

Potter





Contents

	Page
Potters Symposium	2
Don Reitz	3
The New Society	4
John the potter	5
Frank Colson	6
The Raku firings	7
The National Exhibition	8
Crystal gazing	14
Saint Aubyns Potters	16
Honour for potter	22
Kelesita Tasere from Fiji	23
Baroque Politocaust	24
Build your own filter press	26
Air freighting	26
Salute to Bacchus	28
A philosophy of pottery, a standard for judging	30
Waimea Potters. The post-sales-tax Dynasty	33
Royce McGlashen	34
Burnished and primitive fired	37

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Barry Brickell moving his terra cottas on the Driving Creek Pottery railway.

CERAMICS '81

FIRST NATIONAL POTTERY SYMPOSIUM

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CERAMICS '81

23rd NATIONAL POTTERY EXHIBITION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Council of The New Zealand Society of Potters and the 23rd Exhibition Committee wish to express their appreciation to the following for their contributions:

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Potters

SYMPOSIUM — Ceramics '81

In May 1979 Helen Mason invited members of the New Zealand Society of Potters to gather on the marae at Tokomaru Bay to exchange views on how the Society might evolve to meet the changing needs of New Zealand's 2,000 livelihood and 20,000 hobby potters. Three members and the editor of *New Zealand Potter* turned up. We decided that what potters needed first was a chance for all to come together to meet, talk, listen and learn. This small group put a remit to the Society, and from this idea Symposium Ceramics '81 was born.

The New Zealand Society of Potters embraced the idea and made the arrangements. With a central venue provided at Palmerston North Teachers' College and Massey University, it fell on the Manawatu Potters Association to do the work.

Getting them all together

The opening of the largest national pottery exhibition ever, the 16th Annual General Meeting of the NZ Society of Potters, and the most substantial potters symposium yet held in New Zealand combined to draw 400 participants from every creek in the country every mainstream of the craft to Palmerston North for Ceramics '81. For every two members of the Society attending there were seven non-

members.

Lectures, demonstrations, Raku firings, Kiln tours (including a brickworks) and individual exchanges of thought and techniques absorbed the energies of potters with many diverse interests in an atmosphere of sunburnt amiability.

Our impression was that the symposium was vastly successful and fully justified the months of preparation put

in by the handful of Manawatu potters under the leadership of Stan Jenkins.

The particular stimulus of visiting overseas potters, the opportunities for soul searching — a National Body or not — future trends in New Zealand pottery — how to display an exhibition — and the flow of personal interchange provided an inspirational atmosphere in which the changed directions of the NZ Society established early roots.

Haeremai Haeremai Haeremai

The welcome, following Maori custom, to the marae in the Teacher's College grounds and by extension to the symposium itself and the farewell at the end of the gathering were moving experiences not only for the visitors, but for potters as a whole. Few of us would have previously experienced the courteous procedure of Maori greeting with the speeches and oratory which in this instance were so apt. Without straying too far into the spiritual area we can emphasize that the initial gathering welcomed everybody and everybody was welcome. The feeling of unity was perhaps even more evident at the end than at the beginning. There were rightful references to the early New Zealand potters no longer with us and to Hamada and Leach the predecessors and mentors of all.

We asked John Pollex how he reacted to the opening welcome. "It was the biggest thing I have ever experienced. To be made welcome in a foreign country by people you have never met was a very moving experience. A real link with the hosts was forged in the substance and manner of the responses by the visiting overseas potters. I felt very honoured to be asked to participate and to take part in the ceremony and share in the spirituality of the occasion. One can only properly respond by putting everything one has into the activities and communication of the talks and demonstrations."

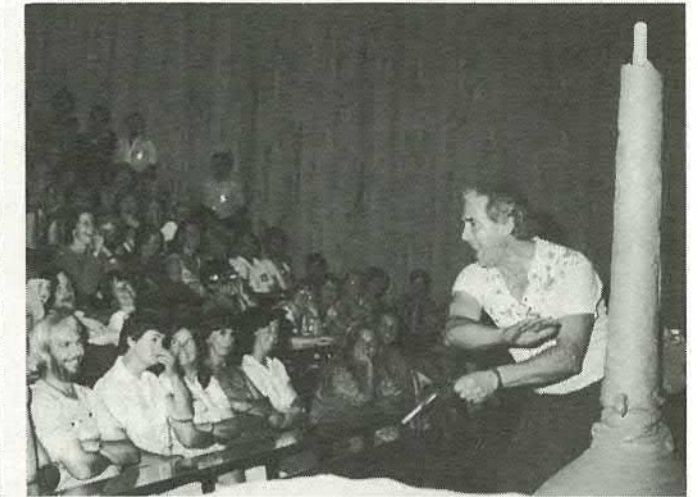


Meeting house "Te kupenga o Te matauranga" (the net of knowledge) at the marae farewell. From left: Stan Jenkins, Karoona Whakamoe, Leo King. In front John Tapiata.



