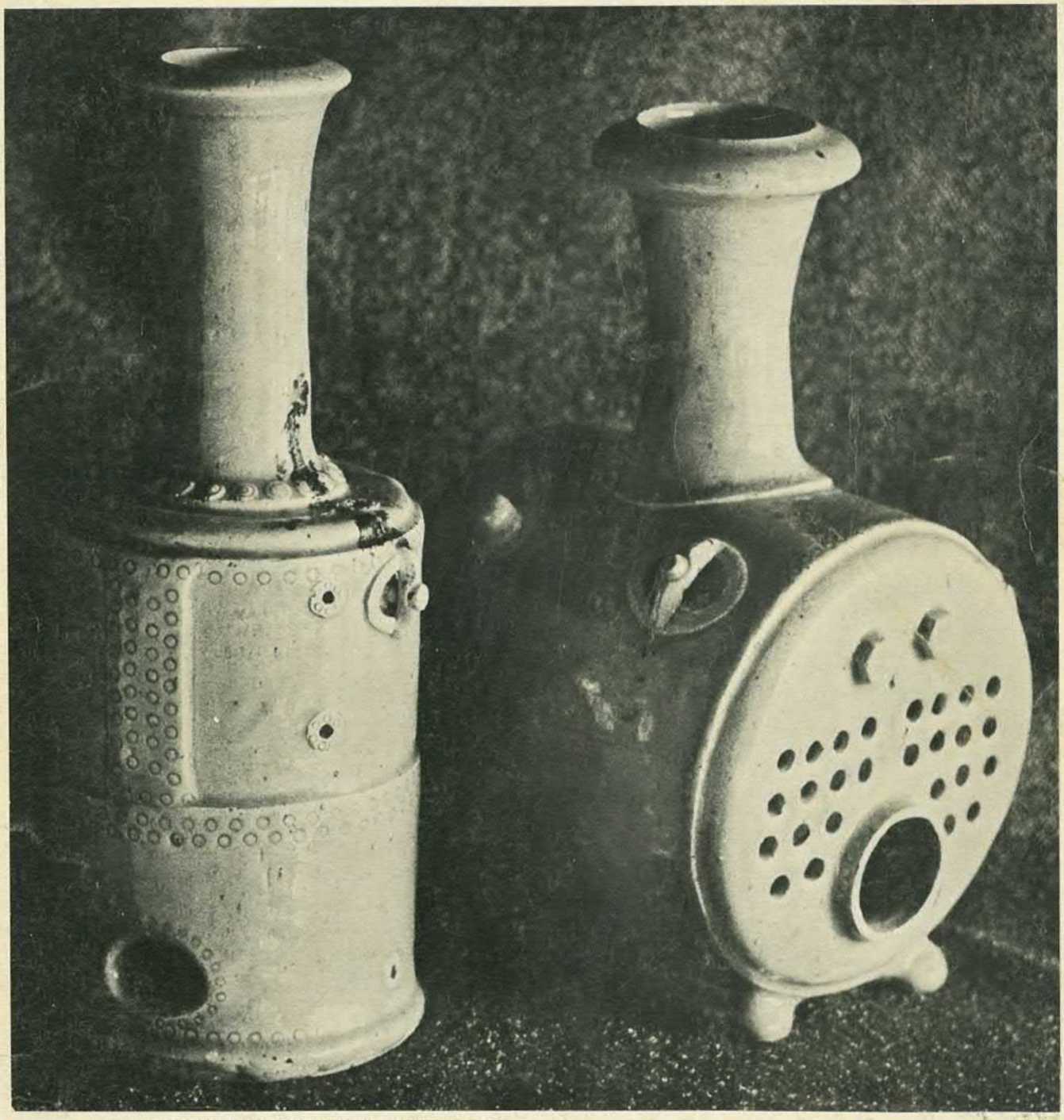
New Zealand

1974



POTTER

On the cover: two Barry Brickell pots on the steam theme engineered in Coromandel clay with an anti-corrosive celadon finish, shown at a recent exhibition at Essex Emporium.
photo: Steve Rumsey

NEW ZEALAND
potter

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The 16th

New Zealand Society of Potters annual exhibition held in Dunedin

by Lawson Fraser

I want to make my role as a critic quite clear. I know of no objective criteria against which the artistic statements of man may be measured. Artist standards are personal. I wouldn't wish to develop or sustain the myth that I have a magic formula which makes my value judgements more authoritative than those of others. I can only write about my own responses to the exhibition, and so allow my own personally evolved criteria to emerge. I invite those of you who saw the exhibition to agree or disagree with me.

I was in a position to be able to see and handle the pots before they were exhibited. This enabled me to view them in isolation and at their most advantageous height — a privilege not available to viewers of the exhibition.

I'll say now that I kept on wanting to put Mirek Smisek's large crock on the floor where it belonged. I've yet to see a national exhibition which does justice to every exhibit and this one at Dunedin was no exception. While the committee did its best and is to be complimented for its first class organisation, the space, the equipment and overall facility of the venue lacked the flexibility to suit such a vast range of needs.

The president's newsletter has referred to the selectors' disappointment on the paucity of high quality domestic wares. I agree. Perhaps it's the competitive nature of our national culture which encourages us artist craftsmen to submit pieces which emphasise our individual uniqueness rather than pieces more representative of our usual work. Perhaps we feel more comfortable competing through divergency than through the subtleties of convergency. If so we could well examine our egos. Whatever the causes there is no doubt that the viewing of a national exhibition requires a continuing reorientation to personal styles and criteria which are more disturbing than relaxing.

The guest potter idea seems to have merit in allowing a more extended view of potters who are considered either more experienced, more skilled, or more divergent than most.

It was easy to see Doreen Blumhardt as a courageous, tenacious and powerful potter prepared to tackle any task. Imagine facing up to that enormous lidded pot with a large brush dripping full of glaze! For all that, I liked the smaller pieces which showed less sign of struggle. Her teapot was a beauty.

Patricia Perrin's aesthetic craftsmanship permeated her more usual productions — her onion and liqueur pots and her wine jar. The forms, surfaces and finishes were all in rapport. She seemed to be less at ease with her sculptured forms which were more metallic in aspect.

photos: Stan Jenkins

Margaret Symes

Mirek Smisek's magnificent fluency with clay has served him well over the years since I knew him as my motivator and teacher. His forms have matured, yet still carry the enthusiasm, vitality and essential directness which characterises them. They have become more plastic and flow with vigour and honesty. His large crock simply floated into the air. It was a joy to lift. For all this I was left unsatisfied with his surfaces which I felt did not fully complete the forms. Too often they carried a hint of brittleness where an honest toughness was called for.

Howard Williams asked for viewing through different glasses as the criteria I used for the other three guests did not apply. He floats his clay in water and casts in his own particular way to give forms which may be angular and walls near to eggshell-thin. His dishes lifted between thumb and forefinger may feel fugitive as a thistledown. I did not feel I could respond with any enthusiasm to his clay handling but I was excited by his surface elaborations. He is an engraver and decorator and I was delighted by the delicacy of the line and texture and by the aptness of his colours.

My response to the pots of the ordinary exhibitors was varied at any one time and changed over the course of the exhibition. Like going to a party and meeting new people. Getting to know them is often a developing experience.

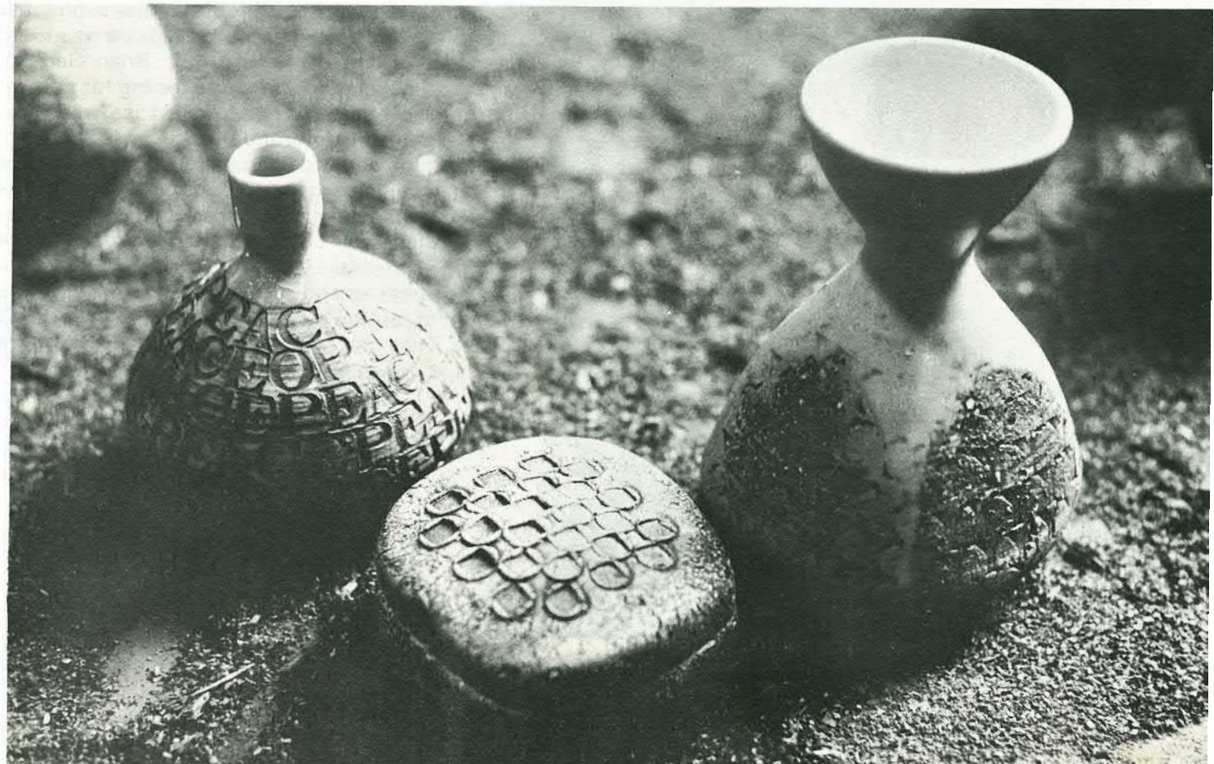
As expected there was a high level of assurance in the handling of the clay as a plastic material. But the way it was handled varied greatly. Some potters approached it like a mother, gently, sensitively and coaxing. Others like the father with force and dominance. And there were others who gripped and tore at it like birds of prey. There's a place for all these individual approaches. The important thing is that the character of the pot is fully developed through whatever handling method is used, from the form the shaping takes, to the surface of the form and its elaboration and to the way these have been fused in the fire.

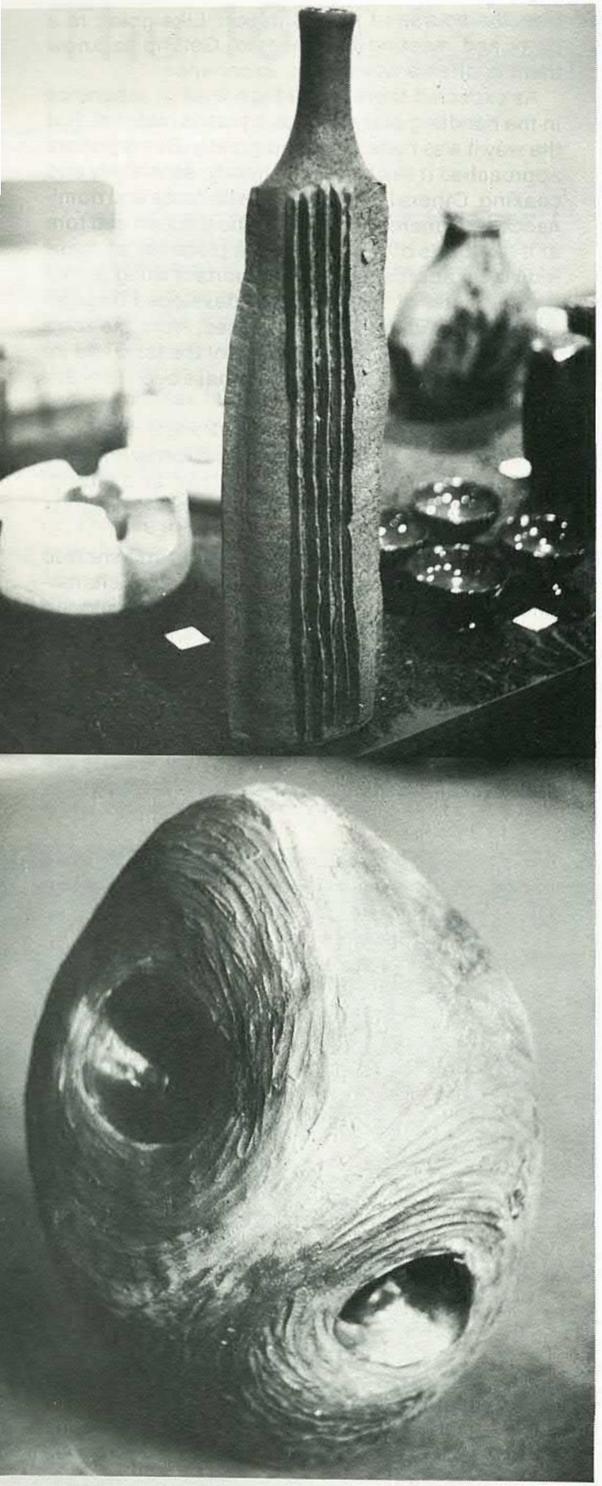
I was impressed by the bold strength and total development of the more traditional forms made by Lawrence Ewing. These stamped him as a strong, sensitive and able potter with a fine feeling for completion.

Martin Beck produced newer forms and showed fine assurance in handling, but I felt that the character of his forms may have been more fully exploited in a more flexible medium such as leather. All the same I admired his strength.

Chester Nealie used slip cast porcelain to develop forms which have been achieved traditionally in either stone or bone for functions of warfare. A fragile material like slip cast porcelain is quite unsuited to the crushing of skulls but it is well suited to

Doris Dutch





delight the lips while drinking from. So again I would be happier to see Chester's obvious expertise channelled into work with more sympathetic functions.

Function is an important point of concern, and I found myself at variance with the selection of casseroles with rough, textured, underfired interiors. This is much worse than a teapot which merely drips. Function in ware nominated as functional should remain a high priority criterion and to my mind some of the casseroles should not have been accepted. This criterion did not apply to Lila Coker's fine, strongly made functional vessel.

Surface elaborations either made or spoiled the pot for me. Where Nola Barron made fine use of a soft lustred glaze which allowed uninterrupted viewing of the various related planes of her sculptures, Frances Frederick used a very high gloss which made the visual assessment of the forms difficult. Her well accomplished bowls were better to handle than to look at.

The integration of surface and form is important, and was well understood and accomplished in Peter Stichbury's platter and Olwyn Dybe's bowl and by others like Nancy Beck whose blossom bottle would have been perfectly complemented by a sprig of blossom. Doris Dutch had a gem of a trinket box. Fredrika Ernsten's bottle was a fine piece. Margaret Milne's sense of completion shows her to be a fine potter. Other work had this same feeling for completeness.

The work of some potters left me with mixed feelings. Nicholas Brandon used tonal contrast to give life to his bowl, but the life topside was killed below by a heavy awkward foot. Brian Gartside showed imagination and a fine feeling for decoration in his platters. His free formed vase, while having an interesting form and surface, was badly fired. Ian Firth too showed imagination and a feeling for fitting decoration to form. I considered that he was adding rather more to both his shape and his decoration than they could stand. This tendency to overdo was evident too in the work of Helen Mason whose ramekins and casseroles suffered under the weight of just too much slip trailing. I liked Helen's plates. They grew on me. Perhaps in another week I'd have grown to like the others.

above:
Brian Gartside
below:
David Brokenshire

Some of the small pots attracted me. Jane Capon's group of three decorated "top" pots were a fantasy of movement, gaiety, dance. Sally Connolly's family of pebble pots were complete in their inter-relationships of form and texture. As simple and unselfconscious pots they were nice to handle. Margaret Milne and Doris Dutch and Graeme Storm all had beautiful trinket boxes.

I was delighted to see the fine development in the work of old friends such as Joyce Oliver and Don Thornley. They both exhibited well designed, well executed pots that you could feel at home with.

The sculptural qualities of clay were well demonstrated in the work of David Brokenshire whose display en masse at ground level was impressive and made a visual focal point to the exhibition.

The continuity of colour, texture and rhythm were effective. I liked his anchor stone rather than his folding forms — probably because it seemed to be contained within a rather more dynamic space. Muriel Moody's three birds perched on an amalgam of salt-glazed bricks seemed to be aptly composed.

The exhibition had a personality. Each pot carries with it the conceptual and feeling capacities of the potters. The overall characteristic here was of warmth and friendliness. There was a steadiness and competence with signs of vitality. There was also a sadly discordant aspect which came from the pots that were not there. It was a disappointment that such a high percentage of experienced and able professionals who have themselves been helped to grow in their own personal stature through national exhibitions of the past, no longer give support. They have so much to offer.

Lawson Fraser is Head of the Art Department at Dunedin Teachers' Training College.

17th National Exhibition in Auckland

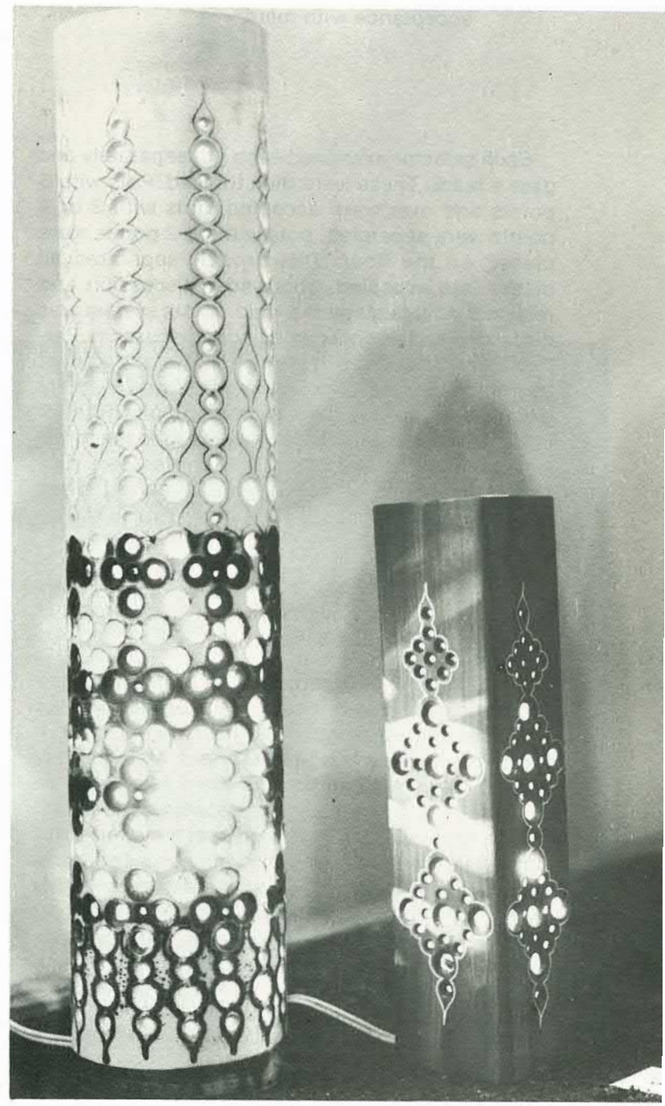
The national exhibition which will be unselected this year will be held over Labour Day weekend starting on 29 October. It will be staged in the new exhibition room at the Auckland Museum.

Peter Travis, well known potter from Australia, will be guest exhibitor and he will give a series of lectures for visiting potters. Some of the other events planned are a hangi for the Friday preceding the opening, kiln crawls and visits to galleries. Peter Stichbury will arrange an exhibition of Nigerian pots.

Prospective new Society members must have their pots ready for selection in New Plymouth in August.

Ruth Court

Howard Williams



From the selectors

The selection was undertaken by Margaret Milne, Muriel Moody, and David Brokenshire on 6th and 7th October in the Otago Museum, Dunedin.

Method of Selection

Initially a simple points system was used

reject	o
doubtful	1
accept	2
acceptance with merit	3

Each selector examined each pot separately and gave a mark. These were then totalled. Pots with 5 points and over were accepted, pots with 3 or 4 points were separated, pots with 0 - 2 points were placed on the floor. This broadly separated all pieces into accepted, pots under discussion and rejected. At this stage the rigid points system was discarded and all pots came under discussion. Particular care was given to the selection of the work of new members and any of the Society's members who had all work rejected. As many helpful notes of criticism as time permitted were added to the forms to be returned to the potters. 365 entries were submitted for selection; of these 220 were judged worthy of exhibition.

Standard of work

In general, it was felt that the overall standard had slipped compared to work of, say, five years ago.

