



# DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



IN THIS ISSUE .....

**POTCRAWL TO EAST ANGLIA**

**ART IN ACTION**

**PENDLEY MANOR (then)**

**and PITSTONE (now)**



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**NEWSLETTER**  
**September/October 1998**  
**£ 1.50**

## 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:(as from Oct.1'98) Family - £18.50  
Single - £15.50  
Student - £7.50

Send your cheque, made payable to D.C.P.G., to Digby Stott (if joining after March, please phone for a reduced introductory rate) "Broomfield", 36 Box Lane, Boxmoor, Herts. HP3 0DJ. tel: 01442 250540.

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. (s.a.e. please with any items to be returned). Opinions expressed in items published do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Committee or Guild members as a whole.

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#### Copy dates

(latest receipt of material for typing)

12th December

15th February

14th April

16th June

16th August

14th October

#### Publication dates

5th January

6th March

3rd May

6th July

4th September

6th November

We can book space ahead of the copy date but, in general, need the final artwork not later than **THREE DAYS** after the copy date.

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**FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH** (by Dorley Fieldhouse)  
The "Great Umbrella Dance" at our Garden Party on  
July 11<sup>th</sup>

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## EDITORIAL

It seems as if we produced the July Newsletter only a few weeks ago (*it was Mervyn, it was ... Harry*) yet here we are putting the September issue together. Time simply flashes by when you are having fun! There I go again, another exclamation mark and I did promise Harry that I would try not to use them so often.

This issue of the Newsletter has again been printed by Alpine Press and we are delighted to have the help that they have so generously given.

**Mervyn Fitzwilliam**

## FUTURE GUILD EVENTS

### **OPEN DAY - SATURDAY NOVEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>**

*This may seem to be an age away - it isn't! You will find the booking form with this Newsletter. This is a bargain day out with top potters demonstrating, with your day's food included and, above all, meeting up with other like-minded people. We will have David Frith, Deborah Baynes and Tony White - all lively professional potters who will also bring their pots along for sale - it's a great opportunity as many of you know from past occasions.*

*'Ceramatec' will be there selling pottery materials, so get your orders in soon to be picked up on the day. See the Newsletter for the phone number, etc. It is possible to turn up on the day without booking, but only if you don't want lunch. Bring your friends/family and make this a pre-Christmas celebration. At such a low price this is a bargain day out not to be missed.*

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO DISPLAY YOUR POSTER**

### **Sept.11<sup>th</sup> 8.00 p.m. at Methodist Church Hall, Kings Langley - WILL LEVI MARSHALL**

Will's slides will show the development of his work from wood fired salt glazed pots to his interest in glazes that led to his present work which is brightly coloured high fired stoneware (1280°C). He will cover different uses of glazes and the many things to do with glazes in an electric kiln. He plans to have a short glaze clinic for members to discuss their problems and to help us solve them. Please bring pots with problems. He is going to demonstrate his glazing methods, talk about glaze formulations and the uses of the computer.

### **Oct.9<sup>th</sup> 7.30 p.m. (NOTE EARLIER TIME) Annual General Meeting followed by Paul Scott Demonstration**

Please remember that it is your Guild and this is your chance to vote for (or against) your committee members and on the Guild's policies. You are also entitled to nominate new committee members but these must be sent in to the secretary by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Nominations put in on the day will not be considered. The committee will be pleased to hear suggestions for future activities and particularly so if you are willing to help organise them. We need your active participation.

### **PAUL SCOTT demonstration**

Paul uses drawings, old engravings, photographs, magazine cuttings and other artists' work to make his collage images, which are then manipulated by computer and photocopier and turned into screen printed ceramic transfers. Using many transfers he is able to build up a picture on bone china plates, old porcelain and earthenware. The transfers are sometimes used with underglaze painting when he makes his tiled panels and screens.

Paul's ceramic murals can be found in many schools, offices, hospitals, arts centres and museums. He is author of "Ceramics and Print" and is researching a new book "Painted Clay".

Paul will talk about himself and his work. He will refer to the exhibition he curated "Hot off the Press" and his demonstration will consist of underglaze painting and transfer collaging.

### **EXHIBITION - OCT.5<sup>th</sup>**

*We hope that as many members as possible will take part. Radlett is a new venue for us and other pottery groups have had great success there. Do put in your best pots and enhance the Guild's and your own reputations. For more information ring Shirley Bell (01707 332176)*

## **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS** **(see inside front cover)**

These are due on October 1st for 1998/99 and, having held them down as long as possible, we now have to increase them a little - but they are still among the lowest of all pottery groups. Under the provisions of the Data Protection Act, the names and addresses of non-members are removed from our computer data base. This means that you will not receive your Newsletter if your subscription is not received in time, so PLEASE SEND IT NOW.

## **LIBRARY BOOKS**

Those borrowed in July must be returned at the September meeting. If you cannot attend, please get someone else to return your books.

## **OTHER EVENTS**

### **BUCKS POTTERY & SCULPTURE SOCIETY**

**9th Sept. 8 p.m.** Chorley Wood Arts Centre.  
**ZYGMUNT PYTEL** -Sculptural dem. making a horse.

**19th Sept. 10 a.m. All day. STEVE HARRISON**  
demonstrates techniques. Tel.Wendy Fowler for details  
01494 524351.

**16th Oct. 7.30 p.m.** Little Kingshill Village Hall, Great  
Missenden **LAURENCE MCGOWAN**.

**4th - 21st Sept. SHOJI HAMADA**, Master Potter.  
Exhibition at Bonhams, Montpelier St., London, SW7.

**17th Sept.-27th Dec.** Major exhibition of ceramic  
works. **PICASSO**: painter and sculptor in clay at the  
Royal Academy.

### **GLAZED EXPRESSIONS - 3rd Oct.-22nd Nov.'98**

An exhibition of pots, books, words & images.  
Orleans House Gallery, Riverside, Twickenham, TW1 3DJ  
For more details ring 0181 892 0221.