All photographs Cliff Whiting and Stan Jenkins.

HIGHLIGHTS



Don Reitz, from the sound track

Putting Don Reitz, invited overseas potter — Professor of Ceramics University of Wisconsin, physical man, ex-lumberjack, driver, diver, meat cutter — on paper is like trying to dam a fair-sized mountain stream.

Each of the sessions of his demonstration school and his talk was a performance — frenetic, compelling and one surmises slightly orchestrated. What came through was an overpowering vitality of both person and pots. The statuesque colossi left drying at the front of the lecture room when the school was over, typified an approach to clay that came near to total immersion.

The evening slide lecture "Story of my life and pots" brought a flood of aphorisms and insights and a deluge of pots on slides that totally involved the crammed-full lecture room.

Don Reitz's philosophy is compelling — he determined to be involved with art. "It was no trouble at all, no one had told me it was hard to do." On learning and teaching "You are an A student when you start", and "teaching has to feed you, the teacher, there's no point if it's a one way street". Among the storage jars, platters, tureens and ladles and the tall sculptured long-necked vases are pitchers. "I always do pitchers", pitchers up to 30 inches tall. With thrown work — "I do everything on the wheel, slipping, decorating, fixing the added pieces of clay, before lifting the pot." With all work — thrown, sculptured, folded handbuilt — "the sooner you do the thing the better, don't stop, carry through to the finish, stay with the form". His demonstration illuminated these thoughts — clay flying, pieces growing on top of pieces, decorative baroque twists and curls adding themselves to the growing work rushing to completion.

All Don Reitz's work has been salt glazed, fired with LPG or in the Wisconsin countryside with wood.

His salt glazes depend on a basic saturated iron glaze — "this is the surface I really love, salt glaze sprayed on oxide colours, scattered frits, the windows left through to the skin of the pot".

"Stacking the kiln is as creative as making the pots" — the opposite extreme shows up in his technique of heaping oxidized pots in piles inside the salt kiln — "the hand of God". Enhanced effects in salt glaze come from the change and contrast of areas shielded from the play of salt. Subtle effects come from firing with cobalt oxide-coated bricks set between pieces, that transmit bluish tones to the surfaces around.

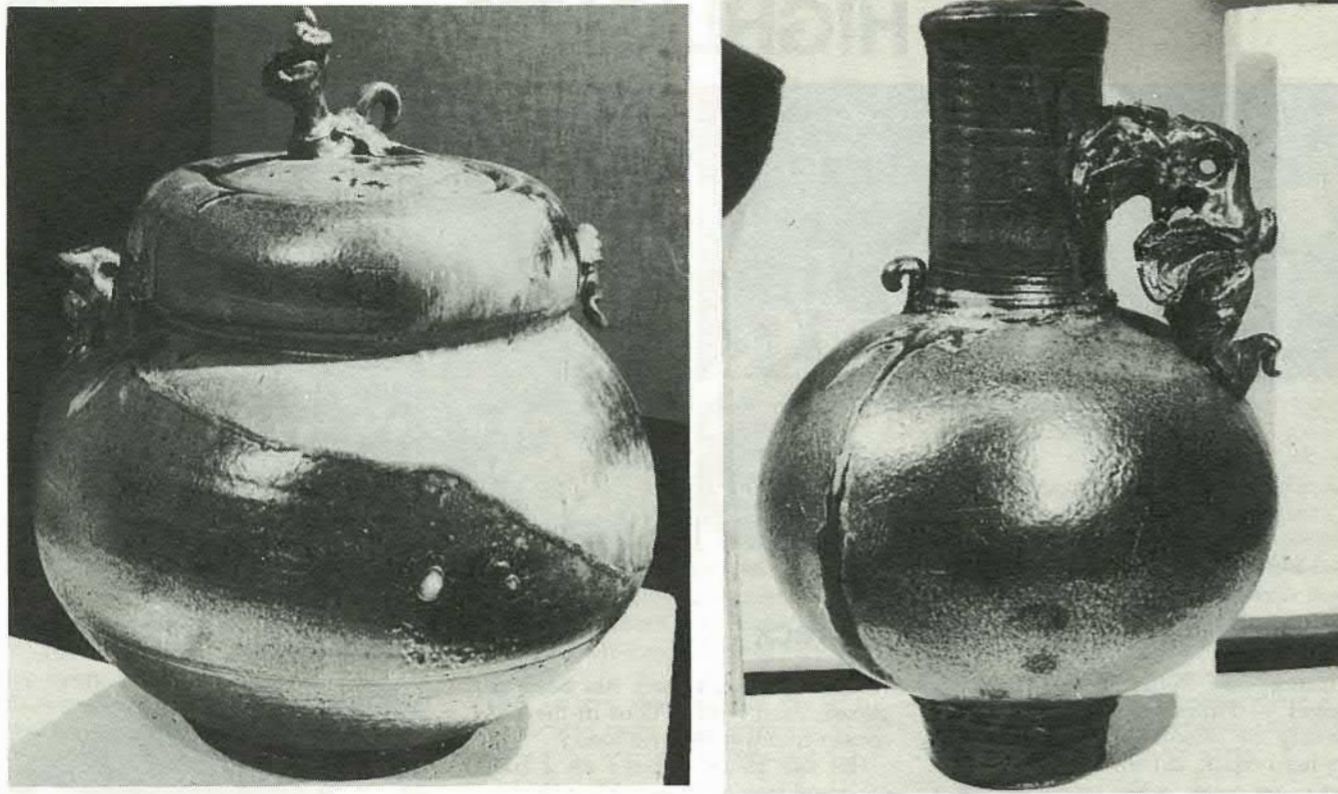
Firing for most of his pots has been outside, in kilns built of whatever bricks could be afforded. The better the budget, the bigger the kiln. When arthritis prevented him throwing large pots all at once, Don Reitz made them in sections, stuck them together, to get vases forty inches tall. When pieces got too tall for the kiln "add more bricks at the top".