General criticism

We think it is a great pity that more first class domestic ware was not submitted. Goblets were a popular item, yet mugs would be used much more frequently in the average household. Many bottles and flasks were submitted but there seemed to be so few plates, platters, dishes, casseroles, tea pots, cups and simple bowls. We feel that the strength of pottery lies in the making of simple pots for everyday use, yet so very few first class pieces in this category were submitted.

In so many cases there was an uncertainty in execution and a lack of self-confidence. We see a need for sound teaching in basic shape. Turning was frequently too tight — careful to the point of freezing the form. Handles were often very poor. In many cases lids did not fit. To sum up there seemed to be a lack of both strength and vitality.

Selection of new members

The panel felt that selection of new members should be done by the selectors at the exhibition. This year there were three submissions where the obligation to select at least one piece lowered the standard of the exhibition. Even if judging had to extend over three days we feel this would be justified. We feel also that admittance standards should be even higher than at present.

A future exhibition

We think the policy of having guest exhibitors to be a good one. We would like to see it extended. At one exhibition in the future we would like to see say twelve potters showing ten pieces of their own choice. Then every other member of the Society free to exhibit a maximum of three pieces unselected. This would at least give an honest cross section of current work and could make a stimulating show.

The Potter put specific questions to each of the selectors.

What was your impression of the quality of work submitted?

Margaret Milne: I felt the quality of work varied tremendously, with some very fine pieces in all sections, but much of it showed too little appreciation of the materials, and, at worst, a desperate striving for originality at the expense of sound craftsmanship.

David Brokenshire: Only fair. The overall standard has slipped since five years ago.

Muriel Moody: Little that had not been there before was on show.

Did Dunedin as the venue appear to limit the range of pots sent?

Margaret Milne: Because so many of the potters are working in the North Island, I felt the range of work was limited by the difficulty and expense of packing and sending — especially larger pieces. This was off-set to some extent by the inclusion of guest exhibitors. However the exhibition is a national show, and it seems important that it should move from centre to centre. A greater exchange of work and ideas is vital to progress in all areas, especially those separated from the main body of potters.

Muriel Moody: No, I don't think so. There was a good response and though the work was mixed, the guest artists had sent very interesting collections which filled any gaps and raised the standard of the exhibition.

David Brokenshire: It shouldn't have limited the range, but I'm sure it did put limits on the size of pots. But size is not particularly important. Beautifully made small pieces compete on equal footing with big pieces.

Are there any new developments in work?

Margaret Milne: There seemed little which could be termed new. I think that any system of selecting for exhibition probably discourages potters who are experimenting with different forms of ceramic activity, from entering controversial work. I'm thinking of work which seems to be a feature of overseas and international exhibitions — objects with emphasis clearly on the *idea,* social or political comment, or merely with a whimsical sense of the ridiculous. Whether these articles are admired or disliked, there should be room for them. A vigorous society should allow for the sophisticated, the primitive, the innovative and the conventional.

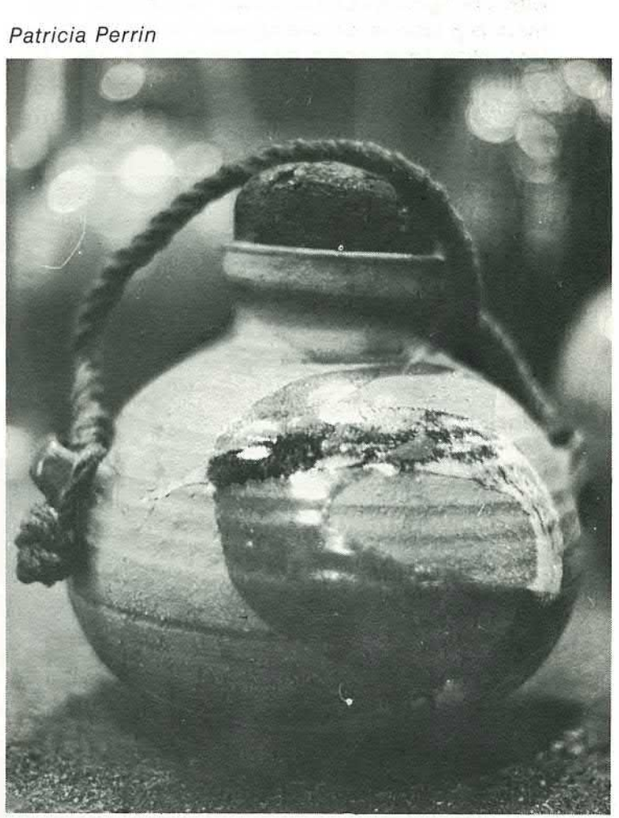
Muriel Moody: No new ground was broken either in manner or ideas. But there was the tendency to make the way-out pot to be sure of selection. There is no need for this. If a pot is good it will be selected. An unpretentious and beautifully made pot stands out like a rose on a bush.

Was the basis of this exhibition domestic ware? Have you anything to say on this subject?

Muriel Moody: No. Beautiful domestic ware was absent from this exhibition — sadly lacking and a great pity.

David Brokenshire: Some of the early exhibitions of the Society were so based, but I think this is no longer true. Work which could be classed as decorative formed the largest group. I consider that the strength of pottery is founded in fulfilling a daily useful need. Expressive individual ceramic pieces occupy quite a different place. They have to take their place in the hurly-burly of the open Art Market.

Patricia Perrin



Margaret Milne: Rather than domestic ware being the basis of the exhibition, very little was offered. It seemed that the discipline demanded in the making of domestic ware had been by-passed in favour of entries in the decorative section. If the basic skills are not acquired, lids don't fit, spouts don't pour, handles don't belong. Most of the very few teapots, coffee pots, jugs and casseroles appeared unhappy with their appendages, and with a few exceptions, lacked that essential feeling of confidence, fluency and appreciation of form.

What should be the pattern for future exhibitions? Are there now other events that could be alternatives to a National Exhibition?

David Brokenshire: I'd like to see three pots unselected from all members plus, say, ten pieces from invited potters — not necessarily even members of the Society. I think that Open Days at individual potteries and One Man Shows will form a large part of future sales. Anyone freshly associated with a National Exhibition vows "never again", yet there is a fascination seeing work from other potters away from one's own centre. It's hard to evaluate the enormous effort needed to run a successful National against the gains.

Muriel Moody: In the early days when there were not so many potters it was interesting and valuable to see what was going on in different parts of New Zealand. But now the exhibitions have grown so large and almost unmanageable that I think the National Exhibition should be remodelled. One gets the feeling that potters are forced into producing the monumental teapot or indeed anything outlandish for the sake of the show. This is not healthy for the pottery movement, and it doesn't make a good exhibition either. In order not to remain static, we need from time to time to scrub out the programme, break up all previous categories, jumble everything together and start the sorting and ordering process all over again.

Margaret Milne: The pattern of future exhibitions must obviously be subject to constant revision. I would like to see it continue in some form, preferably with a much greater number of guest potters. This should create an incentive and an opportunity for some of the newer members to show an integrated group of their own selection. Work from all other members would need to be restricted to perhaps two or three unselected entries from each.

photos: Stan Jenkins *Helen Mason*

What did you think about the work of the new members? Have you any views on the way they are admitted into the Society?

David Brokenshire: I enjoyed seeing new members' work, but I think that reasonably high standards should be maintained. See selectors report.

Muriel Moody: On the whole I enjoyed the new members' work. Skill, verve and an enjoyment in working with clay was evident. This promises well for the future. However, we struck trouble with the present method of selecting new members. New members' work had previously been selected by a different selection committee and there was a directive that at least one piece must be shown in the National Exhibition. Some work considered not good enough for the exhibition was better than some of the pre-selected work from the new members, and that left the selectors of the National in a quandary.

Margaret Milne: I would like to see a change in the system of admitting new members to the Society as I feel that prospective members should not be judged solely by examining a group of six entries perhaps gathered over a period of time, but rather by assessing their future potential as potters and artist-craftsmen. A possible way of achieving this could be by admitting new members for a probationary period as associate members, or by visiting the potter at work in his workshop. This could serve as a guide to his sincerity and the degree of his involvement with the medium.

More thoughts on selecting.

This time by American potter, Peter Voulkos, one of the "jurors" from the last International Academy of Ceramics Exhibition at Calgary, Canada.

"It seems extremely difficult to comment on such an abstract topic as the jurying of a show of art. It is at once subjective and objective and of course always somewhat bizarre. How can one really justify selections of artists' work? Is it really necessary? What is there, is there, and the selection has already been established. To assume a sort of positive attitude is like walking down Broadway in the nude; if one needs exposure all well and good. How can I, as a juror, feel any sort of motivation? Again, is it really necessary? In this society it is difficult enough just making art.

Certainly I was overwhelmed by 1500 entries. Who really knows if they are good, great or bad? I was particularly amazed at the sheer logistics of the whole thing. Who makes out in a sea of ceramics? Anyway, tons of ceramic objects up in Canada and tons of money to the trucking companies. Almost everyone crying over rejection slips. What was accomplished? One has to be either a masochist or a complete egomaniac. All the expended energy is phenomenal. I don't get it.

I said "Yeah", so I get to play God, a little trip to Canada and of course I get to write a statement on what it all means or doesn't. I will try. I am still convinced that a one-man jury is the best way to go on any art show. To have five jurors of varying opinions distilling thoughts, jibes and choice is a great way of arriving at a good case of mediocre blues. No one can really be satisfied. At least with a one-man jury you have a one-on-one chance. (Both artist and God). If it must be so, O.K. Democracy in art is as fictitious as the show it perpetrates.

Here is the game plan; every object has five slips of paper attached; one for each member to mark. Each piece has a zero to four point possibility with four points being the highest. Each piece has a chance of a twenty point maximum. The 230 or so receiving the highest points were accepted into the show. We were then asked to select for inclusion up to six pieces each from those that had not been accepted. Thus 30 entries are one-man juried. If in fact this had been instituted from the start with each member being allowed 60 choices felt that a show of more positive action and quality would have resulted. This way no one can be bummed out. Many of the pieces brought into the show under this latter procedure proved to be prize winners. OOPSIE!

In balloting, a piece could receive the points necessary to get into the show even if no member liked it more than just a bit. Five times two is ten and that was high enough to make it. You win. Who wins? No one. There is no such thing as quality in numbers.

I can only think that the right and equitable solution or system has yet to be devised. The idea of the juried exhibition became almost extinct twenty years ago in the sculpture and painting annuals of that day and to suppose them useful at this time is a thought of pure conjecture. Anything is possible."

Firing with natural gas

by Ian McClymont

Would I do it again? Build a natural gas kiln, knowing nothing about gas kilns. Knowing nothing about gas burners, gas pressures, BTUs, etc. etc. And knowing no-one who could answer my questions.

The answer is yes. Why? Consider these advantages.

- natural draught
- no blowers
- no electricity
- no noise
- no smell
- no smoke or smuts
- no supply problems

And there are other advantages. The gas burns with a soft, clean flame which is easy on kiln furniture and especially on bag walls. The gas company installation costs can be spread over a few years at a low 3%. Lighting and firing is easy. There is no changing of burners during firing. Reduction is simple.

Come on, now, there must be some disadvantages. Well, oil is cheaper — or was, and there is some heat loss at the fire mouth.

I started thinking about gas five years ago when I shifted, and left behind a natural draught basically Smisek design oil firing down draught kiln. Apart from giving off clouds of black smoke it had been a good kiln.

I started thinking big, and in the back yard I built a two chamber gas fired kiln. The first chamber was round with a dome roof and two chimneys and a square bisque chamber of 120 cubic feet overall. The second chamber had its own chimney so that when it reached temperature it could be cut off completely and then the second chimney took over with the glost chamber.

As I laboriously built the kiln over a two-year period I learnt about gas and gas kilns. The Wellington Gas Company in the person of Mr H. Ferry was very helpful. But their experience of gas fired kilns was not extensive. I got in touch with the D.S.I.R., the heating engineer to the National Gas Board. I read books. I wrote to gas companies in Canada for advice on the number of burners I would need to fire such a kiln with natural draught. They said eight. I finished the kiln all but the two last courses of the dome. It was never fired. It would never have worked on natural draught. A kiln of such size needs either a massive set of premix blowers or better still high pressure gas — about 60 p.s.i. I pulled the kiln down.

I was offered rental space in the Wellington Settlement Craft Market, working and selling space with enough room for a small kiln. I decided to set up here and thought about the kiln. Gas, of course. So I built it.

Twenty-five cubic feet with the burners from the other virginal kiln actually inside the chamber, with the pots acting as their own bag walls, thus:

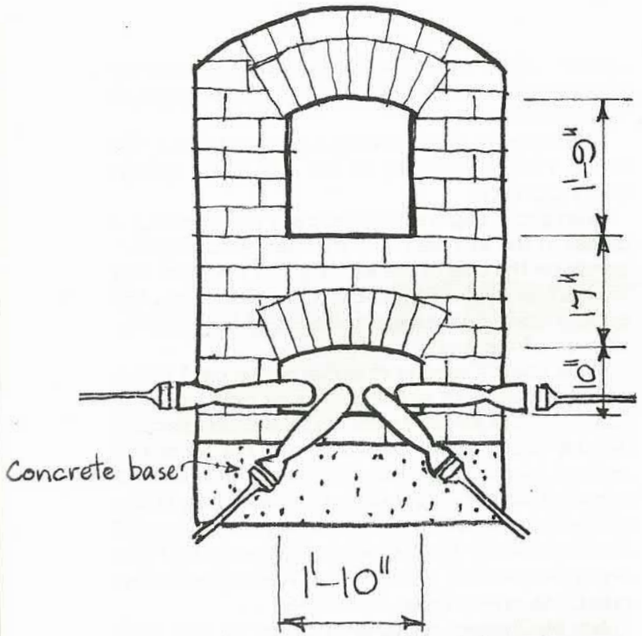
I awaited the results of the first firing. I had two nice bisque firings then a glaze one. After ten hours the temperature was 1000° C. Six hours later it was 1000° C. I then introduced blown air into both secondary and primary inlets. Six hours later the temperature was 1100°C. Not quite cone 10! I shut off and went home in blank despair.

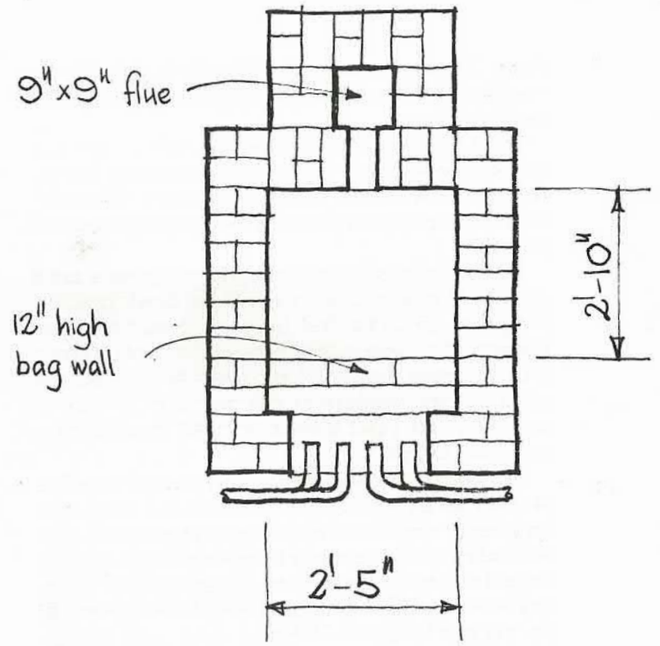
An article was published about the Settlement in the evening paper. It said that I was having trouble firing with natural gas. Early the next morning there came a man through the craft market waving his card. "There's nothing wrong with natural gas. We will get it going. Don't worry, natural gas is the best fuel in the world". This was Roger Mitchell, heating engineer, and my saviour.

He decided that not enough secondary air was getting into the kiln and that the flame inside the kiln needed to fire through quarls, and the chimney wasn't high enough. These things we put right. We glaze fired again. Roger was in attendance. The same firing pattern occurred as last time. It stalled at 1100° C.

Roger dashed off to borrow some larger burners while the gas fitter put on more pipes. We turned off, knocked a hole in the front of the kiln, attached another large burner and lit up again.

Twenty-two hours later cone 10 started. Then closed up. Twenty to thirty pots were alright, the rest were underfired. We changed the type of burners to venturi type imported burners and enlarged the secondary air ports even more and fired again. At 2 a.m. it stuck at 1200° C. We bought a drum of diesel and poured it into the kiln through a piece of





water pipe. Black smoke poured through every crack, out of the chimney and a four foot tongue of flame shot through the chimney top. We made 1300° C at 4 a.m. and were exhausted.

There was something fundamentally wrong with the kiln. It was getting very hot on the outside during firing and there was an unpleasant smell. The atmosphere in the kiln during firing was cloudy. There was not enough secondary air.

So we resited the four burners in front of the kiln with a burner port twice the size of the fire outlet. We made it.

The seventy firings since have been good to excellent.

Post Script

If I were building a gas kiln from scratch again I would try a catenary arch similar to that shown in the Daniel Rhodes book, "Kilns: design, construction and operation", publisher Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd., page 215, figures 186-192.

I would drop the bag walls to 12" and steel brace it end to end. Also in fig. 188 "arch detail", some of the bricks are square. Avoid this if possible. It is quite simple to work the whole top portion of the arch in arch bricks only. Square bricks can slide

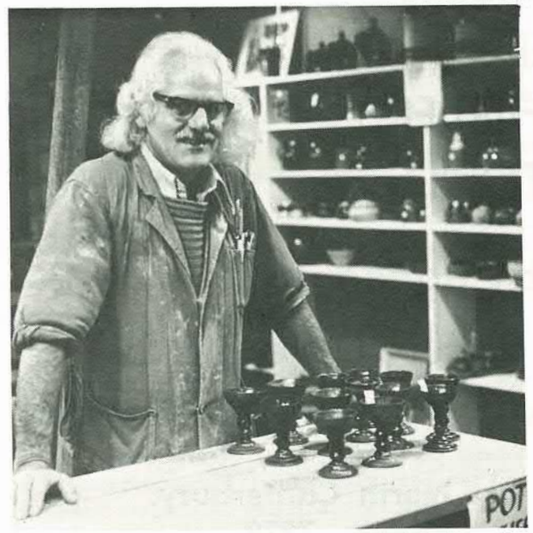
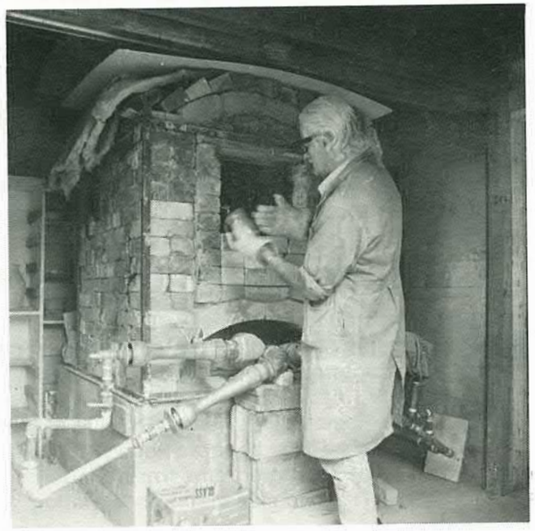


photo: Industrial Design Council



down. The inner support for the whole arch course needs only to be as wide as one course then it can be slid along.

Build up your inner course floor above the flue outlet leaving space for heat flow between bricks. Have the flow of floor bricks towards the flue outlet on the first course and across the kiln on the second course.

Daniel Rhodes in his book "Kilns", gives a table of critical dimensions in gas fired down draught kilns. For 20 cubic feet he gives 6 burners, flue opening 65 square inches, cross section of chimney 9 by 9 inches, height of chimney 16 feet. But he gives no gas pressure or gas pipe size, or size of secondary air input burner port. All these dimensions are critical.

For a 20 cubic foot kiln if you have 6 or more pounds per sq. inch of gas four burners of about 20 ins overall length will be enough. The size of your secondary air around your burners and into the kiln should be 160 sq. ins and the outlet into your chimney should be 81 sq. ins and the chimney itself 81 sq. ins to a height of 16 feet.

It may be necessary to load your kiln with a slightly more open setting than with oil as gas has a shorter flame. If your gas pressure is low, putting in more or larger burners will not correct the problem. Also your gas meter must be able to handle the full capacity of your pipes and burners all full on at top temperature.

HEAT refers to the quantity of heat-energy released and is measured in BTUs. Temperature is the intensity released and is measured in centigrade or fahrenheit.

Atmospheric gas burners are rated about 150 BTUs. Each cubic foot in the kiln needs 30,000 BTUs capacity.

With gas, a bag wall can be lower than for oil and closer to the kiln wall. The number of burners depends on the size of the kiln, the gas pressure and the burner distribution. Each burner needs 550 cubic inches clear space in front of it for the combustion of the fuel.

What about a second chamber on the kiln? This is possible only with either premix or high pressure gas. The Pure Air Act states that a second chamber will be necessary. I checked with the local city council health inspectors and find that a second chamber won't be necessary for gas and a gas kiln of 25 cubic feet will fall into category "C" and won't need a licence. If anyone has queries about gas firing please write to me at The Wellington Settlement, 155 Willis Street, Wellington.