### **QUEENS PARK CENTRE, AYLESBURY**

(01296 424332)

**11th Oct. 10-a.m. - 4 p.m. MO JUPP**

**8th Nov.** Raku day with **CHRIS MALINS**

**13th - 25th Oct.** Chelsea Crafts Fair: With 39 makers  
of ceramics over the two weeks.

**26th Nov.** Studio pottery auction at Christie's, 85 Old  
Brompton Rd. London, SW7.

**28th Nov.** Craft Futures - V.& A. Museum

LP vice-chair Julian Stair is one of several speakers at the  
conference which will focus on contemporary applied arts as  
part of our material culture. Contact the V & A for  
booking details.

## **50 YEARS OF POTMAKING**

**(Corrections to Part 4 in our last issue)**

a) p.5 para.3 line 3 should read: ".... excursion was **east**  
to Milland Pottery ...."

b) p.6 para.1: for 'Kingswood Pottery', now read:  
'Kingwood Design and Craftsmanship in Surrey. This  
pottery was not started by Michael Cardew as I originally  
thought, but had been worked by Lester Campion. Ray  
Marshall and Jane Aburrow. When these three moved to  
build Milland Pottery, Michael Cardew, Mary Gibbson  
Horrocks and others finished off their pots".

c) p.6 para.5 line 5 should read: "Potters were finding it  
difficult **to sell work ....**"

d) p.6 para 6: after: ".... exhibition of pottery for export"  
add: "This was held at their headquarters in Wimbledon  
on 25th July 1956".

e) p.7 column 2 para 3: before 'Lady Pamela  
Glenconner' insert "During the following year or so,"

**K.E.Marigold Austin**

## **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

**Jan Few** is from Kings Langley; she has an interest in  
throwing and also hand building. Jan recently helped us  
at the Chiltern Open Air Museum event.

**Marlene Hounam** lives in Oxford and is a Raku  
potter, so we hope that she will be with us at some of our  
Pitstone events

**Margaret Oram** is from Tring and is interested in all  
aspects of pottery, so perhaps she will also be interested  
in our Pitstone activities, since she is virtually on the  
doorstep.

**Rod Sandy** of Watford has joined us and also has an  
interest in all types of pottery methods and techniques.

**Angela Sturch** divides her time between pottery and  
teaching, covering most types of pottery work. Angela  
lives at Rickmansworth.

We are always delighted to welcome our new members  
and we hope that you will all find the Guild helpful and  
interesting. We look forward to meeting you at our  
events and activities.

**Mervyn Fitzwilliam**

## **FEEDBACK ON QUESTIONNAIRE**

The committee would like to thank all those members who  
have returned their questionnaires (40 to date). We had  
some very positive and supportive comments which are  
greatly appreciated.

Interest was expressed in all the workshops offered and  
some excellent ideas were suggested for other events.  
You will be contacted by the Events Organiser in due  
course with more details about individual events.

It is not too late to return your questionnaires, if you have  
not already done so. Put pen to paper so that we can  
**give you what you want.**

**Caroline Hughes**



## **CORRESPONDENCE**

*(The following letter from Chris Barnes was sent to Val Barnes)*

Dear Val

Thank you for the copy of the Newsletter that you sent me. I am most impressed with it. I enjoyed the evening although I was nervous at first and I learned a lot. The people who came to the talk were very good listeners and I am sorry I was not able to demonstrate the way I decorate pots for you. You were all very kind. Thank you.

Regarding details of events, exhibitions, etc., I have enclosed an invitation to a group show in Lydd, Romney Marsh. I will be showing at the Chelsea Craft Fair, week two: 20th - 25th October. The Chocolate Factory\*\* opens its gates to the public before Christmas on 28-29th Nov., 5-6th Dec. and 12-13th Dec. as part of "The Hidden Art of Hackney" open studio weekends.

Best wishes,

**Chris Barnes**

\*\* Farleigh Place, London N16 7SX. Tel:0171 503 6961

## **THE POTCRAWL OF EAST ANGLIA: JUNE 1998 - I**

This year, it was requested that we should go to East Anglia, so completing an arc of visits that started in the Cotswolds, continued in the west of England, North Wales and Chester, Nottinghamshire and the South Coast. If variety is the spice of life, then surely we have had it in plenty.

This year's programme was opened out to include the last days of three major exhibitions at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. They were the prodigious displays of American paintings comprising works of Frankenthaler, Noland, Olitsky and Poons. Secondly there was the exhibition marking the birth 200 years ago of Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861), one of the great masters of the Japanese print in the late Edo period, before the Western contacts in the 1860s. A combination of prints and text with verses explained with great humour, love, life and warring in Japan. Finally, the celebration of Pembroke College's foundation in 1347 and of King Henry VI and Queen Margaret who became, at the time, second founders by their gifts and assistance.

Such opportunities come but once in a generation, so it would have been a shame not to include them into our visit to Cambridge. Every event has its comic side - so it proved at Brown's Restaurant with the billing and the loss of a half hour due to the non-appearance of the waiter and the lack of table numbers on the computer.

Norfolk has a network of small lanes that defy comprehension. Weaving and doubling back on themselves with such regularity that one small error by the driver can be disaster. We did find the way and were warmly received

by Andrew and Joanna Young. Their pottery has more room than most, permitting areas to be put aside for specific tasks.

One such task for the future is a set-up for jiggling and jollying plates, casserole dishes and much else. Such is the pressure of making for the here and now, little time is left to develop it. We were shown how to apply sprigs, cut out a leaf from the base of a pot and compress the walls to make an oval. Impress patterns in the clay using single and multiple plaster stamps, as if of old. Andrew showed how to get 3 or 4 lbs. of pugged clay by using a frame with wires affixed at set distances to cut the clay as it is extruded. This is exact and saves a great deal of time and effort.

The Youngs have found a formula and a method of producing pots that is very successful commercially and have stuck to it. Break a piece and another is available. It is by far the most automated of the four potters(!) and therefore the other end of the spectrum when compared to our next potter, Peter Reynolds. We stayed at the Post House Forte, Norwich for the night.

On Sunday, we visited the Sainsbury Centre on the university site in Norwich. How often does a monstrous boiler have to be transported off a campus with huge lorries and lifting equipment? I assure you not many times in a century, but it happened during our Sunday visit, causing us to walk down more steps than I wish to recall.

