



DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



IN THIS ISSUE -

OPEN DAY REPORTS

CHRIS BRAMBLE DEMONSTRATION

INSURANCE: THE REAL COSTS

GUILD EXHIBITION INVITATION



NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2003
£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- £21.00
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5th October November

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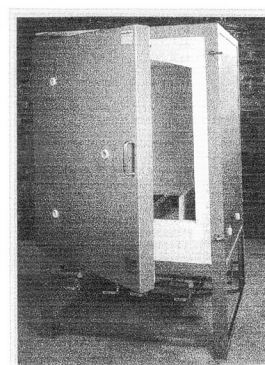
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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Ruby Sharp receives the Stan Romer award for 2002 from John Romer, with Chris Bramble

CONTENTS

Editorial.....	1
Future Guild Events	1
Guild exhibition.....	1
Other Events	1
Correspondence	2
Membership News	3
Potters Open Day 2002	
Mark Pedro de la Torre – Sarah Hall	3
Philomena Pretsell – Ros McGuirk	4
Karin Hessenberg- Marguerite Moon	5
Questionnaire responses	7
Chris Bramble demonstration – Sarah Hall	8
Stan Romer Award	9
Notebook	9
Committee List	10
Tile Panels at Parish Junior School	11

EDITORIAL

The first draft of this issue will be delivered to Harry Karnac today – 23rd December 2002. Currently we are still awaiting write-ups and book reviews, not to mention details of events, and the names of photographers, however, we must make a start.

The Potters Open Day was an enjoyable event, and we did have a very good response to our Questionnaire handed out on the day. The replies give us a valuable insight into what those attending thought of the day, plus other aspects of guild activities. A big thank you to those who took the time to fill in the details.

It simply remains for me to wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

GUILD EVENTS

Guild meetings are usually held at Kings Langley Methodist Church Hall

Friday 14th Feb at 8 p.m. **PAUL McALLISTER** - An exciting young ceramicist, Paul's work is moving away from predominantly functional and traditional forms to more instinctive pieces. A recent project involved using found objects to explore the cultural and ritual resonance of the teapot. Paul is a member of the group who fire the anagama kiln at Wysing Arts near Cambridge.

Friday 14th Mar at 8 p.m. **LUCY BILCOCK** is a young ceramic designer who teamed up with a potter to form a successful business partnership called Diffuse which was featured in *Ceramics in Society* last spring. Together they design and produce a range of high-fired porcelain lamps and lights. Like Margaret O'Rourke they use the translucent properties of porcelain to achieve a softness and warmth of light. Unlike Margaret, they slipcast

The clay. Lucy will take us through the short history of their unusual two-man ceramic factory and show us the basics of their manufacturing process and some of their products.

Friday 11th Apr at 8 p.m. – **CAROLINE WHYMAN** – Caroline throws deceptively simple and subtle forms from porcelain. Geometric designs are carved and inlaid into the pots which are also stained and glazed in strong colours. She teaches at South Thames College and is a well-known lecturer and demonstrator both here and overseas. She is a fellow of the CPA.

Friday 9th May at 8 p.m. **MARCIO MATTOS** – Marcio's work shows a fascination for texture. He produces handbuilt sculptural teapots, jugs, plates and bowls in stoneware and paper clay, which are sprayed and brushed with glazes before being reduction fired. He initially trained as a musician and later took a postgraduate degree in ceramics. He teaches both in the UK and overseas and is a fellow of the CPA

International Ceramics Festival – Aberystwyth 4th to 6th July

17 members are booked into this event. The full cost for admission and accommodation is £125.25 and there will be a meeting on Friday 9th May to discuss travel arrangements. For details and further information please ring Ros McGuirk 017727 834326

GUILD EXHIBITION

We have been invited to hold a guild Exhibition during May 2003, for one month, at the New studio in Olney, Bucks, by the proprietor, Karen Monnickendam. For further details please talk to the organisers, either Ros McGuirk : 017727 834326, or Vivienne Rodwell-Davies : 02084 410 904

OTHER EVENTS

Weekend courses at Brunel

7- 9th Feb. Stacking pots in porcelain with Anne Kari Ramberg Marshall

22-23rd Feb. Mould-making and slip-casting with David Cowley

7 – 9th Mar. Pots for plants and gardens with Beryl Sedgwick

22-23rd Mar. Glazing with Brian Usher

5- 6th Apr. Improve your throwing skills with Brian Usher

9-11th May Porcelain pouring vessels and precious bottles with A.K.R. Marshall

For more information call 01895 273482

Bucks Potters: Fri. 28th Feb. 8 p.m. at Little Kingshill Village Hall – Handbuilding techniques by Sarah Stewart – for details ring 01494 782240.