Ian McClymont is resident potter in this craft market. Mostly he is the only craftsman working on the spot, and his sales are good. One gets the feeling that the craft market aspect of the Settlement has not jelled yet. The other part, the gallery, the music and the poetry are very much alive. A meal by gaslight near a crackling fire in the wintertime is nice. Some details about the Wellington Settlement were given in Vol. 14/2.

Estelle and Bruce Martin

by Margaret Harris

A pair of buildings of unusual shape attracts the eye on the dry flat plain at Bridge Pa near Hastings. They are earth coloured shapes which loom up in interesting wall planes and roof pitches. When you get to Valentine Road the shapes become recognisable as a house and a sizeable workshop. The notice on the gate says Kamaka Pottery.

Estelle and Bruce Martin moved here from suburban Hastings a year or two ago. They could be the only potters in the country with a house and workshop designed by an architect for the job. John Scott from Hastings has a reputation as an adventurous architect and he has given the Martins what they wanted. Concrete block and timber are natural materials needing no embellishment. To do-it-yourselfers this might look like an extravagant way of going about things. But the architect was given his brief, and Bruce Martin says that the method of construction used was economical.

There is plenty of space and light from high steeply pitched roofs and the expansive views are to distant mountains.

The Martins wanted an airy feeling where they live and work. They've planted groups of trees "endeavouring to preserve a sense of spaciousness to see a wide expanse of sky". They are very conscious of their natural surroundings and feel that environment has a direct bearing on the type of work they do. Estelle has always lived hear Hastings where the pastoral landscape is cultivated and trim. On a visit to the South Island's West Coast they were struck by the lush rugged nature of the country. They were stimulated by the rugged bushy hills and became aware of the contrast between textural West Coast, and smooth, grassy, Hawkes Bay. They have become very curious about native trees and bush. There is a lack of native bush in their part of Hawkes Bay and attempts to give their new property a bush setting have been only moderately successful because the ground is dry and exposed.

So they took a courageous step and bought ten acres of established bush on the West Coast near Hokitika for a second home. They'll build a small and simple house for themselves and a workshop. They want to explore and discover. Estelle is enchanted by alpine flowers and she hopes the close association with native bush and flowers will influence her work.

At Kamaka they use mainly prepared clay from Mapua and local materials for glazes when they can. The local clay as a slip and the papa as a glaze. They also get wood ash from the orchards and winter fires. The effect of these glazes on the Martins technically sound ware is of smoothness. No critic could complain that the surface of their mugs offered a rough surface to the lips. I'm a fan for china tea and I like my tea to come in a fine china cup. The Martins made herbal tea for us and it was just right served in a pottery mug. They sold me an idea. Herb tea is refreshing and aromatic.

It will be interesting to see what the Martins make of the raw material from a completely different district. Something of the West Coast's vigour is bound to have its effect.

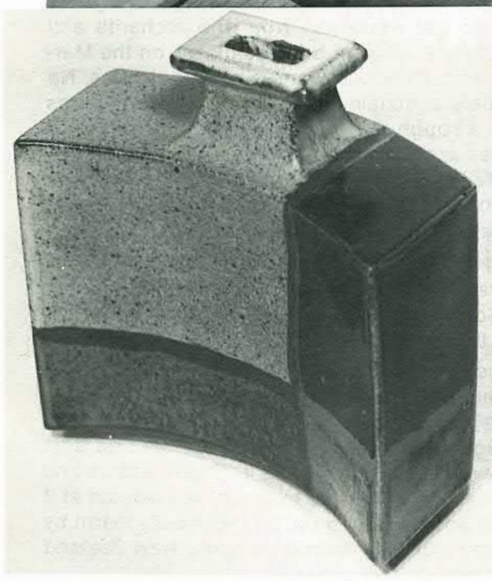
Bruce and Estelle have been potting fulltime for eight years. The beginning for Estelle was through a New Zealand Potters Exhibition in Napier fifteen years ago. When she saw pottery for the first time she knew she wanted to make it. "There was no one in Hawkes Bay then able to teach, so I worked at it with the book propped up. So I've mostly learnt by trial and error with help from some New Zealand potters and pottery schools".

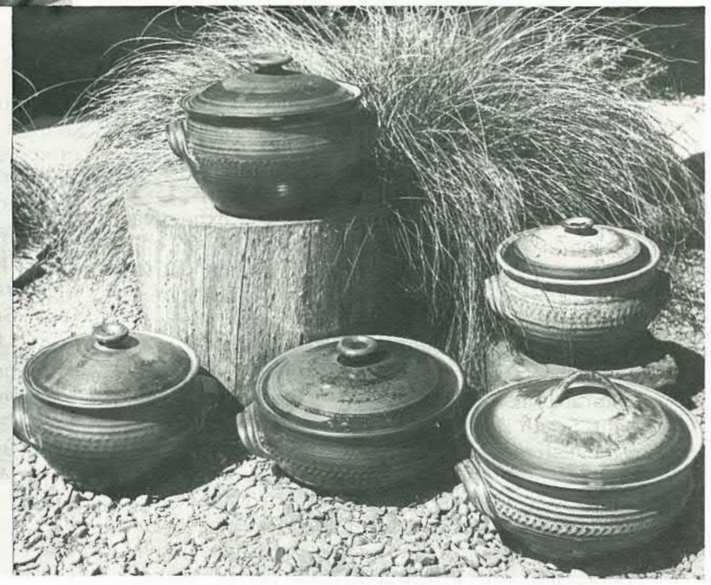
Bruce had the customary spouse's job of kiln and wheel building. Then he got onto making glazes and experimenting himself. He started to do slabware because he likes to construct. He enjoyed it, so gave up his job as a radiographer and he and Estelle founded Kamaka Pottery.

Estelle likes the feel of the soft clay and enjoys repetitive throwing — of "having another chance to develop a pot." She does most of the thrown ware although Bruce helps to fill the demand for domestic items.

"The kiln we are now using, kiln number 4, is beginning to come apart and we have plans for building a round and larger one.

photos Alex Houstan



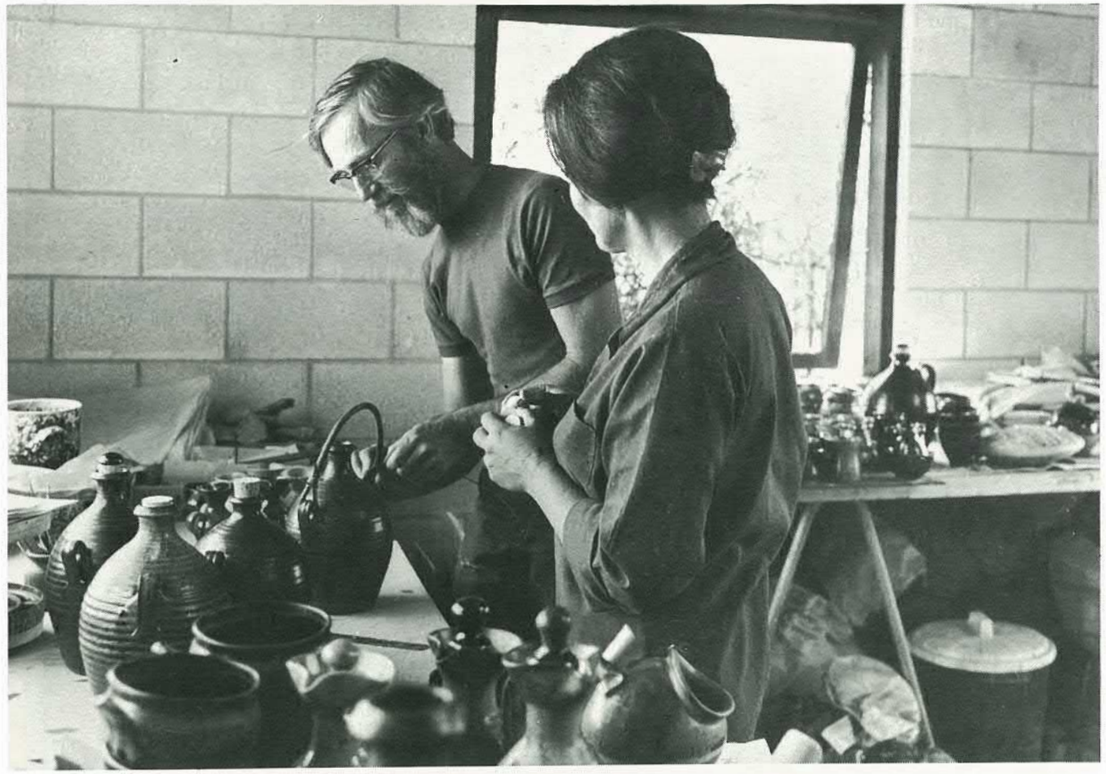


Our lives fit in well with making pottery. We like the complete involvement through making and using pots and meeting others who share the same interests. We enjoy the making, the glazing, the firing, but never the packing!" They like to listen to music, to read, and are interested in other crafts and architecture. They like to have some order in their lives.

A good deal of the Martin's output is sold from the small showroom at the workshop and this suits them well.

"Our family of three sons are mostly away from home now — not a potter among them. However, they intend doing their own thing whatever it may be."

photo Alex Houstan

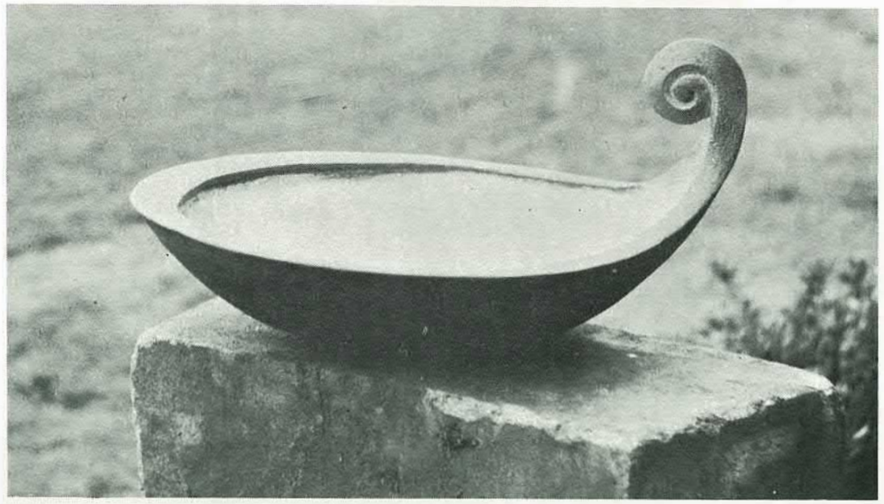


Unfolding growth forms

Jim Greig has been concentrating on this subject. The photographs show some of his most recent work. They are from "the developing and evolving series that I've been putting a lot of effort into. I call it the unfolding growth form series to give a clue to the underlying impulse. I've taken it through twelve forms so far and I'm still working on it".

The other aspect of Jim Grieg's work has been architectural commissions, a field as a former architectural student, he is at home in. This mural about thirty feet long is in the Phoenix Assurance Company's new building in Wakefield Street, Auckland.

In March Jim Grieg went to the Arts Festival in Adelaide where he had a small show.



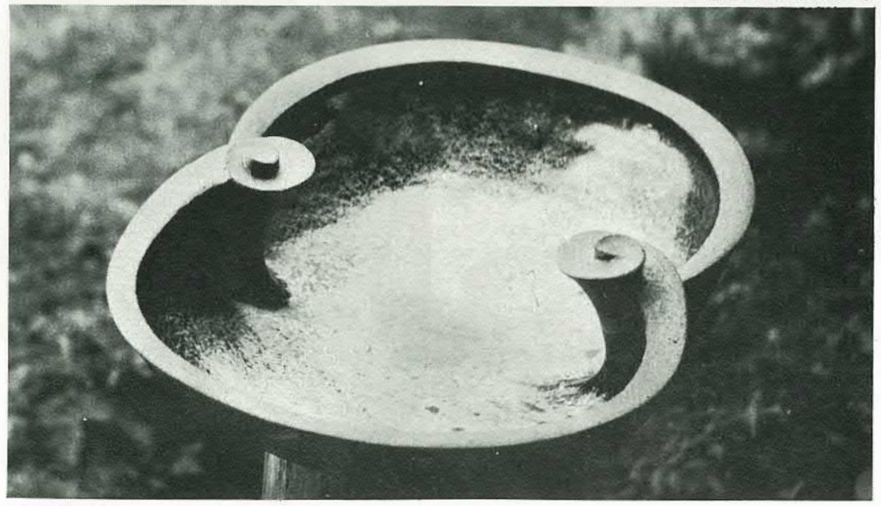
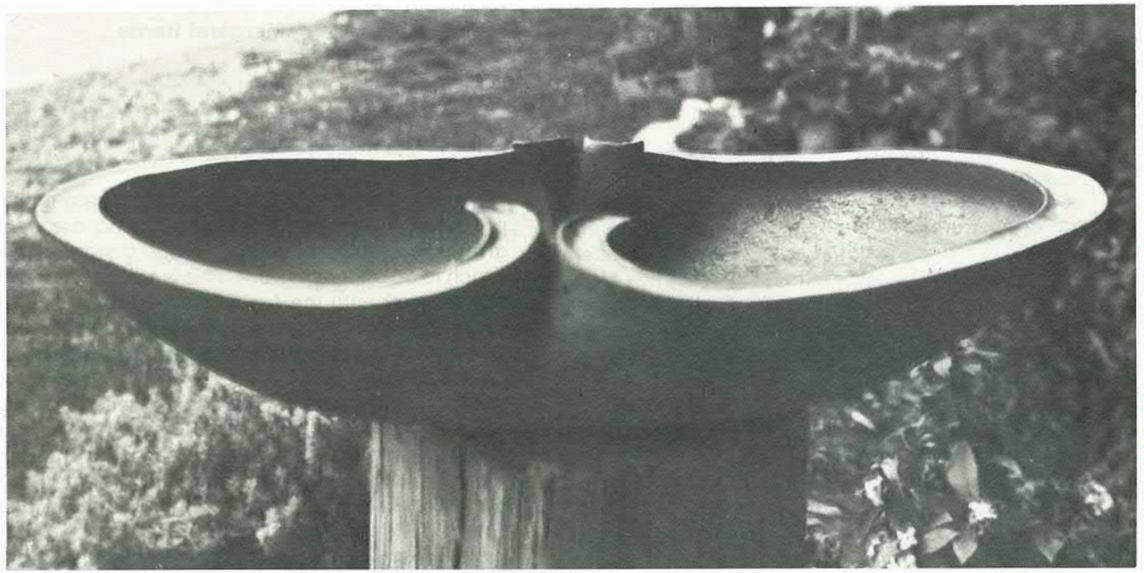
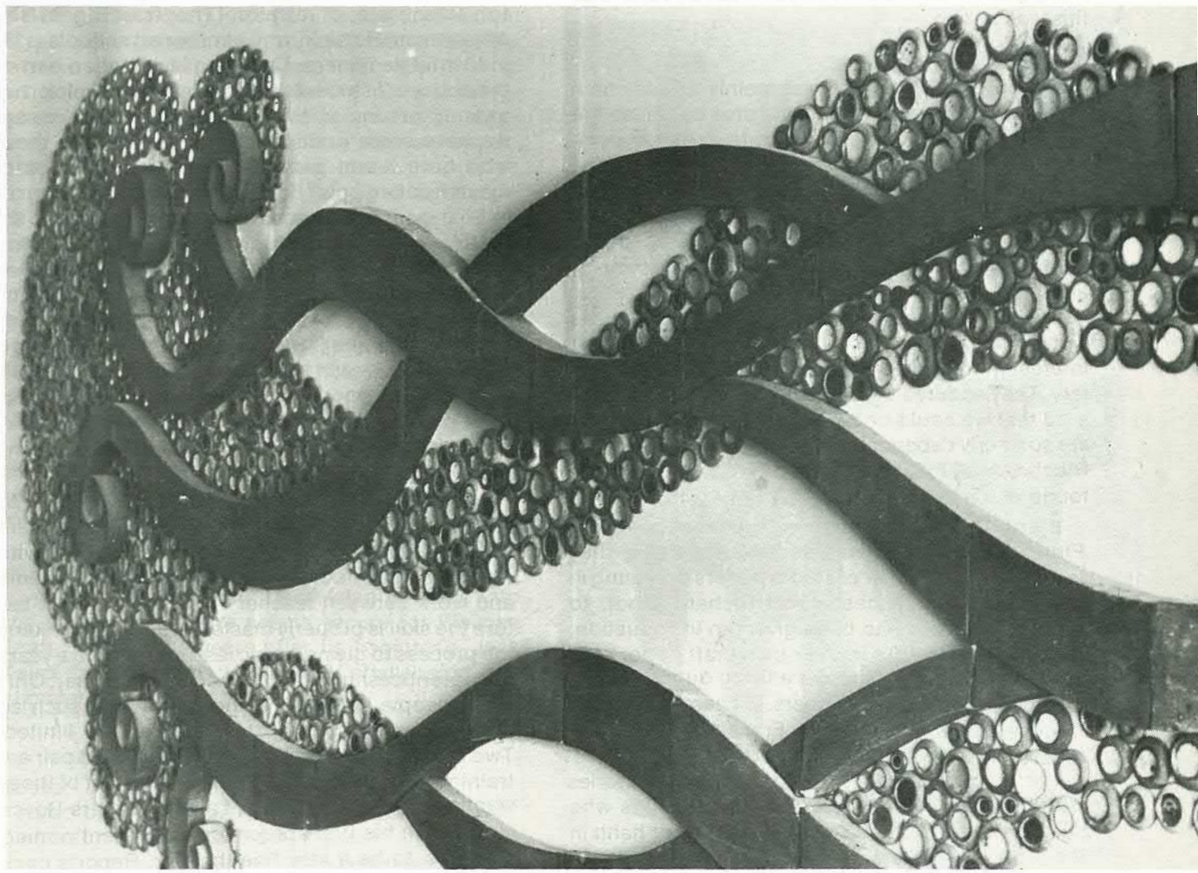


Photo Jim Greig





Jack Laird in Europe

Margaret Harris

Jack Laird from the Waimea Pottery, Nelson, is back from Europe where he spent six weeks visiting studio and industrial potteries in Denmark, Sweden and Finland and two weeks in Germany. The Lairds were also in Britain and Jersey where they found an out-of-the-way place to stay which was like the Jersey they remembered from fifteen years back when they lived in the Channel Islands.

The Waimea Pottery is New Zealand's only pottery craft industry. It was started by Jack Laird almost ten years ago with encouragement from Nelson local bodies who wanted to foster this kind of industry in the district. Now it has reached its optimum size, and there's a good market for Waimea stoneware and porcelain both here and in Australia. In our ignorance we imagine Scandinavia to have many such craft industries. Jack Laird found that this was not so.

In Scandinavia

The purpose of the visit was mainly to study both studio and industrial pottery in some depth, so the Laird's were in a good position to see how comparatively New Zealand pottery stands against the pottery being made in Europe today. Jack Laird says that our pottery stands the comparison well, and the people he was in touch with were curious about our work. They were intrigued by its range and individuality.

He gave a two hour illustrated lecture to the design staff of Arabia, Helsinki, where he found real interest in the New Zealand way of producing pottery. They admired the pots shown and were impressed that we could be so self-contained when they are so utterly dependent on imported raw materials. Practically all the raw materials used at Waimea are found at hand, except for a bit of cobalt.

It's not easy to set up an independent pottery in Finland, and there was some envy when they learned of the number of studio potters operating in New Zealand. Francesca and Richard Lindt, to whom Jack Laird had been given an introduction, had both started out in their own craft pottery but they hadn't been able to get a living out of it. They are now at Arabia as designers. Richard as head of the design department and Francesca a leading artist.

The set up at Arabia and other ceramic factories is that the work is the creation of designers who produce the prototype and have no further hand in the production. As well as their regular employed production design staff, the Arabia company makes provision for ten artist designers who are each given the use of an atelier of huge dimensions in which to do their own work. This is sold as their own signed work with the Arabia stamp of course. The entire top floor of the factory is given to the ateliers. With space and light and climbing plants they could be considered ideal places for creative work. And fine work is produced, some on a very large scale.

The over riding opinions that Jack Laird formed after this period in Scandinavia are that the best work is comparable with the best in the world, but that there is also some that falls far short of the ideal due to a surprising weakness in some aspects of craft pottery. This applies more specifically to Finland and less so to Denmark and Sweden.

The type of training potters are given accounts for this state of affairs. The training at the Athaeneum, Helsinki, and at other art schools is for industrial designers. Throwing is not often part of the course. If students want to learn, they pick it up as an extra somewhere. By contrast, Jack Laird says we have some good throwers here among those who have learnt and practiced their skill with a master potter.

So the designer-based training as opposed to the craftsmen's training produces many students who have no hope of earning a living as self employed designers. If they are lucky they get a job in the studio of a big ceramics works. Arabia is the only outlet for students from the Athaeneum, Finland's major art school.

This situation supports Jack Laird's view that craft pottery can't be taught entirely in art school because the emphasis is in the wrong place and the teachers have not got all the craft skills.