Inside is the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sainsbury. The building was designed by Norman Foster and houses 1,200 items spanning thousands of years. Alongside Maori and African masks are works by Picasso, Bacon and Henry Moore. Japanese scrolls rub shoulders with pottery and metalwork from Mexico and Peru, ritual objects from ancient Egypt and North America, etc. My favourite is the "Little Dancer" by Degas in stark relief to the nearby Giacometti's "Standing Woman" that has so wasted away that only the standing shadow denotes her former self.

I tend to pack in to every event as much as possible, Sainsbury's, Peter Reynolds and a pub lunch at Lyng, with an old style piano and player by the door, banging out tunes from his youth. 'Take me Home Again, Kathleen' seemed just about perfect. With my knee in full ache, it should have been 'Them Bones, them Dry Bones' as a finale. He was still going strong when we left, and it is said that he is still playing his full 1920s programme.

Peter Reynolds' display and demonstration were quite outstanding. Trained in Japan for 4½ years with a deep respect for its traditions, he does not make tea bowls "that is for them as they know best, it is their art form". Yes, he makes bowls, but he does not name them 'tea bowls'. He throws off the hump on a reversing wheel using a fine stoneware clay without any grog or sand in its body. So as to get the matt black, he uses a black commercial stain. It is easier than using a slip. On the table he had a line of bottles in boxes. Gold of two strengths, bronze and

platinum. The bronze gave a beautiful blue shadow that crept back from the bronze lines over the black. The gold did not do this. He is also preparing a video of various potters demonstrating their techniques and styles of decoration. The clip we saw was that of Ruthanne Tudball.

Next came Stephen Parry at Ryburgh. Imagine a full-sized coach at Great Ryburgh village, itself more church than settlement. We are at the wrong village, so we ask an old man with a dog "where is the pottery at Little Ryburgh?" "Now let me see, that's miles away you know. Turn around (no easy matter), and go up the left hand lane past the bridge by the church". We did a two point turn to get into the lane. The coach wheels ran along the base of the bridge, brushing every bush and blade of grass as we went. One oak tree had the temerity to have a low hanging branch that ran along just touching the top of the coach. Two cars had the same idea, so we met half way along, as in gladiatorial combat. Never pick a fight with something bigger without a technical advantage, so we drove forward and they retreated to the farm and cottage gates so as to clear the road.

Stephen Parry is a truly fine thrower of clay, making jugs etc. that have a timeless quality, simple in line with strong handles. Whereas the Youngs applied sprigs and used roulette wheels for decorating, these relied on strong rims and outlines one would associate with either of the two kick wheels. I was fascinated by the larger of the two, perhaps by the power generated by the foot or, maybe, by the danger of dangling one's foot between the horizontal spokes. That's as it may be, the potter can sit or stand and make a pot as deep as the arm will allow, providing he does not slip.

His pots are once fired with simple raw glazes applied before they completely dry out. The glaze is thin, allowing the throwing and combed lines to show as if by salt glazing. Stephen fires his wood-fired kiln about three times a year due to size and to his other commitments at Camberwell as a teacher.

The last call was to see Colin Davies. Colin has moved with the times and adapted his styles and glazes. He once used iron and copper glazes, relying on reduction and other techniques. Now, he produces colours that are very bright and vital. No two pieces are the same, yet all belong to the same family. Many old acquaintances were renewed which stretch back to the start of our association many years ago. May I thank all those who came on the pot-crawl and supported me. My health has not been good and I was worried that the weekend may fall apart. With your help it did not, and I completely enjoyed myself. Thank you.

**Brian Bicknell**

## **THE 1998 POT CRAWL - II**

We had a very full programme on this two-day pot crawl. After our visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge on the first day, we travelled into rural Norfolk to visit

Andrew and Joanna Young at their farm in Lower Gresham.

Firing: Andrew and Joanna make a wide range of domestic ware in high-fired stoneware. They use a single firing method, that is they do not first have a bisc firing and then a glaze firing. Since the glazes are applied to the leather hard clay, they are slip based. They use silicon carbide in the glazes to give a reduction fired effect when the pots are fired in an oxidising kiln. This method produces a pleasing effect on the pots which is often mistaken for salt glazing.

Decoration: They decorate some of their ware with impressed designs and applied sprigs. Plaster press moulds are used to press a design on to items such as plates or bowls. Where a mould design is pressed into a rim, the rim is supported by one hand while the plaster mould design is pressed into the damp clay with the other hand. They also use a number of roulettes for decorating their work.



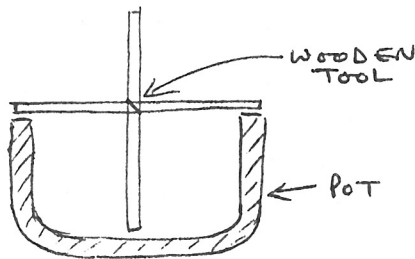
The head of the sprig mould is curved like the curvature of a shallow dish

When they use sprig decoration they use a solid plaster sprig mould which has the design cut into the top of it. Soft clay is pressed into the sprig mould design which is then smoothed down with a sponge. The surface of the ware to have the sprig decoration applied is then moistened with a sponge and the sprig mould with the soft clay in it is then pressed on to the dampened clay directly. Note that the clay sprig is NOT removed from the mould before it is applied to the ware, as it is at Wedgwoods.

On the second day we had an interesting visit to the Sainsbury Centre. The comment afterwards was that "it was the best branch of Sainsburys we have ever visited. The only trouble is that they didn't give us any reward points".

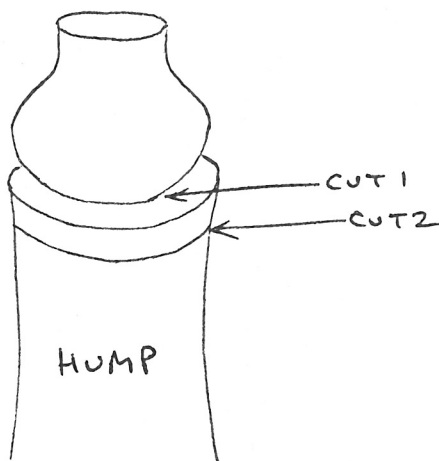
Our next visit was to Peter Reynolds in the village of Lyng. Peter trained as a potter in Tokyo and Hagi in Japan. He uses a combination of Japanese and European techniques to make his black glazed pottery which is

decorated with gold and silver lustres. Peter uses a Potclays smooth white stoneware clay for his work.



