



# DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



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**OPEN DAY TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE**

**A DATE WITH TOFF MILLWAY**

**FREE BOOKS OFFER**

**PHIL ROGERS COURSE**

**LIBRARY UPDATE & BOOK LIST**

**AGM - COMMITTEE CHANGES**



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**NEWSLETTER**  
**November/December 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. Exhibitions, visits and workshops are also organised at various times.

Membership Rates:(as from Oct.1'98) Family - £18.50  
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The Dacorum & Chiltern Potters Guild Newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August and September, 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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**FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH Will Levi Marshall demonstrating his glaze application methods.**

(Photograph by Anita Cheasty)

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**EDITORIAL**

Geoff Parr has written about his recent pottery course with Phil Rogers and I hope that others will follow his excellent example. We need volunteers to write about our meetings, send "potters tips", "profiles" and reports about courses and visits, account of any exhibitions visited and, indeed, on any matter of interest to our readers. Such articles all add interest to our Newsletter, so please help if you can.

**Mervyn Fitzwilliam**

**FUTURE GUILD EVENTS**

(Kings Langley Methodist Church Hall)

**Friday 4th Dec.'98 at 7.00 p.m. (please note early start -finish normal time)**

**TOFF MILWAY** likes to create pots that have an old-fashioned country feel to them, yet still retain their elegant lines. He makes his pots to be used and hopes they will inspire people to make good food. His work is decorated with slip by brushing and slip trailing and then salt glazed. Toff will be treating us to a full evening of demonstrations, showing us his making techniques and discussing his salt glazing.

**8th Jan.'99 8 p.m.**

**SEAN MILLER: European Slipware and Folk Pottery**

**OTHER EVENTS**

**BUCKS POTTERY & SCULPTURE SOCIETY**

Sat.21st - Sat.28th Nov. 10 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.  
Annual Exhibition at Amersham Town Hall

11th Jan.'99 8 p.m. at Chorley Wood Arts Centre  
**BRIAN USHER**

Sat.12th & Sun.13th Dec.'98. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Craft Potters Association's Christmas Fair at Bloxham school, near Banbury, Oxon. A question/answer session during the Saturday evening session involving many potters, manufacturers and suppliers. Phone 01451 820 173.

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

**Clare Courtney** is a potter from Banbury; she is open minded, being willing to learn new things about any aspect of pottery.

**Chris Kelly** of Rickmansworth is a ceramics student at West Herts. College, eagerly awaiting the start of a post-graduate course.

**Sally Hadden** lives at Northwood and has an interest in any and every aspect of pottery.

**Bridget Thomas** is involved in programme production at the BBC and lives at Milton Keynes. Bridget has a general interest in all forms of ceramics and methods of producing them.

**Mr. & Mrs.P.Sillence** are both potters residing at Mill Hill (and have joined us just in time to have their names in this issue of the Newsletter). They both take a strong interest in all types of pottery.

We are delighted, as always, to welcome our new members and take this opportunity to remind you to come to our Potters Open Day on 14th November. This is an event which you really must not miss, since we have an excellent and varied programme, which will undoubtedly be of interest to you all.

**Mervyn Fitzwilliam**

**LIBRARY UPDATE**

You will find enclosed with this Newsletter a list of the works in the Stan Romer Memorial Library.

We already have some new books - some donated by publishers and others by some of our members.

271.	Gonen, R.	Ancient Pottery
272.	Robison, J.	Large Scale Ceramics
273.	French, N.	The Potters Directory of Shape and Form
274.	Gault, R.	Paper Clay
474.	Hamer, F. & J.	Potters Dictionary of Materials & Techniques

If you can't find the book you want to borrow in the book-case, I will do my best to bring it to the next evening meeting.

Books with "400" series numbers are for reference during the meetings only. Most members are returning their books promptly. There are only 3 books outstanding from previous meetings. I hope these will be returned soon, as other members want to borrow them.

**Pam Bishop**

## **WILL LEVI MARSHALL DEMONSTRATION - Sept.11th**

Everybody was impressed when they heard that Will Levi Marshall had driven all the way from Scotland to talk to us. He showed no signs of fatigue. In fact it was a very stimulating evening. We were given many 'potters tips' - e.g. he told us that he uses paper clay for repairing cracks. Another interesting idea was that of using a blunt 6B pencil to write the name of the glaze directly on to the glazed surface. Something I will find invaluable was the information that errors made with wax resist can be removed with acetone\nail varnish remover.

He started the evening by showing slides of pots he admires, his own work and his family. Then after coffee we came to the exciting part of glazing. Using callipers and a variety of pencils, he marks out areas in the pot with the greatest of care. This is obviously the most challenging part of the process. He starts by marking the middle of the pot using a board painted with a black line. He stressed that you need one big area of a pot, otherwise it ends up too fussy and that it shouldn't be too balanced in the centre or it will be too static. In fact he was particularly concerned that his pots should have a dynamic quality. To this end he has shapes and corners which go off the edge of the pot. (What Wölfflin called 'Open Form' in his book *Classic Art*).

Having established the spaces by carefully drawing with a pencil on the biscuit pot, he then marked out areas using enormous quantities of masking tape - expensive, more flexible tape for curves, cheap tape for straight lines. Once again, he started with the middle section. His technique for glazing is extremely dramatic. He takes a very large ladle fixed on a long broom handle and with amazing dexterity poured the glaze over the correct area. He stressed that several layers of thin glaze were preferable to one thick layer. The moment that the glaze had dried, which seemed to be very quick (he does a soft bisque firing to 980°C), he applied thinned wax emulsion with a large soft bristle brush. By then it was almost time to leave. As he said, time flies when you are having fun, but the following are some of the glaze recipes he gave us. Further glaze recipes of Will's can be found in issue Nos.162 and 173 of *Ceramic Review* Sept./Oct.'98.