Tea party: Teapots ancient and Modern – slide talk with Emmanuel Cooper. Sat. 15th Mar. 2 p.m. at the Crafts Council, 44 Pentonville Rd., London, N.1. CPA/LP members £8 non-members £12 Conc. £4. **Booking essential** phone 01398 331442

25th Anniversary of the 1st CPA trip to China & 1000 years of porcelain production in Jingdezhen now SPRING 2003: May 20th – June 16th

Workshops, participation, demonstrations and visits to contemporary potters, museums and kiln sites. Travelling overland through central China to Jingdezhen (porcelain), Xian (northern celadons & the terracotta army) & centres of Jun & Cizhou ware production before arriving in Beijing the Forbidden City and at the Great Wall.

Costs approx. £2800. Few under/graduate scholarships of US\$1,000 (£700) available. Details: Christine-Ann Richards, Chapel House, High Street, Wanstraw, Somerset BA4 4TE tel/fax: 01749 850208

CORRESPONDENCE

The following letter has been received from Colin Hazelwood:

Dear Mervyn:

I am responding to the question about workshops which you raised in the Editorial of the Guild Newsletter for Winter 2002. I have some sympathy: I found myself in a similar position some years back in a different field of endeavour.

I recently returned to practical pottery as my principal retirement activity and quickly realised that if I was to stand any chance of approaching the standard of work of the professionals that I admired and collected over the years then I would have to specialise and practice hard.

I found that getting specialist instruction at the recreational level was very difficult. Salt glaze being one of my interests, I was delighted to be invited to take part in Paul's first soda firing experiment and as a result became a member of the Guild to get more of the same! Sadly I missed the Steve Harrison workshop but only because I was already booked on a lecture session by Emmanuel Cooper.

While I try to come to all evening meetings to broaden my general knowledge of ceramics, workshops are time consuming, being designed to learn and practice a technique. For me this is not attractive where the end result is not a style that appeals to my personal taste.

If my view is shared by others then, while very valuable for the interested few, our diversity of taste could be why the support for any particular workshop is quite low. If so the answer has to be to reach a larger potential audience and certainly not to discontinue these events.

I guess I am saying nothing very original. As a non-committee member I am not even aware what our membership stands at, let alone how widely these events may already be advertised, but at least I am not ignoring your editorial.

Colin Hazelwood

Thank you for your letter Colin, the point that you make is a very good one and has led to much discussion between Committee members. We have also taken the opportunity to discuss the same subject with Guild members and others. In answer to your last question about the number of members, we had 140 at the last count.

We are always searching for demonstrators and workshop leaders who we believe will have a strong appeal to our members. Balancing this is our understanding that we simply cannot always arrange meetings or workshops that will always appeal to all members, or even a substantial number of members.

Having said that, we are searching for ways to present workshops and events with a wider appeal, and the best suggestions so far are:

- 1) Decorating workshops have had a very strong previous appeal and we did have several applicants for the Sara Robertson workshop, which was postponed/cancelled at a late stage. We will try to set this up again if Sara is able to do it.
- 2) Doug Jones suggested a general "trouble shooting" workshop, with individual tuition or joint discussion of any pottery technique or problem, followed by practical demonstrations. Obviously particular firing ideas could be discussed, but not instantly demonstrated, unless Raku is part of the day.
- 3) A similar idea would be an evening meeting, with a "question and answer" session relating to pottery techniques.

A point that we have discussed at some length is the cost of each activity. If we run a workshop with a professional tutor, the cost including administration, fees, and hire of venue could be between £160 and £280 for one day. At the higher cost, we would need 10 students paying £28 each to break-even. The difficulty is that with any lower number, a loss is sustained. If the numbers attending were very low, say 5 people, then the loss is very substantial, for the disproportionate benefit of a very few members.

A similar dilemma arises with the raku activity at Pitstone; the Museum is constantly being developed by its own members and devotees, and "we", the Guild, really need to tidy the raku site and introduce suitable safety measures. The cost could be high if we give the work to a contractor (£500 - £1500) and disproportionate to the number of members who attend the raku activities. The real question here is: are sufficient members interested and even more importantly are they prepared to help? Please phone Jan Kent if you have an interest. The committee are keen to keep this site and

activity going, since it is one of our few interfaces with the public.

The soda kiln at Northfields Studio will be back in use in the spring, so if you have an interest in this activity please phone Paul Rowbottom – 01923 263 032, or Vivienne Rodwell-Davies – 02084 410 904

We really come back to the nub of the discussion. Colin highlighted the fact that as potters, our members have very diverse interests. The committee will try to give support for those diverse interests, but naturally, anything that we arrange does need to have support from the membership.

If you have any ideas or suggestions to add to the discussion we will be delighted to hear from you.

Editor

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

GOODBYE!!!

Well, we hope not, but, since membership subscriptions were due in October 2002, if you are one of the people who has not yet paid, then, it really is goodbye!!!