He throws off the hump on his Shimpo wheel. He uses a wooden tool made from two thin bamboo skewers to measure a fixed width and depth for a series of pots made the same size.

Once he has made a pot on the hump, he first cuts with his wire through the clay under the pot, leaving it in place.



He then makes a second cut about 1 or 2 cms. lower than the first cut and lifts the clay platter holding the pot off the hump, therefore not disturbing the pot in the process.

Decoration: He biscuit fires his pots to 1000°C and after spraying black glaze on them, he glaze fires them to 1280°C. After glazing a pot, he typically cools the whole of the outside surface of it with one thin layer of gold lustre using a soft brush while the pot is rotated on a banding wheel. He then applies marbleising liquid while the lustre is still tacky. The pot is then fired to 850°C. To obtain a solid gold rim effect on a pot he now applies an 85% gold lustre to the rim (over the fired marbleising) and re-fires the pot again to 850°C. Peter sometimes uses platinum, silver or bronze lustres in addition to or instead of gold lustre.

As our coach emerged from a narrow lane to stop in front of Stephen Parry's Pottery at May Green, Stephen came out and announced that the last time a coach had come

up that lane, it had four horses pulling it!

Stephen specialises in thrown stoneware and porcelain domestic ware which is ash glazed and fired to 1280°C. in one of his two wood fired kilns. He has a further gas fired kiln which is used for bisc firing. Stephen said that when he was firing two of his kilns on one occasion, a passing motorist noticed and soon afterwards two fire engines turned up to put out the fires. One of the group asked whether the neighbours were frightened when he fired his kilns. "Oh, they just hide".

Many of his pots are glazed inside in the normal way but the outsides are left unglazed in the final firing. The outside of these pots become toasted and coloured with the ash from the wood firing. Stephen made an impressive array of traditional plates, jugs, bowls, teapots and other domestic pots.

Our last visit of the day was to Clive Davis at Harleston. Clive makes highly decorated stoneware bowls, plates and pots. He generally glazes his work first with a zirconium silicate white base glaze. He then often puts a second layer of yellow titanium dioxide or a copper or chrome green glaze over the base glaze. He frequently applies a third layer of glaze in places, and often uses blue in this layer. Clive achieves some spectacular effects where the different glazes interact with each other and give tertiary effects. He obtains some fine pink effects with the use of copper glazes over the white zirconium silicate base glaze.

We are much indebted to Brian Bicknell for organising this pot crawl and taking us on such a varied and interesting series of visits despite the difficulties he had in walking any distance.

**John Beckley**

## PENDLEY MANOR

*A week or so back I was with Jeff Hawkins at Pitstone Green Farm Museum, helping with part of our tidying-up activity. Jeff had allocated us a space in the stable to store our spare materials and equipment, so we were clearing that space. Underneath various items of farm paraphernalia I came across a pile of several copper letterpress printing plates. Jeff immediately identified them as being the illustration blocks from 'Pottery Quarterly' (collectors items that we may auction off to support Murray's retirement fund - if he ever decides to retire - or perhaps support the Guild from becoming bankrupt, if it showed any hint of doing so! - only joking folks). In between the plates we found pieces of very aged and yellow paper and the detail from one of these is reproduced here to remind us of days gone by.*

**Editor**

**PENDLEY MANOR  
POTTERS' MEET**

**PROVISIONAL DETAILS**

July 29th - August 5th 1960

General The Meet is planned as a stimulant and refresher and all potters are welcome - teachers, amateurs, beginners and professional workers.

Lecturers, demonstrators and will be well-known potters, specialists in their particular subjects.

There will be thirty main lectures and demonstrations besides secondary demonstrations and tutorials. These will cover all aspects of the craft - practical, technical, historical, philosophical.

Facilities and subject matter. Pressed slipware, Raku making and firing, glaze trials technique, pottery collections, forms of handbuilding, throwing, turning and finishing, pottery equipment, majolica techniques - wax resist, glaze-on-glaze, etc. Brains Trust. International pottery films. Book and photographic exhibition. Slide collections.

Recreational. It is hoped that members of the Meet will arrange a modest barbecue to follow the Raku firing. Other events will be arranged nearer the time. It is hoped to include wine tasting, boomerang throwing, both folk and concert music recitals and poetry reading. Suggestions from those attending the Meet are welcome.

Contributions to the Meet from the professional potters or teachers attending are invited. Please write with your offers as early as possible so that the programme can be finalised.

Personal tools such as wire, rib and sponge will not be provided for those wanting to do practical work. A variety of tools will be on sale for those wishing to purchase new ones.

Fee for the Meet - £11.11s.0d. A bursary of 75% is obtainable for Hertfordshire residents. Those in other counties should apply to their local education authorities. A certificate of attendance can be endorsed for crafts teachers who wish to obtain a bursary from their authority.

Applications to: The Secretary, Pendley Manor, Tring, Herts. Tel: Tring 2302.

YOU CAN ADVERTISE YOUR "AT HOME" SALE, THE CRAFT FAIR, YOUR EXHIBITION, POTTERY MATERIALS, YOUR SHOP, etc. to our growing membership, their families and other Craft Groups. USE THIS NEWSLETTER.  
Phone: Digby Stott, 01442 250 540

*I came across the following article by Sue Boar in the London Potters Newsletter and I felt sure that it would be of interest to many of our members. It is reproduced here with the permission of the Editor, Karen Tooth*

Editor

**CHECKING OUT THE MARKET**

Now that ceramics is getting the high profile treatment from the large auction houses, it is interesting to see what is going on at the more grass roots end of the market. Are the higher prices filtering down and having an effect on the stall holder, or is the market expanding quite happily without their influence? I went to see LP member John Rastall at Alfie's Antique Market in Church Street to find out more about it.

I was gratified to see that studio pottery, or art pottery, has now found a proper niche in the antiques world, although it is not strictly 'antique' yet. Personally I have always been rather horrified at the high prices that factory made ware can fetch. Of course I can appreciate the rarity factor of older pieces, but the justification for some of the enormous prices quoted on the Antiques Roadshow is sometimes hard to understand. It seems to me that certain items can become inflated the more they are collected, regardless of their intrinsic worth. Now at least there is someone who has concentrated on a much neglected market, that of the individual potter.

