



# DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



**IN THIS ISSUE -----**

**"POLITICAL CORRECTNESS"**

**LOUISE DARBY DEMONSTRATION**

**PAUL SCOTT WORKSHOP**

**7th INT. POTTERS FESTIVAL**

**ART IN CLAY '99**



**NEWSLETTER  
WINTER 1999  
£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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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 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** Louise Darby incising a Hare design on a leather-hard jug before attaching the handle

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## EDITORIAL

The number of new books available on the subject of Pottery seems to be rapidly increasing as you can see from the book reviews in this issue and the book list available from our library. This phenomena may not be restricted to the pottery world. Publishers appear to be willing to increase the supply if the demand exists, but will the quality of the available literature decrease as volumes increase? If this is the case, why is the demand increasing? Well, apparently we all have more money than hitherto and are prepared to spend it on those things that interest us. In addition, we are better informed regarding the availability of literature, especially through ..... wait for it ..... electronic mail! So much for e-mail taking over from books the Guild may need another library bookcase.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.** October 1st was the day - but you can still do it. Don't miss out, there are many good things to come. We have one long-time member who has moved to the Cotswolds who says there is nothing like our programme there - so don't forget to renew and take full advantage of our events.

## GUILD EVENTS

Guild meetings are held at Kings Langley Methodist Church Hall.

**Friday Dec.10th '99 at 8 p.m.**

**JOLA SPYTKOWSKA** makes raku fired figures of animals and humans. These "creatures" are inspired by discarded components found in scrapyards. Jola will show us her methods of making and talk about her inspirations.

**Friday Jan.14th '00 at 8 p.m.**

**ELAINE PETO's** animal sculpture is hand-built in stoneware clay and coloured with oxides. Each animal, whether it be goat, pig, sheep, bull or hare, has it's own individual cheeky, intelligent or ferocious character and is

very true to life. Elaine will demonstrate the making of one of her pieces using slabs and will talk about clay, glazing, making, etc. and answer questions as she works.

## OPEN DAY NOV.13th at the Rudolf Steiner School.

**You still have the opportunity to buy your ticket for this ever-popular event. You can meet up with your friends and get to see other Guild members. As the regulars will know, it takes place in an excellent venue and with our celebrity demonstrators, each showing very different aspects of pottery, it all makes for a most enjoyable day out. You learn a lot too!**

**If you have already ordered pottery materials in advance (Pottery crafts, tel:01923 770 127) you will be able to collect them and also to add a prestigious pot (or two?) to your modern, studio pottery collection. Hope to see you there. (A further application form is included with this Newsletter).**

## OTHER EVENTS

**Bucks. Pottery & Sculpture Society.**

Annual Exhibition 20th - 27th November at Old Amersham Town Hall. Private View Friday 19th at 8 p.m. Everyone welcome. Tel. Wendy Fowler for details 01494 524351

Dec.17th '99. Christine Bull at Little Kingshill Village Hall, Great Missenden.

Jan.21st '00. Paul Priest at Little Kingshill Village Hall, Great Missenden.

Nov.20/21: The 3rd Southern Pottery & Ceramics Show, Farnham Maltings, Farnham

Nov.20/21: The Craft Movement at Battersea Arts Centre, London SW11

Nov.23: Studio Pottery Auction at Christies, 85 Old Brompton Rd. London SW7

Nov.27 & Dec.11: Dulwich Craft Fair, St.Barnabas Hall, Dulwich Village, London SE21

Dec.1: Contemporary Ceramics Auction at Bonhams, Knightsbridge

Dec.2: Contemporary Ceramics Auction at Phillips, New Bond St. London W1

Dec.3-5: The Craft Movement at Queen Charlotte Hall, Richmond, Surrey

Until Jan.4: The Colourful World of Clarice Cliff, Riesco Gallery, Croydon Clocktower, Katherine St. Croydon

## **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

We have five new members:

**Mandy Caldron** from Luton is experienced in many aspects of pottery making and firing. She works mostly in hand-built stoneware clay to create sculptured forms. Mandy is also interested in raku and smoke firing.

**Emma Brown** is interested in throwing and hand-building both stoneware and earthenware.

**Pam Naden** lives in Rickmansworth. She works in stained glass but also has an interest in stoneware and earthenware.

**Mary Jose Bolton** is a student potter based at Luton. Mary is currently working in stoneware.

**Sabine Bayley** from Harpenden is an open-minded student potter, being willing to learn new things about any aspect of pottery.

We are delighted to welcome our new Guild members and take this opportunity to remind you to come to our Friday meetings (see GUILD EVENTS section) and particularly to our Potters Open Day. This is an event which you really must not miss, since we have an excellent and varied programme. Hot toddy is traditionally served by our President Murray Fieldhouse as you arrive, with coffee, lunch and tea included as the day progresses. The demonstrations and pots on sale will undoubtedly be of interest to you all.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

I have decided to write to the members of the Dacorum and Chiltern Guild on behalf of The New Studio, a gallery situated in the busy little market town of Olney in North Buckinghamshire.

Since opening in 1997 we have been working towards establishing links with guilds and associations all over the country with a view to individuals and groups exhibiting their work in The New Studio.

We function on two levels: downstairs is brimful of ceramics, glass, textiles, leather, jewellery - predominantly brightly coloured ceramics. Upstairs is an exhibition space for more one-off pieces and for displays from individuals

and groups. We change the exhibitions on a monthly basis. No rent is requested for exhibition space. Work is set up and shown for a month (approximately) and one-third of the retail price is taken as commission on any pieces sold. The studio pays V.A.T. on its commission which is, of course, reflected in the exhibition prices.