A broad based art school background can only be an advantage to a student of ceramics but two years would be enough, followed by three years work with a potter in his studio because it takes a lot of time and work between teacher and pupil together before the skill is properly mastered. Jack Laird likens the process to giving music lessons. After five years of apprenticeship a student becomes a potter. Only a few people in New Zealand go through such an apprenticeship so the opportunities are limited. Two in five years from Waimea. The second pair are training now and there's a long waiting list of those wanting to take it up. Jack Laird considers Royce McGlashen his first apprentice, at present potting overseas, to be a very fine thrower. Reports back indicate that he is looked on as a kind of Godfrey Bowen, presumably for his ability to produce quality and quantity with no apparent effort.

Kiln development:

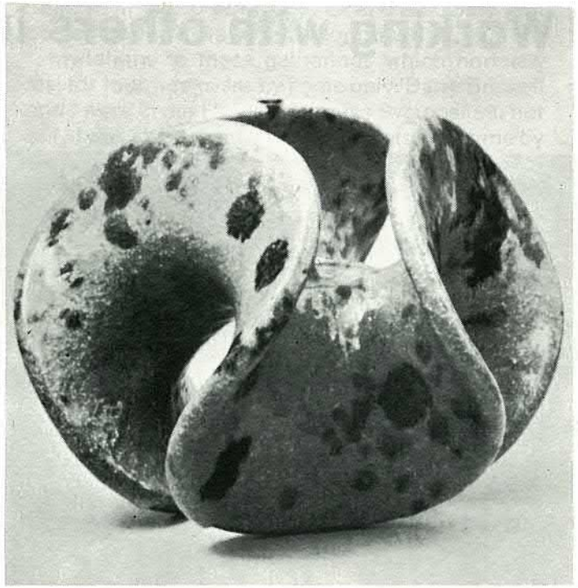
The sophistication of modern kilns in Europe was an eye opener. Bricks are being discarded for felts made up of various grades of ceramic fibres. These form an insulating layer that enables very high temperatures to be reached. Jack Laird saw a kiln of Reidhammers, Frankfurt, in action at Annwerke Oeslan. (The firm sends its kilns all over Europe.) Firing fused alumina catalysts, this electric kiln was reaching 1480° C. Temperatures at Waimea are from 1280° C to 1320° C. The kiln at Annwerke had walls only five inches thick and at full heat Jack could put his hand on it.

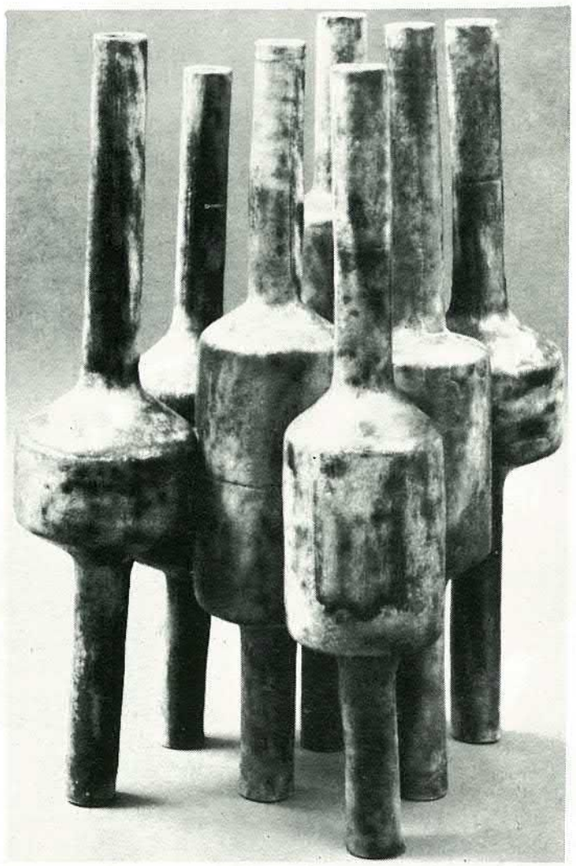
At the Gustavberg Porcelain Factory in Sweden, Styg Lindberg, head designer and chief artist, who is one of the best known names in Europe, is firing on butane gas. And this was the pattern everywhere. Gas replacing oil, and before the oil shortage too. Butane performs in a similar way to natural gas and Styg Lindberg obtains a precise degree of reduction. The high firing produces crystalised effects in muted grey blues and yellows often shot and streaked with lines.

Just about the high point of the Laird's journey was the visit to the Kermion Museum at Frechen near Cologne in Germany, which Flora Christeller wrote about in the last issue of the Potter. Intending travellers to Europe might take note of it. The Kermion will give maps showing the whereabouts of all studio potters in Germany.

As a result of the kiln firing techniques seen overseas, the Waimea kilns are being adapted. When we saw them in January they were merely bricks and dust and being completely rebuilt.

With the demand for Waimea pottery exceeding supply, plenty of people seeking work there and ex-geology student Paul Laird keen to come into the pottery, the future seems secure for Waimea Craft Pottery nine years after its beginning. Jack Laird its founder finds his work challenging and stimulating.



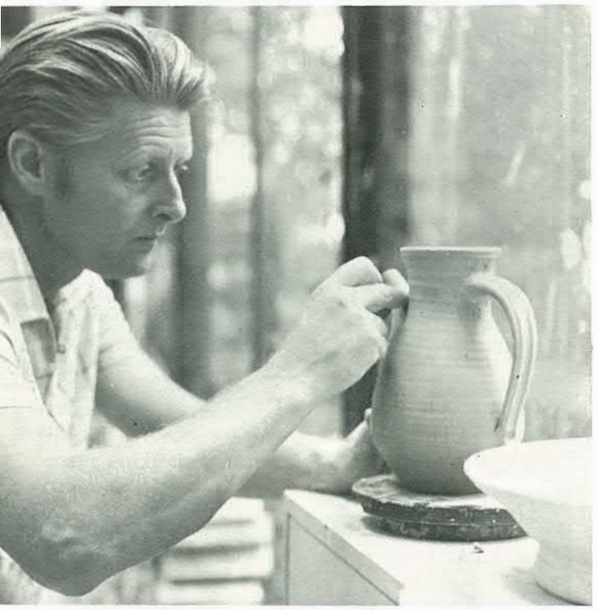


above:
Konrad Quillman 1967 H 15 cm. below:
Beate Kuhn 1964 H 39.5 cm

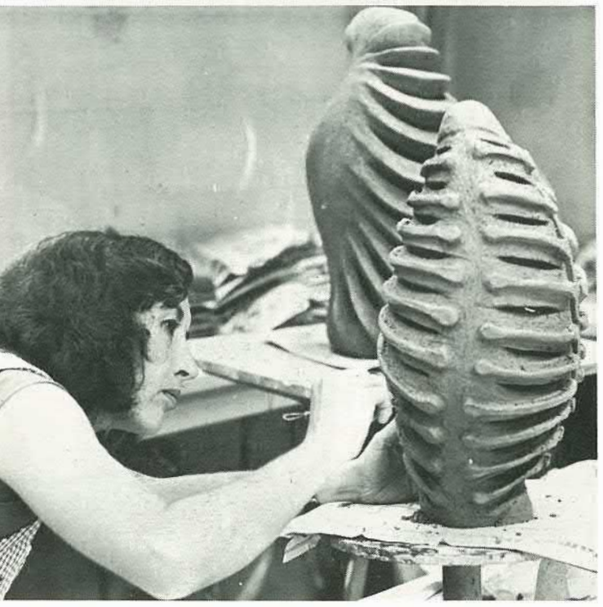
from the Kermion Museum

Working with others in the U.S.A.

by Melis van der Sluis



Melis van der Sluis making a coffee pot
Collette Delozanne (Venezuela) working on her sculptural form



It was a great experience to be one of twenty-four ceramic artists from fourteen countries assembled for one month to work together, talk together and exhibit together. The occasion was an international ceramic symposium at Memphis, Tennessee, U.S.A. last year.

One of the most valuable aspects of the workshop was seeing how other people worked. The variety of methods being used to build pots and make ceramic sculptures was truly amazing.

Most of the participants did sculptural work, either built from slabs or from wheelthrown forms. Only two of us made functional pottery on the wheel. Slabs were made in a variety of ways — one way working as well as another. Edges were joined in just as many different ways. The objects made, varied from small pieces a few inches high to large sculptures towering to five feet.

On the wheel, Lewis Snyder the symposium director, made parts for his "people" pots. Wheelthrown pieces were also used by Elly Kuch from Western Germany, for the necks of her slab built pots and closed forms which she then built up into sculptures. Eileen Lewenstein from England threw many small components to make up her ovoid shapes.

Very thin over-lapping strips of clay were made into slabs for cylindrical vases by Tony Franks from Wales. And Tim Mathers from Illinois threw twenty-four inch high cylinders on the wheel and then added textured slabs. He also combined smaller wheelthrown shapes with slabs to form his ceramic objects.

Cynthia Bringle from North Carolina and myself were the only two making functional pots. Cynthia salt-glazed her pots after they were decorated with combed slip. My own work was finished with earthy reduction glazes.

The American potter Walter Hyleck combined his wheelthrown forms after reshaping them with slab forms and raku fired them. Ken Vavrek from Pennsylvania also raku fired all his work which included a press moulded mural, engobe decorated, and highly decorated "island" pots and planters.

There were a series of wire-cut wall reliefs with unglazed clay surfaces as decoration, assembled by Imre Schrammel from Hungary.

Porcelain slip was poured on plaster bats to form thin slabs that were built into ceramic forms by Kurt and Gerda Spurey from Austria. Patriciu Mateescu from Rumania also used porcelain slip to create spherical cast forms. A full sized ceramic chair was slab-built by Anna Zamorska of Poland.

At the end of the month an interesting international collection of ceramic art was created. This is travelling throughout the States and then it will return to Memphis as a permanent collection belonging to the State of Tennessee.

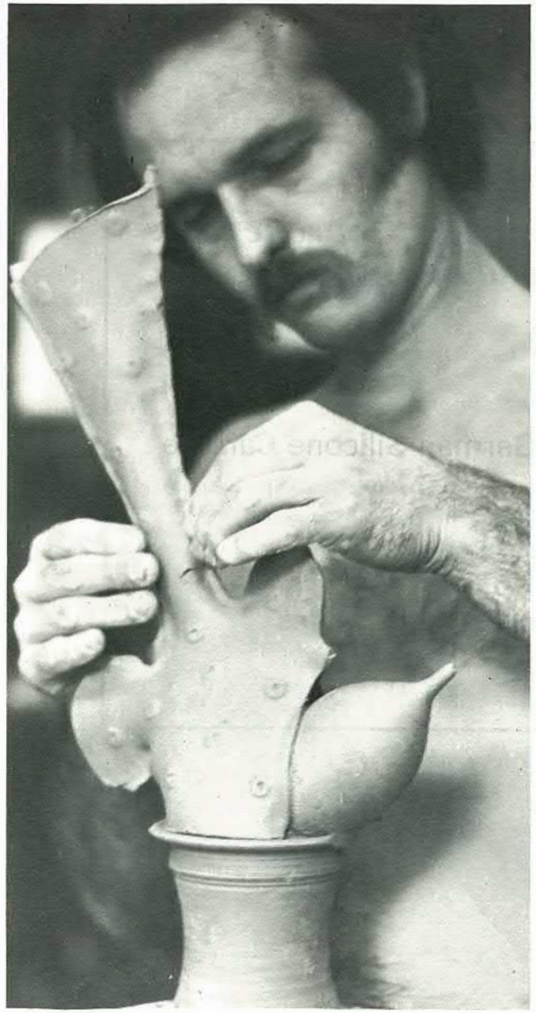
World wide symposiums in the ceramic art are fostered by the International Academy of Arts in Geneva, Switzerland, and by the Organisation of Ceramic Symposiums in Vienna, Austria. Over the last fifteen years they've been held mainly in Europe. There has been one in India and last year's was in the U.S.A. The aim is to bring together interested artists to work together and associate with contempories of varying backgrounds.

Invitations to these gatherings which normally last for four weeks are by name only. Barry Brickell and I were invited to the Memphis Symposium, but only I was able to make it. Travel costs are borne by participants, but board and a weekly stipend is provided and so are all the working materials. Each participant is expected to create at least one large work and/or several smaller works and these become the property of the organising body.

I found the symposium very worthwhile. A time of learning and a time of sharing — an inspiring experience.

below:

Tim Mather (U.S.A.) assembling from wheel thrown parts and thin clay slabs. right:
Santo Mignosa (Canada) finishing his slab built sculpture.



camel hide oil bottles

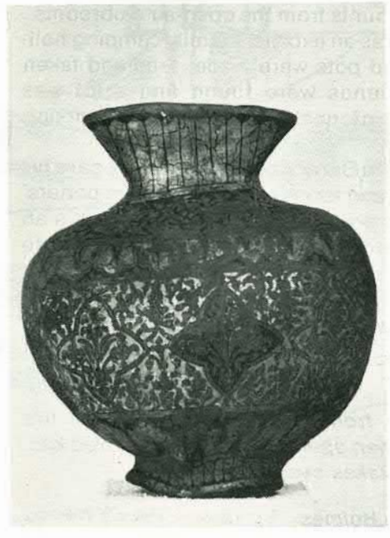
photographed for the Potter by the National Museum

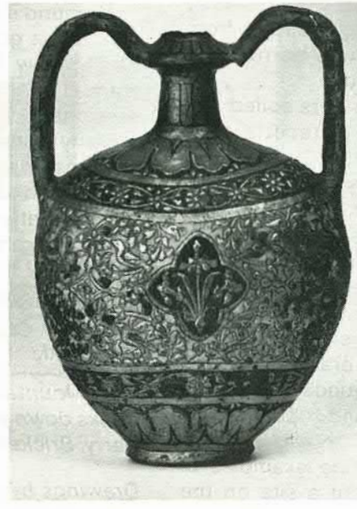
In the National Museum collections are five camel hide oil bottles whose shape might interest potters. The bottles, known as Kopis, are made from camel or sheep skin. The skin is first softened, then stretched over a clay mould of the desired form and when set the clay is washed out. They are ornamented with a paint made from fine brick dust and then coloured and gilded.

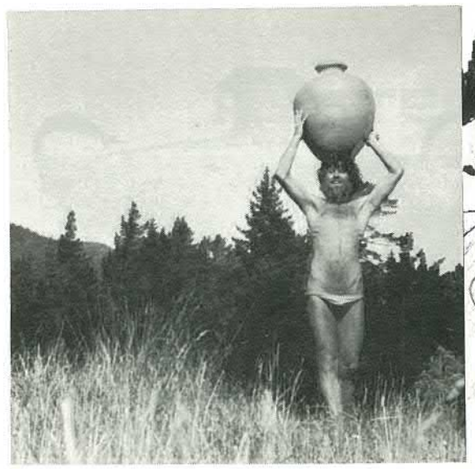
The bottles come in all sizes, from the small flask used to oil the wheels of country carts, to large jars in which oil is carried.

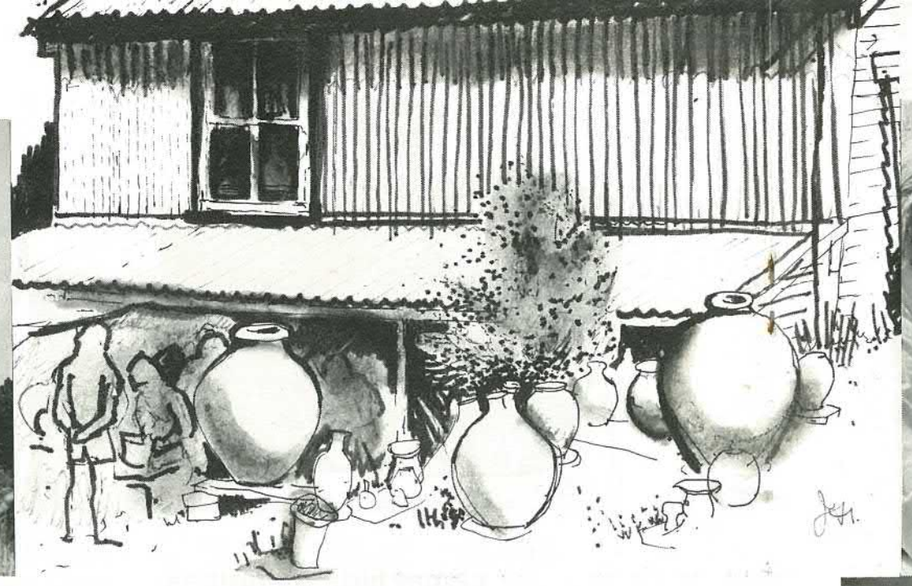
If anyone wishes to examine objects in the Museum, please ring the National Museum and arrange a suitable time.

Betty McFadgen, Ethnologist, National Museum, Wellington.









getting together again at Coromandel

Sixty people from all over the country with their tents and camping equipment met at Barry Brickell's new property in Coromandel for a week from 7 January. He supplied a potting shed with a wheel and raku kiln plus all the clay we could use as well as the use of his facilities for camping, creek swimming and cooking firewood.

Dozens of small pots were made, some thrown, some pinched, and were fired in the wood fuelled raku kiln. This proved not very successful the first time round so it was rebuilt for the glost firing. Temperature was reached more easily for the second firing but we spoilt many of the pots by reducing them in wet grass or water. Most of them burnt too black or the glaze was killed as they'd already been heavily reduced in the resinous smoke from the pine wood fuel. However a lot was learnt about the building and firing of a raku kiln.

Most successful were the large pots coiled and thrown using a low stoneware terracotta clay. These were fired to between 1150° C — 1250° C without the aid of cones in Barry's large "Dutch oven" kiln, again using pine bark offcuts as fuel. The results were most exciting, especially some of the biggest pots which had red flame flashing on the unglazed body. Some were reduced to a deep toast colour by the wood smoke. Others, particularly the ones that had been set inside even bigger pots, remained a bright oxidised orange.

The firing day was perfectly rounded off with a superb willow-spiced hangi laid and supervised by Herb Kingi of Auckland.

Other days were spent collecting examples of quartz crystal and amethysts from a site on the Kennedy's Bay Road, to where we'd been directed by the Coromandel artist Rei Hamon. Some of the group went sailing with Don Capon who had brought his boat with him from New Plymouth. And the children had great fun panning for gold in Driving Creek, with some successful results. On another day people helped Barry's apprentices open a new clay pit, digging the clay and then pugging some in the steam driven mill accompanied by whistle toots, clouds of steam and demi-johns of cold "boiler lubricant" supplied by the pugmaster.

Making the most of perfect weather and moonlit nights a small group made all-night satellite and shooting star counts from the open-air clubrooms.

All round it was an excellent family camping holiday. Some good pots were made, fired and taken home. New friends were found and a lot was learned in the informal discussions and working sessions.

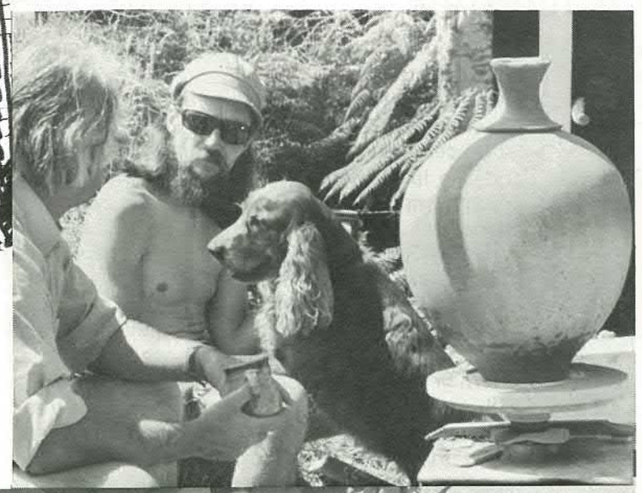
Many thanks to Barry who so generously gave his time, materials and facilities for this second potters' do. We look forward to next year, and there's an open invitation to all serious potters who can give to and gain from such a week.

