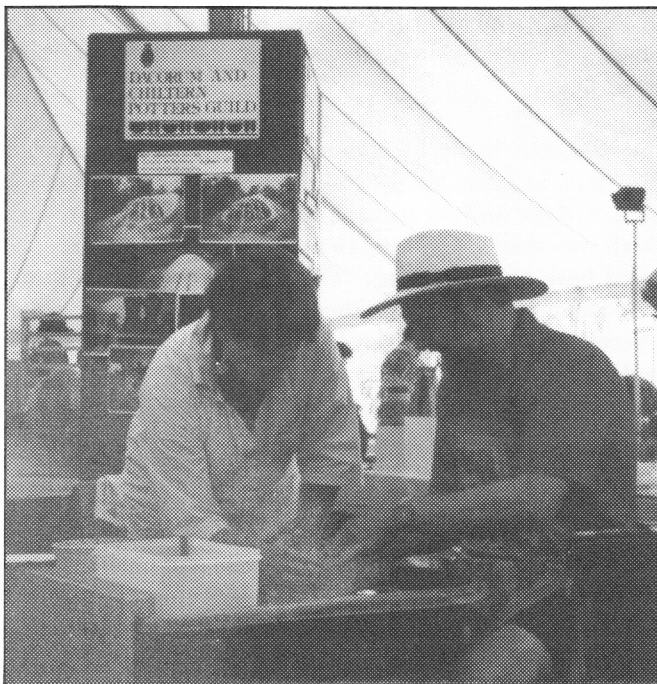
Above - The one-handed throwing competition. L. to R. Chris Brewchorne, Ara Cardew, Doug Jones and Bridget Drakeford. After some deliberation, the outcome was decided on level of applause from the audience & Bridget was declared the winner.



Left - Beryl Singh gives throwing instruction to one of our visitors.

Above - Victor Earl talks to Marguerite Moon and Pierette Beckley on the sales area of our stand.

[Photographs supplied by Linda Bryant]



PROFILE - I

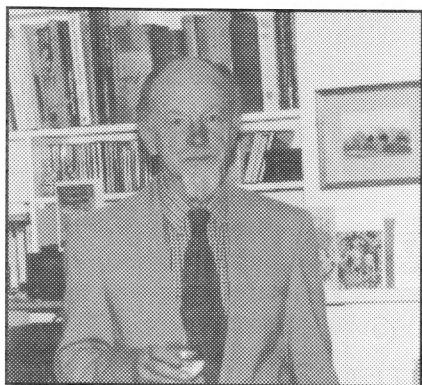
When my daughter left school, about thirty years ago, she fancied pottery and signed on for evening classes at Watford College of Further Education. Unexpectedly, but wisely, she signed me on, too.

I took to it and have attended classes ever since. Soon after retiring from my profession in 1977, I installed an electric kiln and wheel at home.

I enjoy throwing useful things for people in stoneware and earthenware: bowls, mugs, casseroles, vases, etc.

I have exhibited and sold things at Watford Library, Art in Action, Christmas markets and, recently, Hatfield House, but I don't think I could call myself a Professional Potter.

Gerald Gladstone



Gerald,
drink in hand,
relaxes in
the library
at his home.

PROFILE - II

Sue, with one of her
oil burners. The lid
is removable & the
vapour rises from the
chimney



I'm not exactly an expert potter, I'm still at the stage where my enthusiasm and spirit of adventure considerably outweigh my technical ability and, in many ways, I hope this will always be the way because I'm having so much fun experimenting and exploring that most wonderful of raw materials - clay.

I enjoy hand-building and throwing, most of my pieces reflect, in some way, my love of the natural environment. I've always loved things natural - of the earth, from when, as a very young girl, I used to take presents of 'special' stones and leaves to my Mum, through my degree in Botany and eventually into my chosen profession - Landscape Architecture.

I use quite a lot of design and graphics in my job, but I don't get a real chance to be genuinely creative which can be very frustrating. This is where pottery is a real life saver, allowing me to explore and invent to my heart's content.

Inspiration comes from all around me: natural forms, living things and other people's creations too, which is where being a member of Freda's Monday class helps. All members of the class contribute to the down-to-earth humour, ideas and tips in a non-competitive atmosphere which is a real relief from work.

My ambition as a potter is to have the skill to throw near identical pieces (with lids!) on the wheel, which are almost as good as the ones you can buy for 50p. on the market. As they say: "Don't give up the day job" - but who cares? -- it's fun.