If you think that your members might be interested in the possibility of mounting a guild exhibition at some time, please contact us.

We welcome - indeed, we encourage - visits by artists and craftspeople to The New Studio to get a feel for the place, the way we display, etc. We reserve Mondays especially to meet people and to see work. Someone may be able to get to see us or may be able to call by if visiting our area. We would be delighted to meet you.

We look forward to hearing from you.  
Yours sincerely,

Pamela Ward,  
The New Studio,  
Rose Court, Olney, Bucks. MK46 4BY.  
Tel: 01234 711994. Fax: 01234 241405.

*(Copy of letter sent to Val Barnes from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge)*

Dear Ms Barnes,

Thank you for your letter. Although I would be very glad to give a talk on some aspect of pottery to your guild, I am unable to do so for the next year or so. This is because I am the organiser of the Fitzwilliam's exhibition to celebrate the Millenium which opens in January, and after that have various projects of my own to complete.

If after January your group was able to make a weekday visit to the Museum I would be happy to talk to them in the galleries and possibly, if the group was not more than 15, show some items of interest to them in the reserve, such as 20<sup>th</sup> century Studio Ceramics not on display or a selection of different types of pottery. If this would be of interest, please could you write to Jan Saunders, Secretary to our Keeper of Administration, who deals with group visits, telling her that you wish to arrange a visit with me.

Yours sincerely,  
Julia E. Poole, Senior Assistant Keeper  
Department of Applied Art.

*Would members interested in such a visit please contact Jane Kilvington, phone 01727 853 156*

**One last reminder (sorry to nag).** Do please remember to reply to our Exhibition for 2000 opportunity if you want to take part (see previous Newsletter). We will have to cancel the venue if the response is not adequate and time is short now.



## BOOK REVIEWS

### **CHINESE GLAZES by Nigel Wood. Hardback £35 pub'd. A. & C.Black**

Good books, like good pots, are underpriced. This good book sub-titles "Their Origins, Chemistry and Decoration" is the same price as a Chinese dinner for two but it will take longer to digest this well-written work than the two hours it takes to digest a Chinese dinner.

Chinese glazes have been admired throughout history for their extraordinary qualities and colours. Nigel Wood's book traces the development of China's high fired, high iron glazes from the bronze age to present day porcelain. Low fired glazes are also examined from the time of the first emperor; he also examines how the Chinese were able to work glaze miracles with the simplest of recipes and shows how they could be adapted using modern materials.

Having read every page of this easily read book and being able to 'dip in and out' at my leisure, I thought I should speak to Murray asking him if he knew Nigel so that I could tell you about him.. "Do I know him? - he's a genius. Was at Farnham and threw big pots at Wrecklsham. Went to China and wrote standard works on Chinese glazes. I saw the manuscript of the boook which took ten years to write".

"Murray" I was able to say at last "what can I say about him?" "Tell them anything you like, its a great book for anyone interested in Chinese glazes".

I told him that I had made and fired five glazes which Nigel specifically mentioned amongst the many others, easily adapted using modern refined materials. The Tenmoku, Khaki (Kaki they call it) and Celadon were very similar to those which Derek Emms and David Frith use. The cobalt blue recipe produces a very, very light blue but would show darker on porcelain. My family, without exception, picked it out as the most riental coloured glaze they had seen in my workshop.

Nigel mentioned, amongst other unintentional tips, that the Chinese mixed cobalt with tea (sometimes I dip the brush in my coffee, it just turns my eyebrows oatmeal).

This book is a wonderful present for anyone wishing to replicate Chinese glazes; it is lavishly illustrated with pictures not usually seen in pottery books. Finally, look for the much improved *Ceramic Review* write-up, it will be interesting to see what ar real potter thinks about this excellent book.

Arthur Ball

### **THE NEW MAIOLICA - Contemporary Approaches to Colour and Technique by Matthias Ostermann. Hardback £25. pub'd. A. & C. Black**

A bright eyecatching cover entices one to look inside straight away, revealing a book which is well illustrated

with clear colour plates throughout. The book is described as a "workshop in print, guiding the reader progressively through some of the conceptual material and technical concerns of this demanding medium".

The book is, indeed, very clearly set out, starting with it's origins and stated aims. There is a very interesting section on the history of Maiolica from it's beginnings to the present day. Personally, I would like this section to have been longer. After the chapter on the author's approach to æsthetics the book turns to the technical aspects of Maiolica. Materials, glazing and firing are covered and there is a very detailed section on colour theory which details almost every colour combination imaginable.

The chapter on brushwork is, again, comprehensive giving many different techniques and showing the brushes used. I only wish that all the illustrations were not of fish!

The second to last chapter is an informative and comprehensive overview of contemporary Maiolica ware. This is of particular interest to me and, alongside the historical section at the beginning of the book, it gives useful reference material for teaching.

Finally, there is a useful section on any problems that might occur, with clear answers, along with an appendix on glaze details for the more technically minded who would wish to follow this technique.

This book is packed with information and interest and is one I would definitely like to own.

Caroline Hughes

### **BRITISH STUDIO POTTERS' MARKS by Eric Yates- Owen and Robert Fournier pub'd. A. & C.Black. Hardback £35.**

The reputation of Robert Fournier as a meticulous documentor of anything to do with ceramics ensured a very good response from some potters to send in information on their personal marks. Those potters who did not will be kicking themselves as I did 35 years ago when I never got round to replying to a similar appeal from G.Godden.