### **A.A. BASE - Cone 9-10**

Colour: Translucent Green

Surface texture: Semi-Matt or Satin

Type of firing: O. or R.

Glaze type: Ca

Cornwall stone ..... 46

Whiting ..... 34

Grolleg ..... 20

Additions

Tin oxide ..... 4

Copper carbonate ..... 4

**or** Tin oxide ..... 4

Chromium oxide ..... 0.1

### **MgO BASE - Cone 9-10**

Colour: Opaque Blue

Surface texture: Semi-gloss

Type of firing: O or R

Glaze type: Mg

Potash feldspar ..... 41

Gerstley borate ..... 12

Dolomite ..... 7

Talc ..... 15

Ball clay ..... 5

Flint ..... 20

Additions

Tin oxide ..... 2

Black cobalt oxide ..... 2

### **RUTILE PINK - Cone 9-10**

Colour: Opaque Pink

Surface texture: Semi-gloss

Type of firing: O

Glaze type: Li Ca

Barium carbonate ..... 2

Lithium carbonate ..... 11

Dolomite ..... 6

Whiting ..... 16

Nepheline syenite ..... 23.5

Flint ..... 41.5

Additions

Tin oxide ..... 3

Rutile ..... 3.6

Bentonite ..... 2

**Margaret Aanonson**

### **WILLIAM LEVI MARSHALL**

The quote below appears in "POTTERS" - 11th edtn. and gives an immediate insight into Will's work:

"William Levi Marshall a potter  
Fires till cone ten does totter  
Reduction fired hues  
Gave him the blues  
But his oxidised reds are much hotter!"

Will's work is amazingly colourful, striking and distinctive in form. Despite having just driven down from Scotland to talk to the Guild he was articulate, witty and very interesting.

Will has a B.A.Hons from the Manchester Metropolitan University and an MFA from Alfred University, New York, USA. He met his wife Phoebe in America and now lives in a beautiful historic family abode in Scotland.

To give us an insight into his work, Will brought with him a good number of slides. Two slides in particular were striking: one, an old black and white photograph, showed two pioneers one of whom was Will's grandfather; the second caused many to gasp in amazement - not many people had had the misfortune of burning down a wood kiln, charring the rafters and causing the closure of the



outdoor kiln site. This event, not surprisingly, led to Will's departure from wood firing and to his interest in oxidised stoneware firing. He spent considerable time experimenting with many materials to develop a powerful range of glazes.

Influences included Pete Volkas and especially Rudy Autio. Rudy uses bright ceramic colours and is very involved in female form. Will is very aware of user's tactile response to his pots. Sources of inspiration also include the Guggenheim Museum which has a sloping floor and this line is reflected in the glaze decoration of some of his bowls. Historical pots also provide a starting point to develop a shape and design - he showed us a decorated Assyrian pot and his interpretation which caught the essence of the style and decoration. To develop a new form can take several months to perfect. A tall faceted vase took 3 months to design and make to his satisfaction. Decoration is often linked to a cube and circle relationship and transfers are often used.

Will fires bisque to 980°C. This results in clay having good absorbency for the glaze application. Glaze firing temp. cone 9, cone 10 just starting to bend. He is careful at cone 8, firing slowly for about 2 hours to ensure a satisfactory cobalt purple. He cools at 50°C/hr for 2 - 2½ hrs.

After a coffee break, most held their breath as Will handled an exceedingly large fragile dish with footring, for decoration. He examined the bowl and started to mark it out for glazing. Will told us a dish may take 35 minutes to throw, 45 minutes to turn and 4 hours to decorate. He will also sand the dish to ensure the surface is smooth for glazing.

He uses a long piece of wood as a ruler and after deciding on the line, he draws it with an HB pencil - any mistakes can be rubbed out using a pencil eraser. He often uses the line where curves change. Other tools include a set square and some callipers. He points out that when decorating you must balance the areas of the shapes to get good proportions. His curves, line and corners go over the edge of the dish onto its underside. He decides which glazes go where and has a shorthand for them which he actually writes on the dish - usually 3 glazes on a small dish and 5 on a larger.

He marks off various areas in blocks, starting in the middle, using expensive masking tapes for curves and cheap masking tapes for straight runs. He supports the dish by its footring and pours glaze from a long-handled large ladle. When he is satisfied that he has sufficient glaze on the dish he will let it dry, mark it very gently with the glaze shorthand, using a 6B pencil. He then covers glaze with diluted wax emulsion- 1:1 or 2:1 with water. When firm, the masking tape is carefully pulled off at 90° to surface thus giving a clean edge. This procedure is then repeated till the dish is fully glazed - top and underside. Unwanted glaze is scraped off with a scalpel blade and acetone used to remove wax resist.