Being slightly less cryptic, after this issue of the Newsletter, the names of those who have not paid their subscriptions **MUST** be removed from the data-base, under the terms of the data protection act. So if you fall into that category, please send your renewal cheque to Digby Stott as soon as you can, or you will become an ex-member and will not receive any further correspondence or newsletters.

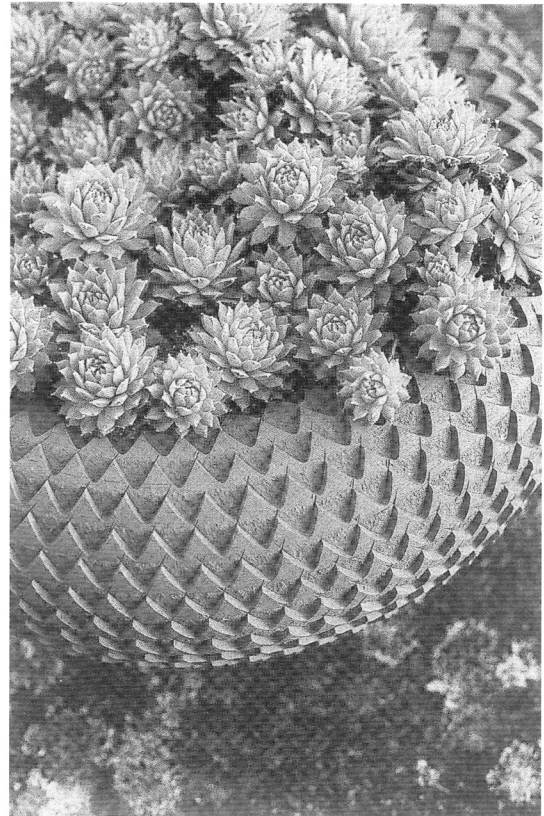
New Members

Jeff Choules of Little Kingshill whose main interests are hand building and throwing with stoneware and earthenware. Jacqueline Earley who lives in Maidenhead and is interested in hand building and decorating. Nicki Preston from Leighton Buzzard has a broad interest in most aspects of pottery.

We welcome these new members and look forward to seeing them at our future events.

POTTERS OPEN DAY

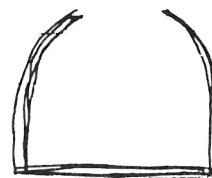
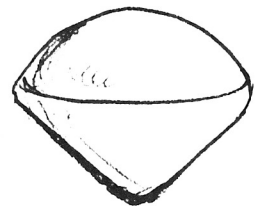
1. Mark Pedro de la Torre



Detail of zigzag cacti pot planted with *Sempervivium Jubilee*
Photo and pot by Mark de la Torre

Mark gave us an assured and interesting demonstration, despite the fact that it was the first he had ever given. His clay is Spendcroft grogged red earthenware which he uses fairly stiff as his 'doughnut' forms collapse quite easily.

He prepares the clay by spiral kneading it after it has come out of the pugmill. A lump of clay is formed into a ball and then rolled into a cone shape:



Now when the ball is banged on to the wheel, no air is trapped. The clay is centred and opened out. The base is compressed and the drainage holes are made at this point. These are necessary as all Mark's pots are

for the garden. As the pot is pulled up, the top is kept collared in. Next, the shape is opened out, the top is left thicker



The shape is finished when this extra thickness is thrown down by pushing gently on the rim, moving the clay down and in



The pots are turned later – the shape is defined and the throwing lines removed



All Mark's pots are burnished to a high shine. This is done on the wheel, initially with a table knife and finally with a piece of plastic carrier bag stretched tight over a finger tip.

Textures are added in various ways with a variety of tools. Knurling wheels give a herringbone design and leatherworking tools can be used to give an all over, hammered design. A striking zigzag design is made by cutting sections away, using a V of the metal that is used to package palettes of bricks.

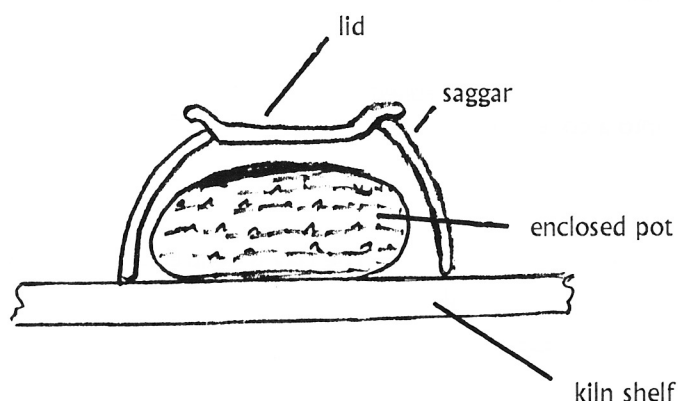
Once a pot is decorated it isn't touched as any fingerprints will show up once it is fired. All of the pots are bisqued to 1160°C.