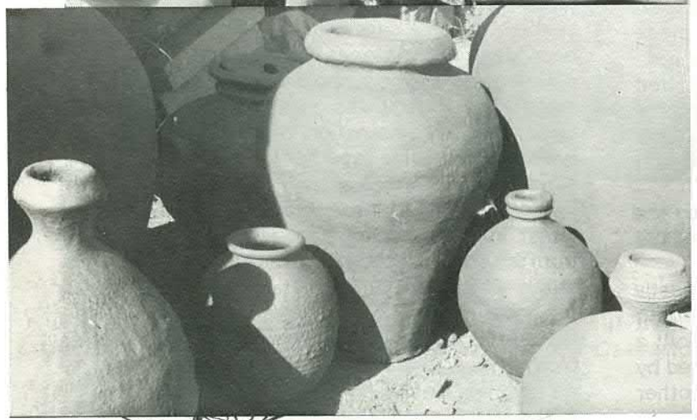
Howard Williams

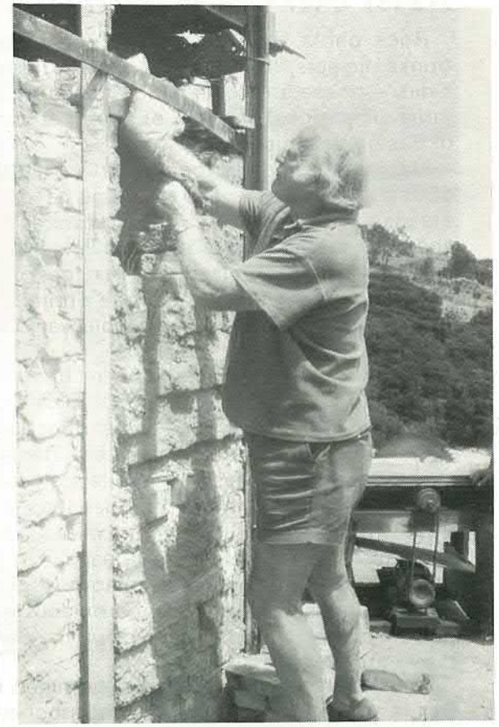
Nick Brandon, New Plymouth, carries a pot from the kiln. Charles Holmes and Roger Brittain from Auckland. Some of the fired pots.

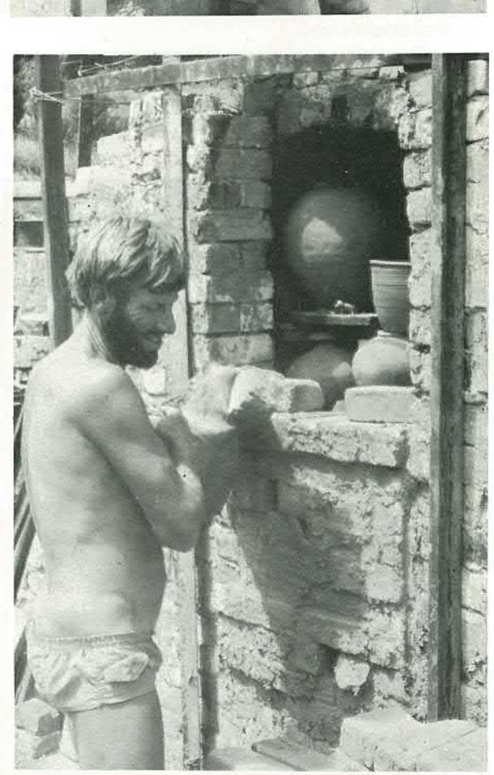
Guy Mountain from Katikati takes the first fire bricks down when opening the big wood fired kiln. Barry Brickell takes over.

Drawings by J. Holmes *photos: Howard Williams*









Margaret Thomson a weaver

Rock pools, opposum skins, sea eggs, tree trunks, limpets, trailing vines, wasps' nests, cow hides — these are some of the things which the three-dimensional weaving of Margaret Thomson of Eastbourne suggests.

Margaret has been experimenting with this type of weaving for the last two years and her creations are striking. They are in sense sculptures in wool and have the same arresting quality as good abstract work in this art form. They suggest different things to different people and have a primitive, tactile appearance which makes people want to touch them.

Her work is a combination of two different techniques. The first is doubleweave: a thick fabric of two layers is woven at once and stuffing is sometimes placed in the pocket created. The second uses two or more pieces woven separately and then joined together. The three triangular-shaped piece were woven separately on a vertical pinex board, using tacks to hold the warp threads, and joined together after they had been removed to make a hollow, three-sided form. A roundish, double-sided piece was then woven to hang down the centre of the form.

The texture of her fabrics is determined by the way in which she has prepared the wool and the materials used.

For three-dimensional weaving she uses mostly natural wool which is first combed out by carding and then finger-twisted into short lengths about a foot long and half an inch wide which are joined by overlapping to give a thick, ribbed effect. Another texture is achieved by rya knotting which gives a pile appearance.

In addition to wool she also weaves flax and sisal.

Her works are usually finished with woven circular pieces resembling nodules, limpets and fungi, and she likes them to look as though they have grown from the main piece rather than having been added on.

Her colours are mainly natural but she will use bright commercial dyes to gain a particular effect.

"The things which suggest ideas for my hangings are first the weaving techniques and the materials I use, and then the natural shapes which are to an extent governed by the first two", she says. "Some of the things in nature which influence me are trees, vines, rocks, pools, caves, shells, fungi, objects found on beaches, thermal pools and caves. Sometimes I may attempt to reproduce a recognisable shape such as a cave or a sea egg, but I think my best ideas are the ones that are not consciously planned and are more spontaneous; where I did not really know what I was going to do. They are an unconscious combination of many influences in nature which come together to make up a new design".

A weaver since 1967, Margaret Thomson's interest in three-dimensional weaving (as distinct from the conventional type which normally employs relatively fine yarn and is rectangular in shape) was revived when she saw photographs of a similar style taken in New York by well known Wellington weaver Molly Duncan while she was in America giving talks on spinning and weaving in New Zealand.

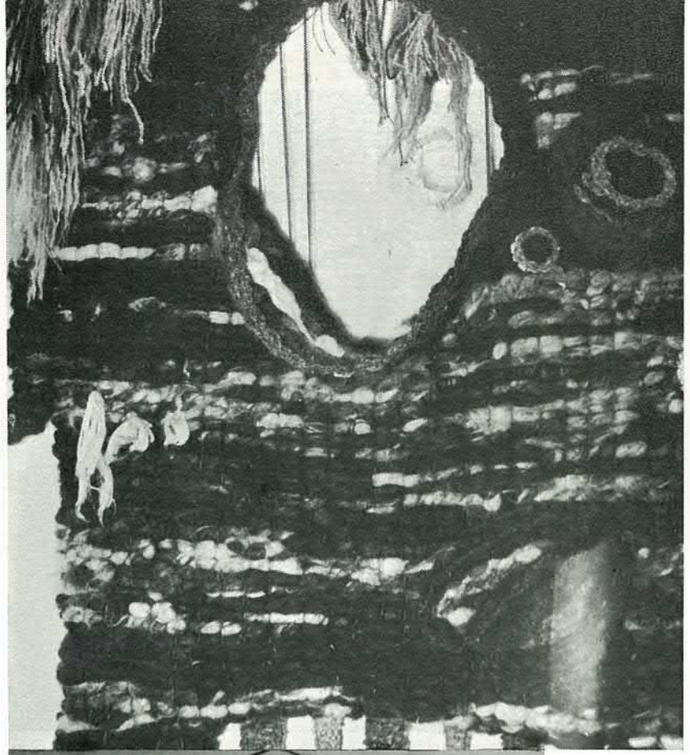
The style Margaret has evolved is distinctively her own and she has made six interesting pieces. She also weaves rugs and one was bought by the World Craft Council for exhibition overseas. A recent honour was being invited to exhibit five hangings at the Christchurch "Group's" annual exhibition as a guest weaver.

In 1971 she gained second place in the Reserve Bank national wallhanging competition.

A young housewife with two teenage and three younger children, Margaret weaves when she can snatch a few hours from household chores at her home in Eastbourne, a seaside suburb on the eastern side of Wellington Harbour, favoured by artists and writers. The loom she uses is large and dwarfs her slender 5 ft 4 inches frame.

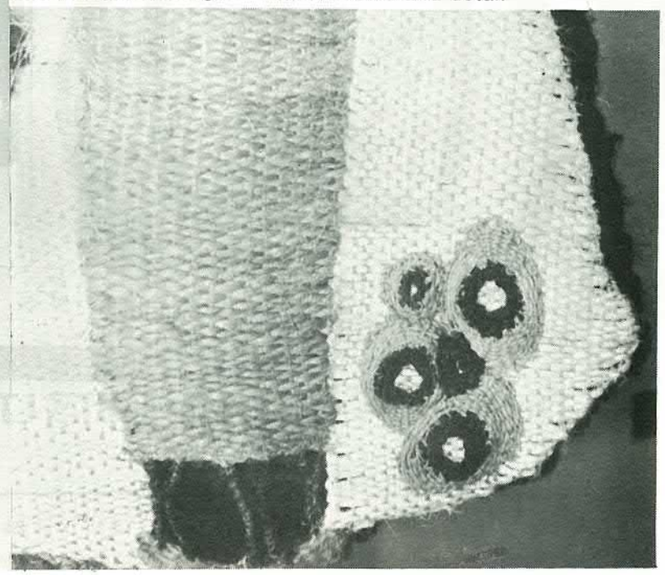
She says her children enjoy trying to guess what her "woollen sculptures" are supposed to be. They also express disapproval if there are not enough "bits hanging on it!"

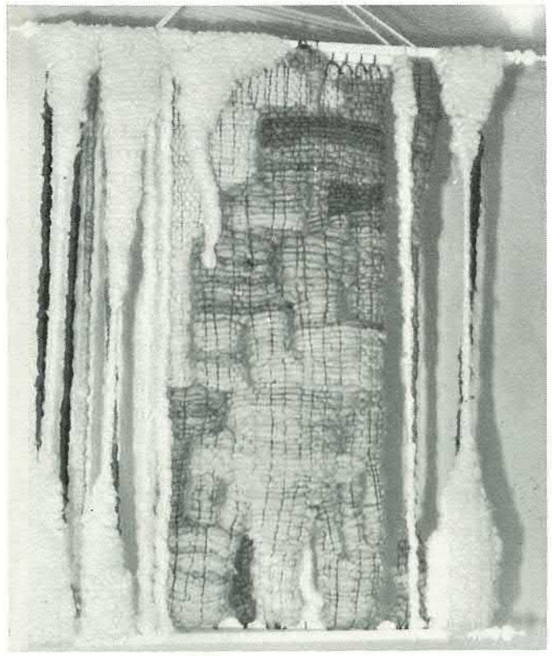
Margaret Thomson finds that three-dimensional weaving gives her the most satisfaction and she is specialising in it more and more. Her work in this field is in its infancy and the way in which it develops will be watched with interest.

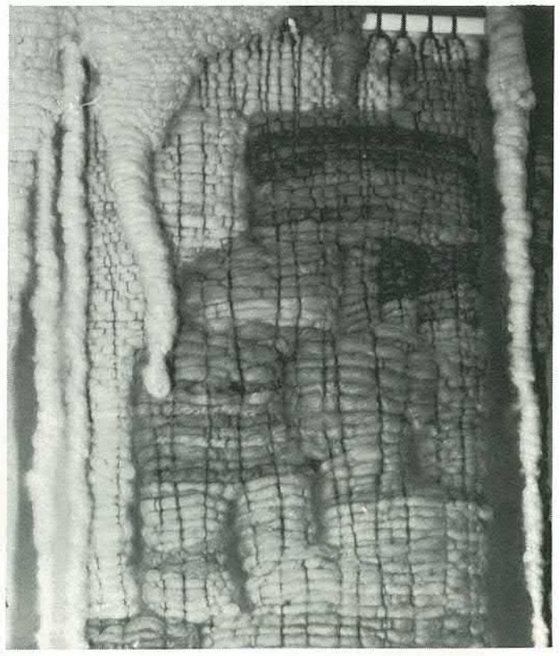


above and left: Cave and detail

above right and right: Woven form and detail







Wall hanging and detail by Margaret Thomson

EXHIBITIONS

Milne / Mountain exhibition

Margaret Milne

The exhibition of pottery and weaving by Margaret Milne, and Guy and Jocelyn Mountain at Several Arts Gallery, Christchurch, was a happy experience in every way. They set up the exhibition and were there for the opening.

Margaret Milne had terrace and garden pots, domestic ware and porcelain among the eighty of her pieces listed in the catalogue, and it would be difficult to know in which area she is most successful.

The garden pots were a strong feature of the exhibition showing satisfying shapes and emphasis on fissured surface texture combined with deep blue matt glaze. The domestic ware was a delight and a breakfast set was particularly pleasing with soft coloured glaze and simple resist decoration. Free form dishes, platters and bottles all had colour and texture. And there were delicate little porcelain bowls, boxes and bottles, some brightly coloured, and again showing Margaret Milne's love for vibrant effect.

Guy's pots, mostly domestic ware, were highlighted by three magnificent garden lanterns. All conveyed a strong sense of form and pleasing simplicity. The gently curved lines of his domestic ware were often complemented by the use of a glaze resembling a thrush's egg and a set of his bowls would be a delight in any home. His work has a quiet quality of timelessness.

Jocelyn Mountain showed woven rugs and wall hangings and "no loom" hangings. Her rugs featured interesting designs and her highly creative approach to weaving caused much interest and discussion. Her use of colour together with her talent for visualising, enables her to collect and blend cones, flax heads and other natural materials and to weave them into deceptively simple and effective hangings. Her work, confidently and soundly constructed, will stand up to wear or to whatever purpose it is intended.

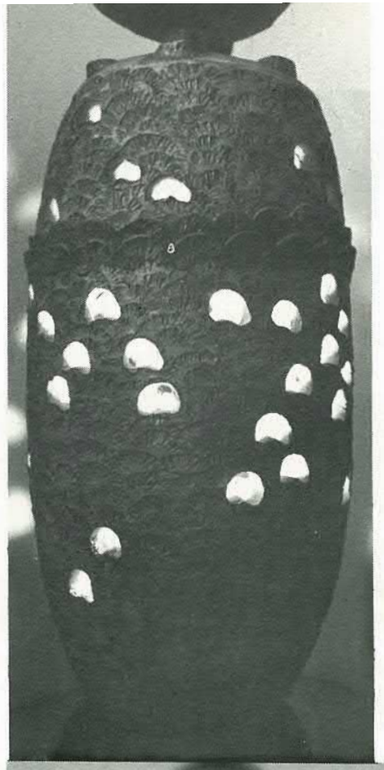
Anne Noonan
Several Arts Gallery, Christchurch.

Margaret Milne

"I get great pleasure working with texture contrasted with vivid colour. I like making and using domestic ware. My new and growing delight is porcelain, especially small and brightly coloured pieces".

Margaret Milne does not seek star billing, but her work stands out and she must now be regarded as one of our leading potters. She pots fulltime and has her own workshop. Since we last gave an account of her work (Vol. 12/1) she has developed new ways of expression — new forms, new textures, and colour in the glazes. Margaret is modest about her achievements. She says she gains a great deal from her association with the Mountains. The stimulation provided by working with them sharpens her own thinking about what she wants to do.

Her work has developed on a broad front. She says, "good pottery needs the foundation of sound craftsmanship before personal expression can emerge unselfconsciously". Only after years of making earthenware and stoneware for domestic use has Margaret Milne gone on to make the things that are now recognizably her own.



Guy Mountain

Painter, turned potter, works at Katikati with Jocelyn Mountain and Margaret Milne. "Pots should be warm, plastic and spontaneous".

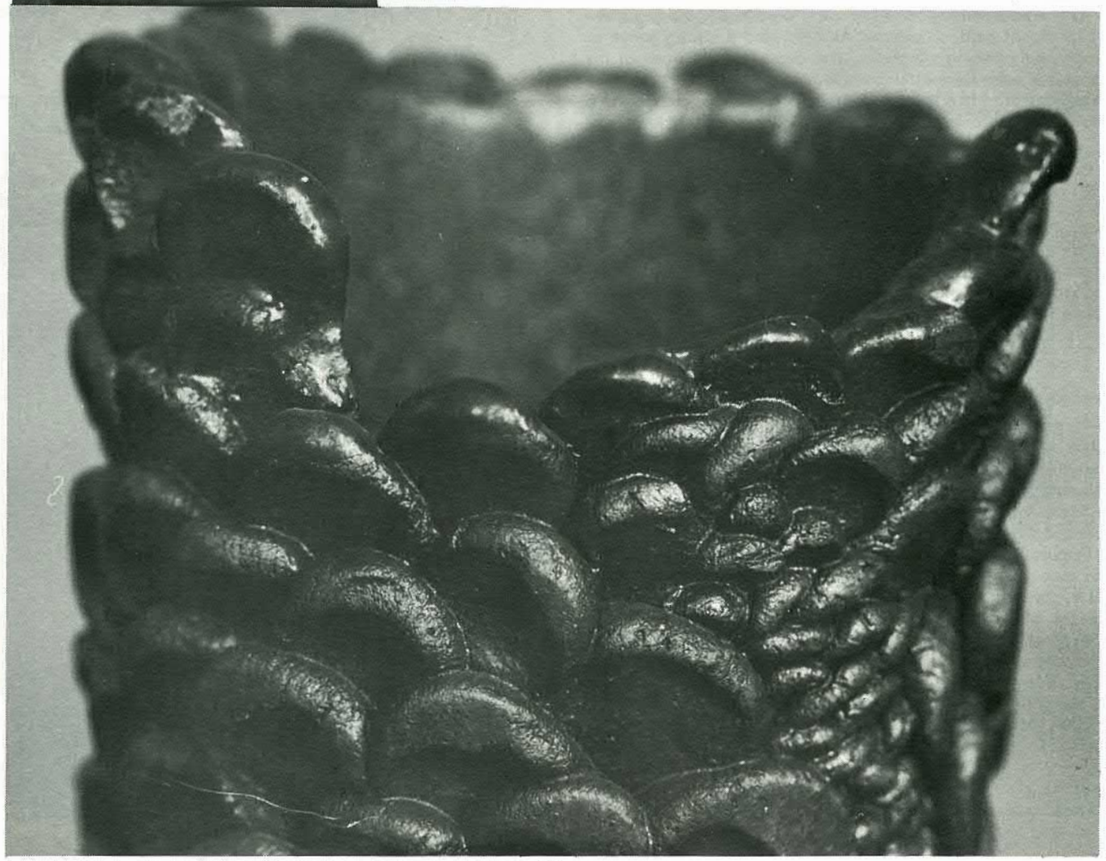
Jocelyn Mountain

Studied at Elam School of Art. Started weaving and spinning with Dryad in London in 1939 and took it up seriously twenty years later.

"Freedom in designing and making of all wall hangings. I do not pretend that handweaving is necessary, but a unique handmade rug is a very useful luxury".

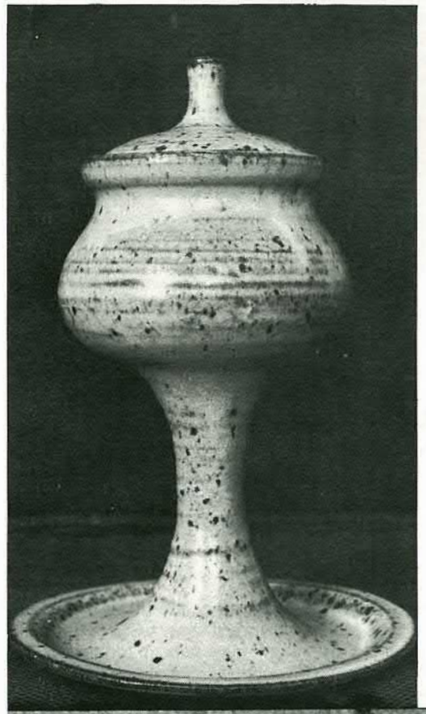
left: lantern, Guy Mountain
right: porcelain trinket box, Margaret Milne.
below: detail of pebble pot, Margaret Milne

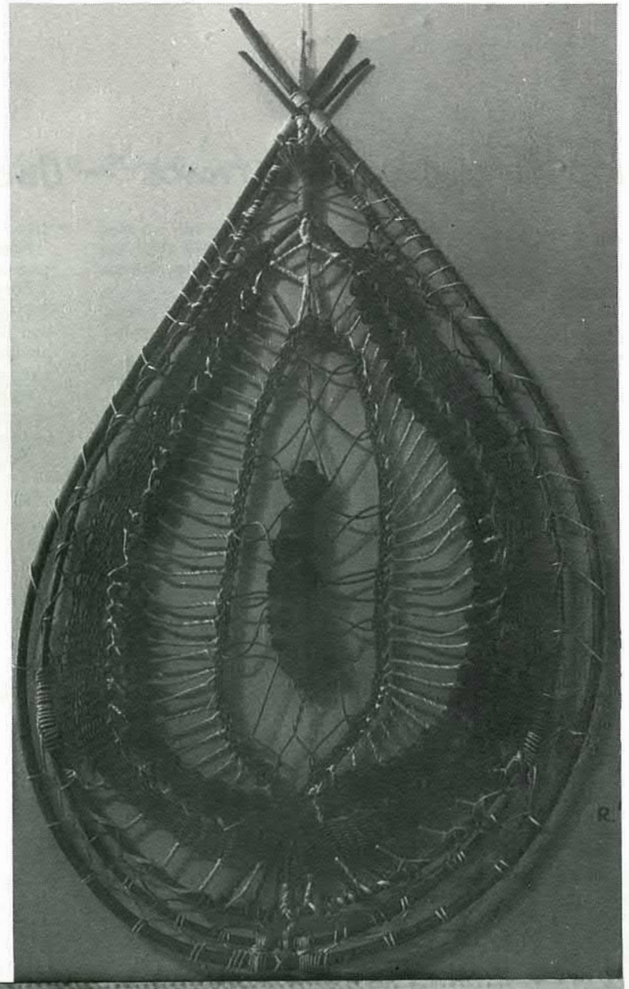
photos: Keith Nicholson

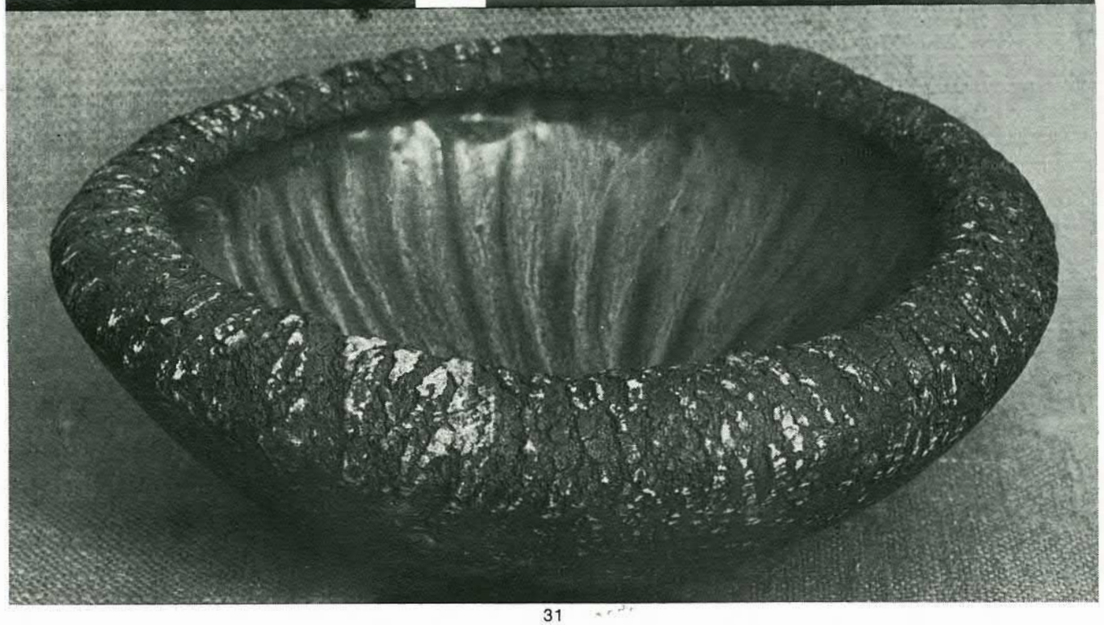


Guy Mountain's "absurd honey pot."
right: Woven piece by Jocelyn Mountain
below: fissured bowl glazed deep blue inside by Margaret Milne

photos: Keith Nicholson







Festive candlesticks – December – New Vision

"The whole exhibition at New Vision is festive and most appropriate for the pre-Christmas season and even the whimsy does not jar.

