

BULLETIN
SEPTEMBER
1986

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday September 19th Northchurch Social Centre - 8 pm.
(See map on next page)

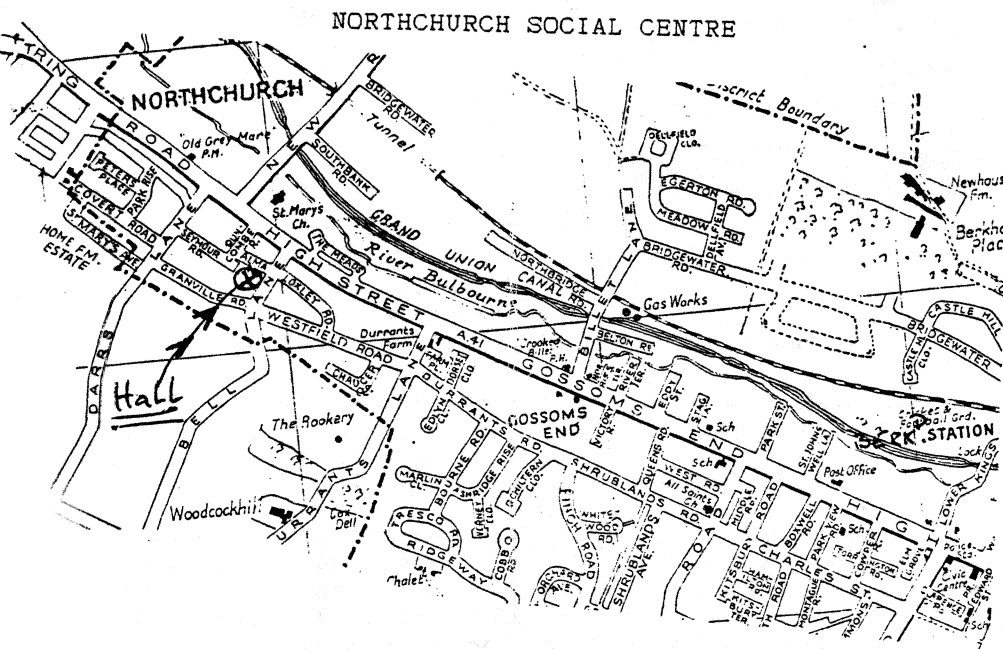
MICHAEL BAYLEY: INLAID AND AGATE WARE

Michael Bayley makes a range of stoneware comprising various pot forms, press-moulded bowls and wall-pieces. Each form is essentially sculptural, being handbuilt and having a rock-like presence due to the rugged, unglazed surface and rich earth coloured markings. His work reflects his love of natural form. Landscape, mountains, rocks, trees, the sea-shore, skylscapes and the shapes, tones and markings associated with these, influence almost everything he makes.

Michael's starting point is clay made rough by the addition of grog and sand and tinted with iron or manganese, the colours ranging from light cream to warm, umbrous shades of brown. A number of different toned clays are laminated to produce a striking 'agate' pattern. Tonal textures and pattern are made by rolling coloured clays into one another and afterwards 'inlaying'. Designs range from the abstract to effects with depth and form. On occasions pots are embellished with blue and white porcelain. All work is once-fired to 1280°C.

Trained at Hornsey College of Art, London in the 1950's, Michael enjoys working to commission. His pots have been exhibited in various leading craft and ceramic galleries both in the UK and abroad, and are represented in public and private collections in Europe and the USA.

Friday October 17th Annual General Meeting. Also at Northchurch Social Centre. This will be followed by an account, by Murray Fieldhouse, of the visit to La Borne.



SPECIALIST GROUPS AND OTHER NOTICES

RAKU GROUP Contact Roy Adams 55 Shrublands Road Berkhamstead Tel: Berkhamstead 71095. Firings monthly at Bulbaggers Tip.

SALT GLAZERS This facility will now cost £10 a year commencing October 1986. It will entitle you to as many firings as you like during that period. Contact Alan O'Dell or Chairman re bookings.

VIDEO Three titles available £2.50 plus deposit (weekly). *The Potters Craft*, *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).

LIBRARIES Membership drive - Can you make a booking for a display corner at your local library for the Guild display boards? Periods required are September through to January. Fortnight from 17th September has been booked. Roger Winn is organizing this (Chesham 782033).

CHORLEYWOOD ARTS CENTRE The Chorleywood Community Arts Centre runs pottery groups on Wednesday evenings between 8 pm - 10 pm and Thursdays between 10 am and 12 noon.