Some of the pots are given a darker sheen by firing them inside a saggar which has been glazed with the following glaze:

- 91 lead bisilicate
- 4 china clay
- 3 Bentonite
- 2 flint
- 0.5 chrome

This causes flashing on the pot inside the saggar. This firing is to 1060°C with a 1 ½ hr. soak. Mark uses an electric kiln.

The saggars used were of novel construction, designed with a lid and curved in at the top so that the flashing tended to predominate on the upper part of the pot.



Sarah Hall

2. Philomena Pretsell

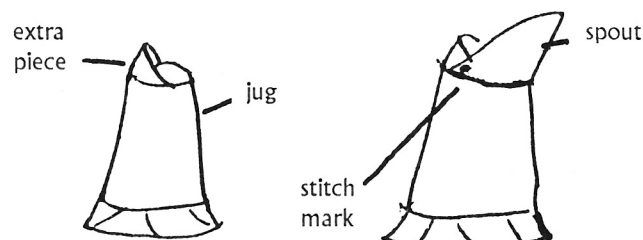
Philomena's talk took us briefly through the history of her work from a foundation course in Northampton to a degree and postgraduate studies in Edinburgh, with an artistic husband and a young family "in tow". Throughout this time her interest in communicating through pots developed, with particular emphasis on the relationship between form and colour. The materials she used then were white stoneware clay with earthenware glazes, slips and commercial transfers. She enjoyed making pretty, colourful and shapely pots and, to encourage the creation of a market, she started to produce them in groups. These collectable sets of plates, mugs, jugs, teapots and so on appealed to gallery owners and collectors, and some travelled abroad in exhibitions. Recently, Philomena received a research grant from the Scottish Arts Council which she used to explore galleries and museums in Italy in search of the wonderful ceramics to be found there.

Philomena's fresh, lively pots are made from soft slabs of clay which are treated like fabrics. The clay is cut off the block, rolled by hand and brushed with loose strokes of bright, pretty-coloured slips. The slabs are manipulated to loosen them up and create a fluid look. The shapes are cut out using paper patterns which are designed to give good, strong forms with the least possible number of joins. So the shapes are curled over or folded and joined and then a base is added on, where required. Currently she is using a white earthenware clay from Potclays with Valentine's S-material added for the larger pieces.

Tall frilly jug

Philomena began her demonstration by showing us how she handles the clay. Her first task was to make a spout for a tall jug. She took a clay slab that had been rolled out a few days ago. Being well rested, it was easier to handle. Pink and blue slip had been brushed on to the clay. She began to stretch it by picking it up and gently flopping it back onto the work surface several times. Then she rolled it with a rolling pin to even it out. The slab was then placed on a bat, impressed with a small stamp and cut to a pattern for a large pouring lip for the jug. (The technique for making the jug form, which was already partly made, was demonstrated with the next piece, a tea-pot).

The spout was left on the bat for about half an hour to firm up. Then it was gently bent and placed on the jug and the position was marked with a knife. Excess clay was cut off the rim which was scored, and brushed on. An extra piece of clay, a small crescent shape, was added to the rim. Then the spout was fixed on.



The pointed end of a wooden rib was used to make a decorative stitch mark on either side of the spout. A tassel was made very quickly in the hand by rolling a small ball of clay until elongated into a carrot shape, then the side edge of a rib was used to impress the card marks.



It was fixed on to the extra piece of the rim.

For a handle, Philomena showed us how to make a bow. A large piece of clay was gently folded in the hand and then it was fixed to the jug using scoring and creamy slip and by pushing it on firmly. It was left to dry, supported on a pile of sponges. Later, a twisted coil would be curled up and added to the centre of the bow on each side, to give the look of a scarf brooch.

Teapot

A small cone of clay was placed on a slab. The slab was cut out leaving about an inch all round the base of the cone. Several cuts were made in this edging, perhaps 8 or 9. Then slip was painted on and it was pushed down gently with the heel of the hand before being turned up and carefully pinched into place. In order to preserve crisp edges, these were handled very lightly.

The spout was curled over in the hand and trimmed to shape. It was placed onto the pot in the same way as the jug. But before it was finally fixed on, 9 small holes were made in the usual way for teapots, using a very fine hole cutter and the bits were brushed away to keep the edges smooth. The spout was fixed on with the slip and a wooden tool inside the pot. A finger placed inside the spout helped to push it on more firmly.

Lid

This required another cone, so a slab of clay was cut, rolled once and stretched by flopping it about and turning it as before. It was impressed a few times. While being held in the hand, the edges were slipped, the piece was rolled into a cone and the seam was sealed. A decorative stitch mark and a tassel were made as before. The tassel was fixed to the top of the lid to aid its balance. (Usually the lid is allowed to firm up a little before its embellishment).

Handle

Philomena rolled a coil, not perfectly round but oval in cross-section, and allowed kinks to develop in it, then she twisted it. The ends were coiled up and the handle was ready to be fixed on in her usual way.