Mary Hardwick-Smith has amusing and complex little kilns loaded with miniature pots. Jack Laird has a centaur brandishing a pair of candles like swords.

Barry Brickell shows a huge "fatty buster" candlestick in true Brickell style.

Althogether, there is a great deal of lively work. A group by John Papas includes a 3-piece hanging candlestick and some interesting wrapped forms.

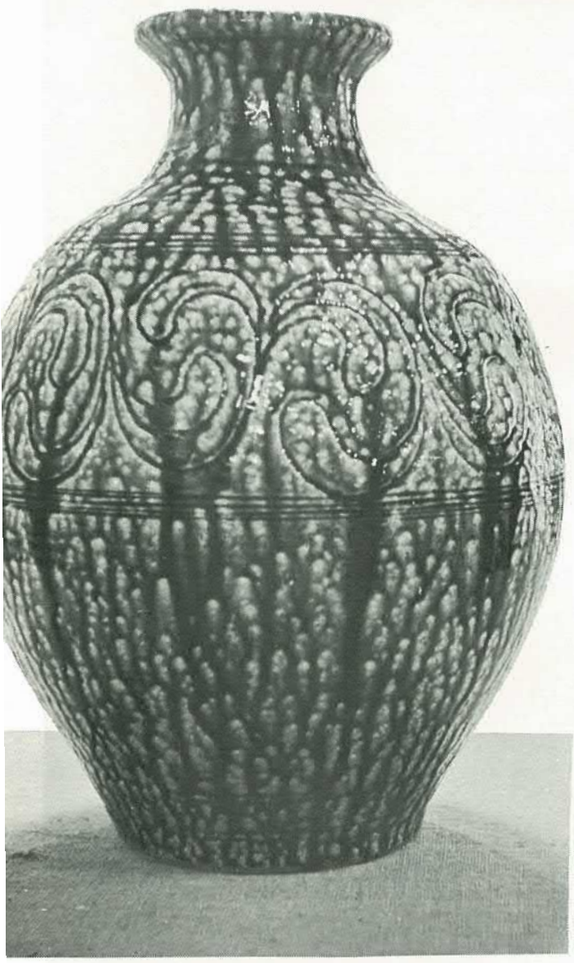
Yvonne Rust has a candle-holder that also has space for peanuts. Several others make provision for flowers.

Adrian Cotter shows smaller scale candleholders with elegant glazes. Maurice Dawson shows them without any glazes.

The range is from Pat Perrin's sculptured spheres to Rosemary Brittain's whimsical little candleholders complete with flowers and Christmas ribbons, and not forgetting Margaret Milne's pierced globular candleholders making their own decorative patterns of light."

Whether you want a tiny inch-high taper-holder, or a huge sculptural form large enough to hold candles in a cathedral, you will find it in this exhibition.

Dawn Percy, New Zealand Herald.



major SMISËK exhibition

The newest Smisek pots are thickly glazed by different salt glazing techniques. Mirek is using a number of coloured oxide glazes and is refiring and resalting his pots up to three times.

The result of the repeated reliquifying and salting makes a richly stranded glaze of blending colours. The thick glaze looks good on the big pieces, giving texture to the form. Not so good on the smaller pots because the texture has not been scaled down to the size of the pots.

A major exhibition of Mirek Smisek's latest work was held in the Dowse Art Gallery, Lower Hutt, in November. The gallery provides the right kind of space and lighting for displaying pottery and its director David Millar knows how to set an exhibition up. So this Smisek exhibition was one of the best.

There were goblets, jugs, candlesticks, bowls and dishes. A complete range of Mirek's domestic ware, and you'd know exactly what to put in every piece. He keeps to the basic shapes he's developed over the years. Traditional shapes for pottery that have been in use since the middle ages. These proven shapes have functioned well. So the pots work well and they look right. This was a no-nonsense collection of well designed work. An exhibition from a master craftsman.

Margaret Harris

Mirek and Jane are at present in Europe on a QE II Arts Council grant. They are looking particularly at medieval pottery.

Jar, heavily salt glazed, Mirek Smisek

The pot on the cover of the last issue Vol 15/2 was Mirek Smisek's. It was a big salt glazed jar around 20 inches high

photo: Stan Jenkins

Beryl Jowett in Dunedin

Beryl Jowett has become a full-time potter. She intends salt glazing and woodfire glazing as well as oil firing. The electric fired ware is mainly reduced to 1280°C.

Her exhibition of fifty five pieces at the Globe Theatre in Dunedin showed a wide variety of shapes and glazes, from abstract forms to platters, branch pots, fruit dishes, serving dishes, jugs, ramekins, casseroles and teapots.

Throughout there was a lovely "live" quality to the glazes whether matte or glossy. The pieces I particularly liked were a vertical pot with raised loops and vertical lines in brown on a matt grey background, 10 inches high and 3 inches in diameter, but statuesque in quality. And a branch pot glazed inside only with the red body sgrffito patterned on the outside and oxide stained. A bowl with matt green glaze vertically incised with lines on the outside and showing a nice balance between decoration and form. A triangular platter had brown transverse lines on a matt ivory glaze.

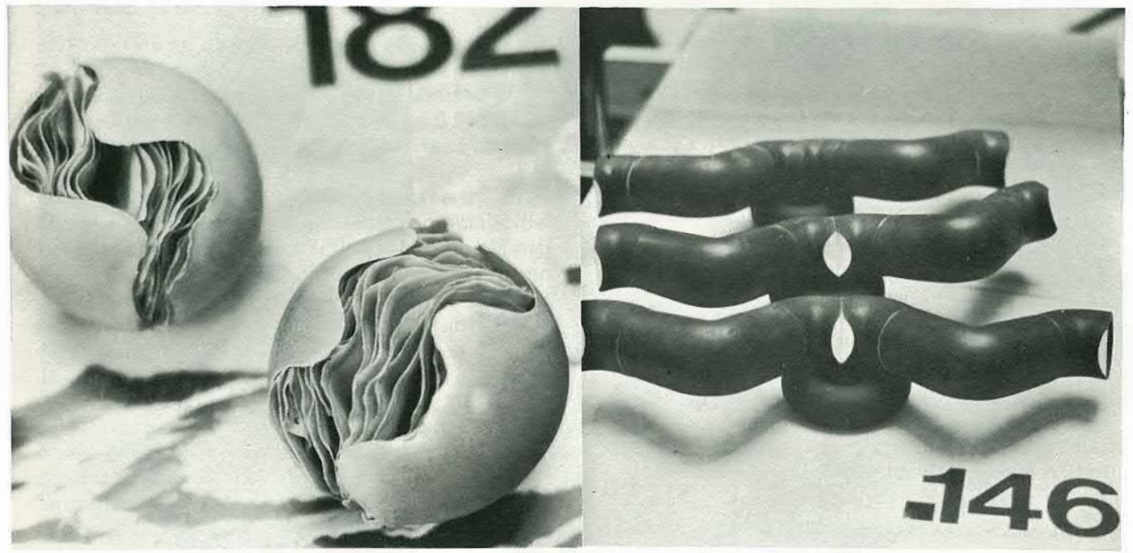
Of the purely domestic ware there were two fine casseroles, one in tenmoku glaze with the lid breaking into khaki, the other bigger in grey glaze with brown matte streaks, a strap handle, thumbed on ends. This was beautiful. There was a jug in wood ash glaze and a matt grey glazed wine set where the handle of the decanter sprang naturally from the neck. And two small vinegar bottles with a squat bulge in the curve, beautifully glazed with khaki strokes over the horizontal throwing lines.

Oswold Stephens

The Potter is your magazine. It tries to reflect accurately the pottery scene in New Zealand by showing the pots that are being made here, and the potters who make them. We offer grass-roots technical information and put in a bit of this and that which our readers have come to enjoy. We get a good deal of applause from overseas subscribers. Some of them say they feel they know us. We need you, the potters, to keep us informed. Send photos of exhibitions (these are returned), and above all information of a technical nature on materials or equipment that you have experimented with.

International '73

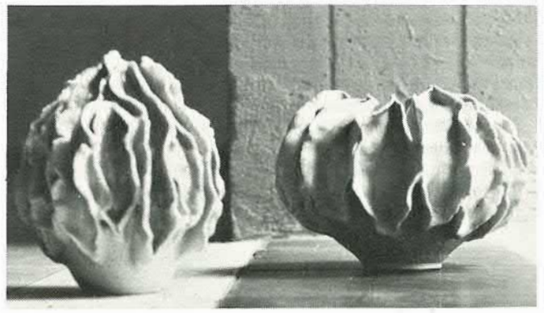
From Ceramics International 1973 at Calbary, Canada.
left: Split form, P.J. Simpson, porcelain, matte glaze and Life of a Woman, H. Hayash, Japan, oxidation porcelain, black matte glaze.



ART NEW ZEALAND 1974

The familiar sign again — this time for the Commonwealth Games Art Exhibition arranged by the Christchurch Society of Arts in January while the Games were on.

Called Art New Zealand 1974, the exhibition showed the work of a hundred and twenty-two of our best. Painters, printmakers, weavers, sculptors, potters and jewellers were each invited to submit one work. Nola Barron from Christchurch says it was a very good exhibition. The pottery was well up to standard and she singled out the work of Margaret Milne, David Brokenshire and Mirek Smisek. She says there were some fine paintings and the jewellery was especially good.



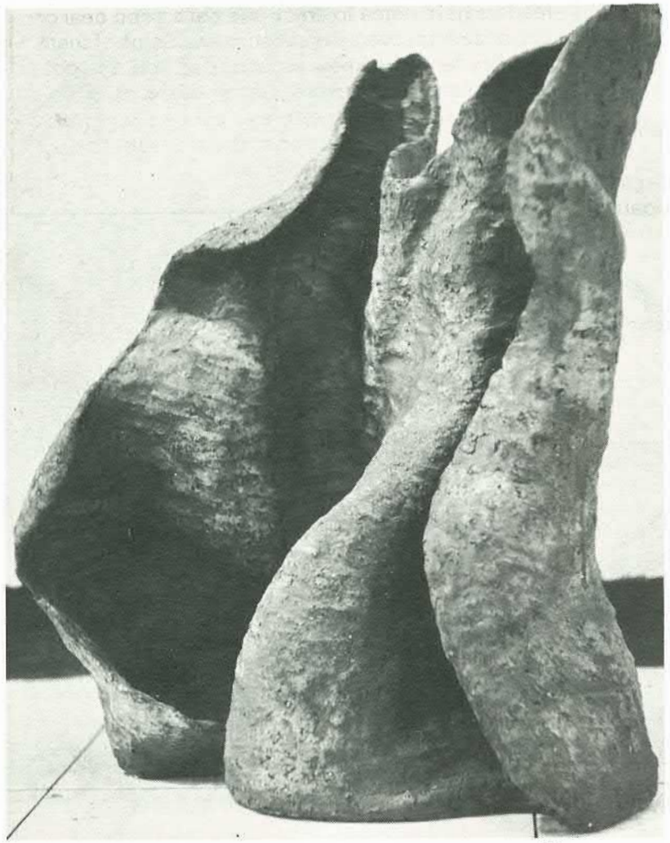
"As one would expect, the standard of pottery is high, with a wide variety of utility and decorative ware that includes work from Nola Barron, Doreen Blumhardt, Roy Cowan, Jack Laird, Pat Perrin, Rosemary Perry, Irene Spiller, Rita Ernsten, Michael Trumic, and Mirek Smisek.

Smisek's work is impressively large in scale and richly decorated with surface pattern. David Brokenshire's ceramic anchor stones and other large pieces are displayed at good effect among the weaving elsewhere in the gallery."

Trevor Moffit, Christchurch Press.

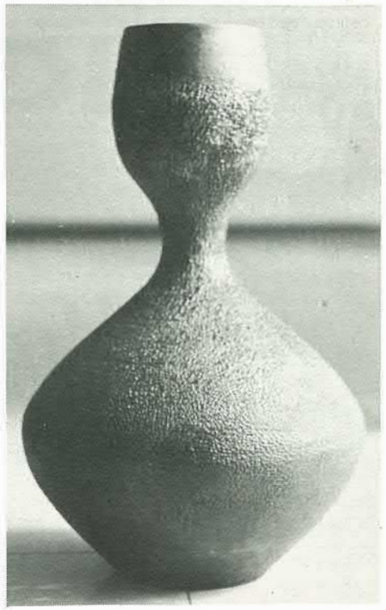
"On the whole, the pottery is good and ranges from fine examples of domestic ware of good form and colour to sculptural forms. Large pots may seem impressive but size does not necessarily make for good quality, and some are inclined to be bulky and stolid.

Altogether the pottery exhibits are too crowded. They need more space to be appreciated properly, and almost any colour would be preferable to the brown hessian on which they are displayed."John Oakley, Christchurch Star.



From the Art 74 exhibition, above: Irene Spiller, porcelain, left: David Brokenshire, waft of clay below: John Fuller.

photos: Nola Barron



For the Queen

Pottery was chosen for the official gift to the Royal Family at the end of their visit this year. The presentation was made by the Prime Minister at the farewell state banquet in Auckland on 8 February. Pottery was also given to the visiting Head of State of Western Samoa on 12 February.

The Prime Minister is particularly keen that New Zealand arts and crafts are used for official gifts. The pieces were from a collection kept by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for presentations and to be used in New Zealand embassies abroad. A buyer from the Ministry always previews the major pottery exhibitions held in Wellington and the red stickers are on the very best pots.

Our contact in Foreign Affairs says, "It's a pity that the arrangement of the pots in the photograph does not show them off to the best advantage. A good arrangement had been made, but some (unauthorised) person apparently thought better and changed it for the photograph". Ah well, it won't have been the first time.

For the Queen, three pots by Len Castle. A blossom vase (opalescent blue glaze derived from the ash of the New Zealand Kauri. A trinket box (vitreous white stoneware, unglazed with ochreous pigment wash). Bowl (opalescent blue glaze again). From Peter Stichbury a platter (glaze; papa rock base of mudstone from Mt Messenger, Taranaki; decoration in West Coast ironsand from Kerikeri, Auckland). From Graeme Storm a wide decorated stoneware bowl. From Margaret Milne a trinket box (barium blue glaze) and a jarlet (barium blue glaze). From Mirek Smisek a large salt glazed stoneware platter and from Doreen Blumhardt a slab vase.

There was also a length of woven wool naturally dyed fabric by Dai Parker.

Presented to the Head of State for Western Samoa was an unfolding natural form by Jim Greig, and a double spouted wine jar by Michael Trumic.

photo *National Publicity Studios*

Jennifer Shearer with some of her work exhibited at Antipodes Gallery, Wellington

young women exhibit in Wellington

From Anneke Borren's last exhibition at Media Gallery, Wellington. The glazes are purple and turquoise

photo: Anns Westra

DISPLAYING in a Private Gallery

by David Millar

The Dowse has had three pot exhibitions in the last three years — two as group shows, the last a one man show by Mirek Smisek. In 1974, Graeme Storm of Auckland is to be the exhibitor. So these following thoughts have evolved as the result of practise and theory. The result suits our gallery — suits it well. It may be of interest to others.

Whistler believed that the exhibiting of an exhibition is as important as what is exhibited. So do I.

Crowded walls or cluttered tables are suitable, nay, necessary, for a sale of work or a shop. But rarely in a gallery. This gallery has in the past, been frequently criticised for the "waste" space in exhibitions. No apologies. Pots and pictures, like animals exhibited in a zoo, need room to breathe. And galleries should be art zoos.

My next axiom is if an exhibition looks wrong, do not rearrange — *take something out.* Again and again I have discovered that the *removal* of objects is the first rule in exhibiting. When in doubt take it out.

We have built up a series of rules for pot exhibiting and they work very well here.

We have table tops at differing levels. Everything on the same level kills pots. It induces visual boredom.

We cluster pots of the same height and scale into groups. And then, and only then, intersperse those groups. A table covered in beer mugs looks dull. A planter on its own, by a teapot on its own, looks incongruous.

Aim to make display stands anonymous. A good display makes you forget how it was displayed. A "clever" display will distract from the pots. Accordingly avoid too many levels, or mountains of concrete blocks. Used sparingly, blocks are a godsend. But they can reduce an exhibition to look like an outpost of the Maginot Line.

Use the walls to cluster platters or large pots on pedestals. It is a change to look at a pot, and not just down on to pots.

We arrange the table tops in groups. It makes for interest in moving around an exhibition. And we arrange the exhibition to cope with the crowd for the opening. We find that the 300-400 can then move easily, and when they have gone, the gallery looks just right. In other words, it is spacious.

As to colour, we prefer plain hessian. It does not fight for attention with the various glazes. And, of course, a couple of pots with a touch of tall greenery placed in them look just right. As Pooh said "Pots are for putting things in".

Spot lighting is an important element. But not too many spots. Otherwise night becomes day again. Half the attraction of spots is that a good percentage of the gallery is in semi-darkness. A useful tip. You cannot have more groups of pots then there are spots. Ten spots means ten groups. And that places a limit on the number of pots you can exhibit. Spots bring up dirty finger marks on white stands used for the larger pots, so keep a tin of paint, or a tin of vim handy.

Finally, and we repeat. Be prodigal with space. The pots will look better, and therefore, hopefully, sell better

David Millar is Director of the Dowse Art Gallery, Lower Hutt.

in a small private gallery

by Anne Noonan

Walk into a big gallery to view a pottery exhibition. Stand on the threshold waiting to sight those little pots dwarfed and daunted by acres of space around and above them — even the ceiling hangs high as the sky in some galleries. Breathtaking the impact may be in viewing the large sculptural pots; but incongruous to have to hunt down the humble casserole in these grand dimensions.

Pots are generally comfortable creations, sometimes encompassable in the cup of the hand, more often held easily in both hands. They are fashioned and destined for the kitchen table or the mantelpiece, most of them, and there they function and 'have their being'. Divorced from this rightness, this necessary perspective, they become uneasy, a little unreal, and a bit silly.

The benches and shelves — the simplest of props, assist in giving the pots every opportunity for display. We find no need to titivate when mounting our exhibitions. A robust pot will shout for all it's

worth without being persuaded to do so. A gentle pot will glow on this clean honey-coloured wood. A timid pot may borrow a little warmth from it.