John Rastall started off by collecting Clarice Cliff ware in the late 70s, when they were still affordable. It was just a hobby to begin with, but grew as things tend to until by 1985 he was running a stall at Greenwich Market once a week. I looked around for examples of his early interest, but he says he doesn't collect them any more as the prices have become ridiculous. What altered his whole outlook was when he came across the work of Frank Smith in 1988. I'm afraid I had to admit my total ignorance at this stage, but apparently he trained with Colin Pearson and they worked at Peasmarsh near Rye. On a high shelf he had an example of his work, a very tall jug, beautifully made and wonderfully light - selling for under fifty pounds. This inspired him to concentrate on art pottery, which became almost a mission to make some of the lesser known names more familiar.

I must say that unless one had studied the history of ceramics one would be hard-pressed to recognise some of the names, but the work speaks for itself. There was a charming dish by Marianne de Trey, who used to work with her husband at Dartington, and other potters that were represented who will be more familiar to most of you, were Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie, Ruthanne Tudball, and early work by John Ward and Mike Dodd, amongst many others. The main thing is that all this work is still affordable, and so John has clients who are genuinely interested in the genre, not just collectors who are trying to make a profit. He complained that if the work becomes over-hyped, then no-one can afford it any more. I would have thought that the auction houses were giving the whole of ceramics a higher profile which has got to be



a good thing, but John was a little worried that they highlight only certain artists, and that they deliberately raise the prices of people's work they have access to, such as Lucie Rie.

By the early nineties what started off as a hobby became a full-time job, and John has had a stall at Alfie's for the last four years. However, he couldn't make a living if he relied on studio pottery alone and so he has expanded into complementary fields; he stocks a comprehensive collection of the Midwinter range of plates from the fifties, which looked all too familiar to me, having been a child of that era. He has also had to branch out into related fields and keeps a vast collection of corkscrews and lighters, which always have a ready market.

I was interested in finding out where he sourced all his pottery, and he said that he doesn't go to auctions much as the prices there are too high. As he gets more well-known he finds that people come to him with work they want to sell, or else 'runners' as they are known in the trade [who] look out for the sort of work he is interested in. He has to spend the days he is not at the market, Sunday and Monday, hunting for stock, which must get more difficult as time goes on. At the moment there aren't too many dealers with this specialisation, but as soon as the market gets crowded, the prices will eventually go up. Obviously now is the time to buy the work of the potters who were the seminal influence of our century.

After my crash course in the history of studio pottery, thanks to John, I could appreciate it with new eyes. The Bernard Leaches of this world have been so influential that one can easily neglect the lesser names who were working in his shadow, but when you see at first hand the honesty and simplicity of their pots, you have to acknowledge our indebtedness to them all. There are so many studio potters today that one tends to forget how exceptional they were in the early years of the century.

John Rastall held a successful exhibition at the Harlequin Gallery in Greenwich in February entitled 'Bernard Leach and the Leach Tradition' which was timed to coincide with the exhibition at the Crafts Council early this year. He also plans to have a stall at the National Pottery and Ceramics Festival at Hatfield House in August as this tends to attract people who are specifically interested in the subject. He would be more than happy to see any of the London Potters on his stand as his aim is not just to sell the work of neglected artists from the past, but to show them to a wider audience. I suspect that the best pieces he keeps at home, because he can't bear to part with them.

I can thoroughly recommend a visit to Alfie's Antique Market in NW8 no matter what you are interested in, as it is a treasure trove of fascinating objects for the home, most of which seem reasonably priced. As the whole place is a rabbit warren of stands on about four floors, I'd better tell you that John's stand is on the ground floor near the Ashridge Street end of the building; in fact he has a window overlooking the street, so you can see his

pots in the window. I can also recommend the restaurant on the rooftop terrace, which was a haven of tranquillity on an unexpectedly sunny day in the middle of April.

**Sue Hoar**

## PROFILE

*(Several years ago, whilst Sylvia and I were on a skiing holiday in Austria, one of the many people that we met was Ineke Stevenson. We quickly discovered our mutual interest in pottery and Ineke joined the DCPG. She was a member for 3 years, I think, and her autobiographical article in the July issue of MPA news is inspirational, particularly for those dithering on the edge of pottery interests, as so many seem to do. It is reproduced here with the kind permission of Ineke and the editor of MPA News, J.Lockett. - Ed.)*

## A Time in the Life of ..... or "It's Never Too Late"

When I first met my new neighbour, Barbara, I did not know that it was she who would change my life eventually. I had just come from Israel where I had lived for two years on the Lebanese border in a settlement built for new immigrants. As they considered it to be too dangerous for civilians, they made it into a school for land orienteering and fencing, and an observation post for the army. Not very safe I may say. Many times we were under fire and every morning the army checked for planted bombs. The children were told not to pick up a button or matchbox as they could trigger off something else. But that is another story.

After two years in Israel and six weeks in Holland, we arrived in Edinburgh. The contrast was frightening. From sun and sea and bright skies to dark buildings and rain. It was very depressing, initially.



We got ourselves settled and met the neighbours. Barbara lived down the road from me. She had just moved in, having arrived from England. Barbara had a potter's wheel! She had been interested in ceramics for many years and had always attended evening classes. She used the facilities at the college to have her pots, which she made at home, glazed and fired. "Have a go, try it" she said when I looked, intrigued, at her when she was throwing a pot. I did and I was hooked!

I enrolled with her in the evening class and started reading books. My experience of evening classes was that they provided the space

and you just got on with it. There was not much teaching involved. There were very limited glazes and clay and you had to just try and try again.

I moved from Edinburgh to Saudi Arabia and again to Edinburgh, to Glasgow and Dunlop in Ayrshire, changed my husband and eventually moved down to Hagley and Belbroughton in the Midlands. There were not always evening classes available where I lived and as I had to work for a living, pottery was not a priority.

