



DACORUM AND  
CHILTERN  
POTTERS GUILD

BULLETIN

APRIL

1988

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 15th April 8 pm at Northchurch Social Centre,  
Bell Lane, Northchurch, Berkhamstead -

JOHN LOMAS ON GLAZING. A practical evening. Please bring  
two biscuited pots, brushes, slip trailer.

Friday 13th May at Northchurch -

Ken Eastman - "Slipware with a difference". Ken studied at  
Edinburgh and the RCA London. He now has a studio in  
London. He hand-builds using slabs and moulds. He uses  
earthenware slips and paints.

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THE WEST FOREST POTTERS NEXT EVENTS ARE:

Wednesday 20th April at Polehampton Junior School,  
Kibblewhite Crescent TWYFORD Berks  
Siddig El'ngoumi, A fusion of 3 cultures

Saturday May 7th - Visit to Annette Fuchs and Lucy de Mauny  
in the Henley area.

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SPECIALIST GROUPS  
AND OTHER NOTICES

- RAKU Three sites now available for members' use as follows:
- 1 Pitstone Museum, Pitstone, near Tring. A sheltered kiln  
with workshop beside it which includes two wheels. Can be  
used any time.  
Details from Christine Bull (Princes Risborough 3515)
  - 2 A kiln at Pipers Corner near High Wycombe. Further  
details from Jenny Templeton, Amersham 7243.
  - 3 Berkhamsted, Bulbaggers Tip. For details contact Roy  
Adams, Berkhamsted 71095.

MEDIAEVALISTS Contact Lesley & Ann Sutherland: 01 907 4944  
if interested in the making of medieval pots.

SALT GLAZE KILN Available for use to Guild members and their friends. Wood fired, and about 30 cubic feet of setting space. £10 will entitle you to as many firings as you would wish during the year. Contact Christine Bull (Princes Risborough 3515) for further details.

VIDEO Two titles available £2.50 plus deposit (weekly). *Rolled Figures Audrey Blackman, Exhibition Work Audrey Blackman*. Other titles on the way. Guild use is for members' showing at Open Houses (no charge then). The video-tape made by Mr Athill of the Dave Roberts Raku demonstration last June is now available.

CHORLEYWOOD ARTS CENTRE Regular members' meeting each Wednesday, plus opportunity to pot. Ring the Chairman of the Chorleywood Community Arts Centre on Chorleywood 2918, or the Secretary on Chorleywood 4627 for further info.

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### RICHARD PHETHEAN, 18 March

The Berkhamstead Art Group joined us for a very interesting evening given by Richard Phethean. He first showed us slides of his work starting from his degree show at Camberwell College in 1976 and on through to 1985. Over this period his work changed and developed. Honey glazed earthenware gave way to slip trailed decoration and thence to more complex slip decoration using stencils and paper resist techniques, principally on domestic ware, garden pots and large plates.

In 1985 Richard went with his wife Leslie to Papua New Guinea for two years on a VSO scheme helping to run the Eastern Highlands Cultural Centre. He showed us slides of the scenery and the varied peoples there including their incredible ceremonial body decoration. The very rich decorative heritage of many Papua New Guinea tribes was used as inspiration for very elaborate designs incised onto slip coated pots at the cultural centre.

Richard then gave us an excellent demonstration of his latest techniques using coloured slips and paper resist.

PETER & BARBARA SPONG

#### A NOTE FROM RICHARD PHETHEAN

A number of people asked for glaze and slip recipes which I have listed here:

CLAY BODY: Red earthenware/Buf stoneware 50/50

BISQUE FIRE: 1080°C

SLIPS: White = Ball Clay; Black = Powdered red e/ware  
+ 3% Cobalt  
+ 4% Manganese  
Colours = Pastel body stains mixed 3%-10% with  
ball clay  
Grey = 1/3% cobalt, 1/3% chrome,  
1% red iron  
Blues = 1/3%-3% cobalt  
Sea Green = 1% Cobalt, 1% Chrome  
Tan = Ball Clay:Red E/ware Powder 50/50  
Olive = 1% Copper, 1% Chrome  
Plum Red = 20% Red Iron  
Beige = 3% Red Iron  
Add all above percentages to ball clay, mix dry,  
add approximately 1 pint to 1 lb, sieve at least  
100 mesh.

GLAZES: GLOSSY (Applies to either raw or bisque ware)  
1080°-1100°C Cone 04  
Lead Bisilicate 75  
Ball Clay 15  
Cornish Stone 6  
Whiting 5  
Bentonite 1

MATT	Clear	C9 Slightly Cloudy
1080°-1100°C Cone 04		
Lead Bisilicate	53	55
Whiting	9	8
China Clay	26	25
Flint	6	5
Zinc	5	-
Barium Carbonate	-	9

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### CHRISTINE-ANN RICHARDS 19 February 1988

The evening started late, giving us an opportunity to talk to friends and our guests. Refreshments were made available a little earlier.