**Anita Cheasty**

### Some further recipes:

#### REVISED LP MATT

Opaque Purple, semi-matt or satin

Soda felspar	34
Dolomite	23
China clay	16
Barium carbonate	16
Flint	11
Additions	
Cobalt carbonate	1-3
Manganese dioxide	0.5

#### CARAMEL YELLOW

Petalite (Lithium feldspar)	46
Nepheline syenite	36
Titanium dioxide	12
Dolomite	9
China clay	9

#### COBALT GREEN

Nepheline syenite	70
Calcium carbonate	5
Gerstley borate (Ca borate frit)	2
Petalite	15
Ball clay	8
Additions	
Cobalt carbonate	1
Rutile	2
Bentonite	2-3

#### WILL'S HIGH CaO

Blue grey runny	
Blue salt glaze	
Potash feldspar	14
Dolomite	9
Barium carbonate	9
Calcium carbonate	29
Ball clay	17
Flint	18
Additions	
Cobalt carbonate	0.5
Red iron oxide	2

\*\*\*\*\*

### PITSTONE

Jan Kent has become our new Pitstone Organiser. He has taken over from Tina Hall who intends to help at Pitstone when she can, but now has more pressing commitments with her family business.

We have been offered a 3.5 Cubic Feet front loading electric kiln, which we plan to install at Pitstone & convert for gas firing. Jan will be looking for help with this project, so call him on 01908 674 051 if you are interested, or if you want to be involved in the Raku firings.

\*\*\*\*\*

## PICASSO'S CERAMICS AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY

This is a large and stimulating exhibition that no potter would willingly miss. The sheer exuberance and inventiveness is a revelation and enormously enjoyable. Picasso is of course primarily a painter, but if you think he is merely using the clay surface as his 'canvas', you would be mostly wrong. He does paint pictures sometimes on his plates and platters, often humorously and playfully, but more often he uses shapes and forms in a method more akin to collage, usually combining several techniques on one item. For example a plate or dish will not only have food freely painted on it with slip, but there will also be perhaps a clay fork and food shapes applied to the surface. There will also be gougings and impressing done with fingers and tools. He pinches, wax resists, presses, brushes, slabs and dabs with endless energy.

There are large amphoræ and urns on which he re-invents Etruscan, Cycladic and Greek decoration. You can clearly see the classicism from which it comes, but also the originality of Picasso's mind re-working it in his own inimitable fashion. There are women as pots and pots as women - slender vase shapes pinched and coaxed and folded into gentle and graceful shapes. Some of the small ones have great elegance and grace with the addition of a few black brushed lines to indicate drapery and body form.

He seems to understand instinctively the demands of decorating forms in the round and his visual punning with bird, animal and human forms is ingenious and enjoyable. Some of the larger forms have slip decoration which enhances their volume until they seem 'fit to bust'! Handles are always large and strongly emphasised. The interpretations of Greek amphoræ are in classical colours, unglazed terra-cotta, white and black, but their lively spontaneity of brushwork is in complete contrast to the originals and more akin to the Cretan and Minoan marine period.

I had seen a little before but I had no idea that he had done so much ceramic work and in such variety and quality. It seems that it took a painter to free up the world of ceramics. As in much of his work, he accepts and takes the traditional and then pushes its boundaries to the limit.

The pots were made by a skilled potter, Jules Agard in Vallauris under Picasso's direction, to be altered and painted by the artist himself. I get the impression that he would have been too impatient to learn the art of throwing for himself and after all, in the circumstances, why bother? Many drawings are shown in which he worked out his ideas, but some of the figurines for instance, were done spontaneously.

The exhibition is on until December 16th and the entry charge is £7, full-time students £5. Unfortunately, on checking with the Education Department, I found that there is no reduction for groups.

Ruth Karnac

## JESSA FUCHS CERAMICS AND PAINTINGS

**Saturday & Sunday 5 - 6 December**

**10.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.**

**at her home and studio**

24 CROSS RD., KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES,  
SURREY, KT2 6HG

Tel: 0181 549 6906

## BOOK REVIEW

"Ancient Mosaics" - Roger Ling A4 144 pp.  
pub'd. by British Museum Press 1998. £12.99

This is not a **practical** book for potters insofar that it does not give constructional information, indeed mosaics need not be made from ceramic materials at all. Early mosaics utilised coloured pebbles, whilst stone, glass and terracotta have all been used.

Mosaics were in their heyday during the Græco-Roman period and were a common feature in Roman villas throughout their entire empire. Interestingly the Romans differentiated between floor and wall and ceiling mosaics. They valued the latter two more highly and were willing to pay the artisans a higher rate for them. There may have been an element of 'danger money' included in this since there is at least one fatal accident recorded when one mosaicist fell off a wall to his death while working on a mosaic.

As I said, this is not a practical guide but it gives an interesting insight into a related art form. A copy of this book will be included in the Guild's library.

**Tony Stevens**

## POTTERS TIP?

During a visit to a hard-working potter, I was offered a cup of tea. The draining board carried a stack of unwashed mugs and I started to rinse one. "No, have one off the shelf above, they've just been fired" and then, by way of further information, "I don't wash the mugs, I just put them in with the next firing".

I was amused, but understood the logic, although thought it rather eccentric - could this be a new way of saving water, which we have often been urged to do? Well, the idea is not new.

When innkeepers offered clay tobacco pipes to their customers during past centuries, they had usually been cleaned or sterilised after previous use. This was done by stacking them into a hooped horizontal iron holder and then firing them in a suitable oven or kiln, or perhaps more often by placing the holder in the fire embers and leaving it there until the next morning.

**Editor**

## **SALT GLAZE KILN: PROGRESS REPORT**

The catenary arch downdraught kiln has been constructed with end walls, fuel and damper course in place.

**Work to do:** Finding a ducting pipe to complete chimney; tiling in chimney and bracing end walls; building insulating retaining walls and backfilling with vermiculite; setting propane burners with flame arrest shut-off valves; constructing a protective covering/shelter.