The Yates-Owen and Fournier book will, I am sure, become the bench mark for any such books in the future. The cross reference system in the book is simple and effective, but the whole thing must have been a nightmare to put together. For that alone I applaud the editors.

The book is, as its intention, a must for the collector, museums, potters, enthusiasts, shops, etc., but I got so involved in the plot that I managed to burn two meals. Plot! What plot? I can hear you say. Well, with all the cross references, one could find where folks are living now or last heard of and with whom they are now living or married to. Quite fascinating and a must.

There are omissions of present potters but this is probably due to the fact that they did not reply to the appeal and with so many young potters starting, I can imagine that it

will need additions or a supplement every five years or so.

What I found rather frightening, as I suspected, was that there are almost as many potters as customers in this country and we must educate the young whilst at school to appreciate art (even if they don't do it) so that when they are earning they will want to go out and buy some pots!

Doug Jones

### **ART IN CLAY - HATFIELD 1999**

Planning our contribution to Art in Clay at Hatfield, which took place in August, began around Easter. Around 25 people volunteered to help set up, sell pots and man the wheels for 'have-a-go'. A huge number of (wo)man hours went into compiling schedules, phoning around and organising transport to get equipment and stock to the venue.

This year, the Dacorum and Chiltern Potters Group occupied their own marquee. It avoided overcrowding on the displays and, combined with a request that only a dozen pieces per potter should be shown, resulted in a slicker and more professional presentation. It also gave enough space to set up four wheels for 'have-a-go'. Two wheels were supplied by Mervyn Fitzwilliam and two by the Guild. Valentines provided our clay.

"No, I couldn't possibly". My exact words after helping out at last year's Living Crafts at the Chiltern Open Air Museum. Ask Ruby. I kid you not, helping on 'have-a-go' does wonders for one's own throwing skills. Hence, I suppose the expression "Those who can, do, those who can't, teach". Although I think I could have learned a thing or two from Swedish John. Who was Swedish John? Ask Ruby. Thus I found myself at Art in Clay 1999 doing 'have-a-go'.

On Saturday morning, as I walked from the car park, I felt the first spots of rain. You know, the usual sort of thing - perfect weather for weeks on end, organise an event and bingo! As it turned out we were just being teased, the weather improved and the customers rolled up. Sunday, however, was a totally different story.

By mid-morning the rain hammered down in horizontal sheets. In spite of the old wartime determination to keep smiling through come what may, operations had to be temporarily suspended as those in the front line were drowning. Forget the mackintosh, sou'wester and gumboots of the typically British summer outing, snorkel, mask and flippers were the order of the day.

Fortunately this state of affairs was short-lived. Once the weather cleared and people emerged blinking into the daylight, business picked up and trade on the wheels was brisk. Despite the appalling weather, the total takings for the weekend were £119.07 on sales and £392.89 on 'have-a-go'.

Hard work, sleepless nights, well - maybe, but a worthwhile venture and a note of thanks to Ruby Sharp for all the hard work that goes onto organising an event such as this.

Thanks also to Sylvia and Mervyn for their kind hospitality at the B-B-Q. that followed on the Sunday evening. A wonderful way to unwind.

Jan Few

### **VALENTINE CLAYS AND ALAN AULT**

At Hatfield 'Art in Clay', we were extremely grateful to Valentine Clays for donating the clay for use in the 'Have a Go' event and in return we felt it necessary to redress an imbalance discovered.

One of our members had been talking with Alan Ault, a director of Valentine, to discover that Alan had never thrown clay on a wheel, while supplying tons of clay to potters. An opportunity was grasped. We persuaded Alan to have a go not once but twice - maybe he is now addicted. Ruth Karnac took Alan for the first session and reported that he was very well co-ordinated and he successfully ended up with a very good pot, which he proudly took over to his stand to show his colleagues. I later saw him walking round the site with it in his hand, beaming with pride.

Later in the day, Pam Bishop gave him another session and once again the results were very good. Pam reports that with only her verbal guidance, he manipulated the clay on his own. Pam took the pot to be fired. One member of Alan's staff assured me that the pots will be placed in a prominent position in their office. Well done, Ruth, Pam and, of course, Alan and thank you all.

Ruby Sharp



Ruth Karnac instructs Alan Ault  
Photo by Jane Kilvington

### **PITSTONE - 1999**

The Pitstone "open" season is now over for 1999. The July open day was very hot and very well attended. Sales of pots went briskly and "have a go" was very busy too. We raised enough to buy a new gas cylinder, make a donation to the Museum and still have a little left over to

go in the coffers for the coming year.

Due to holidays and Hatfield, we didn't manage to organise anyone to attend the August open day, but we were back in action for September, the final open day of this year.

Once again the weather was wonderful, a little cooler than July, with plenty of visitors in the afternoon. It was a day for "crackpots" with Tina firing the pieces of a pot that had blown up in biscuit firing and Maurice taking a hammer to a pot that was too tall for the kiln. They intend to glue them back together with coloured or metallic resin to create patchwork pots!

We had a good number of children "having a go" after lunch, but sales of the remaining pots donated by members were not so good. However, over the year our sales of pots raised around £80 as donations to the Museum. Many thanks to the members concerned and we would be grateful for any more pots anyone may be able to spare for the next year.

We still hope to organise firing days later in the year, so if anyone is interested in coming along with pots, please get in touch.

Many thanks to our regulars for their support over the year. How about some of you other members out there having a go next year?

