



DACORUM AND CHILTERN POTTERS GUILD



IN THIS ISSUE –

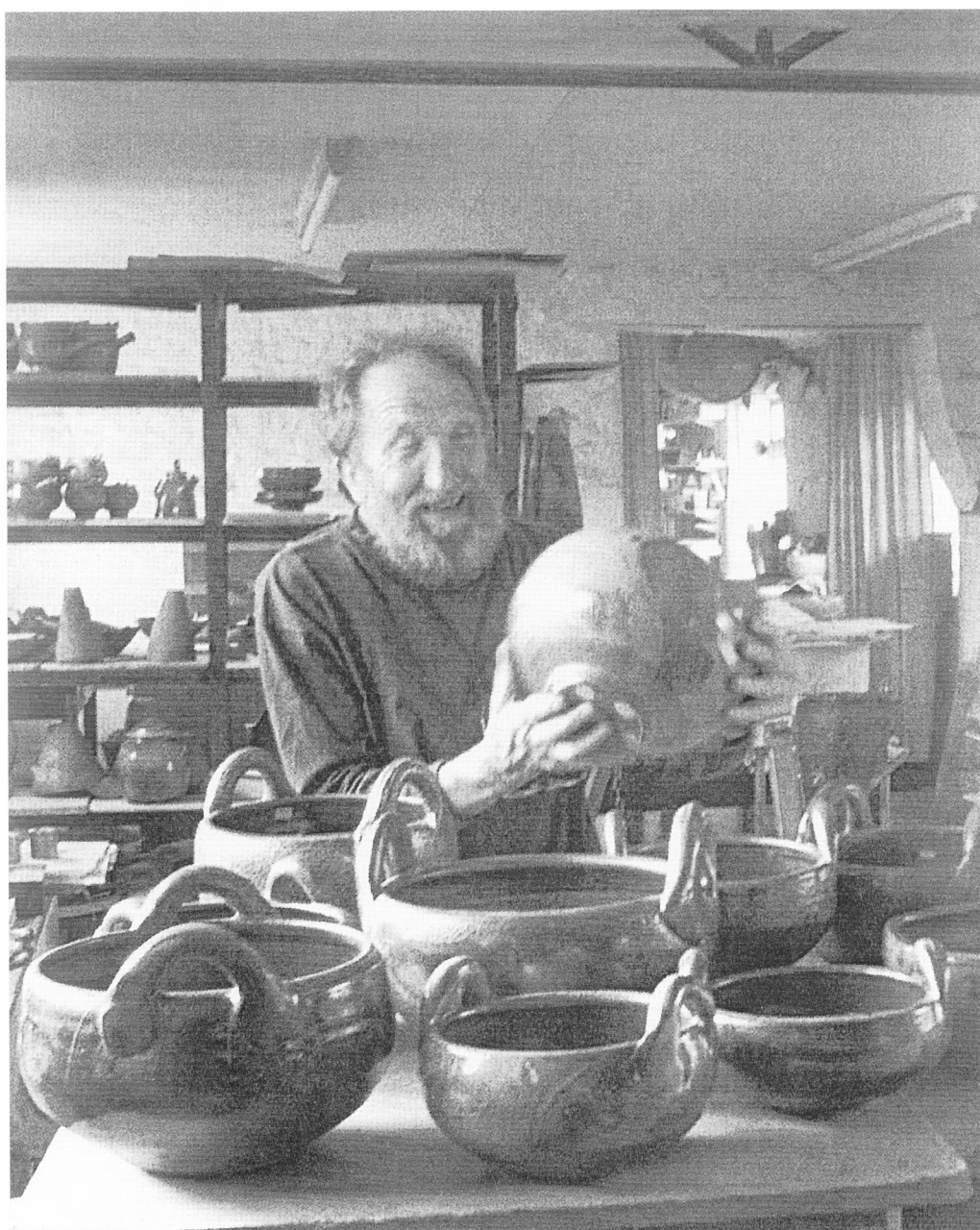
MICK CASSON MEMORIAL DAY

MAY LING BEADSMORE & ANDREW MASON

("Saturday special")

TRISH CHILES' DEMONSTRATION

WESTONBIRT FESTIVAL



NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2004
£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: Family £21.00

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Send your cheque, made payable to **D.C.P.G.**, to Digby Stott, "Broomfield", 36 Box Lane, Boxmoor, Herts., HP3 0DJ tel: 01442 404122. (If joining after March, please phone for a reduced introductory rate).

The Dacorum & Chiltern Potters Guild Newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August and November, being distributed free to all members of the Guild, other craft groups & organisations. Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome (s.a.e. please with any items to be returned). Opinions expressed in items published do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Committee or Guild members as a whole; nor is the Guild responsible for the content of individual advertisements printed in the Newsletter.

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(latest receipt of material for typing)

6 th January	February
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6 th April	May
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6 th July	August
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5 th October	November
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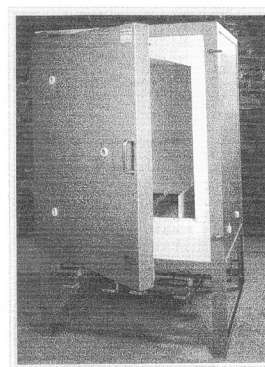
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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Mick Casson – this photograph reproduced from the Memorial Service leaflet, with the permission of Ben Casson.

CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Future Guild Events	1
Other Events	3
Membership News-	3
Membership Subscriptions.....	3
Obituaries	3
Notebook.....	4
Time to Smile.....	4
Henley Craft Fair: Ros McGuirk.....	4
Trish Chiles' Demonstration: Ros McGuirk	5
Olney Exhibition: Ros McGuirk	6
Book Reviews: Jan Kent & Mervyn Fitzwilliam.....	6
Westonbirt Festival of the Garden.....	7
Pitstone '04: Jan Kent.....	8
May Ling Beadsmore & Andrew Mason:	
Sarah Hall & Ros McGuirk	8
Mick Casson Memorial Day: Dorley Fieldhouse.....	11
Small ads.....	12
Committee List.....	12

EDITORIAL

Past experience has shown us that during June, July and August, many guild members seem to be taking holidays or are involved in other activities. Because of this, we have not arranged any Friday evening meetings during these three months, and no-one came forward to arrange a "Potcrawl". However, there are more exciting pottery and social events listed in this issue than you can shake a stick at, beginning with a Pitstone raku firing on 8th August, and a Garden Party on 22nd August.

Please look through the enclosed leaflets and send in your applications for events as soon as you can. It will greatly help the organisers if we have an early idea of numbers applying for each event, rather than an apparent lack of interest followed by several last minute applications, arriving just after we have cancelled !