So we have the intimacy of a small gallery to help our exhibitions, the correct perspective in which to show our exhibitor's work, and an unpretentious means of displaying this work. But it is not enough to leave it at that. You cannot dump a pot down on a bench and say that's good enough. Decisions have to be made about how to place them in relation to each other. To me, pots are almost alive. They have amongst themselves 'friends' and 'families'. They cry out to be grouped accordingly. There are focal pots as there are father and mother figures. We must decide which are these focal pots — it is quite easy to do this. Then find their friends and place them together, like with like. Another family or group close by may provide the contrast or impact necessary to give visual interest. Alone in a corner, two pots, twins, are all that this corner needs to provide interest. Don't separate twins. Let them be as they should be, together. It is human nature to enjoy the opportunity to draw comparisons and with twin pots the challenge is greater.

Some pots to be noticed must be elevated to higher levels. Here the tiered shelves are used. Groups of smaller pots are placed on these so that they get their share of attention.

Pottery which is deemed fit for exhibition should above all things have earned the right to convey its own small message of warmth, loveableness, exuberance or sensitivity.

At Several Arts our gallery is small. Two rooms opening into each other, the larger fifteen by fifteen feet.

Into the space of these two rooms we can put about a hundred and fifty pots without looking like a bazaar and certainly without looking like a barn.

Walls are painted white. Big windows give good lighting. As well there are big central lights in each room. The building is old so the ceiling is high enough for airiness and comfort.

Right around both rooms we have wooden benches about two feet wide. They are pinus and have a clear varnish finish. Above these benches we can tier two shelves, though usually only one shelf is necessary in addition to the bench.

As there are loners among people so there are loners among pots. So place them alone. Alone they achieve stature; incorrectly grouped they are merely incongruous.

When all pots are placed properly in relation to each other check them to see that every one is visible, that no pot is blocking another, that each has a chance of snatching a little of the limelight.

I stress again that provided these basic things are carried out there should be no need at all for gimmicky innovation. We do not see the necessity for clever settings for pots. A pot which is worthy of being exhibited does not need this dubious help. The simpler the means of mounting the pot, the kinder it is to the pot. And this also applies to the lighting. Providing the light is adequate and the pots can be seen comfortably, there should be no need to dramatise them by spotlighting.

At Several Arts our exhibitions usually run for two working weeks. The opening and the first week account for the major portion of sales. The second week people come back to look again and this is valuable because by this time they can comfortably assimilate what they see. People enjoy finding out what it's all about and this they do at their various levels.

So apart from the first hour of the opening being a bit of a mad scramble, the period thereafter is something which we all enjoy enormously.

Several Arts Gallery and Showroom is at 809 Colombo Street, Christchurch.

MATERIALS DISSECTED AND EXAMINED

by J.R. Rooney.

BORAX: $Na_2O.\ 2B_2O.\ 10H_2O.$ (Sodium Tetraborate).

A mineral prepared chemical compound.
Molecular weight 381.43.
Specific Gravity about 1.69
Hardness 2.0-2.5

Soluble in water and acids and melts in its own water of crystallization. The percentage composition of borax, according to the formula given is as follows:

Sodium Oxide	16.3%
Boric Oxide	36.5%
Water of Crystallization	47.2%

Owing to the water of crystallization present, which makes for greater care in calculation of glaze batches the dehydrated form is the most preferred.

BORAX (DE-HYDRATED or FUSED BORAX) $Na_2O.\ 2B_2O_3$.

Molecular weight 201.27
Specific Gravity about 2.36
Melting Point 735° C.
Insoluble in water.
Composition as follows:

Sodium Oxide	30.8%
Boric Oxide	69.2%

Analysis shows the water of crystallization less than 0.5%. The dehydrated form may be substituted for ordinary borax in the ratio of approximately 2:1. It does not swell to a fluffy mass during melting and therefore minimises segregation and loss. In concentrated form larger yields are possible and less time is required for melting owing to the water content having previously been eliminated and because no insulating action is present.

BORIC ACID: (Boracic Acid) H_3BO_3

Molecular weight 61.84
Specific gravity 1.4

This occurs in the Tuscan "soffioni" or "fumaroles".

It is also prepared from borocalcite. Soluble in water, decomposing at its melting point of 184° C.

Boric acid is occasionally used for introducing boron into a glaze if for some reasons no alkali may be added. It is marketed as a technically pure preparation containing 56.3% B_2O_3.

CERIUM OXIDE CeO_2

Molecular weight 172.1
Specific Gravity 6.74
Melting Point 1950 6 C.

Used principally as an opacifier, where it gives better results than tin and titanium in the temperature range 700-800° C in amounts of 2% - 5%.

CHROMIUM OXIDE Cr_2O_3

Molecular weight 152
Specific Gravity 5
Melting Point 1950°C.
Insoluble in acids and alkalies.

It is prepared by heating chromium hydroxide or ammonium bichromate or potassium bichromate and sulphur. These chromium compounds are derived from the mineral Chromite FeO. Cr_2O_3.

Chromium Oxide is used mainly to impart a green colour and is most usually introduced as chromium oxide or potassium dichromate, but the dichromate of sodium and ammonium and the chromates of potassium, sodium and iron find little use. Sodium dichromate although cheaper than potassium is not so satisfactory as it absorbs moisture from the atmosphere and is not so easily distributed through the batch.

Dichromates (Bichromates) are usually preferred to chromates as they contain a higher proportion of chromium and show stronger colouring power, weight for weight.

FELDSPAR:

Feldspar is the most important flux used in ceramic bodies and glazes. It is one of the commonest minerals in primary rocks where it occurs chiefly mixed with quartz and often with mica. Natural feldspars are usually a mixture in varying proportions of the aluminium silicates of sodium, potassium, calcium, lithium and occasionally barium and caesium. For ceramic bodies, the potash spars are the most important though the lower fusing soda spars are gaining considerably more importance because of their greater fluxing action. The different feldspars, even when free from quartz and other impurities naturally have a range of values according to their physical properties.

Melting Point 1110° — 1532° C.
Specific Gravity 2.56 to 2.63
Hardness 6.0 to 6.5

Feldspar is the most convenient form for introducing nearly insoluble alkalies, which in massive feldspars are not water soluble, but fine grinding does release some of the alkali. The alkali content will be somewhat lowered by wet grinding followed by filter pressing and drying.

A dry ground feldspar will on addition to a wet batch, release free alkali and alter the pH. The presence of these alkalies gives feldspar a comparatively low melting point, so that in the normal mixture clay-feldspar-quartz the feldspar softens and becomes glassy or even liquid while the clay and quartz remain as solid particles, the surface tension gradually pulling them together with the feldspar being distributed through the pores. The molten feldspar also dissolves some of the solids and reacts chemically so that the different phases of the resulting fired products differ from the raw material. The actual temperature at which feldspars melt depends on the nature and quality of the different individual feldspathic minerals making them up. The temperature is also affected by the other materials in the body as well as the grain size making it almost impossible to generalise about the effects to expect.

FLINT SiO2.

Specific Gravity 2.62
Hardness 6-7

Found in large quantities in England, France and Denmark in pebbles which consist of cryptocrystalline quartz with a small quantity of water and carbonaceous matter. Flint breaks with a characteristic conchoidal fracture and appears black. Highly refractory and non-plastic flint is a source of silica in all glazes and bodies. As silica is a major component of normal ceramic earthenware bodies (about 20 to 50%) it is normally introduced as ground calcined flint.

FLUORSPAR Calcium Fluoride CaF_2.

Molecular weight 78.08
Specific Gravity 3.2
Melting Point 1360° C, decrepitates when heated.
Hardness 4.
Solubility in water at 18° C, 0.0016g/100ml: at 26° C 0.0017g./100ml.

The use of fluorspar as a flux in bodies and glazes is not widespread. It is an excellent flux but reacts with the other glaze constituents producing volatile silicon aluminium and sodium fluorides. The losses of these compounds from a glaze are rather unpredictable, being easily affected by small differences in batch composition firing schedule and kiln atmosphere, so that the final product is not uniform.

The excaping gases produce pinholes and an altogether unsatisfactory glaze texture. Fluorine and its compounds especially its acidic one, are toxic so any gases given off must not be inhaled.

IRON OXIDES:

FERROUS FeO

Molecular weight 71.84
Specific Gravity 5.7
Melting Point 1420° C.
Oxide entering fusion Fe_2O_3. M.W. 160.
Generally undesirable colouring impurity.

FERRIC FeO_3

Molecular Weight 159.68
Specific Gravity 5.2
Melting Point 1565° C.
Oxide entering fusion Fe_2O_3 M.W. 160.
Cause of reds, browns, yellows in bricks etc. Gives off a volume of oxygen equal to 30% of the body it is in.

FERROSO — FERRIC Fe_2O_4

Molecular Weight 231.52
Specific Gravity 5.2
Melting Point 1538° C.
Oxide entering fusion Fe_2O_3 M.W. 160.

IRON DICHROMATE (ferric) $Fe_2 (Cr_2O_7)_3$

Molecular weight 759.74
Oxide entering fusion Fe_2O_3 M.W. 160.
Brown underglaze colours alone or with manganese or zinc oxides.

ILMENITE Fe TiO_3

Percentage TiO_2 52.67%, FeO, 47.33%.
Molecular weight 151.75
Density 4.75
Hardness 5-6
Used mainly for its influence on texture and as a means of inducing spots or specks into bodies and glazes. One to three per cent is sufficient to give a marked colour and texture. Added to bodies and engobes ilmenite produces a darkening colour and a speckled peppery appearance.

LEAD COMPOUNDS:

Lead compounds are among the chief glaze fluxes giving a glaze of low fusion point and viscosity which results in a product of high brilliance, lustre and smoothness.

Lead compounds are still in widespread use although it is well known that any that are soluble are a danger to the health of both the potter and consumer. The fritting of lead compounds has produced the much less dangerous lead silicates and led to the development of special low solubility glazes.

LEAD OXIDES:

LITHARGE PbO

Molecular Weight 22.321
Specific Gravity 9.53
Melting Point 888° C.
Solubility in water at 20° C. 0.0017g/100ml.

RED LEAD Pb_3O_4

Molecular Weight 685.63. PbO, 97.67%, O_2 2.33%.
Specific Gravity 9.1
Decomposes to PbO and oxygen at about 500° C.
Red lead is sometimes preferred to litharge though somewhat less difficult to keep in suspension. It decomposes, giving off oxygen at 500° C but this cannot entirely prevent reduction to free lead which may well cocur at high temperatures.

LEAD CARBONATE, White Lead, Basic Lead Carbonate.

2Pb Co_3 Pb (OH_2)
Molecular Weight 775.65 PbO 86.33%.
Loss in ignition 13.67%.
Specific Gravity 4.
Decomposes at from 320° C to 400° C.
Commercial basic lead carbonate is produced in a chemically pure form with particle sizes suitable for suspension and dispersion in water. Its decomposition at 320° — 400° C with the evolution of gases leaves the resultant oxide in a finely divided state that readily mixes with the other glaze constituents. Thus fusion of the glaze is quicker than when the oxides are used.

LEAD SILICATES:

The fritted forms of lead are much less harmful than the dusty carbonate and oxides. The composition of a relatively insoluble lead silicate may vary and a number of products are on the market. The solubility of the lead drops markedly if a small quantity of alumina is added to the mixture.

The lead-alumina-silicate eutectic mixture is:
PbO 61.2%, Al_2O_3 7.1%, SiO_2 31.7%.
Melting Point 650° C.
There is also the commercial 'lead bisilicate'.
PbO 65%, SiO_2 34%, Al_2O_3 1%.
Melting Point about 815° C.

LEAD PYROANTIMONATE $Pb_2 Sb_2 O_7$

Molecular Weight 769.94
Specific Gravity 6.27
Oxide entering fusion $Sb_2 O_3$, M.W. 291.52.
Conversion factor 0.381
Colour Naples Yellow.

LEAD ORTHO ANTIMONATE $Pb_3(SbO_4)_2$

Molecular Weight 993.15
Oxide entering fusion PbO. M.W. 291.52.
Conversion factor 0.294
Colour Naples Yellow.

LEAD CHROMATE $PbCrO_4$

Molecular Weight 323.22
Specific Gravity 6.1 — 6.3
Melting Point 844° C.
Oxide entering fusion PbO.
Conversion factor 0.69
Colour Chrome Yellow in acid flux.
Red Opaque with basic flux.
With tin gives pink.

MAGNESIUM CARBONATE Mg CO_3

Specific Gravity 3.
Hardness 3.5 — 4.5
Melting Point. decomposes 350° C.
Solubility at 20° C, 0.0106.
Magnesium Carbonate (Magnesite) MgO 47.80%, CO_2 52.20%, occurs in two different forms, the cryptocrystalline or compact magnesite and the coarse crystalline magnesite.

The common compact form originates from the decomposition of magnesium silicates such as talcum, serpentine, olivine etc. by carbonated water. The crystalline form is a metamorphic formation of limestone coming in contact with magnesium — containing thermal water. It contains varying quantities of iron, since there is a continuous transition from magnesite ($MgCO_3$) to ''breunnerite''. Magnesite begins to dissociate, giving off carbon dioxide at 500° C. 'Caustic magnesite' is produced by burning at 800° C and can be completely hydrated by contact with water or steam. Although magnesia is in itself refractory, it reacts with silica and soda to give low-melting products and therefore acts as a flux in bodies and glazes. In general it reacts with clay flint and feldspar to give a glassy bond, this increases strength and decreases porosity but also increases shrinking.

MANGANESE OXIDE MnO_2

Molecular Weight 86.93
Specific Gravity 5.0
Melting Point decomposes 535° C.
Oxide entering fusion MnO. M.W. 71.
Conversion factor 0.817
Insoluble.
Red, yellow, brown, purple or black body and glaze colours.
Temperature stable up to 1300° C.
Reversible reaction.
On heating above 300 — 500° C it gradually loses oxygen becoming successively Mn_2O_3, Mn_3O_4 which are dark brown and finally well above 1000°C manganous oxide which furnishes the pink manganous iron. On cooling the reverse occurs if oxygen can enter.

NEPHELINE SYENITE: $K_2O.\ 3Na_2,\ 0.4\ Al_2O_3.\ 8SiO_2$.

Specific Gravity 2.54 when crystalline: 2.28 in the glassy state.
Hardness about 6.
Sintering range 1060 — 1230° C.
Used to replace part or all of the feldspar where it is desirable to have a body maturing at lower temperatures. The wide sintering range is partly due to the eutectics which form between nepheline and soda feldspar, its greater fluxing action lowers the fusion temperature saving fuel and time.

The story on lead glazes again

Our readers are naturally concerned about this subject. We haven't heard about any locally made pottery being at fault. New Zealand potters do not produce low fired wares to any extent, and it seems that the imported ware is most likely to offend.

The information published here is for Australian consumers and is reprinted by courtesy of the Australian Consumer's Association, 28 Queen Street, Chippendale, New South Wales 2008. Subscription rate $5.00 p.a.

Lead is one of the best, and cheapest, low temperature fluxes available. It causes the glaze to flow evenly over the pot for a wide range of temperatures and is able to seal over minor cracks and other faults. It also gives brilliant colours and is compatible with other colouring materials likely to be used at low temperatures.

If correctly used, lead glazes are quite safe on containers intended to hold food. But a slight error in applying the glaze can be dangerous. For example, if the ingredients in the glaze are not mixed in the correct proportions, or the time or temperature of firing, or the atmosphere of the kiln are not correct then any acidic foods in the container can dissolve the glaze and release a dangerous amount of lead into the food. The kinds of food likely to precipitate this release are fruit juices, soft drinks, wine, vinegar, sour cream, tomatoes and mustard.

Poisoning with lead, as with most other chemicals, can take two forms — "acute", which is the case if someone takes a large amount of the poison at one time, and "chronic" when small amounts are ingested over a long period, perhaps even years. It is chronic poisoning which constitutes the problem with lead in glazes.

All the food we eat, however carefully prepared or whatever its source, contains a little lead which we cannot avoid ingesting, but we can minimize our intake by avoiding substances rich in lead. The unavoidable daily intake amounts to about 0.3 milligrams (mg) and this need only rise to 0.6 mg for lead to start building up in the body. Authorities differ in their opinions as to what constitutes a dangerous intake. Many authorities consider a daily intake of as much as 1 mg hazardous. Periodically there have been epidemics of lead poisoning caused by lead water pipes and these have corresponded to levels a little greater than 5mg a day.

The onset of lead poisoning is usually difficult to detect. Digestion is upset, there is a loss of appetite, constipation, and later a loss of weight. Rheumatic pains may occur. The poisoning eventually can cause gout and damage the kidneys. If there is a rapid increase in the amount of lead in the body, the nervous system may be affected.

The symptoms of lead poisoning are imprecise because lead interferes with many essential bio-chemical processes and therefore affects many functions.

SAFEGUARDS

At present there is considerable discussion among the various government authorities as to what limit should be placed on lead levels in pottery. The Department of Customs and Excise monitors all imports of crockery for lead and uses 7 ppm as a reference. (The 7 ppm refers to the amount of lead released using a standard method of extraction with a slightly acidic solution). It is not a strict limit and crockery with higher amounts of lead can be imported at the discretion of the Minister. (One ppm would mean an intake of one mg per day if you consumed one litre — rather under a quart — of an acid food from such a container).

A suggested standard of 2 ppm for small containers (cups and mugs), 7 ppm for larger containers (such as casseroles) and 20 ppm for plates and saucers is receiving consideration.

AUSTRALIAN CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION DOES SOME TESTS

Australian Consumers' Association wanted to find out the extent and severity of the problem of lead leakage and our buyers went on a spree in pottery shops, gift shops and chain stores buying brightly coloured mugs and casseroles. We eventually tested twenty-two branded and unbranded items for lead release.

Because casseroles frequently have food simmering in them for several hours and mugs are used for hot as well as cold drinks and for soups we gave our test items a severe test for leaching out the lead. The extraction was carried out at temperatures close to boiling point rather than at room temperature.

Three of the items we purchased released more than 7 ppm of lead. The worst offender was a small unbranded casserole imported from Mexico which released 250 ppm. An unbranded Italian casserole released 32 ppm and a mug produced by the Benedictine monks of Prinknash Abbey, England, released 21 ppm. All other items tested had well below the 2 ppm level suggested for small containers.

Just before Christmas we learnt that the department of Customs and Excise was checking a new shipment of low priced crockery for lead. We decided to go out and buy these cups and saucers and see what we could detect.

None of the cups we bought at that time showed a dangerous level of lead, but three saucers which had a coloured pattern on them released appreciable amounts of lead, although still below the 20 ppm suggested for saucers. The highest was 10.6 ppm. The source of the trouble on the saucers was a decorative pattern, high in lead, which was not sufficiently glazed over.

WHAT TO DO

Unless you are positive that your pottery utensils won't release an unsafe amount of lead, do not store acidic foods in them. Use glass or plastic containers instead. Provided all decoration is adequately under the glaze, stoneware and porcelain is safe to use. However, as it is hard to tell if the decoration is under glaze it is best to avoid cups, mugs and casseroles with decorative patterns inside. A number of manufacturers now label their products as "acid proof".

Potters' societies in Australia are well aware of the problem of lead poisoning and continually remind their members of the possible hazards of lead glazes. Many studio potters have now turned to lead-free glazes for use on earthenware.

WHAT AUSTRALIAN CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION WANTS DONE

It is an unsatisfactory situation when pottery with such high lead levels as we found in our tests is so commonly available.

Delays in setting a firm standard are unwarranted, yet discussion still goes on about what lead levels are acceptable. Australian Consumers' Association hopes that the suggested standard of 2 ppm for small containers, 7 ppm for large containers and 20 ppm for plates and saucers be adopted. In our view, the main alternative under discussion, a blanket 7 ppm, discriminates against some items (such as plates and saucers) unlikely to be a hazard, but we feel that it is not low enough for cups and mugs.

For our part we intend to continue surveys of this kind from time to time and will include other potentially dangerous metals such as cadmium and mercury until we know that government scrutiny makes this unnecessary.

NEWS

Denys Hadfield of Christchurch has been given a QE II grant to experiment in the construction of light weight kilns for raku firing. He's using a special material designed for quick construction. He intends building the kilns at Middleton Grange High School and will take the students through a course in raku pottery.

"I want to use raku methods myself for creative expression in large pieces and for this I will build three separate kilns to hold tall pots, large platters and average sized bowls".

Michael Trumic has also been given a grant. He will use it to assist with the building of his studio at Loburn, an orchard district on the Canterbury downs, thirty miles north of Christchurch. MariTothill says "We Canterbury potters consider this a well deserved grant. He has not spared himself in an effort to raise the standard of pottery here. He has held study and discussion groups and taken many classes and so enabling potters to become good enough to qualify for membership of the New Zealand Society of Potters".

Lawrie Ewing and **Paul Fisher** from Canterbury are now full-time potters. Laurie Ewing has built a studio and kiln, also at Loburn.

The **Mt Pleasant Pottery** group have moved to new quarters built by the Community Centre after functioning for eight years in three army huts joined together. A new group has been formed at Halswell. Their HQ is an old house given by a farmer. They have six wheels operating.