A variety of clays and a wide variety of glazes are available for use, as well as three wheels and two kilns. Basic instruction in pottery can be given by fellow members, as well as mutual help and assistance. The kilns are loaded and fired by members giving an ideal opportunity to learn this skill.

Ring the Chairman of the Chorleywood Community Arts Centre on Chorleywood 2918, or the Secretary on Chorleywood 4627 for further information.

POT CRAWL ON 28.6.86.

First we visited Audrey Blackman in the small studio where she works for 3 hours every morning - taking one to two weeks to complete a single porcelain figure. She puts in as little detail as possible (especially on the faces) so that the viewer will use his own imagination.

She has adored the ballet ever since seeing Anna Pavlova dance. At present she has been commissioned to make Shakespearean figures for Stratford-on-Avon. We were able to watch a video which showed her making the figure of Titania - showing the translucent veil which was also impressed to further aid translucency.

She recently visited China and a delightful figure showed a proud Father with his one son.

We roamed round the acres of beautiful wild gardens and ate our lunches on the lawn whilst sipping a cool fruit cup supplied by our charming hostess.

After a short, hot coach drive we gratefully entered the cool interior of the Ashmolean Museum to be met by our 2 knowledgeable guides. Tours of English Saltglaze, Japanese, Islamic and Medieval English pottery followed, and we were able to handle fragments of the latter and wonder how many people died from lead-laden glazes!

Then it was on through the steaming countryside to Russell Collins' pottery and lovely upstairs craft gallery. The pottery is run along extremely businesslike lines, with large exports to America, Canada and Australia (mostly for hotels). One could only marvel at the throwing skills and sheer physical energy of the man.

PAM TAMES

IN A POTTERY GARDEN ANOTHER VIEW OF BOAR'S HILL

On entering the garden from the house I was immediately conscious of a tall well-manicured beech hedge on my right hand side, which drew my gaze and footsteps towards a small gate visible in the distance. The gate proved to be a mere distraction for the path turned sharply leftwards in front of it, dropping steeply. At once, Alice-like, I had plunged into a different world; shady and cool, quiet and damp.

Here was an extensive and imaginative woodland garden. The canopies of tall trees served to make it an enclosed and almost secret place. Underfoot the pathways wound between ponds, boggy areas and unusual plants. A bright splash of colour was provided by a large colony of candelabra primulas: big strong and healthy plants which demonstrated their harmony with their situation by liberally self-seeding into adjacent vacant spaces.

Exploring a rising path I passed examples of their near relatives, *primula florindae*, with their giant cowslip like heads of flowers. A helpful gardener was more than willing to pass on information. Surprisingly the garden had only been established for 20 years and the original soil very variable. Many borders and some individual shrub plots were lined with plastic to prevent lime soil washing into them. A large wet-loving plant under the unlovely name of skunk cabbage was pointed out together with its much smaller offspring.

The background contained many rhododendrons and azaleas of all kinds. Nearer the paths were borders with hostas, ferns and hellebores to name but a few. Turks cap lilies were interspersed between other lower plants to provide splashes of colour against the darker backgrounds, and the whole so arranged to provide a natural effect.

To partake in a visit or outing is to a degree a gamble and as in other gambles they sometimes bring surprisingly large rewards. The trip to Audrey Blackman at Boar's Hill was definitely a winner. Everyone will have their own particular memories but I shall always remember a charming and friendly hostess, a helpful gardener and a diverse, fecund and peaceful garden.

BOOK REVIEW

"THE SELF-RELIANT POTTER", Andrew Holden. Large paperback, 144pp. A & C Black. £5.95

This is a welcome reprint in paperback, making it much less costly than the first hardback edition in 1982.

It shows almost no alterations to the original printing. And on the subject of printing, the general layout of the book is good; the typeface is large and clear; the lines are not made even at the ends by hyphenating, something I find most annoying with many (especially American) books, to the detriment of easy reading. The many black and white photographs and the line drawings are clear and do not interfere with the lines of text.

As to the content; this is indeed most informative. It is written in simple everyday potters' language; and the reader can find a complete description of how to obtain materials, make major equipment and prepare, glaze and fire all kinds of pottery.

For the studio potter this book has quite considerable useful general information, but the greatest benefit surely must be for the student or newly interested potter to learn about all the various aspects of the craft, from someone who has painstakingly described all those functions necessary for making good pottery.

It is indeed a great misfortune that Andrew Holden wrote only this one book, published shortly before his tragic death in a road accident.

This excellent publication, however, is a memento of someone who would otherwise have continued to progress as a first class potter.

STAN ROMER