Volunteers to form a working party will be needed to complete these tasks. I will be available Sunday 8th Nov. to assist. Ring 01923 263032.

**Paul Rowbottom**

## **50 YEARS OF POT MAKING - The S.E.A. Craft Conference at Bishop Otter College, Chichester, August 26th to September 5th 1957**

The year 1957 was a memorable one for me for many reasons. The Society for Education through Art was active at that time. The society existed to promote understanding of the function of art in education and to provide communication between teachers and all those concerned with the arts. It was equally concerned with the detailed work of the teacher and with the larger issues of national education policy. It actively contributed to progressive International Movements in Art Education, and had the support of the Arts Council.

The Society had originated by the combining of the Art Teachers Guild and the New Society of Art Teachers, thus forming the Society for Education in Art in 1941. The name was changed in 1952 to the Society for Education through Art. The Society produced a journal called 'Athene' and a feature for many years were the Annual Conferences held at education centres.

I attended the Craft Conference held at Bishop Otter College, Chichester from August 26th to September 5th 1957. The fees for residence, tuition, material and use of tools and apparatus for the whole week was 19 guineas. One could apply to the Local Education Authority for a grant towards the cost. How cheap, compared to today's prices for such an informative time. The majority of those attending were teachers, but other craft people attended as well. I met many interesting people who expanded my ideas and changed my whole way of life.

There was a wide range of crafts. I chose to do Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing as a change from Pottery, but got involved with the Kiln Building anyway. Many of the tutors were lecturers from Farnham. Henry Hammond took kiln building, Paul Barron pottery, Helen Pincombe, who worked at Oxshott did hand building, Ella McCloud weaving and Barbara Mullins from Graffham near Midhurst did spinning and dyeing.

The students at Farnham built experimental kilns in the pottery yard and I remember a salt glazed kiln - I still have

a little bottle that came out of it. Michael Cardew was working in Africa and he was experimenting with building high-fired kilns, as most African pots were fired in bonfires or clamps. He evolved a small round-chambered test kiln with a French Burrie fire box. Most country potteries in England had bottle shaped up-draught kilns fired with wood and finished with brush wood (hazel bundles like pea sticks) and later coal. In Japan they fired to higher temperatures. They would direct the flames up, then down through the pots to go out near the floor. This enabled the kilns to gain greater temperature, because the heat did not rush through the pots and out through the hole in the roof. Cardew had given a plan to Henry of this small test kiln and he had tried it out at Farnham with several adjustments, so the students built one at Bishop Otter (see fig.1)

People also built other kilns, a little updraught kiln and one using a sagger. The Cardew kiln was built with a double row of fire bricks for the round chamber, loaded from the top with a Ciment Fondu dome made in six pieces (see fig.3). The Burrie fire box was square and had two levels with primary and secondary air holes to assist in the rise of temperature. It was fed in two ways, first from the front on the ground level with small sticks to warm the kiln through and begin to gain temperature. Then wood was placed on ledges from above (see fig.3). As the wood burnt, the ashes dropped to the fire box below. The flames entered the kiln on floor level and hit a bag wall which shot them up to the dome, they were then drawn down through the pots and the checkered floor and out of the chimney vent that was at the back of the kiln, along a horizontal underground flue and then up the chimney stack which could be raised to make the pull stronger.