Jan Kent

### **POLITICAL CORRECTNESS (Sic)**

*The following article was published in the September issue MPA News. It is reproduced here with the permission of the editor, John Lockett. M.F.*

On receipt of the August 1999 issue of MPA News I was saddened and not at all amused to see in the Agenda for the forthcoming Annual General Meeting the employment of the terms "Chairperson", "Chair" and "Vice-Chair", these presumably purporting to describe respectively "Chairman", "Chairman" and "Vice-Chairman" which usage I find offensive and which I can only regard as grave misuse of the English Language. In each case the suffix "man" was never intended nor should it ever be taken as referring exclusively to a person of the male sex, but instead (*mutatis mutandis*) to a person of either the male sex or the female sex as appropriate.

To those who would invoke as justification for such misuse of the English Language the concept of "Political Correctness" (so called) they must be patently ignorant of the origin and objectives of this tyrannical and quite awful concept. "Political Correctness" was invented and first used by Lenin, later by Stalin, and later still (in an even more virulent form) by Mao Tse Tung and his infamous Red Guards, every one of these being tyrants of the worst political kind, the objective in each case to suppress any opposition to their regimes by denying their people free speech and freedom of association. And yet this is

precisely what certain poor depraved and misguided individuals are now trying to do to us, by invoking this foreign, tyrannical and undemocratic concept of "Political Correctness" here of all places in a country which for generations has taken justifiable pride in being a free country with free speech, freedom of association and freedom from imprisonment without fair trial. What is vital is that we see "Political Correctness" for what it really is, a tyrannical and insidious cancer masquerading as normal and acceptable behaviour. We all need to subject it to ridicule and to reject it at every opportunity.

In conclusion, in my fairly long experience most political things tend to stink, and incidentally when do politicians ever get anything right (except occasionally by mistake)?

Mike Bourne

### ***Copy of letter sent by Murray Fieldhouse***

Dear Mike Bourne,

Just a note to thank you for your piece in the recent MPA News protecting the integrity of our glorious English language inheritance. I do hope you will persist in your viruous crusade and deal with the misuse of the word CONTEMPORARY. The expression CRAFTSPERSON is also ripe for ridicule from bullying bigots and their pathetic conformist followers.

Kind regards

Murray Fieldhouse

Dear Mervyn,

I am normally content to plod away at preparing the Newsletter for the printers without comment, this being mainly due to my total ignorance on the practical aspects of pottery.

However, I really feel that Mike Bourne's article on "Political Correctness" (*his italics and his capitals*) really went over the top. I was less surprised by Murray's enthusiastic response - bless his dodo's heart! We know that he views anything since "his" day as rather less than acceptable.

It seems to me that Mike is on very shaky ground politically, historically and linguistically. Firstly, it may be true that political correctness has been used by Lenin, Stalin and Mao-Tse-Tung as a form of legalising state oppression (how about Hitler, Mussolini and many more recent dictators?) but I doubt that they were the originators - how about Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition? I feel certain we could find even earlier examples.

Historically, I think one would be hard put to find many examples prior to World War I of organisation or business committees having "female chairmen". Equally, I believe Murray would need to dig very deep into his vast library to find many "female craftsmen" before the end of the 19th century.

But, most of all, my objection to Mike's article is its misunderstanding, linguistically. I am as jealous of the integrity of our language as Murray or Mike, but I differ from them insofar as I see language as a growing form of communication incorporating social development and change. If this were not the case, we would still be using the vocabulary of Chaucer, Spencer and Shakespeare.

Finally, why should a chairwoman or a craftswoman accept the gratuitous favour of being considered an "honorary" man and how many male chairpersons or craftspeople would enjoy being referred to as "chairwomen" or "craftswomen"? What about it Murray (madam president)?

Harry Kamac

## PROFILE

Russia 1917, seizure of power by Lenin and his Bolsheviks. Grimsby 1917, Arthur Ball was born at a very early age. The Bolsheviks lost their revolution; I am still revolting.

When Mervyn and Sylvia came to visit my pottery, Mervyn asked that I review a book and, additionally, let him have a 'Profile' of me.

It sounded very easy at the time but I have now found it all about me and being a very modest bloke it's embarrassing. The easy way out was to ask my children what I should tell you.

"Remember Dad it's a profile; a sideways glance, not an autobiography". Don't tell them the 'no boots and shoes' routine, the tar which burned your feet, going to school or about your sisters' knickers, War stories are certainly out: no kami-kazi dive bombers and bobbing up and down in the ocean blue.

1923 was, I am told, the hardest year in the history of British industry. Ships were rusting away in the Humber by the dozen. This was the year I joined 48 other children with a cloth drawstring bag around my neck containing my 'dinner' - two slices of bread and dripping with lots of salt; it was great and I was a very happy boy.

Happier still when the General Strike came in 1926. I enjoyed the shouting and pushing, collecting coal from the seashore and fishing in our trout stream. Playing games which are no longer seen: marbles, faggots and leapfrog until it was too dark to see. These were desperately poor days, but I remember them with happy thoughts.

A new and more terrifying time came when at 13¾ years, I 'gained' an apprenticeship (slave) in the shipyard where I learned a 'trade' (pushed a handcart and carried tools) but, more importantly, I learned that life is not fair. Some boys went to work, to sea, some hung about round the corners (that is what I wanted to do). Others went to grammar schools even though they were no brighter than we urchins, some very quickly to Borstal and the rest in

the Army.

Eventually the big war came which was great for many young men who had been placed on the scrap heap. Eventually, the Navy said they could not manage to fight the Japanese without me - well, they didn't exactly say that, but I understood.

Pacific ocean; a carrier; engine room artificer; Okinawa and no pots and a very big bomb saw me homeward bound a year after the street parties were over and all the heroes had gone back to work.