Feet

More tassels were made for feet, to be added the following day when the pot was dry.

Finishing

Philomena uses high biscuit firing (1155°C) then glazes with a basic clear glaze of

Lead bisilicate 85%)

+ china clay 15%) for the creamware

Alternatively, she colours the glaze with ¼% cobalt carbonate + ¼% manganese dioxide to produce blue pots, or 5-6% yellow stain for the yellow ones. The glaze firing is to 1040°C. Then small pieces of commercial transfers and a little gold lustre are added for a third firing to about 800°C.

This has to be a "clean" firing with the bungs out until top temperature is reached, when the kiln is switched off and the bungs put back to allow it to cool slowly.

Summary

Philomena admits that her teapots are not entirely functional. For some tastes, her pots are too frilly and frivolous. I enjoy their exuberance and good humour. Like their maker, they are full of fun and the joy of working with clay.

Ros McGuirk

3. Karin Hessenberg

To round off a very interesting day, the last demonstrator, Karin Hessenberg, showed us exactly how she makes one of her leaf lanterns.

Starting with her slide show, Karin showed us slides of her early work, simple ovoid squashed and smoke fired pots. Her background included a degree in zoology and medical research, pottery coming via evening classes and gate crashing the Central School of Art for figure drawing. More formally, she attended Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts in 1974 which she enjoyed, but would have preferred Harrow had she been able to fund it.

Originally attracted to table ware, she turned to ovate flattened bowls. A trip to Peru showed her the precision of Inca masonry and inspired a new range of pots which just did not appeal to galleries at that time, so then she tried cutting bowls and at the same time experimented with the burning of different materials. Later, a visit to India and Nepal and a look at the construction of their buildings and the patterns on them Influenced her pots. She applied for and gained an award for developmental work leading to her garden pots, which at first proved difficult to place in galleries and shops.

She said it took her two years to develop her range of *jardinières*, bird baths, lanterns, etc. and work out how exactly to reproduce her particular range of patterns, which glazes worked best and how to make her particular reactive slips and to decide to raw glaze the pots.

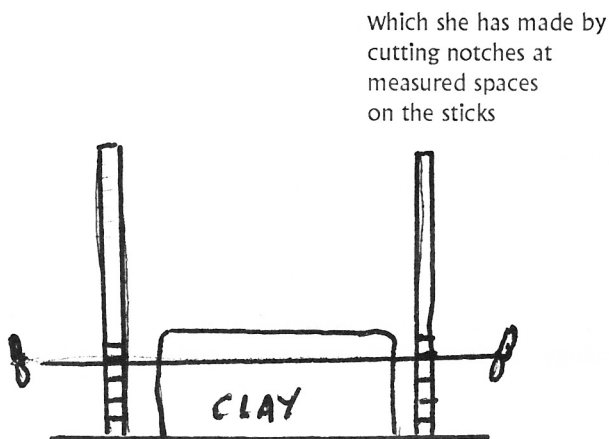
She explained how she did her experiments (using 50% china clay and 50% anything else you have) for her reactive slips and her glaze tests.

I found her slides talk refreshingly honest in the way she assessed herself and thought there was certainly no shame in copying from the sources she mentioned, and interesting when she told us about the irritations inherent about accepting commissions.

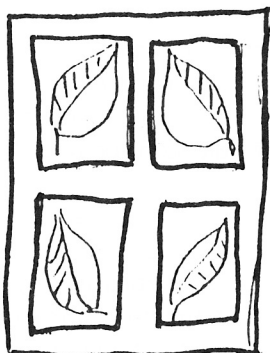
Now for the actual demonstration:

she uses Potclays craft create premium 1114M which has no lime popping and constructs her pots from firm slabs.

On undoing a bag full of clay, she drops it several times on the floor to firm it up, squares it off and gets it roughly the size of her ready prepared cardboard templates, which comprise a rectangle of the exact size required and a square (top and bottom) to match. She does no other wedging but cuts the slabs straight from this block of clay, using cutting sticks and piano wire thus:

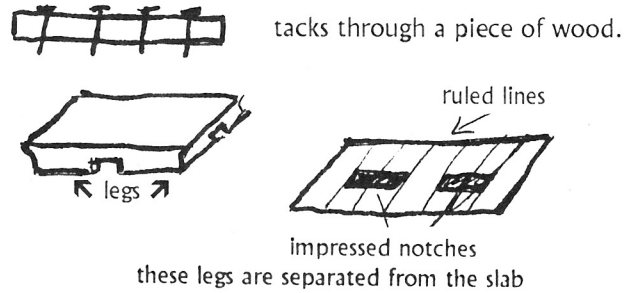


Sometimes the slabs split on taking them off the block, this is repaired with a smoothed in coil of clay and rolled lightly. The soft slab is placed on newspaper (which prevents sticking and helps drying) on a board, and marked around the template, then impressed with her plaster of Paris blocks with a moulded leaf shape.