Sue Taylor

DEMONSTRATION BY GAYNOR LINDSELL on 15th September '95

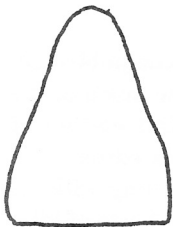
Gaynor began her demonstration by showing us her technique for throwing large pieces of clay.

THE BODY - Initially she made the lump (Ceramatech's low firing 950°C terracotta) into a tall symmetrical dome-shape. Once on the wheel, it was centred at full speed by pushing the wetted clay forward with the left hand with the arm steadied against the hip bone. The right hand pulled the clay backwards. Eventually it was flattened into a domed 'cow-pat' shape. The clay was then opened up, right through to the base, with the wheel at full speed. The fingers undercut the wall and thinning began. All opening and throwing was done with a sponge.

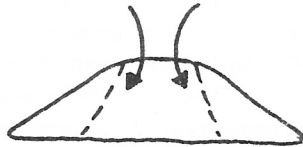
A rib was used to clean up the surface, and marks (mostly lines) were added using a plastic card as a profile. The clay was then allowed to dry off a little until it was no longer shiny. It was then cut off the wheel head.

The base was made by rolling out a large slab (in two directions to avoid warping and cracking). The circumference of the wall (at its base) was measured with string which was then made into an oval and placed on the rolled base (see diagram). The string was pressed into the base to make a groove, then the edge was scored with a serrated scraper. A layer of stiff slip was applied, made from a slurry of the same clay with the addition of gum arabic and a pinch of chopped polyester fibre (three denier from Reward Clayglaze). This idea was taken from Colin Pearson with whom Gaynor worked for some time. It improves the binding power of the slip.

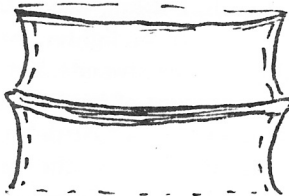
The wall was then placed on to the base and pushed into waves and curves both at the base and rim. The base was then cut out and the edges pushed up to meet the wall using a rib. The inside seam was secured by working in a half-moon shaped extrusion. A card profile was used to tidy up the edges.



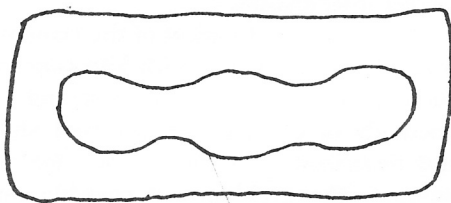
symmetrical lump
put on wheelhead



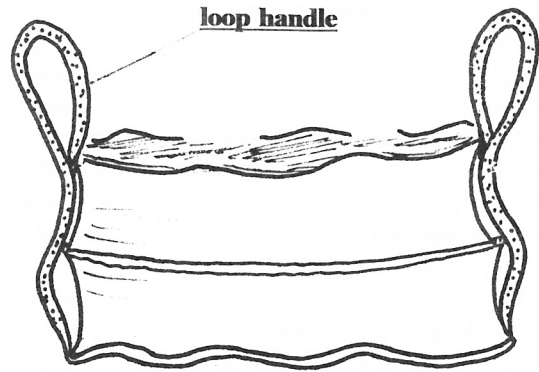
opening clay



walls thinned
no base



string line impressed
on rolled base



loop handle

DECORATION - Gaynor uses terra sighillata to seal the surface and produce a shine. Recipe:- 1.5 kg. dry, very smooth terracotta clay, 3 litres distilled water, 12.5 gm. sodium hexametaphosphate (Calgon). Mix well and leave to settle for one week. The top clear layer and the next slightly cloudy layer are siphoned off and discarded. The next layer is the terra sighillata. This is siphoned off and is ball-milled for four hours. It is poured inside the vessel when it is leather hard, and five layers are painted on to the outside where a shine is required.

White terra sighillata can be made from ball clay (TWVD) and coloured terra sigillata can be made from oxides and stains, but these produce a drier surface. Because the vessel is still porous after firing to 950°C., a water sealant is used on the outside.

Elaine Hudson

BOOK REVIEWS

The Story of Writing. Andrew Robinson. Hardback. 224 pp. Thames & Hudson. 1995. £16.95

This book should have great interest for potters on two counts. Some of the earliest forms of writing were made from impressions in clay and, fortunately, many of these clay tablets still exist today in museums all over the world; also, writing of all kinds has been used decoratively on ceramics, especially on those where reproduction of the human image (e.g. Islam) is forbidden, the artists resorting to beautiful ornamentation consisting of, or derived from, flowing scripts.