Setting up home with Margaret (who I still miss greatly) and learning that we had both changed but happily had grown closer together in so many ways. Two children, ten years on the housing list, food rationing and a shortage of dosh made us enjoy the many crafts we shared. Margaret wove, painted, sculpted, bronze cast, cooked and scrubbed. For a living, I messed about with safes and spent the next 40 years learning 'woodwork'.



Arthur Ball at 80

Pottery came late into the frame and then only because the country had a surfeit of my bedside tables and toothbrush racks. Surely, I thought, a big bag of clay could be recycled and would be far cheaper than planks of oak which were prone to expensive 'off-cuts'.

Dropped 'woodwork' and joined the Art school "Ceramics for beginners". It was like playing mud pies again and I enjoyed that.

Margaret and I decided that at 65 we would spend our savings on building a Studio - D.I.Y. you understand.



Two thousand bricks, windows, roof tiles, tons of sand, big foundation holes and **MOST** importantly **HOT** running water.

The pottery/weaving 'Studio' was now in commission but Margaret found that clay and weaving looms were not compatible and I had it all to myself - she took the house!

Cheaper than woodwork, did I say? Two electric kilns, one gas kiln, a wheel, damp cupboards, racking and all the small tools; sieves, dustbins full of glazes, with all the glaze materials, brushes, sponges and "**most important**", said Mick Casson, a pug mill. It cost a fortune.

Twenty-five years have gone by since the beginners' class making more than sixty years of evening classes, summer schools, combined with working at home in my studio, which has now become a 'workshop'.

In the meantime Maurice Clark, an architect and member of the Guild, asked me to make tiles for the Watford Mosque; its a long story, it did get done but after much heartache and joy at the end.

This year I have given up pottery classes in favour of gourmet cooking and making a commemorative stained glass window along with pots at home.

All this said, I still have hopes that the next time Linda goes to David Frith's summer school, she will take me.

Arthur Ball

## **7TH INTERNATIONAL POTTERS FESTIVAL, ABERYSTWYTH, UNIVERSITY OF WALES**

Everyone agreed that the highlight of the event was the *P'ansori* (song with movement) performed by Kang Hyo Lee preceding his lecture. This year the focus at Aberystwyth was Korea. Apart from that cultural moment, it was the usual POTTERY POTTERY POTTERY and BOOZING BOOZING BOOZING called socialising. Potters attending international events appear to be 70% vegetarian alcoholics! Perhaps it is the unremitting three days of ceramic saturation that drives them to drink at every opportune moment!

When I was running such gatherings, we took these opportune moments to provide alternative refreshment. Poetry readings. A walk with a naturalist. Drama. Music. Demonstrations of other men's crafts. A classic film, etc. This event takes part at a University for-God's-sake. Its notice board indicates a variety of cultural and intellectual extra curricular activity, all of which appear to close down during the period of the potters' occupation. It is little wonder that the clerical and catering staff refer to us as "the mad potters". They were certainly justified in doing so when observing the antics and .... ahem .... Contemporary work of the Japanese potters in 1991. The kiln site often encourages some daft and infantile

pyromania fortunately absent in 1999 although, as I perambulated towards one firing, several people tried to deflect me warning "Murray, don't say anything". Well he was a big man!

Well .... it is called a Festival and I suppose it is bound to have some barmy fringe aspects such as one would encounter at the Edinburgh Festival and making pottery by hand in a commercial environment is an alternative activity - a protest.

Corea is now spelt Korea although the inhabitants prefer to be called Chose, I am told. Kang Hyo Lee certainly had the identity described in Gompertz. "Tall, lean and muscular with superb indifference as if they are masters of creation, a natural ease of manner and a droll and whimsical sense of humour and a deep seated conservatism". The latter was revealed when a feminist in the audience asked if he had any women working in the pottery!

Kang Hyo Lee made a huge *Tok* (a storage food jar), larger than he could have got into his kiln at home. It would probably have been used in the past for the fermented vegetables known as *Kimch'i*. This pickle was originally made in the home but is now factory produced, so the production of the jars using four inch thick coils thinned by an anvil and beater and a suspended charcoal beater (as described by Janet Leach in *Pottery Quarterly* 14, 1957) is now protected for posterity by individual potters such as Kang Hyo Lee. This information was not available at Aberystwyth because the translator did not have a very good English vocabulary and little knowledge of pottery, but we did not complain because she was so appealing! Kang Hyo Lee also demonstrated the *Punch'ong* techniques in an original style using rhythmic finger decoration through the thick brushed on slip called *Hakeme* in Japan. White slip on the dark Korean body did not fit by dipping, so it had to be brushed - a wonderful art form emerged. He also made the famous Korean rice bowls freely turning the foot with a bamboo knife in ten seconds, for which he received a standing ovation. His Korean companion made International modern stereotypes that had no Korean relevance. The sort of "Ceramic Art" that Arthur Ball describes with a four letter word!

The translator for the Latvian potter Dainis Pundurs was more competent. Using scaffolding he made a 20 ft. pot that should be in the Guinness Book of Records. It kept its lively plastic quality and was not in any way phallic. Quite an achievement. It seems he also makes bone china. How ambivalent.

There was little sinful pottery such as slip casting in 99, although I have a blind eye when it comes to noting such work. Someone was using paper clay but it passed my attention. Healthy pottery was made by Cathi Jefferson from Canada and by our own Joe Finch.

Michael Casson gave a discreet lecture on 20th century

pottery, but even for the informed who may disagree he is always a joy to hear.