Until I met Trudy, a Dutch girl who had just done a two year foundation course in Art and Design at Kidderminster College of Further Education. She showed me her portfolio: printing, textiles, photography and ceramics and many drawings and work sheets. It all looked very interesting but alien to me. I had been selling bacon, beef and frozen food for the last eight years! What you call a contrast. It did not stop me applying though. During my interview, in a low chair, opposite two males and a female, I felt very small.

I had put my items of ceramics which I had made during the years and some macramé and batik wall hangings in the next room. "Where are your drawings?" they asked. Perplexed, I said that I did not have any. "But you must have done some drawings when you were at school". Thinking of my bacon I said that was 35 years ago and I had not kept them. They accepted me without drawings and said I could start the following day. Although it was very difficult for many reasons, I enjoyed every minute of it.

After two years, when all the students were preparing their folios for colleges and universities, the tutors suggested I should apply too. I did and was accepted at the Birmingham Polytechnic which later became the University of Central England in Birmingham. After three years I got a 2.1 in my B.A.(hons) degree, ceramics with glass.

Since then I have set up in my own studio in the back of the garden. I have developed a range of decorative ceramics which I have been able to sell in different galleries and craft centres. I have entered exhibitions with or without the MPA. I now get chosen for various exhibitions with the RBSA and other independent galleries. I sell in craft centres and galleries on a regular basis and am a full member of the Worcester Guild of Designer Craftsmen with whom I do the larger shows in Malvern and Worcester. I have had commissions from the CBSO and ASI Computers. I have run a retail pottery shop in Worcester, Clayworks Ltd., with four other potters. We were selling pots from 39 potters who were working and living in the Midlands. I am now teaching in Kidderminster College of Further Education, where I did my Foundation Course. From the 1st June I will share a workshop with Stephanie Redfern in the Jinney Ring Craft Centre in Hanbury, near Bromsgrove where we will be able to make pots and sell direct to the public.

When I arrived in the Midlands in 1988 and did not know any potters, I became a member of the MPA. That brought me in contact with other potters and informed me what was going on in the Midlands. Later I became a committee member and am now the chairperson. I did all this after I had brought up my three children. So as you can see, what was a hobby initially is now a large part of my life. This might never have been the case if I had not met Barbara.

For all of you who are thinking about pottery but find it difficult to change, just do it. Get involved and get on with it, it is never too late.

**Ineke Stevenson**

## **NOTEBOOK**

Just time and enthusiasm .....

During the past 18 months your committee have been talking with the Pitstone committee, discussing, planning, submitting estimates and generally trying to decide how to improve the site that we use at Pitstone.

Our desire was to have a suitable place to store our materials and keep our kiln and gas bottles, etc., thus avoiding the need to remove them when firing was finished for the day. The Pitstone committee wanted us to tidy the site and improve the appearance. We were greatly assisted by Jeff Hawkins who allocated us a place in his stables to store some items. Jeff and I cleared the space on 4th July and John Beckley, Ruth Karnac and Geoff Parr moved several items and quite a lot of materials and tools into the space we had cleared. Jeff also helped again by finding us some old shed panels that we could use, plus various pieces of wood, etc. which would be useful.

Came the day ..... On Saturday 25th July we descended on the site and after some discussion and some depression about the state of our materials, we started on the work. We worked hard and, as often seems to be the case, the harder we worked the luckier we got and the more progress we made. Time passed quickly and it must have taken two hours to repair and erect the first piece of the building, but then we really began to get going. We completed the whole building, made a door frame, cut and fitted the door and had it all painted in approximately SIX HOURS, an outstanding achievement.

Our very grateful thanks to Geoff Parr, John Beckley, Steven and Sylvia Fitzwilliam and Linda Culver who all worked like Trojans to get the job done.

During the next few weeks, power points and lights should be fitted and other tidying will make the site more "user friendly".

\*\*\*\*\*

## AN APPEAL .....

As reported above, our facilities at Pitstone are now improved. We continue to be supported in our activities by the Pitstone Farm Museum committee and we appreciate the fact that we have virtually free access to, and use of that facility for Raku and other firing experiments, etc. Now it is our turn to support the Museum committee, since they have very little income from the Museum and Craft activities there. The last Museum open day was financially unsuccessful and things are getting tight, so we need to help by raising some support for the Museum.

## WHAT TO DO .....

Please donate a few pots that we can sell from our area at the Museum. Anything that you can spare will be gratefully accepted, so those pots you have not sold, or even perhaps do not regard as quite perfect, providing they are saleable, will be acceptable. Please hand your donated pots to any committee member, or arrange with Tina to take them to Pitstone direct.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP .....

For more information, phone Tina Hall 01442 826 223 or Mervyn Fitzwilliam, phone/fax 01442 242 332.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Refractory Ceramic Fibre

I have now received a copy of Information Document HSE 267/3 from the Health and Safety Executive. This document is essential reading for all using or contemplating the use of RCF. The introduction reads as follows:

### "HAZARDS FROM THE USE OF REFRACTORY CERAMIC FIBRE"

#### Introduction

*1. This document contains internal guidance which has been made available to the public on the potential risks associated with the use of refractory ceramic fibre (RCF) and the precautions recommended when working with this material. The guidance is considered good practice (rather than compulsory) but you may find it useful in deciding what you need to do to comply with the law. However, the guidance may not be directly applicable in all circumstances and any queries should be directed to the appropriate enforcing authority.*

Guidance details are given for exposure levels that can be expected from the installation and removal of this material. To obtain a copy of this document phone the HSE Infoline on 0541 545500

\*\*\*\*\*

**Mervyn Fitzwilliam**

## ART IN ACTION

".... well, I won't be in tomorrow as I'm going to Art in Action; why don't we meet there, you'll enjoy it". "Sounds great, whereabouts in Acton is it?". "Not Acton, Action ....." I'll leave the rest to your imagination; suffice it to say teeth, brandy and new phones figure.

The following morning I am just about to leave for this annual event, knowing that the earlier I get there the less I have to walk from the car carrying a large willow chair which I am kindly loaning back to Guy Martin, the maker, who is demonstrating in the woodwork marquee, when the phone rings. "Good morning Mr. Jones, Mervyn here". (He always calls me Mr. when he wants something). "Would you mind doing a write-up of Art in Action for the Newsletter, dear chap?" (I refrain from asking where in Acton it is). "And some pictures would be nice". I grab the camera, check it, O.K. it's got about ten shots left, so that should cover me and there is always a couple of rolls in the bag, check, yes, go.