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

FUTURE GUILD EVENTS

Raku at Pitstone Sunday 8th August

Guild members and visitors are welcome, please bring pots to fire if you have some. Phone Jan Kent for details 01908674 051

Garden Party Sunday 22nd August 2004

A Garden Party for Guild members and their partners will be held at the Chairman's house on Sunday 22nd August between 12.00 & 5.00 pm.

The outline plan is that all will bring some food and drink to share (cheese/bread/tea/coffee will be provided) we will eat at about 1.30 pm. and indulge in some light-hearted entertainment and social banter. We do need to know approximately how many will join us, so if you plan to come, please complete the enclosed form and return it to us as soon as you can, or phone us (number on the form).

Sat. 4th Sept. Visit to Mortimer Wheeler House

This is the ceramic and glass store of the Museum of London, and for potaholics it's a veritable Aladdin's cave. It contains a vast array of artefacts from pre-Roman to present times, including a superb collection of Medieval pots. Join us for a hands-on experience.

Sketch- books and cameras might be useful, though you will have to guarantee that any photos taken will only be used privately.

The visit is timed for 10.30am. until 12.30pm., and is for current members only. Numbers are limited, so phone me a.s.a.p on 01727 834326, to be sure of a place.

We will meet up at 10am. at Moorgate Station, and then take a bus. There will be a charge of about £5 a head, to be paid on the day.

Ros

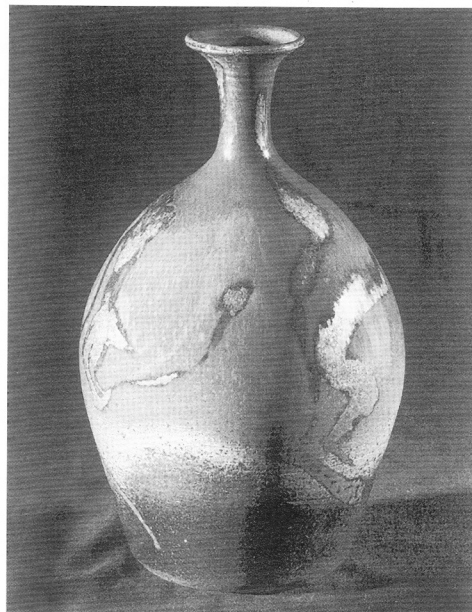
Fri. 8th Oct Starts at 7.30pm. AGM and Stan Romer Competition, with Brian Dewbury.

The Stan Romer Award application form was sent out with the previous newsletter. At the time of writing very few applications have been received, so, it is time to start work on the piece you will make for this event and to send in that application.

If you want to enter the competition you must complete an application form beforehand. Should you be unable to find your form, please phone me and I will send you one.

(editor)

Brian is a well-known potter, teacher and glaze researcher. His output is eclectic, varying from delicate porcelain, through a wide range of stoneware, to ceramic sculpture. Much of his work is finely thrown and finished with a rich variety of glazed surfaces and colours. Examples can be found in Royal and private collections, and in galleries around the world.



Thrown pot by Brian Dewberry

Soda Kiln Firing 9/10th October 2004

Paul Rowbottom has volunteered to manage a Soda Glaze firing for Guild members and visitors at Northfields Studio, Tring.

The Guild Soda Kiln is approximately 15 cubic feet internal volume, and we propose that a group of eight people could contribute a meaningful number of pots to fill the kiln. This would be an ideal size group for this activity, which will include preparing the kiln and site during late August/early September, preparing pots, then packing the kiln on 2/3rd October, and firing 9/10th October. This activity will be open to Guild members and visitors.

Depending on the response we have, it may be possible to have a follow-on firing during the middle/end of October, for those wanting to gain further experience. If people other than those engaged in the workshop want to attend the firing we propose that they can do so on payment of a small contribution.

An application form should be with this newsletter, but for more information phone Paul on 01923 263 032.

Salt Glaze Workshop with Steve Harrison 6th & also 7th November 2004

After much wrestling with the calendar, we have agreed the above dates for two very special salt firings with Steve Harrison.

The plan is that on 6th we will start early, build the kiln (which is to a new design called the Rocket Kiln by Steve, which you can see at Art-in-Clay, this year) then load the kiln with student's pots and fire it.

The next step will be to start work on building a second kiln to the same design, from scratch. The idea is that this will give "hands on" experience to those interested in such a project. We anticipate that the work on this kiln will be partly finished by the end of the first day. The conclusion to the day will be unloading the first kiln and a review of the results.

The second day we will also start early, review the kiln building procedure, load the rocket kiln, with the student's pots, start firing, and then complete the building of the second kiln. Depending on the progress made, we may just have time to fire the newly built kiln for the first time. The day will conclude with kiln opening and a review of the results.

The overall plan is to give two groups of 10 people (Guild members & visitors) some real experience of salt firing, plus kiln building, with Steve, who is one of the leading exponents of this activity. At the end of these two days we should also have a kiln which can be fired either at Pitstone or at other places to suit guild members.

Does it all sound a bit "way out?" or, as the youngsters say "real cool !" ??? Well, DON'T MISS IT!!!! The application should be with this newsletter.

POTTERS OPEN DAY

Saturday 13th November 2004
(Rudolf Steiner School, Langley Hill,
Kings Langley, Herts

We have two superb potters for this year's event. They are **BRIDGET DRAKEFORD** who specialises in thrown porcelain. Simple classic-shaped pieces sometimes carved and incised with a final glaze of ash, celadon and copper producing vibrant colours with oxidised and reduction firings. Bridget has been an established potter since 1977 and exhibits widely in U.K. and abroad and is a member of the C.P.A.

Our second guest demonstrator for the day is **JEREMY JAMES**, who sculpts a range of creatures including hares, cockerels, crows, otters, meerkats and human forms from a variety of clays such as stoneware, porcelain and earthenware and has been designing and making since 1987.

=====

Catering arrangements will be as before: tea and coffee will be provided during the breaks; however, each guest will be responsible for organising their own lunch requirements. You may bring your own wine to accompany your lunch (please remember to remove all bottles at the end of the day to comply with school regulations). For those of you who wish to lunch at "The Old Palace" pub (opposite the school gates) you can do so by telephoning **01923 263803** to reserve a table and place orders in advance.

Doors open at 9.00 a.m. Tea and coffee will be served together with the traditional "Hot Toddy" on arrival. The first demonstration will take place at 10.00 a.m. There will be an opportunity to purchase books and pottery materials on the day, since Potteryworks will be with us and open for business from 9.00 a.m., so do come early to purchase your supplies and books before demonstrations start. You can order clay and other supplies in advance - 'phone Potteryworks on **01923 800006**
Please note this date in your diary. Application forms are included with this Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you on the day

Fri. 10th Dec. 8pm. at Kings Langley Methodist Church Hall. **JIM NEWBOULT**

This will be a welcome return from one of our most interesting and entertaining guests. Jim is an expert in the historical technology of the pottery industry. From a few shards, he can identify a pot, and when and where it was made. He and his wife, Emma, have been producing replica pots for over 12 years. They also work with film, TV, re-enactment groups, and educational resource centres across Europe and the U.S. On his last visit, Jim threw some Roman pots on a replica wheel from that period. This time, he will demonstrate something a little more up-to-date.

