



DACORUM AND  
CHILTERN  
POTTERS GUILD

BULLETIN  
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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 15th September 8 pm at Northchurch Social Centre,  
Bell Lane, Northchurch, Berkhamsted:  
MO JUPP - an illustrated talk.

Friday 13th October 7.30 pm at Northchurch:  
AGM - followed by something not yet decided.

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THE GUILD OUTING  
JUNE 10th/11th

We started our journey on Friday and finally beat the traffic to arrive at a campsite in Devon, late but ready for the next day.

We met at the studio of David Leach on Saturday am. It was filled with a wide range of his work and that of Tim Andrews who shares his workshop. David talked of pots and potters, of his father's influence on his work and that of others, over the years. An easy raconteur, his talk ranged over the change of style and standards of public taste and awareness, or lack of it; the new wave of potters' work; artists or artisans? No matter, all one to a man with such a wide range and long life working with clay.

He gave a brief demonstration of fluting first a bowl and then a teapot, emphasizing the need for the clay to be in the right condition. He showed us his latest large pot, thrown to test his state of senility and ability; the pot was a strong, handsome one of satisfying size.

The work of Tim Andrews was much admired. He showed a great variety of pots - good domestic ware, well-decorated plates, dishes and teapots. He had some exciting raku porcelain, subtle crackle glazes contrasting with the blackened body. Obviously a name for the future. The company finally moved on to lunch at the gallery in Bovey Tracey.

The Riverside Gallery, opened by the Devon Guild of Craftsmen, under the chairmanship of David Leach, has been beautifully restored and equipped. Converted from buildings backing onto a small river, it has a large exhibition and sales area, much of which is dedicated to ceramics. Space is given to other crafts - carpentry, hand-knits, prints, etc. Standards were very high and the choice was varied. We enjoyed our meal, with David continuing to play host and talking about his plans for the future.

Later that afternoon we headed for the Dart Pottery, set in a complex of workshops and sales areas. Our guide, who showed us the pottery had been working there for three years. She was well acquainted with machinery and methods.

Some shapes are thrown but much of the decoration has been arrived at by close co-operation with Janice Tchalenko. Many designs are easily recognised as standard ware and we had a demonstration of how this was achieved - to produce Black Rose. The pots are all biscuit-fired and glazed before decoration; they are slip-trailed, brushed and sponged. Our expert explained the method whilst she deftly used all three ways to cover the pot. The sponge design was carried over the rim; some quick slip trailing, a few flowing strokes with the brush and with a final flourish the red centre was placed in the Black Rose and the design was complete.

Because the design is done by hand by a variety of people, it retains a freshness despite the years of repetition. In order to introduce new designs, brainstorming sessions take place when everyone has a chance to use new glazes, freshly cut sponges and different techniques, with Janice presiding. Out of this a new design, possibly commercial, can be found. A recent addition was the dramatic peacock design in blue, green and gold. The sponges used are cut with a sharp surgical blade. This is a simple method of decoration, quite startling in result and possibly providing a base for new ideas for us all.

After this visit, we viewed the rest of the complex, staying till closing-time. As no plans had been made for the evening most people had drifted away. I returned with my friends to the campsite and had a good meal in the local pub to end an enjoyable day.

On Sunday, in good weather, we set off across the moors to Longham Pottery, a complicated journey but our directions were sound. It was obvious that despite all their work with clay, Andrew and Jennie, who met us, put in much time with their flowers and vegetables.

All their current work is raku fired and Jennie's work has changed since she demonstrated at Dacorun. All of it is of