Robert Sanderson and Coll Minogue built the proper kiln this year featuring the Bourry box on which they gave a talk.

'See you in 2001' was the farewell repeated to me on departure. Some members of our Guild attended and I hope there will be many more in two years time.

Murray Fieldhouse

## **THE TAG SALE**

You may remember this being advertised in our last Newsletter. I was intrigued, so I phoned Michael Roosen to find out more. He is very keen to persuade more potters to participate in addition to Jonathan Garratt.

Michael Roosen has been organising TAG sales for several years. His enthusiasm is infectious. Before running TAG sales, Michael worked with one of the top art auction houses (Christie's, I think). His TAG concept is based on the fact that artists often have work for sale that takes a while to sell. If sold, cash flow improves and work can continue. TAG sales provide the opportunity to sell art at 'reasonable' prices direct to the buying public - without the huge commission often charged by galleries - everyone wins. To find out more visit their website at [www.tagsale.co.uk](http://www.tagsale.co.uk).

Whilst at the TAG sale held at the Royal Agricultural Hall in S.W.London, I spoke with Jonathan Garratt to see how it worked out from a potter's perspective. The TAG team have been very helpful and supportive to Jonathan, who feels that participating has been very worthwhile for him. Not only does he sell his work during the sale, but he takes orders for his garden installations, makes contact with potential customers and people wanting lectures/talks about pottery or woodfiring.

Jonathan makes woodfired earthenware pots for the home and garden in his studio near Wimborne, and also produces a selection of glazed tableware which he woodfires. (He sounds an ideal candidate for an open day, visit on the pot crawl or a workshop). He has been working with Peter Reynolds producing a video on woodfiring techniques which he hope will be out soon.

The exhibition was quite breathtaking. The Royal Agricultural Hall, in which it was held, was a huge high-ceilinged room, divided by a maze of 6-ft. high screens. Every section of screen was covered with art works of every conceivable type - more were stacked against the foot of the screens. Every piece had its tag attached showing its 'normal' selling price and its TAG price - many were considerably lower.

I was informed by Jonathan that there was a Cézanne and a Whistler amongst the masses of lesser-known artists

showing in the sale. (I must admit not to have spotted them myself). However, within the thousands of pictures there was something for everyone at a price that would fit someone's budget.

Alongside paintings, drawings and prints were sculptures, carpets, ceramics, brass and marbledware, wine tasting and more. An incredible set-up, seemingly highly successful and most fascinating for the casual observer and potential buyer. Well worth a visit, potentially well worth while participating as a seller, too.

Linda Bryant

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1999**

The Guild held its Annual General Meeting on October 8th in the Methodist Church Hall, Kings Langley. The Chairman and editor of the Newsletter, Mervyn Fitzwilliam thanked the following committee members for their hard work during the year:

MURRAY FIELDHOUSE, the President, for his advice and assistance.

CAROLINE HUGHES, Vice-Chair, for the many tasks she undertook for the Guild.

MARTIN HUGHES for his efficient work as Treasurer.

JOHN BECKLEY for his work as Guild Secretary.

DIGBY STOTT for enrolling new members and maintaining the Guild's membership records.

VAL BARNES for organising an excellent programme of evening meetings.

BRIAN BICKNELL for organising a first-class Pot Crawl weekend.

TONY STEVENS for a range of tasks.

PAM BISHOP for running the Guild library.

RUTH KARNAC for organising Potters Open Day so well.

HARRY KARNAC, Newsletter sub-editor, for his invaluable computer work on the Newsletter and other documents.

RUBY SHARP for her efficient work in organising our participation in events such as Art in Clay.

SHIRLEY BELL for organising our exhibitions.

ANITA CHEASTY for organising the Guild's publicity.

JAN KENT for taking responsibility for Guild activities at Pitstone.

The Treasurer, Martin Hughes, distributed copies of the Guild's accounts for the year to July 31st 1999. These showed that expenditure on the Newsletter had been reduced because it is now being printed 4 rather than 6 times a year. Expenditure on Friday meetings has increased as fees paid to our demonstrators has risen. All in all the Guild's finances are in good shape and we have the funds to meet any likely demand on them. The meeting voted to accept the accounts.

The meeting then re-elected Mervyn Fitzwilliam as Chairman, Caroline Hughes as Vice-Chair, John Beckley as Secretary and Martin Hughes as Treasurer. Val Barnes, Anita Cheasty, Shirley Bell, Pam Bishop, Digby Stott, Ruth Karnac, Ruby Sharp and Jan Kent are continuing on the

committee.

In a discussion after the formal meeting, 12 members voted in favour of a possible joint Guild group to go to the Aberystwyth event in two years time and 11 members voted in favour of a possible Guild group to go to the Rufford event.

John Beckley

### **PAUL SCOTT WORKSHOP - Sept.28th '99.**

#### **- Surface decoration using various forms of monoprinting.**

This was a fascinating day, watching a master craftsman at work. We tried out a number of quite different techniques, with varying degrees of success, and heard about others.

1. An even, thick rectangle of underglaze colour was painted onto clean glass and dries. Pottery tissue was stretched over this using masking tape, and a pattern drawn on the tissue with sharp or soft tools. The tissue is carefully cut out with a sharp scalpel and the pattern pressed carefully and evenly onto a prepared slab of clay. To use this method on bisque fired clay, apply spray mount before placing the transfer. Paul told us that if this technique is used on glazed tiles or plates, the colour sinks into the glaze.

2. Make a pattern on paper or synthetic fabric with underglaze colour mixed with slip and transfer it carefully onto prepared clay. The method can be used on curved surfaces.