OTHER EVENTS

11th Aug. - 2 Sept. Summer Exhibition. Flower vases by gallery potters. Galerie Besson, Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond St., W1. 0207 491 1706 (www.galeriebesson.co.uk)

21 Aug - 5 Sept. 'Clay and ink'. Porcelain by Bridget Drakeford with ink painting/calligraphy by Irene Sanderson. Ice House Gallery, Holland Park, W8. 01768-897071 (www.bdporcelain.co.uk)

3-5 Sept. A 'Dirty Weekend'. Northern Potters Festival. At the Kiln Site, Rufford Craft Centre, Rufford Country Park, Nr. Ollerton, Newark Notts. 01623-822944. Demos. By Chris Keenan, Gwen Bainbridge, Mike Eden et al. £70 for 3 days, (£25 students). Daily rate £35 (£15 students).

10-11 Sept. Potfest Southwest. Frome Market. 150 potters. Adults £2-50. Seniors £2.

18-19 Sept' 'Ceramics in the City' 50 potters. Geffrye Museum, Kingsland Rd., E2. 0207 739 9893 (www.geffrye-museum.org.uk)

18 Sept – 3 Oct Open Studio in Herts. Includes DCPG members Pauline Ashley, Annegret Ostberg, Paul Rowbottom (on 18/19 and 25/26 Sept., tel: 01923 263 032), Dorothea Paterson and Vivienne Rodwell-Davies (0208 441 0904). Look out for brochures in libraries, tourist offices and art suppliers. (www.hvaf.org.uk)

18-19th Sept. London Open House (www.londonopenhouse.org)

26 Sept. Doug Jones' Open Day To celebrate 45 years in the business. Starts at 11am. tel: 01923 770913

14-17 Oct. 'The Affordable Art Fair' Autumn collection. Mainly prints and paintings, but also some ceramics, sculpture et al.

5-7 Nov. 'Celebration of Craft and Design Fair' First ever, contemporary designer craft fair at Waddeston Manor (N.T.) nr. Aylesbury. Tel : 01296 653259

20-21 Nov. 'Art in Clay.' The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey. 10am-5pm. Tel: 011598 73966

See also www.studiopottery.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Presently four new members have joined us, and as always we are very pleased to welcome them;

Sue Coles is based in New Southgate, London, and is a research administrator. **Barbel Daly** is from Finsbury Park and is a finance assistant. **Mrs. P.A.Green** is a classroom assistant from Borehamwood. **Susan Eglinton** has joined us as a student member. Susan is an artist, also from Borehamwood.

All of our new members have expressed an interest in a wide variety of pottery techniques including raku. Our next raku day at Pitstone museum is on 8th August, so perhaps we will see some of you at that event (phone Jan Kent for details on 01908 674 051).

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

October 1st is the date that membership subscriptions are due. The application form for the Potters Open Day and also renewal of subscriptions is enclosed, with the rate being the same as last year. The membership card usually contains details of all events booked for the coming season. I mention this since some people wanted early notification of events, but did not receive that information because they had not renewed their subscriptions on time, so did not receive their membership card. Please renew your subscription promptly, to avoid the need for follow-up letters later on.

OBITUARY – ELEANOR GLAZE

Eleanor was a former member of the Guild. Sadly, she died on 28th May '04 of cancer aged 58. At the age of six, Eleanor moved to England with her family from Guyana. She attended school in North London and went on to complete a B.A.Hons. degree in ceramics at Harrow and Westminster University.

When younger, Eleanor worked as a nursery nurse and later as a secretary, but her real love was fashion design and all things artistic which led to her becoming a potter. I met Eleanor as a student at Aylesbury College while taking my City & Guilds in ceramics.

Her enthusiasm, patience and wonderful sense of humour and friendship helped make my two years of study happy.

Eleanor was very popular, had many friends and was happily married to George for 39 years with a son Laurence. She will be sorely missed by all.

Joy Wills

BARBARA MEEKING

As we go to press I have been informed (by Janet Collings) that Barbara has died following a stroke. Barbara was an active and supportive member of the guild, and I hope to have a more detailed obituary in the next issue of the newsletter. Editor.

NOTEBOOK

Workshops

The Sara Robertson Workshop was held at Kings Langley on 16th May, & was attended by thirteen members and visitors. Sara phoned me to say that she had personally enjoyed the Workshop, and was very impressed by the standard of work produced, and the diligence of all those who attended. Heather Paul also told me how much she had enjoyed the day, and since this seems to be so popular it was proposed that we ask Sara to hold a similar type of event next year.

Future Workshops

We are planning a further sculpture workshop, probably with Paul Priest, who gave us a very successful demonstration and workshop some while back. Currently we are unable to set a date for this since Paul is away, but we will keep you up to date on developments. As a general note, I would again ask members to let the committee know what type of events they want so that we continue to address appropriate ways forward.

Barnet College

As we go to press I have been told that Barnet College have dropped all adult education relating to ceramics classes, including City & Guilds.

Website

If you have not found the Guild Website yet, pay a visit to www.thedcpg.org.uk Our Website manager is John Powell. Please contact John if you have any snippets for the site. He can be contacted on e-mail john.powell22@btinternet.com or use the address on the website feedback page.

Editor

TIME TO SMILE

How to make a small fortune from pottery

- 1) Start with a big fortune
- 2) Open a pottery
- 3) Wind up with a small fortune.

Pottery class for the Elderly

The elderly potter made his way (with his Zimmer frame) over to his lady friend in her wheel chair.

"Guess how old I am" he said

Without a word, she reached through his Zimmer frame, into his trousers, and fumbled with his genitals, withdrew her hand, then looked up at him and said "you are 84"
"How did you know that?" he said

"Well" she said, "you told me yesterday!"

(Told on Radio 4 by Clement Freud, in a slightly different form)

All in the mind

A small boy sitting in a cardboard box was pretending to drive at a mad pace, with violent steering wheel turns and accompanying tyre screams.

"Hello" said his uncle, "are you in your car then?"

"No" said the boy, staring at his uncle, as if he was mad, "I am in a Box"

Why do I do it?

I enjoy going to pottery class, I enjoy coming home, but it's all that struggling with the clay that gets me down!

Food for thought

A potter who enjoyed gardening crossed a potato with a sponge. It tasted revolting, but did hold a lot of slip.

Answer that!

What do you send a sick florist?