fig.3 Henry Hammond leaning on the dome of test kiln



KILN SECTION

fig. 1

Michael Cardew Test Kiln,  
modified for Bishop Otter

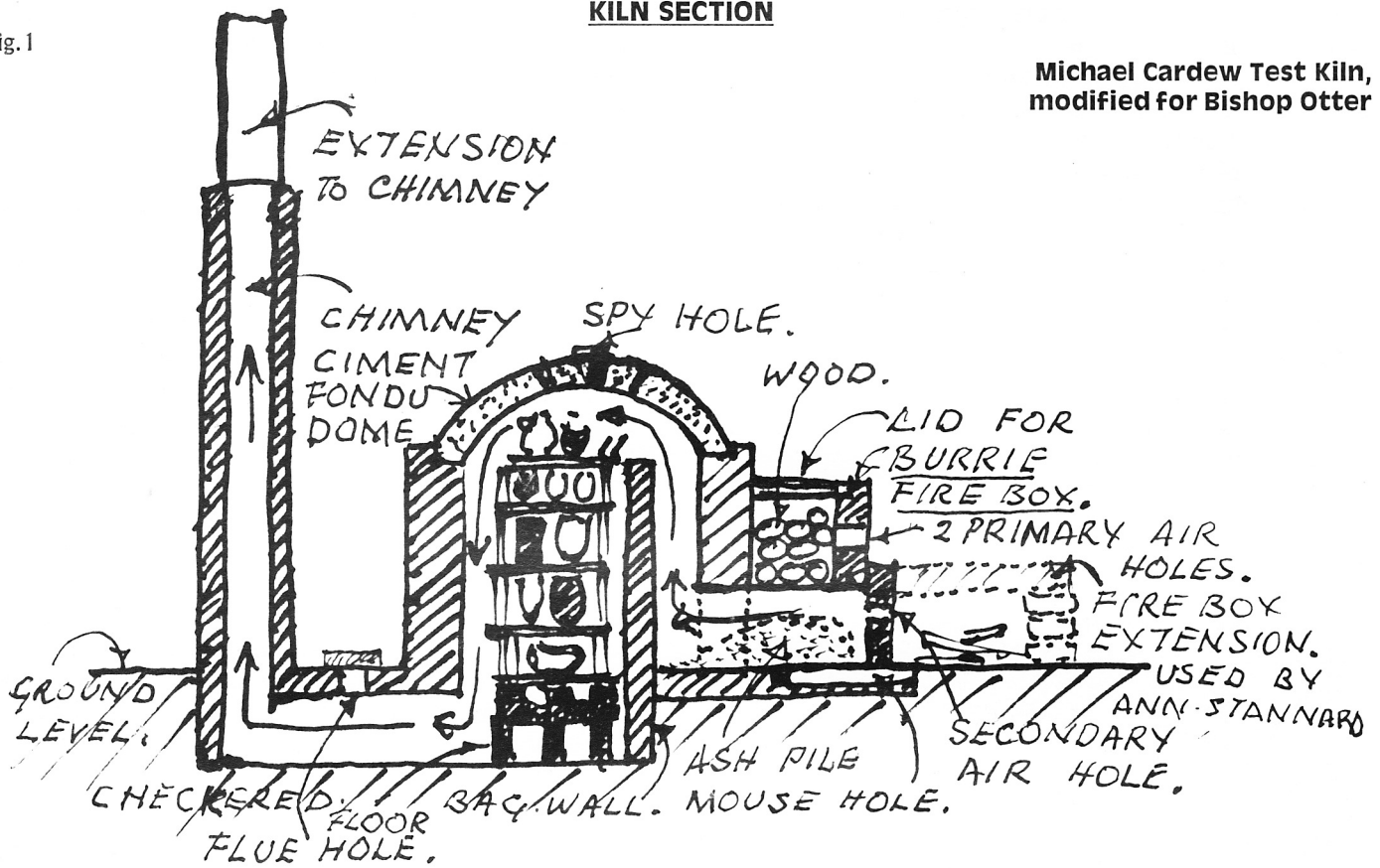


fig. 2



Stan Romer

Top of kiln  
after firing

K.E.M.A. behind  
Leach's bottle

Shona Robertson  
(wrote craft books)

Bernard Leach



There is a great art in firing these kilns; there needs to be two teams of people because there are bricks and air vents, etc. that have to be adjusted to keep the temperature rising, for if the kiln is allowed to go on too long with one adjustment, it can lose temperature. There is also the problem of getting the fire box clogged with ash and thus temperature loss again. So Cardew evolved the Mouse Hole, which was a piece of scaffold pole that went from the outside to under the centre of the ash pile (see fig.1). The air is drawn to the ash and burns it away, so keeping the air way clear. Dry pine wood is good as it burns with a long flame and the resin explodes, making it very hot. Wet willow only loses temperature and can cause reduction at the wrong time. The two teams are needed to keep constant vigil and it is very tiring, one group rests while the other works.

fig.4 Test kiln showing Burrie fire box with ledges



Henry had some interesting teachers in his kiln building group. Jeff Love, a very active craft teacher from a secondary school in the Midlands, he helped to run craft courses at Attingham Park near Shrewsbury. Derek Turner taught Art and Craft at Frederick Bird school in Coventry; he had been a student at the Slade when I was in the Bartlett, University College, London. Ann Stannard, a teacher at the Royal Commercial Travellers School at Hatch End, Middlesex and Stan Romer was on the course, but I do not know which group he was in.

Bernard Leach came and visited us on the Sunday in the middle of the course and gave a talk on brush painting and

designs. Then, later, we sat in front of the Cardew kiln which had been unloaded, and Bernard Leach talked and answered questions (see fig.2).

I enjoyed learning to spin with a spindle and dyeing wool into a wonderful rust orange, using lichen called Crottell. Then weaving a length of check wool material with natural black, white and the rust I had just dyed. I still use this on a chair in my sitting room. In the evening I met Phyllis Neale a weaver, she and I became great friends.

Later in the year on 7th December, I went to help Ann Stannard fire the Cardew kiln they had built in the grounds at Hatch End (see fig.5). It took many hours to fire it, as it got stuck at 1000°C. Then the science mistress deduced "heat gained was equal to heat lost", so four of us got cracking. I raked out the ash and raised the lid of the fire box. Ann supplied the wood. Betty, the science mistress, shoved the wood into the fire box and Helen, the gym mistress, was monitoring the colour of flame passing through the flue (by looking into the hole made by removing a brick out of the back of the round chamber below the chimney). This worked well and the temperature fairly shot up. Cones just could not resist the charm of four female attendants stoking like the demons of Hell, getting the flames longer and hotter, and hotter and longer well into the night. In the morning the turfs we had put on the dome to keep in the heat were well baked.



fig.5 Ann Stannard's kiln at Hatch End gives a complete picture of kiln and size.

The conference was very enjoyable as it was in a very pleasant place, all the people on the course were so interesting and I got involved with the kiln builders as well as the weavers.

Information on the Society for Education through Art was taken from their application for membership form and History of S.E.A.

Details of the Cardew test kiln from photographs taken at the conference and the Cardew Test Kiln Plan of 1951.

**K.E. Marigold Austin**

### **PHIL ROGERS' SUMMER COURSE**

In July, I attended the third of Phil Rogers' four week long summer workshops at his farmhouse and pottery just outside Rhayader. The farm, outbuildings and surrounding countryside were very beautiful. I was one of the three 'students' who were able to stay at the farm and was thus able to enjoy Lynne Rogers' beautiful breakfasts as well as the superb lunches she provided for everybody on the course.