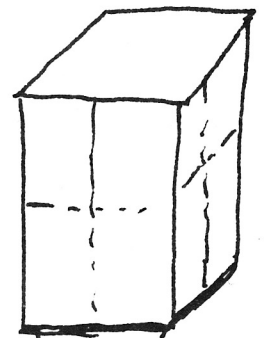
these slabs are then stacked on boards (between them kiln props) to dry out and reach the required rigidity.

The square top has its own square leaf block and the bottom square has legs – using her own 1" combing tool, she makes parallel lines riding along a guide and a 1" square block to impress the places for the notches.



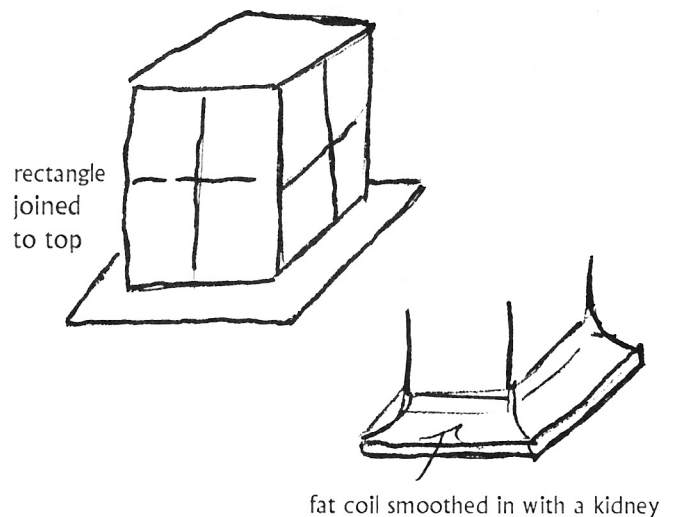
When the clay is leather hard, but not yet rigid, Karin uses two knives, a pointed craft knife and a lino knife.

At the rigid stage, the ruled lines of the shaped slabs are cut with the lino knife and the long edges levelled at 45° - each level is roughed up with a dinner fork and wetted before joining the four pieces together; the resulting joint is then forked and a coil moulded into the join on the inside. The outside of the joins are finished with a kidney after forking and wetting.

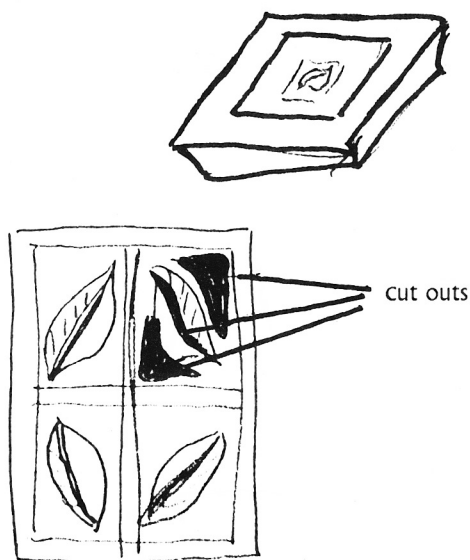


While showing us all these stages, Karin worked fast and tidied all the bits and pieces of extra clay away. She does not need to use slurry to make her joins as the deep forking creates lots of bits which the water then converts into slurry on the pot.

Having created a rectangular shape, she then joins it in the same manner to the top which is then finished with the addition of a fat coil smoothed into the join to create a harmonious shape.



The top is then finished off with beading trim. At this point, Karin showed us how she cut the holes using the craft knife. Starting with the leaf vein and pushing the pieces through.



After leaving the whole pot to dry out a bit more, she is able to trim the hanging bits off and clean everything up with fingers, kidney tools and a surform, not forgetting a bottle brush for the tricky bits and rounding off the edges with a bit of wet chamois leather.

The pots are fired at cone 9 - 1240°C + 20 minutes soak or nearly cone 10 - 1260°C which takes much longer but no need to soak.

Her coloured slips and glazes (blue and green) are brushed and sponged on in the raw state for once firing, care is needed at this stage to make sure each layer is dry before applying the next. She finds that calcined clay works well in the reactive slip, it changes the texture or quality of the semi-transparent glaze used.

It is necessary to wax all areas that are not to be glazed before applying the glazes and slips with a sponge. She uses at least three coats of slip or glazes, two with a sponge and the third using a brush and to do the windows. The firing is done very slowly with only a 35° rise in temperature per hour up to 200°C and thereafter until 600°C, a rise of 85° per hour.

Marguerite Moon

ANALYSIS OF P.O.D. QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

(35 forms completed and returned which represented replies from 45+ people)

Q.1. Did you enjoy the day?

4 very much; 25 yes; 1 not enjoyed after lunch

Q.2. Is this venue satisfactory?

2 very good; 23 yes; Comments: 3 preferred last year's - more intimate; cold during first break and lunch (9); seats uncomfortable (6); acoustics blurred (2); better view than last year (1)

Q.4. Demonstrators with contrasting skills – did we get it right?