Going spare

I know a potter who is so old that his blood type has been discontinued.

Further out than you think

Our 4 year old grand-daughter on the phone "Granny, when I got up there was a storm, did you see it"

"No, not this morning"

"Oh, so it didn't rain on your planet!!"

Editor

NEW CRAFT FAIR AT HENLEY

Held in the beautiful grounds of Fawley Court, a fine Wren house beside the Thames, "Craft and Design" was billed as "the most exciting craft and design initiative to be launched for 20 years". There were to be workshops, lectures, demonstrations, musicians, acrobats and storytellers, in addition to over two hundred artists and craftsmen. Indeed, it looked a very good show, and blessed by the first touch of summer weather, drew out plenty of visitors even on the first day, a Friday.

'Chelsea brought to Waterperry' was my first thought, as I navigated between marquees, tents, outdoor sculptures, and café tables, enjoying the unaccustomed warmth, the wafts of scent from the may flowers and the towering chestnut trees. The show was a little smaller than Art in Action, and thus it was easier to see everything and still have time for tea and home-made cake. For potaholics like me, there were plenty of old friends but also, in Chelsea style, lots of new faces, including young makers. I came across our very own Marilyn Andreetti, busy selling pots.

It seemed a good day out for families, too. There was face painting, pot throwing, raku, and lessons in clay

modelling, among many other things. While I was preoccupied with potters, my husband had been well entertained in the music tent and by the automata and the fountains, including a wicked-looking Venus fly trap.

We left at the end of the afternoon and joined the queue of cars heading for the gate. It did not take long and soon we were heading for the back roads and country lanes to avoid the traffic. It was a glorious run through the Chilterns to Kings Langley and the Guild meeting. What a perfect end to the day!

Ros McGuirk

TRISH CHILES' DEMO

Trish studied textiles, which she loved, and taught herself to make pots when she needed some for her macramé work. When she realised that textiles would never generate a reasonable income, she became a full – time potter, able to throw 20 pots an hour. Her pots are finely thrown and she has developed a speciality in delicate, pierced work that reflects her interest in textiles. She has been making these cut pots for 27 years in her pottery at Middleton Stoney in Oxfordshire and sells them at farmers' markets (St. Albans, Chesham, Berkhamstead and Aylesbury), and various galleries and shows.

Trish uses a clay mix of reduction St. Thomas's 1104 together with 10% of a local clay. The gas kiln is fired until cone 10 is down, (1298C), with reduction. The glazes are dipped and poured and may be layered one over another. Celadon, tenmoku and a creamy white Feldspathic glaze, between them produce a wide range of colours and lustrous effects – purples, blues, greens, and creams, etc.

Trish is a bare-foot thrower, and once introductions were done she got down to work on our little wheel. She began by making domed forms which have become another of her specialities, being the basis of mustard pots, salt cellars, incense holders, pierced vases (for lazy flower arrangers), pot-pourri bowls and a multitude of lidded pots.

The Sphere

1. Taking a 1lb. piece of soft clay, Trish centred it with one hand and had it up in 2 or 3 lifts. Even at this early stage, the form is kept narrow at the rim.

2. Using finger-tips she collared in. Then, starting with finger-tips right inside at the bottom, she refined the shape and thinned the pot. This pattern was repeated until the top was closed.

3. In this case, the stem was made into a knob.

This pot would later be cut to form a mustard pot. It had taken two minutes to make, and when biscuited, it would be glazed. It would then take 6 minutes to clean the glaze away from the rims so that the lid would not stick in the firing. She then showed us how to tap open one of her lidded domed pots.

Separating lids

Using the base of a small pot, (any strong, rounded form would do,) tap around the pot until the lid is loosened.

N.B. 1. Make sure you are holding the pot and lid securely.

2. Do not tap the lid, nor the rims, as these are more fragile.

A lemon squeezer came next. The clay was centred and opened to the base. Leaving plenty of clay near the centre, a saucer was made, followed by a dome in the middle. The rim was finished off with a generous spout. Then came a goblet. It is safer to make these in two separate pieces when the clay is so soft and the rims are fine. First she made the bowl and then the base (which is thrown upside-down). These will be joined later and turned.

This method gives one more opportunity to adjust the shapes when making a set. The bowls and stems can be mixed and matched so that they are all the same height, and in the same proportions.

Incense stick holder. Made as above, but the base is solid, and the central dome becomes a hollow knob (which is later pierced with small holes to accommodate the sticks).

Trish's Throwing Tips.

1. "Quick and clean" should be your motto. Throw with soft clay and little water. Aim to get your pots up in 2 or 3 lifts and keep your working to a minimum.
2. When centring clay keep your elbows out from the body and at right-angles. This locks the hands into position and gives you strength.
3. To avoid going off centre when opening out to the base, leave a thin skim of clay on the base. It can be removed later.
4. Make your own wires with copper picture wire. Strip a piece and take two strands. Fasten these to a large bead and secure the loose ends to the centre of the wheelhead using a lump of clay. Turn the wheel until they are twisted as much as you like.

By the time the first part of the meeting was brought to an end, there was a grand selection of pots drying on the floor; bowls, domes to be made into lidded pots, candle holders, and all the others described above. There were fourteen pots in all.

Fettling Tip

When the pots have firmed up and are dry enough, the bases and lower walls are worked over with a soft kidney. This is very quick. Trish had to fit this in with childcare and taught herself to work fast. Her kiln is 12.5 cu. Ft. and she can make a full load in one day. (Cut work, which increases the value of a pot more than threefold, can be done on the kitchen table at night.)

To cut a lid out of a sphere, do it quick and clean, in two stages:

- i) Stick the blade of your knife/scalpel all the way through the pot
- ii) Cut round in one smooth motion.

Finishing a lemon squeezer

A large looped tool is used to cut away excess clay from the base, the area is smoothed with thumb- nail and sponge. Grooves are cut in the dome from the base almost to the top, using a corner of the turning tool. The cutting action looks pretty straight, but the resulting grooves are attractively curved.

The piece is finished off with a small pulled handle, which is attached straight on to the rim as soon as it is made. No slip is required.

N.B. Trish works on her pots before they are leather hard.' Cheese hard' is the stage when you can easily push a finger- nail in.

Turning

Avoid if possible. Trish turns only bowls, goblets and cups.

Cutting and piercing

1. These pots are fired almost to melting point, so where there is any fault or weakness, splits form, or the pot flattens out. With this amount of cutting the margin of error is small, and you only get one go at it.
2. Trish uses two tools; a scalpel and a tapered hole- piercer. Both should be made of stainless steel.
3. Keep your hands, working area and pots clean.
4. As the cutting progresses the pot becomes more fragile, requiring gentle support with the left hand.
5. Trish never marks out the pattern first, but cuts by eye. The designs are in her head. She cuts freely, adapting the designs to the shape of the pots.
6. Domes which are compressed during the collaring in process, are stronger than bowls, dishes and thrown lids. Domes can therefore be more finely cut.
7. Open forms become especially vulnerable as cutting and piercing progress, therefore they are kept upside down, to protect the rim.
8. Little bits of excess clay tend to stick to the sides of the pot. These are easily removed with a piece of clay that is a bit drier.