CANTERBURY POTTERS' PRIMITIVE FIRING:

There was an enthusiastic crowd from a wide area — from Hanmer to Timaru and everybody came with dry pots to fire and lots of conflicting, expert ideas. There were pots of all shapes and sizes, even lidded pots, the latter faring well in the flames, emerging still lidded and in one piece. The first fire produced varied results, one or two pots remained intact; most fractured, or lost large lumps. Some disintegrated completely.

The second fire energetically supplied with fuel by one and all fared little better.

It seemed that a pot with even a small amount of stoneware clay in the body did not come through the flames well. The successful ones consisted of low firing clay, plus sand or grog.

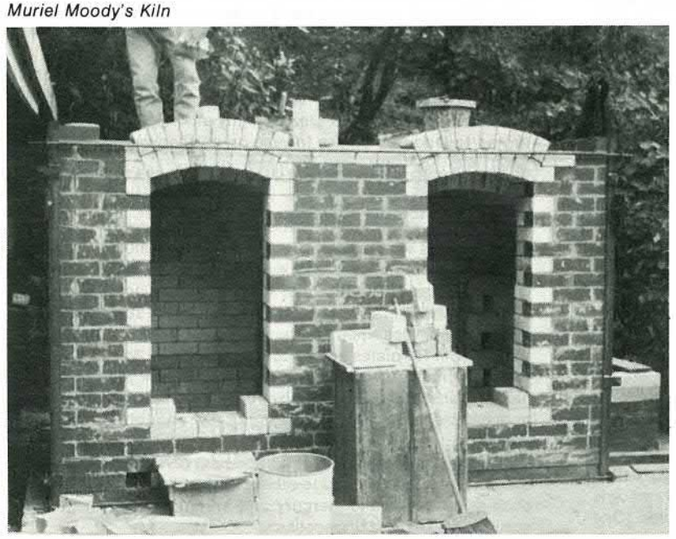
MURIEL MOODY has built a new kiln in her garden at Days Bay. It's a Roy Cowan design and was planned by Muriel and Bob Moody to cope with their combined work after Bob's retirement. Now a year after Bob's death, Muriel has gone ahead and had the kiln completed as planned. Previously she used an electric kiln at home and for large pieces fired at the Thomson's place in Ngaio.

LEE THOMSON was one of the founders of the Potter Magazine and a pioneer potter. Her husband Bruce, and Roy Cowan, built the kiln, one of the first in Wellington, in the basement of the Thomson house to Roy's design. After Lee's death Bruce said she'd have liked her friends to go on using the kiln. So for many years Muriel and one or two other close friends made an occasion of the firings. They were happy times to be looked forward to. They always had a dinner party and fun afterwards which Bruce enjoyed as much as anyone. Muriel says when Bruce married Roz she was just as welcoming. She took an intense interest in the work and was there to see what came out of the firings.

Now the Thomsons have need for the basement space for extensions. The kiln will have to go, and the friends look back on a happy association with Heke Street. Some good things came out of that kiln.

M.M.H.

Muriel Moody's Kiln



Audrey and Jim Brodie have been living in the pottery at their new place in Seatoun, Wellington. Not that they intended to, but builders being what they are, the house was not ready for them to move into before Christmas. The Brodie's have bought the property where Elizabeth Matheson lived and worked for twenty years, so Audrey's lucky to get a new house with a pottery built in.

Whose for the Kibbiutzim?

Seriously, for young potters with a desire to live the community rural life, a New Zealand kibbutz is a reality. The government sponsored communes being established in both the North and South Islands are to be called by a Maori word to underline their distinctively New Zealand character. The word ohu has been chosen. It means to achieve something "by means of friendly help at work". No details have been given yet, but the next step is for interested people with common interests such as farming, beekeeping or pottery to get the Lands and Survey Department to help them select the type of land best suited to their needs.

Wayling Elliott, Wayling Hing, now married with a young baby, lives in Barry Brickell's old house at Driving Creek, the house of railway fame. She is starting to pot again and is firing with Barry.

Doreen Blumhardt is travelling again. This time to the Middle East, to Teheran and Bahrein where she intends finding out about the crafts. She's also taking a boat journey up the Nile.

Wilf and Janet Wright who live in the country near Wellington, now have a flourishing collection of animals and birds. The newest additions are peacocks and water birds. A sedge-bordered lake has been made to make them feel at home. As we've said before the pace must be on at feeding time. Anyone suspecting that the country life has a lot to offer could be convinced after a visit to Reikorangi Pottery at Waikanae.

M.M.H.

Stephen McCarthy has come a long way since his first exhibition with Nan Berkeley in Wellington six years ago. He has come to terms with his craft and his pots now show sureness of hand and mind. Early last year he married Imogen Willis at Wanganui. They are living in a cottage across the river from their ten acre property at Woodstock near Batten Bridge — about forty miles from Nelson and fourteen miles from Motueka. Stephen is building a studio first and then a drip-feed kiln. A house will be built later on the property which has a stream running through it. About seven acres are in beech and white pine forest. Imogen is teaching at the local college twelve miles away. They have become friendly with an American potter, John Ing, who lives further down the river. He and his wife who spins and weaves have been helpful. Stephen hopes to be in production later in the year.

Muriel Moody

John Crawford is another young potter heading for the South Island's West Coast. He has been one of the potters at Waimea for a number of years. Newly married he is off on his own. Very much on his own. Jack Laird says this young potter has flair and originality. For a start anyway some of his work will be sold from the Waimea showroom, which gives him a direct outlet and provides variety at Waimea.

Beryl Jowett has taken over the old Whare Flat School and workshop, says Florence Robinson from Dunedin. Here with her large nightstore heater she is snugly settled with her wheel, drying shelves and generous display area.

In spite of its isolation Beryl has many visitors and takes the odd pupil. Her electric kiln is at her home in Outram but she has an oil fired stoneware kiln at Whare Flat and plans to use it for salt glazing.

The property is in glorious woodland and Beryl would enjoy offering hospitality to potters travelling through Dunedin who would like to put down their heads for a night or two.

Non craft markets

We went to Wellington's Victoria Market one Saturday. To all three stories of Edwardian brick warehouse. There's gallery space on the ground floor.

It's not quite called a craft market. It's definitely not in the Browns Mill class. Apart from some leatherwork and some well made wooden toys and some nicely crocheted hats the stuff there was mostly pretty junk and dressmaker's clothes. All good fun.

But the display cards underlined this or that as a handcrafted item. And a potter had a bit of philosophyon hisstand about what he's dedicated to doing.

I can't help feeling that this sort of thing doesn't do the craft movement any good. Not only is there no skill in the work, but there's no art in it either. So let's not allow people to be kidded into thinking that this is craft. Because the danger is that when the current craze for handmades is over, the baby will go out with the bath water.

Marion Street is a small Wellington city street. One of its few remaining Edwardian houses looks pretty much the same as the day it was built. It was Bill Mason's showroom for his hand printed wallpapers and fabrics. And magnificent they are — particularly the wallpapers. Many of the patterns are derived from traditional designs but are interpreted to give rich and vital effects.

There are some on the walls in Marion Street. Chrome yellow with gold rococco over pattern in the front room. Brown, looking like beaten bronze upstairs. Nine inch diameter blue gentians on a white background in the darker hallway.

He has kept the best features of the house. The polished wood stained handrail on the stairs looks all the better contrasted with the pieces of well designed new furniture. Bill Mason uses pottery. On a table with a book of carpet swatches open to golden yellow is a small pot with two marigolds repeating the carpet colour. A sure touch simply done. Because Bill Mason is a total designer he has been doing interiors for New Zealand residences in Canberra and Lima and we can be glad that someone of his calibre has been given the job.

After my first visit I wanted to buy an old house with fourteen foot studs so that I could use his wallpapers. Alas, Marion Street is no more as Bill Mason's showroom because he's had enough and he wants to get on with his painting.

Now there is an artist and a craftsman.

M.M.H.

On Saturday December 1st, Doreen Blumhardt is having an Open Day at Her Home 35 Harbour View Road, Northland. There will be pots of all kinds for sale, and you are invited to come at any time between 9 am. & 4pm.

Doreen at home

By the time we got there at ten thirty most of the pots had gone. Everyone seemed to be there with their aunt or their baby. The first visitors were gently discouraged from coming in before nine o'clock, because as well as the invited acquaintances an announcement of the event in the newspaper attracted all comers. It must have been encouraging to Doreen to see that her pottery was so sought after, even though the party was more overcrowded than she'd bargained for.

The idea of having an Open Day at home is not new to potters. Established potters such as Peter Stichbury have been doing it for years. For some its a good way of selling work.

You first need the pots. Doreen has never made enough to do it before. When she was a part-timer her pottery was mostly for exhibitions. She has never sold to craft shops. Now she sells from the showroom at her house. For the Open Day sale she planned on four kiln loads of around a hundred and twenty pots each. So that made five hundred pots and she sold every one. There was a big variety with plenty of the kind of domestic ware that people like to give and receive at Christmas.

And you need the space. Gardens don't come much steeper than Doreen's. A recently completed lower terrace provided some necessary bench space.

And it's best if you get a good day. You can't bank on this in Wellington even in early December, but on this particular Saturday morning after a night of wind and rain the sun shone with tropical brilliance on to Doreen's sheltered hillside. The view across bush and Kelburn rooftops to the meteorological office and beyond to harbour and open sea is as good as you'd get anywhere. The visitors drank this in with the orange juice and the coffee kept replenished by young helpers.

A sale on this scale requires a good deal of preparation in getting the pots ready and priced. The advantages to the seller are quick disposal of the pots without bookwork, commission or even wrapping. To the buyer it's a chance to buy from the kiln-side at a reasonable price, and a good day out.

Margaret Harris

Showing the Way

Johannesburg
South Africa

The Editor, New Zealand Potter,

My students and I read every one of your publications from cover to cover and look forward to digesting many more. The New Zealand Potter is an excellent and informative magazine.

We have started a South African pottery magazine, but being brand new it has still to catch-on. It is called Sgraffiti. Your magazine has so much stimulation and information in it that we hope it will act as a guide to our South African group to show what a truly good pottery magazine should be like

Denise Fox

Pottery in Australia

Published by the Potters' Society of Australia, twice yearly in spring and autumn. The yearly subscription is $A3 and the magazine may be obtained from the editor Pottery in Australia 39 Mary Street, Longville, Sydney 2066.

from May Davis in Peru

Harry was in Lima in all for seven months, and this very trying time was made tolerable by the great kindness and understanding of some friends who let us share their flat. Harry also kept himself sane by working on a Volkswagen, van-type, which he turned into a "camper", i.e., fitted it out with beds, cupboards shelves etc. ready for the day when we could embark, as we did on June 10th, to seek the right spot to start the pottery.

Travelling round in the VW was really terrific. We covered a lot of the by-ways of Central Peru; indeed we drove over 10,000 kms in all. Our good friends, the Mayers, who live in Huancayo, welcomed us with mail and baths etc., every now and again. Peru is fantastically varied, all along the coast there is the Atacama desert. Real desert it is with no vegetation or rain. There are irrigated valleys crossing it, but between it is totally arid.

Then perhaps 20 miles East, the Andes begin, the Sierra they call it. The main road East from Lima rises from sea level to 15,000 feet and at first we were glad enough to carry round our little cylinder of compressed oxygen. Actually when we finally left Lima we chose a less used route, misjudged the distance and were obliged to spend one night at 15,000 ft. Not being acclimatised it was quite an experience. We were terribly cold (it was below freezing) couldn't eat (because of altitude sickness) couldn't close the car doors (because of lack of oxygen.) Now we could do it easily no doubt, although Harry still feels anything over 11,500. We made several trips over to the East side, where the rains fall more frequently, and even went twice to the edge of the tropical forest. Here there are none of the crafts of dress which are so typical of the high sierra, nor the tiles which cover whole villages higher up. Nor did the poverty seem too dreadful. High up it is very little cultivatable land. Also there is a limit to what will grow, even in the three rainy months of the year.

Our search centred on disused water-mills and we must have seen over 30. Some had no road anywhere near, many had very small power-potential, a great many were totally derelict, but it was all very interesting. Mostly people were very friendly, the exception was when we were anywhere near a mine, then we found hostility, sullenness or servility. Once one leaves the main central highway the roads are all unsealed, often one way only (different ways on alternate days) and used almost exclusively by buses and trucks (lorries). This sometimes made things difficult for us, as bridges sometimes had just the two wheel tracks bridged with a horrible void between, and the width was for a bus not a car. It was my job to stand on the far side and make sure Harry put his wheels on the inner edge of the two tracks ... easy enough for the front wheels but I was always relieved when the back ones landed safely on terra firma. We carried timber which came in useful for bridging gaps, and for getting us out when stuck in mud. We also used a steel tape at times to verify that we could get through. On the eastern side of the mountains the roads were muddy and there were deep ruts, again the right depth for a bus but too deep for us. The car stood up to it all very well though we did break one shock-absorber, and the accelerator pedal fell off, and we drove many 100 kms with it tied up with a rubber band to the gear level. Spares are almost non-existent.

Another occasion we were told there was a kaolin mine higher up. So we set off, and reached a ford, which looked frighteningly deep. I got out to prod around with a stick, and of course slipped in, so Harry said, well since you are wet you might as well paddle and see the depth, and then too I got the job of sinking large stones in the deepest part. We got across and followed a winding road up quite a mountain. I think no "gringo" (white person) had ever been up there before by the reaction of the local people. Two girls held their hats on and RAN, skirts flapping wildly. Finally we reached a village, but when Harry approached a child or woman they too ran, however some men were found who were very friendly, and told us that the kaolin was another two hours on foot (or donkey) so we ruled that one out.

Once we were having breakfast and two policemen complete with machine guns came to see our papers, and another time we were thoroughly inspected to see if we had stolen all the leaves from some farmer's coca crop. Well, to cut a long story short, we finally decided on this place called Izcuchaca(pronounced EES-ku-chaca).

Izcuchaca is a reasonable 9,500 ft and a rather lovely spot. It is in a narrow gorge,but at a point where a side river comes in and on this river there are two mills. The lower one is just a ruin, mud walls and no roof, but the upper one is half completed and has never been used. We planned to use the head of water from this for the workshop in the lower one, and to use the upper one for our house, and later offices, etc. The upper mill is on the site of an old "tambo" or Inca inn, and legend has it that a Spaniard loaded with gold was murdered there, and that his ghost is to be seen looking for the gold. We first approached the mayor, who was delighted with the idea and asked us to present it to the next council meeting. This we did, and the response was heart-warming. There were 5 councillors, one a young woman, and we were interested to hear them attend first to local business, e.g., a restaurant which needed to improve its hygienic standard, and was to be given one month in which to do so or be closed down. It was all very democratic with the public taking a lively part. Our next contact was when we came over again from Huancayo to give a talk and give slides of the machinery and some of our pots. We thought it was going to a flop because, announced for 6.30 at 7.30 there were only ten children and one dog present. However, punctuality is a peculiarity of the Anglo-Saxon world, and when we began at 7.30 there was a good audience and by 8.00 there wasn't even standing room. A loud speaker relayed our talks (we did one each) to the multitudes outside. I suspect there were only dogs but I didn't actually see. (Now the children bang on our door here in Izcuchaca and when we open ask "When is the next cine show"). There is a railway from Lima to Huancayo, and a narrow gauge one from there to Huancavelica which passes through Izcuchaca. There is a diesel car (1st class) but the bulk of the traffic goes in steam trains, with brass bells rung by hand.

10.30 a.m. is the great moment when two steam trains pass in the station here. Six coaches packed, and a dozen women rush out with food and drink for sale. Slices of fresh pineapple (2 cents a slice), jam pastries, cakes, and the local drink made from the seeds of the

pepper tree (Schimus Molle). There is always much shunting and ringing of bells and rushing to and fro. Izcuchaca is also the town serving a vast hinterland without road access, so we also get herds of llamas arriving in the square with their loads. Lovely dignified beasts. This all sounds terrific but there is one large snag, and that is that the owner of the mills is a little capitalist, owns half the village, land and houses (mostly empty) and won't sell a thing. He is 78 and suffers from illusions of power. Claims to have founded the village and caused the river (a big one) to run in the gorge. He is well known and disliked but that doesn't help. At one of the meetings, it was anniversary of the revolution, and when they had made many very flowery speeches about the revolution and how we all work for the good of the community now and no more blue blood etc., they started to tell him in public what they thought of him and how good our project was for the village. He was in fact publicly shamed into saying he would sell. Cheers all round and wine was brought out, nine glasses. I thought it was for high-ups only but it turned out they only had nine glasses and they kept refilling them ... too fast for any washing between ... till we had all drunk. Then later it turned out that all the old man was offering was the ruin not the upper mill, and not even the water canal to the mill, and without which it is useless. He also wanted to haggle separately for every tree, some of which are actually growing inside the walls of the mill. We seemed to have exchanged national politics for village politics, the only difference was that we had the council and villagers on our side this time.

Now, at the time of writing, he has conceded the water canal, so no doubt by the time this reaches you things will really be fixed. At the worst the village has the power to expropriate but they prefer not to rub the old man up more than they need. We have been lent two rooms in the village (the mills are a mile outside). This gives us a bit of room and Harry can use one as a workroom to assemble the machinery which arrived safely here from New Zealand, nothing lost and nothing broken. It is far from ideal, no garden or even balcony, right on the street with the consequent noise, dust and publicity, and I long to lay my hands on that upper mill which is absolutely delectable, gum trees all round and a bit of land to grow vegetables. We have found the first consignment of clay (fireclay for the kiln bricks) and the tiles to roof the place and in two weeks we have been promised a "faena". This is a communal working bee and is a system handed down from the time of the Incas. The village council provides tools, food and drink, sometimes a band too, and the villagers volunteer to work on some public project. They get a lot done even if they have to be helped home in a state of drunken stupor at the end of the day. There was one last Sunday to cut down and cut up two trees to cook food for the whole village on the fiesta of the year next May. There was a procession of men, some women too, carrying huge logs tied to their backs with ropes (homemade from llama wool) headed by a band consisting of two drums, two horns, one trumpet and one clarinet. I worked out that the band played for 6 hours, walked 12 miles and played for another 2 hours for dancing in the square later. Quite a day's work. The faena for us will be to clear the ground, cut down some trees and build the water canal where it is missing. Another faena was held to put in the concrete foundations for a "medical post". Quite a large building and deep foundations, all done without a concrete mixer. Harry is continually being appalled at the lack of tools, not only among the poor but in the country at all. Izcuchaca has the usual sort of village stores selling dry goods and there is a market once a week when vegetables can be bought. Fresh milk or meat is not available but tins are, and Huancayo is only 2 hours by car and no doubt we shall have to go there fairly frequently.

January 1st, 1974. Well all that was written last November, and then because Gwenny, who was going to send it out for me left New Zealand for France it all got left and now it is two months later and the pottery or even the taking on of apprentices, is still very far off indeed. Sr Matos the owner of the properties continues to obstruct. His son called, drunk, at Christmas, and told us they had a lawyer and money and were going to get us kicked out.

On the other side of the picture the village council has decided expropriation is the only hope and have taken the first steps but this will probably take at least 6 months to do. In the meantime Harry is working hard trying to get a small room which is part of the lower mill ready to live in. It is only 7 ft x 12 ft (no water) and at present is the home of vampire bats. (Harry says they can't be vampires because he has seem them and they don't wear top hats and black cloaks). The room is small enough for two people to live, sleep, cook, eat, wash etc. without having to share it with vampire bats and they will have to go. The immediate problems are still to get a roof, doors, windows, etc. in the main building. Until we have these we can't take on any apprentices. Harry gave talks to the local school leavers and any interested were asked to leave their names. We don't really know yet what sort of a response we shall get here. The plan is an initial test to select 6. These will then work for 3 months installing the equipment, doing throwing practice and some theoretical work, after which the best will be confirmed and be the nucleus of a permanent group.

At times we get rather low in spirits and health and feel we are too old to see this thing through, but this is usually when health is low. We, especially Harry, are working to the limits of our phsyical capacity, added to this is the permanent problem that there is no drinking water in Izcuchaca and our stomachs are not hardened like those of the locals to the intake of bacteria. We wash and boil and peel and have now acquired a filter but 50% of the time we are only half well, which doesn't help. Christmas was celebrated with much alcohol, 2 bands and a lot of dancing in fancy costumes. Apart from eating roast guinea pig at midnight on December 24 with a local family we were cast for the role of spectators.

Finances. So far, except for one or two small personal donations and $500 from New Zealand Friends we are managing on our own resources. We can probably finance it for the coming year, which will include cost of building materials, wages, raw materials, our own living expenses and later the apprentices wages, however if anyone would like to help we would be glad and donations can be sent to the following accounts, but please send us a note direct to say how much has been donated.

ANZ Bank, Hardy St., Nelson, N.Z. Joint % of H.C. & M.B. Davis.
Bank of N.S.W. % No. 132479, H.C. & M.B. Davis, Box 2722, Sydney, Australia.
Midland Bank, % No. 83062449, H.C. & M.B. Davis, Union Street, Oldham, Lancs, England.

May Davis, 7 January, 1974.
Dep Huanavelica, Izcuchaca, Peru.

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