So, if for nothing else, this book is valuable to the potter/decorator for delving into the many historical forms of writing and, particularly so, the 'instant copier' or repeat design made by cylinder seals from Babylonian times, which can be used for repeat decorations around pottery and flat clay tiles. Also the various styles of scripts may aid the potter who wishes to design his/her own logotype for demarcation of wares.

But there is much more for the reader. With many diagrams & pictures, a good number in colour, the history of written communication is described. From origins in various quarters of the world, we are taken through the methods of determining how the many 'scripts' were deciphered, to the development of the modern alphabet - & eventually back to 'hieroglyphs' in modern daily life.

HANDLES - A coil was elongated by throwing it repeatedly on to canvas until the profile was as shown below. Then a stick was placed down the middle of the handle and a kidney used to produce a curve down one side. This was then repeated on the other side. The edges were then chamfered using a steel rule as guide and then sponged. The handles were hung over tubes to dry. Talc cannot be used to stop the clay sticking to surfaces because it would produce white marks after firing, but it could be used if a glaze was added. Once the handles were stiffer they were bent into shape and attached to the vessel as shown below.



handle profile
at start



handle profile
at finish

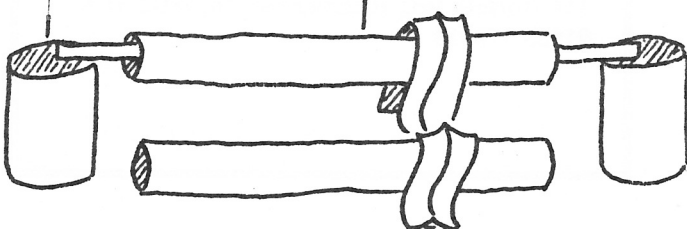
curve cut with kidney

stick



drain pipe

cardboard roll



supports for stiffening handles

Reading this book straight through can enlighten you on the Mayan glyphs and their astronomy and numerology; the Egyptian hieroglyphs, hieratic and demotic scripts, formulating the power behind the messages; the Chinese characters and Japanese syllabaries, as well as the cuneiform texts developed from symbolic picture writing. Also is shown how modern European, Arabic, Hebrew and Cyrillic were formed, each in their respective evolution.

With instant communication around the world, we are learning more of each other's languages and scripts, and where difficulties arise we have resorted to 'hieroglyphics' once more. But art is communicative, and the character, letter, glyph or sign can adorn any pot created by the ceramist, in a most pleasing style.

So, if only for the art of the various scripts, this book is well worth reading and studying.

© Stan Romer

Throwing Pots. Phil Rogers. Paperback. 128 pp.
A. & C. Black. 1995. £9.99

If the title of this book had been "How to Throw Pots", there would have been a certain incongruity: as the author carefully points out in his introduction - "No book can totally replace hands-on tuition". But under its very appropriate and simple title this book can be considered as complementary to a competent and inspiring potter-teacher. In fact it could be classed as the inversion of 'hands-on' teaching, followed by necessary note-taking, in the sense that it contains a full description of each specific process with the recommendation to practise what has been learnt from the notes.

The book, divided into 13 chapters, including good advice on equipment and materials, is very fully illustrated with many photographs of examples, and procedures for making them, as well as line drawings of the processes which could easily be used by a one-to-one instructor to elucidate the particular subject.

The explicit guidance of taking the reader through each stage of preparing, of centering and of throwing clay to make pots, jugs, plates, bottles, teapots, lids & bowls, makes up the very best instruction, second only to having your instructor by your side as you learn.

As I read the book, section by section, I mentally went through the motions of making the various pots. It could be considered as the best collection of notes that a student could take at a full pottery course, lasting probably for years, so that one should refer to it again and again.

Indispensable for the student potter, it is a valuable ally for the working studio potter.

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Kiln Building. Ian Gregory. Paperback. 96 pp.
A. & C. Black. 1995. £9.99

With the resurgence of interest by the Guild in the Raku kiln at Pitstone, and the building of the Anagama kiln at Murray's Northfield Studio, it is fitting that a new edition of Ian Gregory's "Kiln Building", in

the Ceramics Handbooks series, has just been published.

This edition has brought up-to-date much of the very useful information detailed in the first edition of 1977, incidentally with Murray as the series editor.