3. Mix underglaze colour or oxides with Rowney Daler System 3 screenprint acrylic medium and use with tissue to make designs on bisque fired pots. OR use to make lino prints on prepared clay, to get a pattern with colour and texture.

4. Intaglio print using a (very firm) plaster bat. Make a pattern on the bat using a pin or blade (Paul told us how to fix blades into sycamore twigs using tape and araldite). For a subtle effect, roll raw clay over the pattern. For a monoprint, coat with colour slip and, when dry, scrape off the excess with a plastic card before cleaning with newspaper. Then coat the clay and the pattern with lots of wet slip and quickly press the clay over the pattern. Leave to dry for a few minutes (1-10) before carefully lifting the clay. For a colour print, simply add coloured slip before filling the pattern. The examples of this technique were very nice, with fine details and varied surfaces.

The second part of the day was devoted to photocopying methods of decoration.

Paul photocopies collage landscapes, stopping the machine and taking the paper out before the print is fixed. This 'loose' print, rolled onto prepared clay, will produce a

sepia print (from the iron in the ink) when fired. If it is applied to a glazed tile, the pattern can be intensified by washing over with underglaze colour (the ink alters the surface of the glaze even if no colour shows) and firing again - he told us.

A simple well contrasted pattern will act as a resist - paint over with waterbased underglaze colour and allow to dry before rubbing carefully onto prepared clay, to get a negative print.

Photocopy print can be ironed onto glazed tiles with a very hot iron. Allow to cool before soaking the paper off. Fire at 1000°C to get a sepia print on the tile.

Paul demonstrated using decal paper on the photocopier to make transfers, using 'Lazertrans' paper (details e-mail [si@lazertran.demon.co.uk](mailto:si@lazertran.demon.co.uk)). These are floated off in water and carefully laid on the pot as required.

Thanks to Jane's careful preparation as well as a skilful and imaginative tutor, we all enjoyed a fascinating day and went home carrying our little slabs of patterned clay.

Susan Busse

### **LOUISE DARBY DEMONSTRATION - October 8th '99**

Louise began her talk with a short life history. She told us that she had a childhood on a farm, that she is a middle child and that she herself would modestly have called her talk 'Slow Progress'. She graduated from Loughborough College of Art and Design in 1978 and then worked at Torquil Pottery, Henley-in-Arden before starting her workshop near Stratford-upon-Avon in 1984.

We were shown slides of influence on her work. These were not soft items but rather snow scenes, armour, the patina on helmets, animal skulls, stone not wood.

One of the things which was stressed in her talk was the constraints and discipline required by the potter who is supporting herself entirely by selling her work. For instance, Louise always weighs her clay and has clearly established heights for each item. She tends to produce 3 pots of each shape, a small, medium and large. When she was at college she did hand-building but finds this technique is much too slow when you have to earn a living.

Another interesting element in her work, which we saw from her slides, was that many pieces were made in response to invitations from galleries. There were some exciting jugs with large lips, as well as pots decorated with March Hares another with birds for the theme of Flights of Fancy.

The evening moved on to the moment which, I think, we all find the most fascinating, the demonstration. Louise started by drawing on a greenware pot with a blunt pencil. The drawing was done slowly and with respect for the

contours of the pot. This was followed by the use of her favourite tool, a much worn hacksaw blade. She incised the pot with fluency and enjoyment and told us that normally she gets four pots incised in a day. After the outlines were incised, she then slowly and meticulously carved out certain areas using scalpel blades. After biscuit firing she glazes these pots in two goes. For the first she glazes the inside and half way up the pot. She then leaves them overnight and the following day glazes the other half of the pot, overlapping the glaze in the middle area. The glazed middle area is then scraped away with a metal kidney, leaving glaze only in the indented area. She does this when the glaze is damp to lessen the danger of dust. The pot is fired in a large gas kiln to 1280°C. Louise has developed all her glazes herself. They are of a remarkably smooth eggshell finish and give very crisp lines. The white areas are polished with wet and dry paper.



Gecko vases with lidded jar (19 cm. high)

Louise then moved to her second demonstration. These were bowls where the rim looked as though one section overlapped the other in two points. I had seen bowls like this and always assumed that the rim had been cut and that there was a genuine overlap. However this is not the case. First Louise drew two lines, then she softened the area where the lines were and the rim with water. The next action was to hit the bowl with a wooden stick forming a ridge along the drawn lines. She then added a coil to sharpen the ridge and used a metal kidney to smooth this out. The last move was to cut away the rim of the section which was to look like the underneath part.



Flared bowl (14" diameter)

These bowls had an interesting coarse texture, which was enhanced by scraping with a metal kidney. They were thrown from a mixture of porcelain, T material and coarse molochite. Louise buys her porcelain from Potclays.

We all had a very interesting evening and were left with an admiration, not only for the pots, but for the life style of this professional potter.

Margaret Aanonson

## NOTEBOOK

During our AGM we outlined a few things that the Committee are intending to consider during the coming months. One of these was the possibility of having a News page on the Internet. In the short time between that meeting and now, Carenza Hayhoe phoned me regarding adding the Guild name and the name and phone number of the membership secretary to her "South of England Ceramics Scene" web page. We agreed to do this and that page is available at [mochaware.com](http://mochaware.com)

## Newsletter Contributions

Unless you have tried to produce a Newsletter, you will probably not understand the amount of juggling and pressure that we go through to get your Newsletter out to you on time. "What the hell" perhaps you say "who cares if it is on time or not?" The fact is that if we are selling advertising space, or have time-sensitive information (and we invariably do) we MUST produce the Newsletter on time, or you all may miss certain opportunities. In this issue the reminder for Open Day, plus the opportunity to receive a Pottery crafts catalogue (see next item) before the Open Day are cases in point.