Trish covered a lot during the course of the evening. A good number of pots were made, and a range of techniques were covered, including her 'cathedral' cut work. She also spoke about her weekly routine. A typical week would include one day of throwing, one day of glazing, a day for firing, and the rest of the week doing paper work and selling. It was also clear that she has good business skills. She pointed out that to make a living one has to make things that will sell, and find a price that is reasonable for the potter as well as the purchaser.

It was a fascinating and thought-provoking meeting. Trish showed how to be a successful potter through hard work and good management both in the workshop and marketplace. She finished by offering us throwing lessons in her pottery. Anyone interested should get in touch with me for further information.

Ros McGuirk

REPORT ON THE OLNEY EXHIBITION. MAY 04

I'd like to give a big *Thank You* to the seventeen members who took part, and especially to Vivienne and Jola for supervising the setting -up. (One had to take time off work, and the other was in the middle of her degree exhibition.) The standard of work was high and the show looked very good.

The staff at the gallery were cheerful and helpful, as ever, and offered us an extra two weeks, which we happily accepted. Thus the exhibition ran through two bank holiday weekends and stayed up until 7th June.

The visitors' book revealed that we'd had a good mix of locals, folks from the N.W. and the Home Counties, and a few from North America. We even sold some pots!

In fact the group made £793.50 which averaged almost £47 each. The largest piece to be sold was Jola's magnificent painting 'Autumn', the biggest ceramic item was Sabine's black horse, and the smallest were Vivienne's necklaces.

Our sales follow a general trend. The market in crafts does seem to be at a low ebb at present. (Even the fabulous new show at Henley produced disappointing sales in ceramics and glass, despite good attendance figures.)

The good news is that the New Studio gallery has invited us to return again next May!

Ros McGuirk

BOOK REVIEWS

Contemporary Studio Porcelain 2nd ed. Peter Lane clothbound edtn. coloured ill. £35.00

This is a very comprehensive review of just about everybody who is doing anything with porcelain at the moment. There are those who use it for its translucency, for its texture, for its whiteness unglazed and for the effect its whiteness has on glazes. There are those who throw it, who cast it, who slab build with it, who carve it, who Raku fire it and even those who manage to go totally against its smooth nature to produce rough hewn chunks of work. There are works covering the whole range of sizes from tiny delicate carved pieces to large life size statues and yet throughout all the variety of work, the potters find something special in porcelain that they don't feel they could achieve with any other material, but they all seem driven to persist with it and the lavish illustrations show the wonderful range of results they produce. A thoroughly enjoyable book.

Jan Kent

Resist and Masking Techniques by Peter Beard
A&C Black paperback £13.99

This book, published January 2004, is a revised version of the book first published in 1996, in the Ceramics Handbook series. The revised edition has virtually the same text as the original book, but contains many more colour plates, and this does help in understanding the techniques and the results that can be achieved.

Peter is a fellow of the CPA and an accomplished lecturer, having recently given the Guild a very informative talk on the methods he uses. The book is generally very well illustrated, covering a wide range of masking techniques, using waxes of various types, spraying, paper & tapes, with chapters on using slips & colloidal slips. There are also chapters on acid etching, lustre, smoking methods and grit blasting.

An essential book if you are interested in resists, or if you want to understand how Peter achieves those desirable surfaces.

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

Oriental Glazes by Michael Bailey pub'd. A&C Black
paperback £13.99

This is another title in the Ceramics Handbook series, and the author states that it is a sequel to his previous book entitled *Cone 6*. This previous book covered oxidised glazes in an electric kiln, but the present one is devoted to the use of "flame kilns" and a control of the reducing atmosphere.

Michael starts with glaze analysis using graphical methods and glaze making techniques, followed by a chapter on kilns and their firing, including Propane, oil and wood firing kilns. It is interesting to note that most people who contributed information for this book built their own kilns, although build information is not included in this book.

The glazes are covered in detail, with the general classifications of low iron, high iron, and copper glazes, followed by a brief chapter on plotting possibilities for two or three ingredients, and another brief chapter on glaze calculation source material.

The appendix is useful, covering some Health and Safety notes, a glossary, composition of materials, including a synthetic wood ash, and temperature equivalent chart for Orton cones.

The book contains many excellent photographs of pots made by mostly well-known potters, and these illustrations will make you feel tempted to start on Oriental Glazes straight away!

Mervyn Fitzwilliam

WESTONBIRT FESTIVAL 4TH JUNE TO 12TH SEPTEMBER

"REGENERATE" BY HANNAH BENNETT

(sponsored by Arts Council)

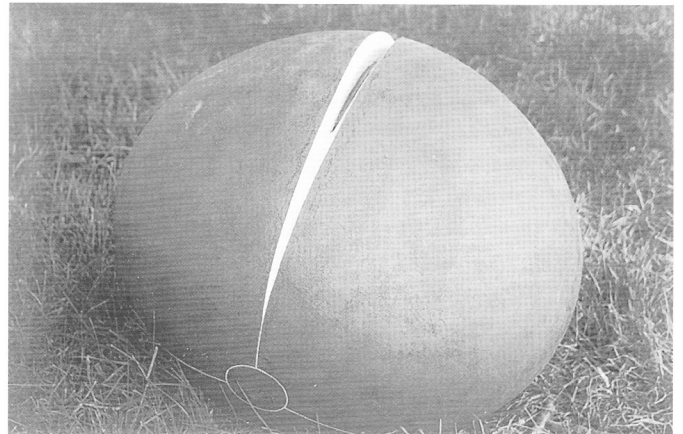
On a recent trip to the West Country, Guild members Peter & Linda Ablett visited the National Arboretum at Westonbirt in Tetbury, Gloucestershire. Peter reports

that the Arboretum is well worth a visit at any time, but was particularly intrigued by the range of individual garden designs incorporating the work of 21 leading artists and designers from around the world.

Of particular interest was a garden area entitled Regenerate, with Ceramic spheres, representing fallen chestnuts. Each sphere was approximately 18" diameter, and the detail given on this exhibit is reproduced below. Peter Ablett provided the photographs.



The spheres under the trees



Close – up of single sphere

'Regenerate' expresses hopes and fears in the guise of ceramic spheres, whose originators fell to earth as chestnuts – with defended, prickly shells, navel-like circles where they were attached to the mother tree and cushioned interiors protecting precious cargo.