So many people cast admiring glances at the chair, as I carry it from the car to the gate, that I make a mental note to employ someone to do the same with some of my larger pots at the start of a show.

Even before the chair is delivered, and it's only 11.30 a.m., I already feel as though this is an extension of the garden party at Murray and Dorley's place. Don't Guild members ever get tired?

I leave Simone (my wife) talking to her brother, the maker of said willow chair, and somehow we don't see each other until about 4 p.m., and make my way across to the next marquee where the pottery demonstration is taking place.

Svend Bayer usually has the largest crowd as he makes the largest pots, but on this occasion his stand was almost empty as he stood there disconsolately nursing his recently broken hand. This unfortunate event gave me the idea for my 'photo shoot' - I would take pictures of peoples' hands reaching out to handle and caress pots, starting on Svend Bayer's stand.

The type of ceramics on show was varied as were the prices or, as one potter pointed out to me referring to another, "he's taking the michael" or words that were more vulgar but appropriate at the time. He was referring to the particularly high price of a modest cup and saucer. Non-functional pots were in the majority in the demo. arena with Chris Bramble, Peter Hayes, Barry Guppy, Ray Rogers and Antonia Salmon as my own particular favourites.

Of the domestic ware, I could happily live with the work of Laurence McGowan, Dimitra Grivellis, Clive Bowen and Svend Bayer. The variety of the demonstration was good on the whole, with one or two who just lacked that showmanship that is needed if they are hoping to be

invited again.

Even though one walks around Art in Action with eyes gazing down at an angle you still run into an amazing number of friends, so one wonders how many does one miss. I expect to meet several friends selling their wares (not only pots) in the craft marquee, but is always a surprise to meet friends in the specialist areas, but then I suppose they become friends because I like their work and Art in Action does give everyone the chance to talk to the artists on a personal level. It is not only the premier art event and a great chance to socialise, but it is also very heartening to see so many people, who genuinely love all aspects of art, in one place and not one copy of the 'Sun' in sight. I'd like to give a personal round of applause to the young girl who posed all weekend for her mother to execute a sculpture of her as a ballet dancer, and the lady on the polo pony giving the artist a chance to sculpt in clay a very dramatic charge for the chuk (or whatever its name is).

P.S. The photos I took turned out to be slides and not suitable for publication.

**Doug Jones**

### **THE DCPG GARDEN PARTY**

It's several weeks since the garden party and now I find myself writing an article on it for the Newsletter, so my apologies for any omissions - my memory is not what it was so I just have to go on what impressed me enough to stay there.

Firstly, the jazz band playing 'Bring me Sunshine' and the warmth of the welcome from Murray and Dorley, then the raindrops percolating through the trees and falling softly on all of us whilst we pretend they weren't. There were groups of us ignoring the weather and swapping techniques, discussing firing and kilns, courses, classes, workshops - in fact anything and everything to do with pots and potting.

Despite the rain, everyone made the most of the day, the only sadness being what an incredible day it would have been without the rain. On arrival, we were pointed towards Murray's salt glaze collection and some further pieces brought along by the committee members. It was very interesting to see the collection of another potter and the notes on each piece giving further information really helped, but for me the pots seemed to come alive with a talk by Murray giving the background history of some of the pieces and what they meant to him.

As I try to remember the pots it's hard because certain ones appealed to me and those are the remembered ones. My strongest were not from the salt glaze pieces of Steve Harrison and Ruthanne Tudball, but of a beautiful slipware harvest jug made only four years ago at Seaton in Devon which was so alive and warm and vibrant, you didn't want to look away from it and a rugged woodfired platter by Patrick Sargeant that reflected the making and firing process beautifully.

After Murray's talk and time spent feeling and examining and discussing the pots on show, we rejoined the 'wet ones' outside. By this time some rather strange installations to combat the rain had been erected with

polythene sheeting and umbrellas - in fact anything to give some shelter.

It was then time to 'tuck in'; what a wonderful spread - (for those unable to come, you really missed a wonderful tea) - it was quite amazing eating strawberries in the rain and John Beckley really deserves a medal for cooking the meat on the barbecue.

Unfortunately, despite the organisation of Vicky and Tina, the Raku firing had to be put off; even I have learned the hard way that the wisdom of not Raku firing in the wet. Meanwhile it was very tantalising to see all the different types of kilns at Murray's and to think of what to fire in which.

Even as we left, a little earlier than planned, but the damp had seeped through to our bones - well, that's an exaggeration, but we were wet despite standing under our umbrella tree. You can't stand and hold umbrellas and eat, so we lodged the umbrellas into the branches of the trees and they worked very well for a while, long enough to fill our tums so, as I was saying, as we walked along the drive, we passed Gas Kimashima at the anagama kiln busy impressing some of the visitors with the firing statistics - how many weeks it took to fill and how the Japanese market for his work was still more appreciated and profitable than in England. They were stunned by the hard work involved and very impressed. I always feel that it is at this point that the pots in all their glory should be exhibited, while folk are still in awe of the potter and fired up.

We had some wonderful talks with potters and friends talking of their pottery experiences both home and abroad; the pots were a feast to the eyes as was the food and what would any potter need apart from these two mainstays of life? You answer - a firing! - yes, that would have been the icing on the cake but life's not perfect and this summer to seems to have evaded us completely.

Many thanks for the hard work everyone put in, especially to Murray and Dorley for such a wonderful location for the party.

**Lynn Brunt**

### **Footnote**

Lynn left before the start of "The Great Umbrella Dance". The "dance" was initiated by Doug Jones who led his wife, Simone, into the area in front of the band to begin dancing. Others followed, some willingly, some with a degree of shyness, some in a state of hilarity (I think), all with an umbrella or sharing an umbrella. It would be difficult to describe the dance which continued in various forms for about half an hour. Suffice it to say that far from spirits being dampened, the music (and perhaps the alcohol) carried us all through to various types of conclusion. It was great fun, but the photographs were mostly blurred by the rain running over the camera lenses. We were undaunted by the weather and the Great Umbrella dance of 1998 will now pass into the legends which make up the history of our Guild. Pity those who did not come to the party just because it was raining.