The book deals with planning, starting with all the important considerations of the type and size of kiln, and where it is to be built. Probably, one of the most important considerations is that of the type of fuel which is proposed to be used. This is dealt with in some detail, but there is one paragraph which, I think, needs to be made clearer. We are told that soft, or lighter, woods release their heat more quickly than hardwoods, but that these hardwoods emit a greater amount of heat than the softwoods. This statement is followed by a 'Gottlieb' table on wood burning, which clearly shows the pines (softwoods) yielding more calories than oak (hardwoods). I find this to be most confusing to the extent that it may even be incorrect information.

This, however, is not typical of the remainder of the book, which deals adequately with kiln construction materials, their insulation properties, cost and ease of use. The methods of construction are well shown in diagrams and described with the reasons for various designs, leading to the avoidance of possible complications and catastrophes.

Several different kiln plans are displayed, and stacking of the wares fully explained. A few examples of fired ware are given, some in colour, demonstrating that a kiln firing can be a living experience!

One small point: as metrication has now taken over from imperial measurements, there is a printer's error in transcribing one brick size from inches to centimetres (p.45), where the 5cm. has elbowed its way between the 2 inch and half-inch, but fortunately the correct measurements are given two pages later.

I, myself, prefer to deal in inches and feet, but there's progress for you! But I found this book to be most informative, by any standard.

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The Winter Solstice Open Day with Doug Jones is cancelled.

Instead of this event, Guild Members and their friends are welcome to visit the Pottery on any day between 6th & 24th December '95.

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METRICATION

"Well, it doesn't really affect potters, does it?" - or does it? During our recent evening meeting with Gaynor Lindsay, the question was asked "what weight of clay is that?" Discussion ensued most of which was in "pounds of clay". Later, talk of pot sizes was mostly in inches, with some of the initiative coming from younger members of the audience. At one point, someone in the audience remarked that "we should be using Metric measurements now".

To help you get to grips with the new law, which was introduced on Oct. 1st '95, we have compiled the following light-hearted quiz. When you have completed the answers, check them at the end of the questions section. (No cheating please!).

QUESTIONS

- 1) Is it legal for a Potters Supplier to sell
 - (a) 18" cutting wires, with 2" long wooden handles?
 - (b) a 4 cubic ft. kiln?
- 2) At a Craft show, the competition to throw the tallest pot is in progress, the height of the winning pot is announced - in inches - to a large public audience. Is this legal?
- 3) For a project in your workshop, you need 10 feet of 2"x 2" finish size, planed softwood. If you ask a wood supplier for exactly that, what will you be legally entitled to -
 - (a) the nearest metric equivalent of 2"x 2" wood?
 - (b) the nearest metric equivalent of 47mm x 47mm wood?
 - (c) exactly what you ordered?
- 4) As a new line, you intend to supply 1/2 pint mugs; if you put a notice on your stall advertising them as such, are you contravening the law?
- 5) You need 12.5 linear yards of lining material, three feet wide (which the supplier has in stock at exactly that width) to cover the tables at a craft fair, can you (within the law) buy -
 - (a) exactly what you want?
 - (b) the nearest length in metres?
- 6) As a special deal, you want to sell ceramic beads in packets; can you sell them -
 - (a) in packets of 10 beads?
 - (b) in packets of 1 ounce of beads?
 - (c) in packets of 0.02835 kg. of beads?
- 7) You want to sell essential oils in small bottles, to go with your oil burners and you already have an enormous stock of 1/2 fluid ounce bottles. To be within the law, must you -
 - (a) put labels on stating that the contents are 1/2 fluid ounce?
 - (b) put labels on stating the nearest metric equivalent?
 - (c) discard the bottles and buy new metric stock?
- 8) After the Craft fair, you go with your friends to a pub; most buy pints of beer, but one insists on receiving a litre of beer in a single glass. Is the landlord legally bound to supply this?
- 9) Returning to your workshop, you decide that you need some new 10" and 12" bats from your supplier. Must you specify the nearest equivalent metric size?
- 10) One of your glaze recipes is in lbs. and ozs.- is it now illegal for you to use imperial weights when making a batch of glaze?