Coiled clay versions of this idea lie scattered beneath trees. "My work is always placed in or on the ground. I take clay from the earth, add water, air and fire, and then replace it. It's about the way we scar the earth."

The glimpse of jewel-like colour on each piece was Bennett's first experience working with glazes: "mixing rocks and oxides from the ground. Research and experimentation took months. You can't hurry clay. It takes me a day to do a single coil and each of these pieces took five days to fire. I was a rush, rush, rush kind of person until I worked in clay and it changed me entirely. I'm far more patient now".

PITSTONE 2004

Well, we got off to a rather slow start this year. The Mayday Bank Holiday was wet and windy so there were very few visitors to the Museum. I spent the morning tidying up and sold a few pots and then at lunch time I gave up as the rain was still coming down steadily.

The Spring Bank Holiday was a nicer day and there were a few more visitors. Again I sold a few of our pots and spent the rest of the day putting up the strip light, that Mervyn donated, in the shed.

The first Open Day of the year on June 13th saw rather fewer visitors, as it clashed with some local events, but Tina and I had a few customers for the have-a-go and once more we sold donated pots. As you can see, these are providing us with a steady trickle of sales. Many thanks to all those who have donated pots, more will always be welcomed. I also finished the wiring of the strip light so we can now see the cobwebs in the shed clearly, so I suppose a good clean around is next on the agenda.

Jan Kent

SATURDAY TALK: MAY LING BEADSMORE + ANDREW MASON

May Ling Beadsmore and Andrew Mason are studio potters creating two separate bodies of individual work. However, they live together, have a child and share their studio space and showroom. They are resident in Derbyshire and work in a World Heritage site at an eighteenth century cotton mill.

In 1986 May Ling was working in a bank and attending a pottery evening class. She enlisted on a full-time HND course in Derby, from which she learnt a comprehensive range of firing skills and those needed to build her first kiln, a propane-fuelled soda kiln. She finished this course confident as a maker, but unsure of setting up in business and so stayed at college extending to a BA in applied arts.

Throughout her career, May Ling has gained advice and experience from as many people as she could and spent time working in the workshops of a number of potters (e.g. Josie Walters and John Wheeldon). Currently she makes functional soda-glazed tableware. May Ling is interested in healthy eating and believes that the brown "wholesome" colours she creates stimulate an appetite for savoury foods. Her work is thrown and slab built, useful and decorative. The firing creates highlights and texture and May Ling enjoys its unpredictability.

Andrew Mason also attended Derbyshire College and began his career making earthenware because of the vivid colours obtainable. Four years ago he switched to "Earthstone" a white-firing, low-vitrifying

stoneware, which he fires conventionally and using raku methods.

He is inspired by Leach, Staite-Murray and the nineteenth century French art posters. His work is predominantly thrown with occasional hand-modelled additions. Andrew is very concerned that his pieces have strong form and look good unglazed. If this is achieved, then the glazing tends to work well and complete the piece.

For his stoneware pieces, the glaze is sprayed on and carefully placed so that the running of the molten glaze creates predictable patterns. The raku is decorated with a glaze that is very heavy with copper. This glaze is rich red at a particular thickness and simply a mask where it is thinner. The unglazed parts of the pot become smoked during a post firing reduction.

Sarah Hall

Notes on May Ling's demo.

May Ling works with Commercial Clay's superwhite stoneware, using a mixture of 50% grogged to 50% smooth. She has a neat method for making a square dish, which involves flopping a slab of textured clay over a wooden block, thus:-

Square dish

1. Make a slab:-

- i) Cut a slab of clay off the block. Make it about 18ins.square by 3-4ins thick.
- ii) Use a twisted wire and two batons to slice an even slab from the base of your clay. Wiggle the wire as you go and a pleasing wavy pattern is formed. (May Ling makes her wires using 14lb fishing line.)
- iii) Trim the sides of the slab by cutting around a template. May Ling prefers a less formal look, so she makes slightly curved edges.

2. Fettle the rim:-

- i) Place a cotton cloth over an edge of the slab, and run your thumbs along the edge so that it becomes rounded and slightly raised. Repeat with the other sides.
- ii) Turn the slab over carefully, gently push in the corners a little, and using the cloth, work along the sides as before.
- iii) Place a board over the clay to turn it over again. Smooth the edges again. Then, lifting the edges carefully, run finger and thumb simultaneously over both sides of the rim.

3. Decorate the slab. May Ling does this by impressing, because textured patterns are picked out well in a soda firing:-

- i) Position a feather in the centre of the slab and mark it with a credit card. Then smooth the area it will occupy using the edge of the card.
- ii) Press the feather down and run your card over it. Remove with a potters' pin.
- iii) Impress the sides of the slab with a roulette, and the wrong end of a paint brush. Run a thumb-nail around the rim to define it well.

4. To make the dish:-

- i) The slab, which should be on a board, is covered by a piece of cotton cloth. A block, made of two pieces of MDF glued together, is positioned on top, and then a second board is placed over that.
- ii) The whole lot is inverted.
- iii) The base is smoothed over using a rubber kidney. A thumb is run around the edges of the base. The rim is touched up, and a thumb-nail is run around, as before.
- iv) Cover with plastic and leave overnight.
- v) Next day remove the plastic, place a board on top and turn it over. Turn up the corners a little, to prevent sagging in the stoneware firing.

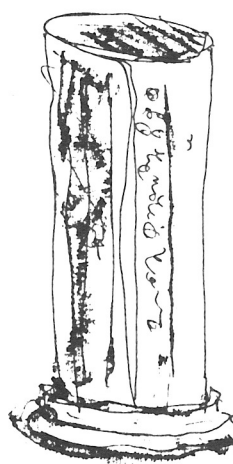
Slab Vase

- i) Prepare a slab, as above. Though the sides should be cut with straight edges, not curved. The edges should be smoothed as before, except for the edge that will become the rim of the vase. This is worked to make a fine, rather than a rounded, edge, by pressing down on the clay gently, from about 1/2in from the edge, until it is wedge-shaped.
- ii) Decorate the clay as before.
- iii) Leave for a while to firm up. (May Ling will prepare a further two slabs in this time.)
- iv) Place a rolling pin on the slab and wrap the clay over it. Score the edges, brush on a little water and join. Impress the seam with a piece of wood. Remove the rolling pin.
- v) Stand the sleeve on a prepared slab. Cut around it, leaving about 1cm excess clay. Remove the sleeve. Using a knife, toothbrush, and water, score the base and replace the sleeve. Roll the vase around to fix it together. Press around the base with a stick so that the sides move up the pot a little. Then press in the edge of the stick all around the base to give the effect of beading. Roll the base around a little to turn up the bottom edge, so that it becomes softly rounded. Finished.