**Editor**



## The Crackpots



### The Hangover .....

As always happens at such events, there were some items left behind at Northfield Studio:

One baseball bat- yellow plastic/ one glass pyrex bowl/ one pair reading glasses/ one pair of salad servers.

To claim the above please phone Murray on 01442 851 229.

### THE SALT GLAZE KILN

Most people attending the Garden Party had the opportunity to see the considerable progress made on the new salt glazing kiln being built by Paul Rowbottom and his team of helpers. I met Paul and Felix Byrne on the site a few days ago and Ruby Sharp and her husband were also there to review progress.



Sarah Hall & Paul Rowbottom working on the kiln base, Rachael Hall in the background



Paul & Jan lift the Catenery Arch former into position

Photographs by Tina Hall

If you feel interested in helping with the project, do give Paul a ring on 01923 263 032.

Editor

### ART IN CLAY AT HATFIELD HOUSE - 7-8-9 AUG.'98

This is the fourth time that "Art in Clay" has been held in the grounds of Hatfield House, and the Guild has been involved from the beginning as part of a national gathering of potters and pot-lovers.

As usual, the stall had to be prepared on the Thursday afternoon and we, the small band of volunteers, arrived to find a line in white chalk on the grass and a heap of tables. So we all set to, put up the tables, put the Guild's banner up, got the wheels out of the van and cars, set out the display equipment, filled the buckets with water, patted clay into balls and unwrapped the pots to set up the display. After the pots had been sorted a little, Marigold Austin took on the arduous task of making it look like a sale of works of art and not a jumble sale. Of course more pots arrived after most people had gone home, but we incorporated them into the display somehow.

On Friday morning even more pots arrived, with the crew to sell pots and help with the Have a Go, and soon everyone was quite busy. My ambitiously planned timetable went out of the window because we had more wheels on the go than I had been told, but everyone had rests when needed, and even I had a go at Have a Go. Jane Kilvington looked after the money throughout the three days, and was the rock on which the rest of the crew depended. Saturday was another busy day, and even hotter in the marquee, but lots of pots were sold and thrown, and Sunday was the same. We managed to keep most of the wheels going most of the time while there was a demand and the sales team were busy all the time. I think most people enjoyed taking part in our great effort

as well as selling some of their own pots, and I hope everyone managed to see the rest of the marvellous show. The total pot sales came to £1691 and Have a Go made £466, which is very satisfactory.

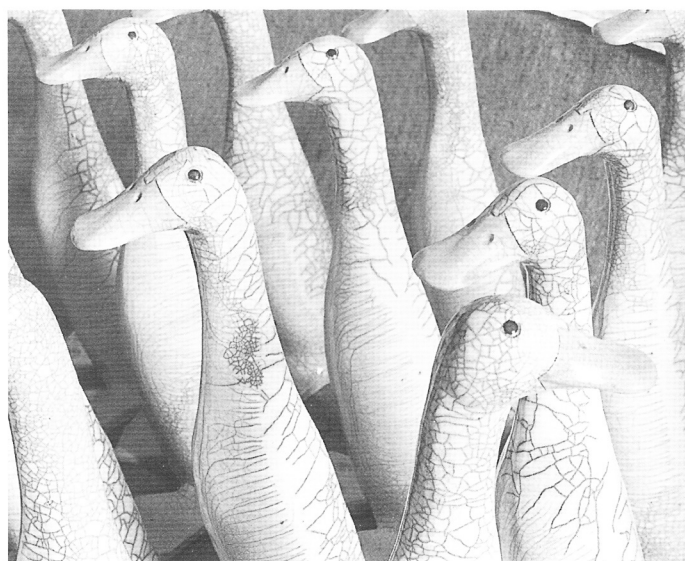
**Special thanks to Arthur Ball for pugging clay & delivering it to us in pieces ready for use on the wheels.**

After the clearing up on Sunday evening - why do fewer pots need more space on the way home? - most of the crew went on to Sylvia and Mervyn's Barbecue and Fireworks, which was most enjoyable.

Many thanks to all of the 45 or so people who helped so tirelessly and those who assisted me so much with the organisation, particularly Shirley Bell, Mervyn Fitzwilliam, Linda Bryant and Ruth Karnac, and made the running of our event at Art in Clay 1988 such a wonderful success, as well as to Sylvia and her helpers who made such a delicious supper to finish it all off.

**Susan Busse**

## LOOKING FORWARD TO OPEN DAY.....



Indian Runner Ducks.  
Ceramic, Raku Fired

by Tony White one of the demonstrators at our next Open Day.

## WANTED

During the Autumn we are planning two (or more) exciting firing workshops. To keep the costs down we need to re-cycle bricks and kiln parts (or even complete kilns). Have you got a broken, unwanted or disused kiln of any kind? Please phone M.Fitzwilliam 01442 242332 or John Beckley 01923 822 659.

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14/15 Surface Pattern & Decorative Techniques : Paula Gray  
21/22 Casting in Paper : Dorothy Fowler  
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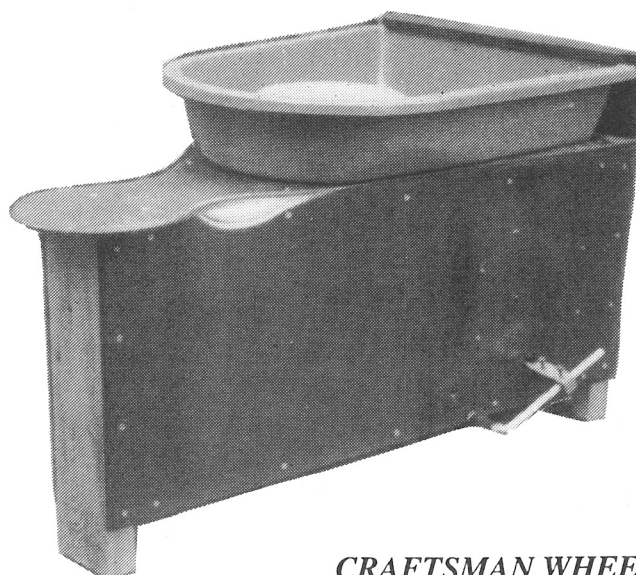
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