One big problem is that some of our contributors miss the deadline. Under these circumstances, the planned space might be filled with another item or it might have to be left blank. If you have promised to meet a deadline, please try to do so, it saves us a lot of stress and last minute alterations.

## Pottery crafts Catalogue

We had hoped to send you all a Pottery crafts catalogue, price list and order form for completion and posting before Open Day. The idea was that you could then pick up your order from Pottery crafts during lunch time on Open Day. We were thwarted in this originally by the catalogues arriving too late to be sent out with the last Newsletter. To alleviate this difficulty, we have handed out the catalogues to members at Hatfield and at our evening meetings. If you have not received a catalogue and want one prior to Open Day, you can collect one from Caroline Hughes, phone 01923 261 834.

## A Bouquet for Arthur

Having whinged on about the poor response to deadlines, I must hand Arthur Ball a bouquet. I asked him to review



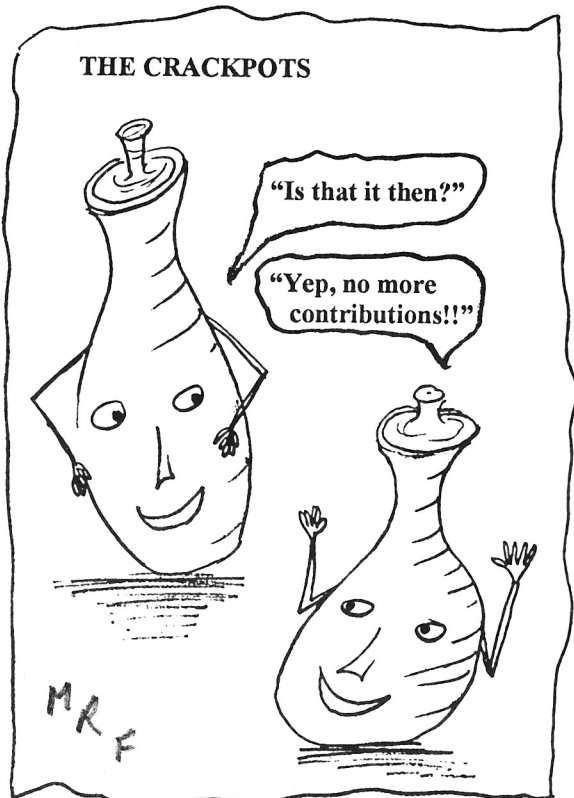
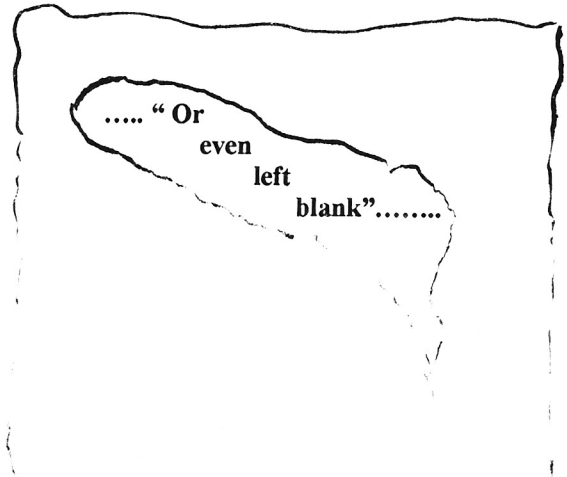
the book on Chinese Glazes by Nigel Wood. Not only did he write a review, he researched the author and in addition he phoned me and said "If I am writing about this book, I think I ought to test some of the glazes to see if they work". I gave him encouragement and, as you will see from his review, he carried out his own suggestion, testing five of the glazes.

Thanks Arthur, for giving us such a well-prepared review and thanks to all of you who have contributed reviews and other articles to the Newsletter.

### Potters Tip

Whilst on the subject of glazes, during a recent visit to Arthur, he explained that he had solved the problem of stirring up settled glazes by using a very cheap plastic bristle broom, bought specially for the purpose. Arthur has his glazes in plastic dustbins and has found this stirring method to be quicker and more efficient than any other way he has tried.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam



Above – Jan Few (back) & Sue Taylor helping children to make a pot at Chiltern Museum earlier this year, plus a general view of the display. Photographs supplied by Ruby Sharp.

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### STOP PRESS !!

The Open day is nearly here, we hope you will come & enjoy the day. The Committee would appreciate any help that could be given by those attending who are able to stay behind for a short while to help clear up after the event.

### THE SALT KILN

The first firing will be bisquit, second & maybe third will be Soda, before salt is used. Interested? Phone Paul Rowbottom , 01 923 263 032

### HELP!

Tina Hall would appreciate some help with tea making at our Friday meetings, please phone her, on 01442 826 223

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Wanted, an Alsager wheel. Any condition considered phone 01442 242332 or 247197.

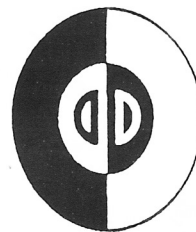
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27/28 Pouring Vessels *Paula Gray*

### December

4/5 Mixed Media Sculpture: Animals, Insects and Plants *Jo Miller*

### February

4/5/6 Life Modelling on An Armature (Wax) *Julian Cooksey*  
5/6 Throwing with Porcelain *Phyllis Dupuy*  
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