May Ling went on to show how she enhances the decoration by spraying with slips on biscuitware. Deep pots such as vases will also be glazed internally with a thin shino, or a celadon glaze. For more information about her kiln, slips and glazes, see the notes she has made at the end.

We have some other notes by May Ling about her kiln and glazes which will appear in our next issue

Editor



Finished vase 101cm base
- bisque fire &
glaze under with
Shino - Thin

1st spray with
so ball } thinly
so china }
2nd spray with another
celadon - Soda enhances marks



turn edges up
to allow for the
clay shrinking in
slw firing

Notes on Andrew Mason's demo

Most of Andy's pots are finely thrown, but for this demo he chose to make one of his distinctive 'cradle bowls'. These are part of his 'Earthstone' range, made from Earthstone Extra Smooth 10 (available from Valentines). He has developed a way of throwing in a mould and adding a slab to create a double-walled vessel with a unique shape.

Cradle Bowl

1. A bisque fired bowl is fixed to the wheelhead and used as a mould. A slab of clay is placed inside and is thrown into a bowl.
2. The bowl is removed when firmed up. A crescent shape is cut away from opposite sides of the rim - the two sections to be removed have to be carefully measured, in order to keep the bowl symmetrical. About half the original rim remains.
3. A slab of clay about 3ins thick is cut. It is rolled and slapped onto the work surface a few times. This is repeated, rolling from different directions, until the slab is ready. (A tip: - artist's canvas makes a good surface on which to roll out clay.)
4. Using a wooden tool, cut out a rounded rectangle to fit the top of the bowl. Consider the surface of this slab. To achieve an even and smooth surface, wipe it in one direction only, using first a metal kidney, then a credit card, then a rubber kidney. For a fine texture, turn the slab over and use the side next to the cloth.
5. Back to the bowl. Roll two coils 2cms thick and up to 3ft long. Place the bowl on a whirler. Score the entire rim and use a tooth brush and water to soften the surface. Add the coil, and gently work it on with the thumbs. Smooth with a damp sponge. Continue working

on the inner edge, dragging clay towards the centre and wipe over with a serrated kidney, until the edges are rounded.

6. Impress the slab. Andy used a small pine- cone wrapped in thin plastic, which he rolled along the sides, (when biscuit fired and washed with iron oxide, this can give a snake skin effect). He placed three small pieces of coniferous fronds into the centre and pressed them in by placing a board on top and tapping it down. (No finger marks!) A flexible kidney made wavy lines.

7. Prepare to add the slab to the bowl. Work a wet tooth- brush over the soft coil on the rim. Hold the slab over the rim and half drop it on. Andy let it fall like a piece of crumpled up cloth. He leaves the folds in the clay, pressing them in a little. The slab hangs over the rim and he works on joining the two, until one merges seamlessly into the other. The piece is no longer a bowl with a shallow, curved top, but has become an organic form.

8. Lugs are added, using a small plastic top to mark the shape. A small disc of clay, made in the hand, is added on, and a hole is cut through this, using a small piece of metal pipe.

9. Later, the bowl can be inverted onto a large synthetic sponge covered in thin plastic, and turned. It can also be burnished in this position, using a smaller plastic-covered sponge.

10. To prevent them exploding, Andy biscuit-fires very slowly indeed. The progression from 95 to 105C takes eight hours!



Teapot Andy assembled a teapot made by cutting a lid off an enclosed form, (a slightly pointed dome), and then added a thrown spout and a pulled handle. The aim is to produce another organic form, with no discernable joins. The spout and the handle look as if they grow from the body of the pot. Decoration is impressed, as before, and a lug can be added to the handle. After the spout is trimmed, it is paddled gently with a stick or kidney. It is then pulled out a little with a wet finger, so that it pours well. A knob is modelled and added to the lid. Similarly, two modelled feet are added to the front of the pot to tilt it back.

Andrew's Earthstone Glazes

Inspired by European and North American potters, where stoneware firings are considerably lower than here, Andy continues to experiment with glaze recipes, and particularly with the frits. Calcium borate frit is especially useful, and can be used in place of gerstley borate frit in American recipes. He takes glost firings to 1200-1225C.

By spraying different coloured glazes onto different areas he can pick out and enhance the patterns in the clay. Colours used are rich amber, green and blue, and often flow down the sides.

Base Glaze 1 (cone 5)

Calcium borate frit	20
Standard borax frit	20
Lead bisilicate frit	4
Soda feldspar	22
Flint	4
Whiting	10
Barium carbonate	10
China clay	8
Bentonite	2
Good colour response with copper, cobalt and manganese	

Base glaze 2 (cone 5)

Calcium borate frit	18
Lead bisilicate frit	22
FFF feldspar	26
Flint	10
Whiting	10
Barium carbonate	5
China clay	7
Bentonite	2
Good colour response with iron, titanium and manganese	

N.B. I have taken all these recipes from *Ceramic Review* No. 193. These days, Andy uses more lead and less calcium in his glazes.

Colouring oxide solution for under or over a glaze:-

Oxide or carbonate	100g
Bentonite	25g
Glaze binder	25g
Calcium chloride	25g

E.g. Black

Copper oxide	33g
Red iron oxide	33g
Manganese dioxide	33g
Bentonite	25g
Glaze binder	25g
Calcium chloride	25g

Summary

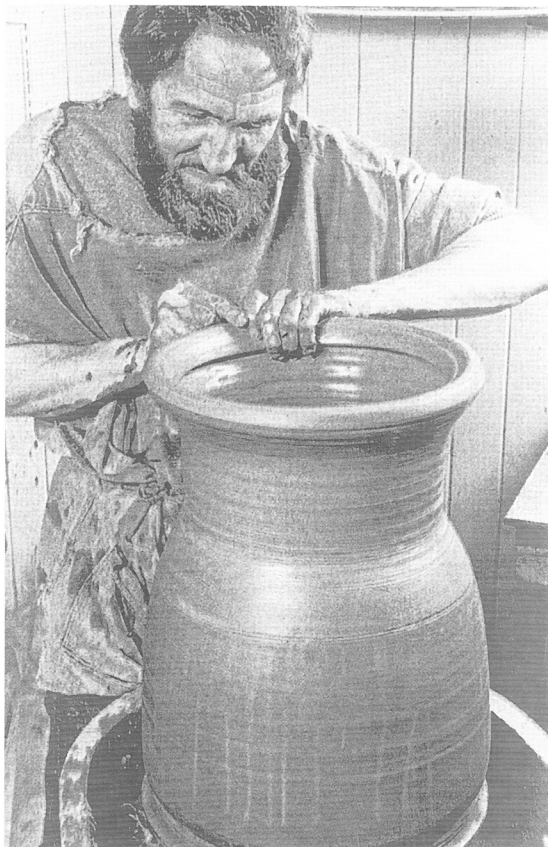
Twenty seven members attended this 'Saturday Special' meeting. We spent a whole day in the hall with two enthusiastic potters who gave generously of their time

and experience. I hope these notes help remind you of some of the things we learned, or give you an idea of what you missed! Thanks go to Sarah Hall and Vivienne for their help in putting them together. Thanks also to Tina for those scrummy cakes, to Andy and May Ling for putting on such an interesting programme, and to young Matilda for being the sweetest-natured baby I've ever met.