The course was primarily a throwing course intended to improve the skills of those who already had the basic skills and to introduce basic skills to newcomers. In fact, everyone on the course had some experience of throwing and by the end of the week we had covered all the main shapes generally thrown by potters, including additional skills such as altering shapes and faceting.

Phil's own recipe 'home made' clay was a joy to use and amazingly, although very workable, seemed to produce very little slip.

A good deal of attention was paid to 'what makes a good pot'. To this end, we paid a visit to the excellent collection of studio pottery at Aberystwyth University and were able to handle and examine superb pots in Phil's own collection, in addition to seeing the many pots of Phil's in various stages of completion.

A highlight of the week was the biscuit firing and ash glazing of the tea bowls we had made on the course. Each of us had about ten glazed tea bowls to bring home with us at the end of the week.

When I look now at my very professional looking bowls, I have to keep reminding myself that although I threw them, it was not my clay, my glazes or my reduction firing that produced such excellent pots. Nevertheless, they are an inspiration to me and a reminder of what an enjoyable and valuable week I spent in Wales last July. My next firing at home will be using my own ash glazes and I am keeping my fingers crossed.

I learned from Phil that excellent results are only obtained by adopting a meticulous and very professional approach to all stages of production.

### **PHIL ROGERS: CERAMIC EXHIBITION** **11th September - 1st November 1998.**

With my wife attending a course in North Yorkshire on the 12th September, it was convenient for us to attend the preview of Phil Rogers' exhibition at the Harley Gallery, Welbeck, near Worksop. I felt slightly concerned at the thought of buying yet another pot (you know the feeling). My wife never gets cross when I return with a new acquisition but asks gently where I am going to put it (you must know the situation).

As it happened I need not have had any fears. The exhibition of 285 pots was quite magnificent, comprising salt glazed and ash glazed work from monumental bottles and jugs to exquisite tea bowls. Each item rewarded close examination and the overall effect was very impressive.

I was able to buy my pot, my wife eagerly bought another and if I had pushed ever so slightly I might have managed a third!

The Hanley Gallery itself is a wonderful example of the practical use to which defunct buildings can be put. It was originally the private gasworks on the estate of the Duke of Portland and has now been converted to a magnificent exhibition gallery with some very interesting craft workshops adjoining, which include pipe organ builders, archery bow and sporting rifle makers and clavichord and harpsichord makers. Well worth a visit!

Such a visit shows how effective the conversion of old industrial premises can be. Hopefully, the planned conversion of the old South Bank power station to the Tate Modern Art Gallery will be as successful.

**Geoff Parr**

### **NOTEBOOK**

\* Our recent survey indicated that we had at least 24 people interested in our "fifteen minute kiln, thirty minute pot" workshop. Arrangements were made to hire equipment, other details were planned, application forms placed prominently in every Newsletter - result? Four applicants and subsequent cancellation.

\* Your committee find such situations rather baffling. It does seem to be the case that associated pottery groups and other organisations are now also running workshops and courses that may conflict with what we may offer. I have had indications that other guilds have suffered similar problems.

\* The Guild exhibition this year was supported by only a handful of members, yet in past years we have been swamped with eager exhibitors. The recent 'Open Studios' activity and the very strong

support we gave to the Hatfield festival are thought to be factors.

- \* What do you know? Help reduce the committee guess-work and help us all by telling the committee why you did not give your support.
- \* I am honoured to be elected Chairman and especially pleased that Caroline Hughes has taken the position of Vice-chair, she has been a great help to us since joining the committee.
- \* Ruth Karnac has worked very hard as our Chair for many years, very often (in fact, far too often) picking up the tasks that others were unable or unwilling to take on. I am delighted that Ruth will remain on the committee and, in addition, working with her husband Harry and myself, I hope she will continue to be a member of the Newsletter team - her assistance is always helpful.
- \* Occupying the position of Chairman and also Newsletter Editor will be quite challenging and something has to give, so the Newsletter will become quarterly in 1999.

**Mervyn Fitzwilliam**

#### **PROFILE - CAROLINE & MARTIN HUGHES**

Mervyn has asked for a profile of us both and it is much more difficult to put into words than one would imagine ..... but here goes!

Although attending the same school, Martin and I only started our 'association' in the sixth form. After school, we then went our own educational ways: Martin to read for a degree in Mechanical Engineering at UWIST in Cardiff, and me to a foundation course followed by an Art degree at Bath Academy of Art (Corsham) studying, of course, Ceramics. After achieving my degree, I joined Martin in Cardiff and obtained my Art Teachers Certificate whilst he finished his final year.

We then moved to Carlisle - Martin working for John Laing and Sons to whom he was articled. and me jobless for a while! I did manage to find work eventually, working as a ceramics technician in a school as part of the "Job Creation Scheme" - remember them? When the contract ended, I spent 18 months working for a newly set up pottery, producing bread and butter domestic ware. I swore afterwards that I would only ever make the 'pots' I wanted to make. Production throwing is not my favourite activity but it did give me a wonderful grounding in throwing.

Martin's job moved, so we came back south to live in Abbots Langley (where we still live but not in the same house) and we both worked for John Laing and Sons in Boreham Wood - Martin continuing up the management ladder and me in the finance department - a big change

from potting!

1982 saw the birth of the first of our three children (2 girls and a boy) and the temporary suspension of paid work for me - temporary being almost 10 years. Looking back, this was a wonderful time, when I could devote myself entirely to the family. Circumstances change and I was getting itchy feet (or fingers), so I managed to find a job teaching pottery to adults on a very part time basis at West Herts. College. I still do this but have added to it teaching Art at St. Michael's Catholic High School in Watford. During this time, Martin took professional exams to become a Chartered Engineer whilst working in the construction, pesticides, automotive and pharmaceutical industries, including a period of being out of professional work for nearly a year.