ANSWERS

- 1) (a) yes (b) yes. Equipment and items which are normally supplied as units, i.e. a cutting wire or a kiln, can still be supplied in that form until 1st Jan., 2000.
- 2) Yes. Nothing is being sold and the units of measurement can be anything that the organisers care to use, although centimetres would probably be best.
- 3) (a) yes (b) yes (c) no. This is more complex than it may appear. Using details from two well-known suppliers, if 2" x 2" planed timber is specified, the size normally supplied is actually 47mm x 47mm. If you insist on the exact size of 2" x 2" finished, this will be supplied by planing down larger stock to that exact dimension, but it will cost you more.
The "trade" began to use a unit of length of 1/3 metre during 1972, since that was a "metric equivalent to 1 ft." and this has become a standard for some suppliers. The nett result of this is that if you order 2.5 metres of wood, you might get the nearest number of metric "units" of 1/3 metre, i.e. $8 \times \frac{1}{3} \text{ metre} = 2.666 \text{ metres} !!!$ If you order 10 ft. of wood, the supplier must give you the nearest metric equivalent over that size, so that you can cut it down to 10 ft., i.e. $10 \times \frac{1}{3} \text{ metre} = 3.333 \text{ metres}$.
- 4) No. You can specify your pots in Imperial measures and sell them in that form, i.e. 12" plates, 10" flower pots, 1 pint jugs, etc.
- 5) (a)no (b) yes. The supplier may not now use Imperial measures for length, so you must have the nearest metric equivalent. The exact size that you receive will depend on the segments of length that the shopkeeper will supply, i.e. units to the nearest 0.5 metre or 0.1 metre, etc.
- 6) (a) yes (b) yes (c) no. Staff at the Trading Standards Office have explained that the bias should be towards the use of "standard metric units" so supplying packets of the exact equivalent to 1 oz. in kilogrammes would be "not in the spirit of Metrication". In addition, fractions of 1 kg. are not regarded as acceptable and below this weight the fractions are expressed as grams,so packets of 20 grams or 30 grams would be more acceptable.
- 7) (a) no (b) yes (c) no. From the 1st October, all non-food goods sold loose must be sold in metric units and priced in metric units. (There are some exceptions, see notes at end of Answers section).

- 8) No. Unless the Landlord is very tolerant, your friend will either be sent packing or told to drink pints like everybody else! Currently there are no plans to prevent the selling of beer in pints, but spirit measures and wine measures are metric.
- 9) No. You can specify the bats in whatever form your supplier can understand. Pottery bats are usually known in Imperial sizes, although the metric size is often supplied.
- 10) No. You can use any method you wish to measure your own materials.

We hope that you found this quiz interesting and, perhaps, informative. The subject is not straightforward, as officials at the Trading Standards Office were prepared to admit.

For further information, free explanatory leaflets and conversion charts, contact your local Trading Standards Office. Bedfordshire 01234 346101; Buckinghamshire 01296 383212; Hertfordshire 01727 813880.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