Ros McGuirk

(Drawings by Vivienne Rodwell-Davies)

MICK CASSON: A MEMORIAL DAY JULY 3RD '04



It was good to go back to Wobage on July 3rd, a beautiful summer day – only a little rain – wild flowers in the countryside all along the way and around the old farm. A feeling of optimism and progression like them had grown and flowered over the past few weeks since the sadness and disbelief that had surrounded the empty workshop and barns on the bleak December day of the funeral, that even the presence of so many friends and well-wishers who had come to honour Mick's passing with the family was unable to dispel.

The memorial day was a celebration of achievement, inspiration, friendship and a rich family life. The large barn was all set up with seats for 250 people and a big screen at the end. By 11 a.m. it was full and people kept coming in. Ben Casson organised the sequence of events. He welcomed everyone and gave a short biographical resumé of Mick's life. He was followed by Lucy Casson who had spent a long time choosing slides from all aspects of Mick's life. From the early days in London, where the family had a restaurant business, his school time, and then through the days at

Harrow, and the pottery at Prestwood, scenes of family life, and Lucy Goffin working with Mick and Sheila. Then on to Wobage and his American experience. With Lucy, we saw some of Mick's life apart from his pottery world. She had chosen carefully from, as she said, "a wealth of material". Slides and incidents that she knew Mick and the family had enjoyed over the years.

After Lucy, Pan Henry – Mick's sister and first manager of the Craftsman Potters' Shop - talked about his involvement with the start of the C.P.A. His enthusiasm to get the first shop off the ground, and how much it had meant to him in those early C.P.A. days, his friendship with other potters at the time and of his growing fascination with the pots of Ancient Greece.

Pan was followed by Vic Margrie – the first director of the Crafts Council and the only craftsman to be appointed as director – talked of his Harrow days. How he and Mick and Colin Pearson had started a course that so many potters found to be a sound practical start to their potting careers. Many of these students were life-long friends of Mick and Sheila and were present at this celebration event. Vic enlarged upon Mick's involvement with committees related to crafts, and his willingness to promote a more general awareness of pottery wherever he could.

Next, Wally Keeler took us through the development of Mick as a potter. He showed slides from the early days of red clay and tin-glazed ware to the rich wood-fired salt glaze of Wobage. He felt that wherever he worked, Mick's personality had somehow overshadowed his pots, but now they will come into their own as we get to know them all over again.

Ben Casson talked of Wobage: how this community of makers has grown and, with the enthusiasm of Mick and the family, has now a firm foundation from which to move on.

We saw slides of wood and bricks in piles – they always seem to need moving! - Andrew McGarva, bringing his experience of wood-firing and salt glaze to the early kilns. Ben also gave us some idea of the rigours of starting off the enormous task of turning the farm site on a remote hillside into a place that would draw makers, and a public to buy their work.

At the end of all the speakers, Jane Hamlyn, one of the first students at Harrow, read a letter from David Leach. He spoke of the influence on pottery today that Mick had had. He reached such a large number of people through books, demonstrations, teaching and his television series. Above all, he said that Mick always made you feel that "you could do it".

Sheila, Clair, Lucy and Ben, all the family and the workers at Wobage must take credit for such amazing organisation of the day because, apart from listening to all the speakers and seeing the slides, we had time to have lunch in the courtyard. Drinks were served in the side barn showroom, and tea or coffee. There was a huge spread, added to by all the visitors, and time to talk to friends, some of whom we had not seen for

many years. There were people from all aspects of Mick's life, some collectors, buyers of Mick's work, potters of all ages and, of course, many students who are now professional potters, teachers or fellow travellers in the crafts.

In the barn was a display of Mick's first work to the last firing shortly before he died, a quiet oasis in the hubbub of so many. As we left, there were videos showing on the screen, Mick talking and laughing, looking at pots, working ----- with so much of him around in the air it was hard to believe he wasn't really there.

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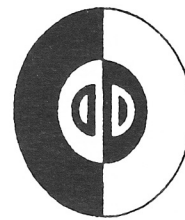
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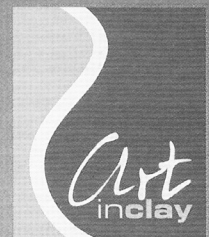
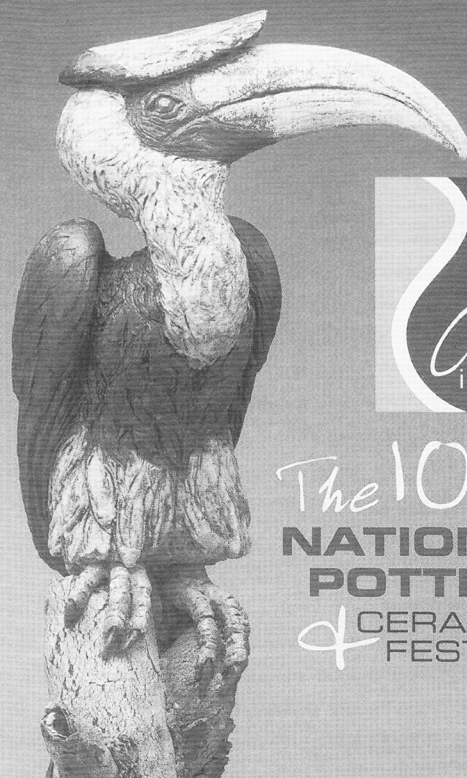
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30/31

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Making Ceramic Jewellery *Beryl Sedgwick*
Landscape at Runnymede *Alan Bennett*
Throwing in Stoneware *Laura Furlong*

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13/14/15
27/28
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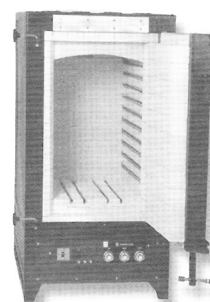
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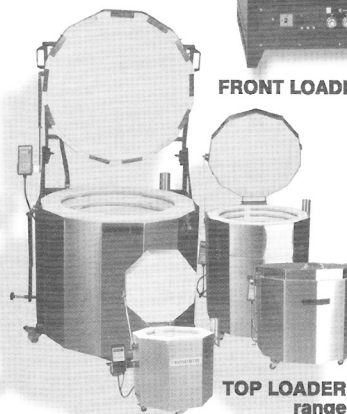
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