We are currently settled into a very busy life, trying to balance bringing up our 3 children with their ever increasing need to be chauffeured everywhere and work, which at times seems to want to take over and, if we are really lucky, a bit of time to ourselves!

I'm dreaming of a workshop at the bottom of the garden and more time, so I can use it. Martin hasn't quite worked out his dream but is happy to support the Guild by adding up the money!

**Caroline Hughes**

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCT.9th '98**

Those of you who were at the above meeting will know that there have been changes on the committee. Your new chairman is Mervyn Fitzwilliam who you all know and who will, I'm sure, breathe new enthusiasm into the Guild and influence all our activities in a positive way. His energy is legendary to all who have worked with him.

*(Ahem! Ahem! this just might be past tense- ed.)* Caroline has agreed to be vice-chair and we are all delighted with that. Her husband, Martin, will take over as treasurer, so we have what is known in some quarters as a double whammy. We are very lucky in that.

We also note with gratitude that John Beckley will continue to be our secretary. I have greatly relied on his good advice in the past. I am staying on the committee but will now take a back seat.

We welcome Anita Cheasty as a member new to the committee and hope that she will find the experience interesting and not too terrifying! We're all pussycats really. Val Barnes, Brian Bicknell, Shirley Bell, Pam Bishop, Digby Stott and Tony Stevens are continuing to serve on the committee.

Commiserations to 4 members who had their cars broken into during the meeting. I don't know what can be done to avoid such misfortunes. It could (and does) happen to anyone, but it was really bad luck and we hope it was a one-off occurrence.

I am over the moon at receiving a presentation on my

'retirement' ....to buy "a pot of my choice" as a gift from the Guild. Thank you all for that. I am, as some of you will know, a pot addict - no, not that sort of pot. I hope to see as many of you as possible on Open Day on November 14th.

**Ruth Karnac**

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT AT THE A.G.M. OCT.'98**

I should like to say just a little more about the Guild's successful events over the past year. Once again over 100 people attended the Potters Open Day, when 3 well-known potters gave us slide presentations and demonstrations.

We have had regular monthly meetings when many excellent potters have demonstrated and spoken about a range of subjects which included slab built pottery, Japanese ceramics, lustres, making tiles and decorating pots with multiple glazes. We hope you will encourage your friends and colleagues to come to these meetings.

In the last year we held two very successful salt-glazing workshops, when members salt-glazed some of their pots. We also improved the facilities available to Guild members at Pitstone and bought a new Raku kiln that can be used there.

We also established a Guild library for use at our Friday evening meetings.

I believe that the committee has worked hard to provide a good programme of events for the year. Lastly I should like to say something about Ruth Karnac's retirement.

As she has mentioned, she has been a committee member for 15 years and in recent years has been the chairperson. She is enthusiastic and hard-working and has taken on many tasks over and above her works as chairwoman of the committee. She has done an excellent job for the Guild.

Her husband, Harry Karnac, also does a great job for the Guild in preparing the typescript for the Newsletters and in many, many other ways. We would like to express our gratitude to him for all his good work.

We are much indebted to you, Ruth, for all your efforts on our behalf. We would like to have given you a pot today as a token of our thanks, but we thought it would be best for you to have a pot that you like. I would therefore like to present this cheque to you on behalf of the members of the Guild and the committee so that you can choose your own pot.

**John Beckley**

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Martin Hughes presented the accounts for the year ended 31st July'98, Amongst other things these account showed that the costs of the Newsletter reduced by £285 compared to '97; revenue from Hatfield increased by

£299; P.O.D. surplus decreased by £654 on '97; Cow Byre exhibition costs exceeded revenue by £108; Pot Crawl loss increased by £64 and the Chiltern Open Air event revenue increased by £112. Overall, the Guild's surplus on the Income & Expenditure account was £671, which was added to the balance of funds brought forward from last year and carried forward to next year. The Guilds assets as at 31st July 1998 amount to £7046.15. The report and account were accepted by the meeting.

### **CERAMICS AND PRINT - A slide presentation and demonstration by PAUL SCOTT**

We were pleased to welcome Paul Scott at our Friday evening meeting on 9th October. Many members know about Paul's work as a result of his books CERAMICS AND PRINT published in 1994 by A.& C.Black.

Paul was trained to be an art teacher, but his tutor at college was an enthusiast for clay work and he became interested in printing on clay when, as a student, he visited H.& R.Johnson's impressive tile works at Stoke-on-Trent. At that factory, he saw silk screens being used to print images onto clay tiles.

At the exhibition, held at the end of his college course, he could have sold all of his printed work on tiles and he realised it might be possible to earn a living as an artist by producing images on clay rather than on paper. However, he started his career by teaching for some years.

After setting up his own studio, he made ceramic panels for buildings and worked on many commissions for customers. At that time, a friend came back from Crete with pictures of models of 4000 year old houses, which he found of great interest.

He applied for and was awarded a grant by Northern Arts to go to Crete and using the facilities of the British School at Athens, he obtained access to the Archæological Museum collection at Heraklion where there is a magnificent collection of pots and othr ceramic work which influenced much of his subsequent work.