It can't have been easy setting out a display of pots for sale and then talking for an hour or so as a narrative to a slide show that ranged from views of royal tombs and mounds to modern Chinese villages sporting kilns, pots, calligraphy, water colours and a host of assorted pictorial items.

Christine has a deep interest in China and its long association with ceramics. This is used to the full by conducting tours that reminded me of a glorious pot crawl lasting for weeks and involving planes, boats, bus, and the oldest mode of transport, one's legs. The contrasts are immense and the distances even more so.

Christine studied ceramics at Harrow College under various tutors of note and now specialises in throwing porcelain pots. This has not always been easy, each tutor had his own methods, so she adjusted accordingly. This experience proved that there are no hard and fast rules and no correct and only way to handle clay. There is a freedom in doing what is best for you.

Most of the pots displayed and shown on the screen were finely made with a wonderful crackle glaze that is controlled to a remarkable degree. This is obtained by removing the pots from the kiln whilst still very hot and splashing them with water. The wetted areas craze into a fine mesh surrounded by more open crack lines. Oxides are used to darken the lines and add interest.

The others were clear glazed over an application of colour made from 8% copper carbonate on a porcelain body, fired in an electric kiln at 1280°C. These were particularly beautiful as they relied on shape and colour alone.

Finally, Christine has been trying to obtain an effect on plates and pots that to me is similar to Chinese calligraphy. These are simple basic shapes made in porcelain with a semi-matt glaze or the body itself. (This I was not able to ascertain) with a black glaze poured carefully over the surface in the form of Chinese water colours and writing. The black is the result of experiment and has changed due to the manufacturer's alterations to the formulation.

I hope I have reflected the pleasure and good humour of the evening, though I think few of us will be able to afford the journey to China as modern Marco Polo's in the company of Christine.

BRIAN BICKNELL

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## EXHIBITIONS

### CLAYWORK

are having an exhibition in the theatre foyer of the Gordon Craig Theatre, STEVENAGE LEISURE CENTRE (opposite station): 11th April - 21st May.

"Claywork" are a group of Herts potters in the Welwyn Garden City and Potters Bar area, most of whom are members of the Dacorun and Chiltern Potters Guild.

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## EXTRACTS FROM AN ARTICLE IN AN AMERICAN MAGAZINE ON JEWELLERY

Mexico is rich in beads. Most of her daughters and some of her young sons wear them. They are sold everywhere; bead peddlars sit on the streets and in the plazas, many of them young, independent designers. Bead use is very ancient in Mexico and beads brought by the Spanish were eagerly sought. Today they are imported from around the world. Still, most beads in Mexico are locally made and the range is astonishing. The main materials are silver, stone and clay.

REDDISH-OCBRE CLAY beads with intricate incised designs, often imaginative and charming, are made in the village of Mayatepec, several hours south of Iguala. Adrian Sidoro makes his own beads and sells them on the streets of Iguala. His family help too and every few weeks he comes into town to sell. In his village there are farmers who also make and sell beads as a sideline, to supplement their meagre incomes. The bead making process is simplicity itself. Clay balls are put on mono-filament nylon fishing line. Small spherical beads are made by tightening a loop of the line around a clay tube. Designs are incised with the tip of the line and the beads are dried in the sun.

BLACK CLAY BEADS: SAN BARTOLO COYOTEPEC. The best known Mexican ceramic beads and the most celebrated Mexican ceramic is the black pottery of Oaxaca. This does not come from Oaxaca city, but from the village of San Bartolo Coyotepec, a few miles south. An estimated 60% of 300 families there make the black pottery. Many of them produce beads as a sideline. The pottery is pitch black or shimmering silver. The words of a local song go as follows:

Clay of faith, clay of love  
Brandishing holy melancholy,  
True symbol of sorrow  
Which sings among my people,  
You are also of the field of labour,  
The sweet happiness. Ti-lay!  
Clay the colour of sorrow  
That sings among my people . . .

The raw clay found in the surrounding hills is grey when dug, and turns red or ochre when fired. The deep black colour, developed by Dona Rosa, is probably produced during the firing, though this is sometimes disputed. Some say that burnishing with certain substances, both before and after firing, is necessary too. It must be a reduction firing to get the result, and some potters burnish with a drop of oil. The firing is done in a pit about 2 metres deep and wood is the fuel.

RUTH KARNAC

## SELL SOME POTS?

Two of our members, Sylvia and John Jones have moved to Herefordshire and are opening a pottery and shop in Leominster. They are offering to sell other members' pots in their shop and suggest coming back to one of our evening meetings where they could select, and pay for, items thought suitable.

Would interested potters please contact either the Secretary (address and phone on page 1) or the writer (Tony - Kings Langley [09277] 64414) as soon as possible, so that, if there is sufficient interest shown, an evening can be selected before the summer break.

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We are sorry to note the death, recently, of Pam Pugsley and express our sympathy to Michael.