25 yes; 2 very good. Comments: previous years better or very good (2); not as exciting as usual or not bad (2); also one reply each added the following comments: a sculpture demonstrator would be better. 1½ hrs per demonstration is too long. Should only have one slab maker, order of demonstrators could be improved (Mark to be in the middle).

Q.5. Who would you like to see demonstrate at next Open Day? - 40 names submitted

Takeshi Yasuda (2)	Mo Jupp (2)
Sven Bayer (3)	Ian Gregory (3)
Michael Flynn (2)	Phillip Eglin (2)
Kate Malone (2)	Chris Bramble (2)
Mick Casson (4)	Antonio Salmon (2)
Wally Keeler (2)	Sasha Wardel (2)
Margaret Frith (3)	

Potter with experience of working abroad (Africa?) (4)
Sculptured Animals (1) Big pots (3)

The following were each cited once:-

Richard Slee	Gordon Cook	John Leach
Gareth Mason	Peter Swanson	Peter Beard
Nick Collins	Christine Gittins	Sheila Casson
Steve Harrison	John Pollex	Peter Lane
Seth Cardew	Tim Andrews	Doug Jones
Sophie McCarthy	John Dunne	David Frith
The Edens	Paul Jackson	Robin Welch
David Leach	Daniel Fisher	Peter Haynes
Richard Godfrey	West & Anne Kari Ramberg	
	Marshall	

Q.6. Catering

Prefer good full lunch (3); either way OK (4); OK as it was (17); Bring & share brings people together (4); lunch break of 1¾ hrs. too long (1); Own lunch cuts out queues & could allow later start (3); buffet lunch to cut cost (2); we sell sandwiches (2).

Q.7. Suggestions or comments about Open Day and Guild activities.

Wanted a more intimate environment to get closer to demonstrator (1)
Suggestion box at our meetings (1)
Shorter POD – e.g. start at 9.30 finish at 5.00 (4)
Knowledge of other members' work – evening to show our wares (3)
Existing arrangements are good/very good (6)
Combined pit firing and pig roast (1)
Different day of week for monthly meeting (2)
We could ask potters we have seen before to demonstrate (2)
Two not three potters at POD (1)
Name badges for all (1)
Shorter lunch break and break periods (4)
Hold a founder member demonstration day (1)
More making workshops (1)

(Our thanks to John Beckley for this analysis)

CHRIS BRAMBLE DEMONSTRATION 11th Oct.'02



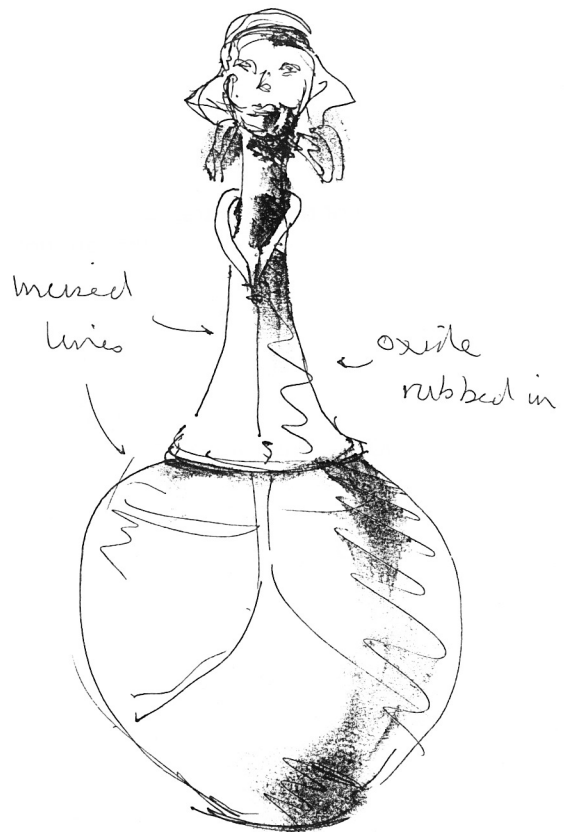
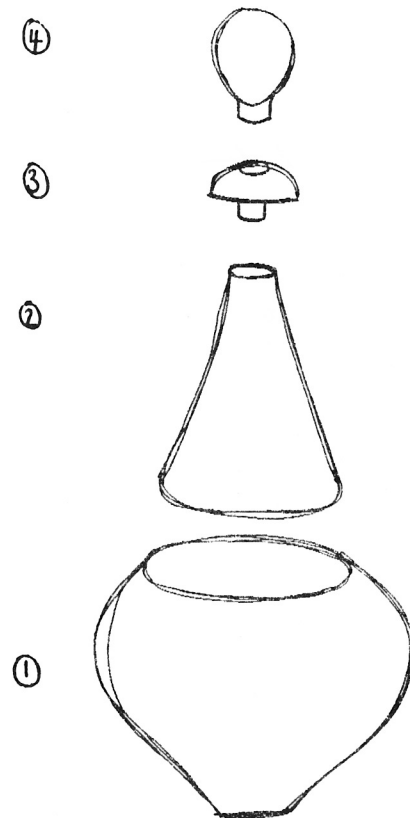
Chris Bramble did a degree in ceramics at the Glasgow School of Art. Initially, he spent all his time throwing and decorating his pots with abstract designs. He started to draw characters on his pots to give them personality. All Chris's pots have names and some of his first pots were "smiler jars" – lidded pots with eyes and smiles all over them, so that they smile at you wherever you are in the room. Chris still makes and sells these pots.