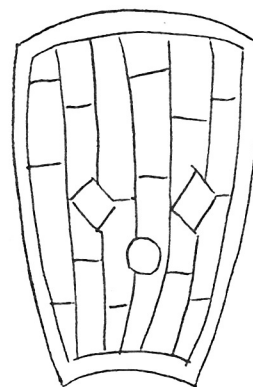


Fig 1

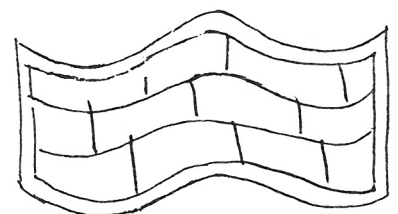
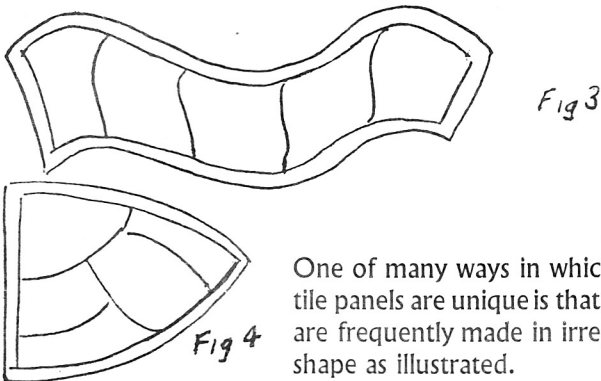


Fig 2

He showed us slides of a number of shallow collage bowls he made by overlapping and joining together a number of separate slabs of clay, each slab printed with different images. He also made a number of painted pictures on clay with attached ceramic picture frames.



In recent years Paul has made many ceramic tile panels, some as commissions for such clients as the Carlisle Museum and Art Gallery, and some for private clients. He has also acted as a tutor for groups of schoolchildren making communal tile panels.



One of many ways in which his tile panels are unique is that they are frequently made in irregular shape as illustrated.

### **HIS DEMONSTRATION**

He used T material and porcelain fired to 1280°C. However, he found that he could purchase Harry Fraser porcelain which he fires to 1200°C. This gave him much brighter colours than he used to get firing at the higher temperature.

He demonstrated painting images on to bisc fired porcelain ware. He painted in a style he would have used with watercolour paints. His underglaze colours were always used mixed with an underglaze medium to make the colours flow more evenly. He did however soften his colours as necessary with water to lighten the tone, as he would with watercolour paints.

Paul described some of the ways in which he makes mono-prints using a high density plaster slab. One method is to make a screen print on to the plaster slab and then pour slip onto the slab, pulling it off as it becomes soft leather-hard. Another method he uses is to draw an incised sgraffito design into the plaster slab, filling the lines with coloured slips before pouring slip on top and pulling off the soft leather-hard clay with the image imprinted on it.

He also demonstrated an alternative method of drawing on the plaster slab, using a mapping pen with a fine nib and a black underglaze mixed with underglaze medium and water as the ink, before pouring on the slip as before.

With time running short, Paul described the way he makes decals using silk screen techniques to print on to transfer paper. The resulting decal transfers with the printed images on them are then used to apply the images to either flat clay slabs or plates or pots as required.

There were many questions from a very interested audience about the techniques used. Time did not permit Paul to deal with all the technical details involved in all of the printing processes he mentioned, including the use of a photo-copier to produce images to be applied to clay. It may be that a workshop run by Paul on these techniques would be attractive to members.

Everyone present enjoyed Paul's lively and informative presentation and demonstration.

**John Beckley**

### **BOOK REVIEW**

**Paper Clay - by Rosette Gault. A.& C.Black £10.99 128pp.A5**

There has been a great surge of interest in paper clay techniques recently. The author, however, points out that the concept is very old. Adobe is a mixture of clay and, typically, straw, although other unmentionable substances can be used. This illustrates a misnomer, paper clay can be paperless. Other forms of cellulose, such as cotton or sawdust, can be used but other materials can also be incorporated such as nylon fibres and glass fibre.

The author explains the great advantages paper clay has over normal clay, its great unfired strength, its lightness and malleability. These all combine to produce a material that is unique and capable of being formed into shapes impossible with normal clays. In addition to strengthening fibres, Ms Gault also details the use of mineral additives. Vermiculite to produce textured surfaces, Kyanite to strengthen thin porcelain bodies during firing and many others exploiting the exciting possibilities of paper clay.

She has chapters devoted to various manufacturing methods, boiling, pinching, throwing and slab/sheet fabrication, all used in 'normal' clay manufacture but enhanced using paper clay. Press and slip moulding are also covered as is the making of paper clay slip, or p'slip as she calls it. (She is American after all!). Slip moulds do not need to be absorbent as with normal slip moulding, instead flexible latex moulds can be used, allowing undercut mouldings to be made. Once made, the greenware can then be carved, have additions attached or otherwise modified as desired.

I found this book not only very informative but also very readable. My only reservation is the index which I found rather sparse. However, the layout of the various chapters is very logical and individual subjects are easily found. The book is fully illustrated in both black and white and coloured pictures, both of finished works and manufacturing details.

Three copies of this book are the subject of our competition, so don't miss the chance of winning one. See the leaflet with this Newsletter.

**Tony Stevens**

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

As a 25 year old German female potter, I would truly enjoy to work in production and improve my throwing skills by working in an English pottery. I will be available from May 1999 for one year.

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### **January**

30/31 Wax Sculpture: Julian Cooksey

### **February**

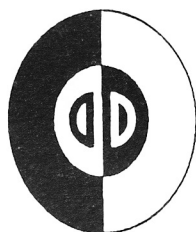
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