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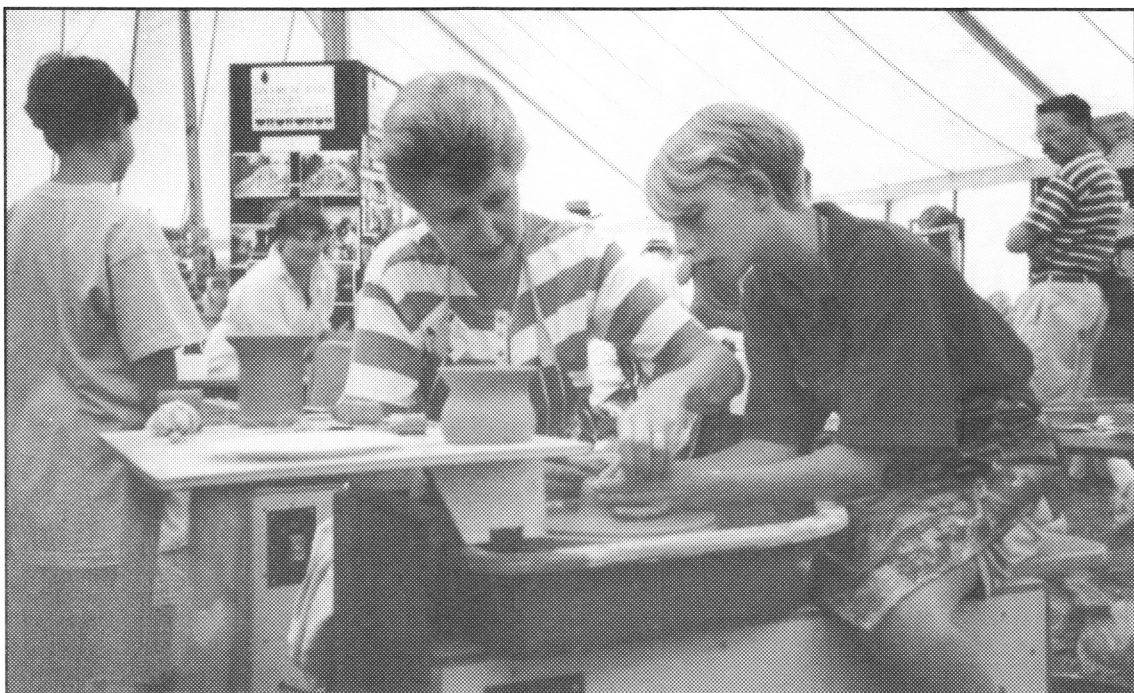
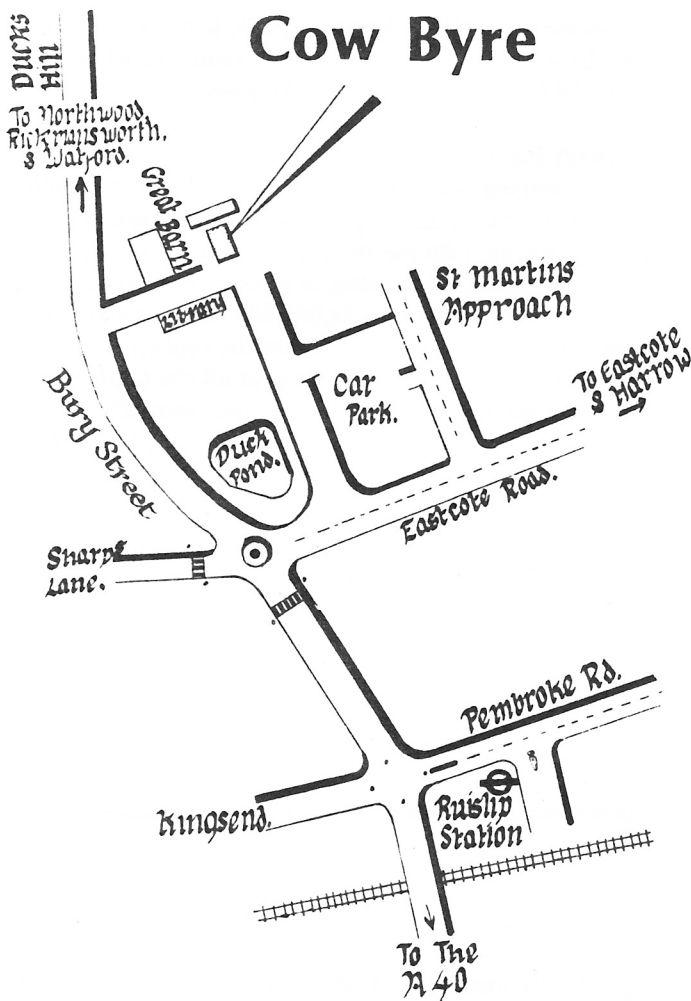
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Jenny Templeton ensuring that a student gets away to a good start, at the National Pottery & Ceramics Festival

[photograph by Linda Bryant]

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SHARDS FROM THE SHOW

During the National Pottery and Ceramics
Festival, it was a great pleasure to meet old friends.
Roger Cockram told me the following story and, in spite
of all opposition, I am going to pass it on to you:

A potter had won £1,000,000 on the Lottery and
when asked what he would do now, he replied: "make as
many pots as I can, then sell them at all the Craft Shows
that I can get to - until the money runs out !!!".

M.F.

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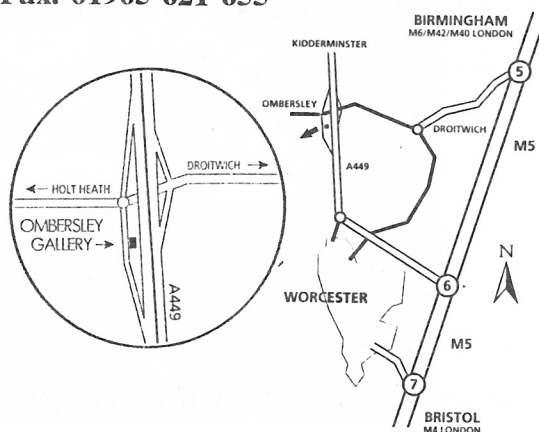
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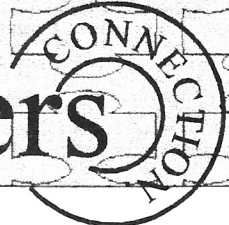
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