Chris's work is always developing and he makes two or three styles of pot at any one time. His work is a mixture of throwing and hand building. His most distinctive pieces are thrown pots embellished with human heads which Chris models in solid clay and then slip casts.

Five years ago Chris returned to university to study for a master's degree at Harrow College. While he was there he made life-sized human figures, which were thrown in ten pieces, joined and then pushed into shape. The hands and feet were modelled.

In his demonstration, Chris assembled for us a pot he called "let the sun shine on me".

- (1) The base is a fat-bellied pot, thrown in Spencroft crank, turned to a narrow base
- (2) A cone is centred on top and joined on the wheel
- (3) The lid drops on to the top of the pot
- (4) The modelled head is joined to the lid
(numbers refer to the following illustration)



Drawing of Chris Bramble and of the finished pot by Vivienne Rodwell-Davies

Chris uses a simple glaze containing china clay, flint and feldspar. The two base glazes are a copper green and a cobalt blue. The variation in the glazes is caused by Chris using all the waste, scraped from the floor of his spray booth. Additionally, if he applies his glazes thick, he gets a range of browns and yellows.

The faces of his pots are waxed and left unglazed. Finally, incised lines are made around the pot to help the eye travel over the form. These lines are covered with manganese oxide.

Sarah Hall

NOTEBOOK

You may have noticed that insurance has been in the news quite frequently recently. Another related subject has been the increasing readiness of people to sue at the drop of a hat, or rather on receipt of a TV message with wording similar to "No win, No fee". According to the telegraph on 17th December, the price of suing for every mishap is ten BILLION pounds a year. Yet another aspect of modern life is the increasingly ludicrous Health and Safety notices appearing on products, such as:

On packaging for an iron – "do not iron clothes on body"

On a hair dryer "do not use while sleeping"

On a well known Sleep Aid "Warning, may cause drowsiness"

On a bread pudding from a very well known store "Product will be hot after heating"

What next? Will all domestic pottery need to have a label saying "warning, may be hot if containing hot liquid or hot food"?

The more serious aspect of all this is that the cost of Public Liability insurance went straight through the roof when a recent survey showed that insurance companies were paying out claims to the tune of 1.7 times the premiums received on average.

Putting the main point very briefly, small companies are being driven out of business by the rapidly escalating cost of insurance, with a claim of any kind causing many to close, since further insurance may not be forthcoming. In the case of a Limited Liability Company, or PLC, it is illegal to remain in business without Employers Liability cover. Many of those staying in business are raising their prices to cover the increased outlay, and trying to cover every aspect of risk with appropriate notices, in suitable places.

But this does not affect potters does it? Well, any manufacturing company within the UK, and that includes those supplying clay, materials, tools, equipment etc is almost certainly facing considerably increased insurance costs. This means that potters will probably be seeing the cost of their supplies increase.

How about potters themselves? Could it be that some are simply unaware of such things as glaze safety? A very recent article in a sister publication indicated that a potter supplying domestic earthenware was completely unaware that her glaze presented solubility related safety problems. Obviously such things must be addressed, by

all Potters; but how soon will it be before pieces of sculpture have to have labels saying "may cause physical damage if dropped on a foot"?

Time to start a campaign to bring back the days of the "stiff upper lip"

Photographs The front cover photograph together with two of those taken at the Stan Romer Award evening appear to be by the same photographer. I have been unable to discover who sent them to me, so please let me know who took them.

Editor

THE STAN ROMER AWARD 2002



The winning entry "Grandfather and grandchild" by Ruby Sharp (photo by John Beckley)



John Beckley receives second prize

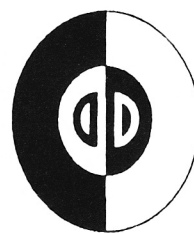


Lip Ong receives 3rd prize

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Sat 15 Colouring Sculpture & Finishing Techniques *Jo Miller*
15/16 Glass : Kiln Cast Glass *Brian Usher*
Sat 22 Intoduction to Pastels *Linda Austin*
22/23 Mouldmaking and Slipcasting *David Cowley*

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- 7/8/9 Pots for plants and gardens *Beryl Sedgwick*
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