"The day after your pot is fired it should still be a soft plastic form and not look like its a hunk of rock."

The square plates, elegant platters with circular pieces cut out, all demonstrate fluidity of form. The baroque coil decoration of his cut out plates is integral with the plates themselves and transforms them into a sculptural whole.

Don Reitz certainly had a message for all those attending the symposium. A message he will have by now repeated at a succession of schools around the country.





The New Society — way now open for all to join

The annual General Meeting of the NZ Society of Potters in the 18th year since the formation of the Society in 1963, preceded the Symposium. In a mood focussed on the need to re-orient the Society, the members present endorsed a number of remits that will radically alter the Society's structure. The members agreed "to do away with selective membership" and now four forms of membership are open to all interested in pottery and ceramics. The first of these is full membership open to any potter "practising in an ongoing capacity"; secondly student membership that includes apprentices and senior secondary school students and students following "any practical course in ceramics approved by the Council"; associate membership caters for others interested including corporate bodies and business houses; Honorary Membership.

We are told that about fifty potters at the symposium joined up. Interested readers should write to the Secretary of the NZ Society of Potters at Box 881, Auckland, if they need details and application forms.

The society is now between its past and its future. It will be interesting to see where this new direction will lead,

A National Body — for or against

Under the title "Pottery organisation for the 80's" a debate on the desirability of a national body for potters (Rod McGowan — yes, Jan Bell — no) was held on the evening of the first day of the symposium. Helen Mason as opening speaker modestly prepared the way for the two proponents.

The main speakers predictably argued for a national body on the grounds of centralized strength in dealing with national matters and with government (cries of "what about the sales tax"!) and against on the grounds of unnecessary expenditure on the central body even that of a federalistic arrangement with regional bodies. (Do we get value for the \$3,500 per annum cost of council meetings?) The arguments against were not particularly answered but there was some feeling in support of strong regional bodies no matter what else.

By our count, the speakers from the floor were 8 to 1 in favour of a strong national body directly or by implication. Although these views were perhaps somewhat moderated by the radical events of the Annual General Meeting, nevertheless there were some firm views expressed as to what was wanted from a national body, several outbreaks of self-interest and occasional

and how the hope that these changes will "set the NZ Society of Potters on a course of being a society truly representing the aims, aspirations and

cries of "bullshit"

Several speakers spoke of the need for clear objectives; some were formally proposed but none adopted. The widest area of agreement was the need for better communication among potters at the week by week, month by month level, as well as by the kind of open gathering that the symposium represented. There was a need to know about potteries for sale or rent, who was coming visiting next month, about things to swap, buy and sell.

More fundamental were the worries about standards. There was some nostalgia for the select Society that had been up to the day before; new members anxious to join the old Society were thereby founding the new. Where was selection now to come from? Several speakers focussed on the inevitable fact that rigorous selection of pots, not potters, at Society exhibitions was the most practicable way of maintaining standards. Many may be called, but few chosen.

At the end of the session one lone Southern voice crying in the wilderness suggested we could all think what we could put into the national body and not only what we could get out of it.

needs of its membership, the potters of New Zealand", will be fulfilled.

Leo King was re-elected President. Neil Grant and Sally Vinson become vice-presidents.

John the Potter

John Pollex, invited potter, from the Barbican Craft Group, White Lane, Plymouth, a master of slipware in the early English Toft tradition gave a series of fascinating demonstrations of his perfected skills.

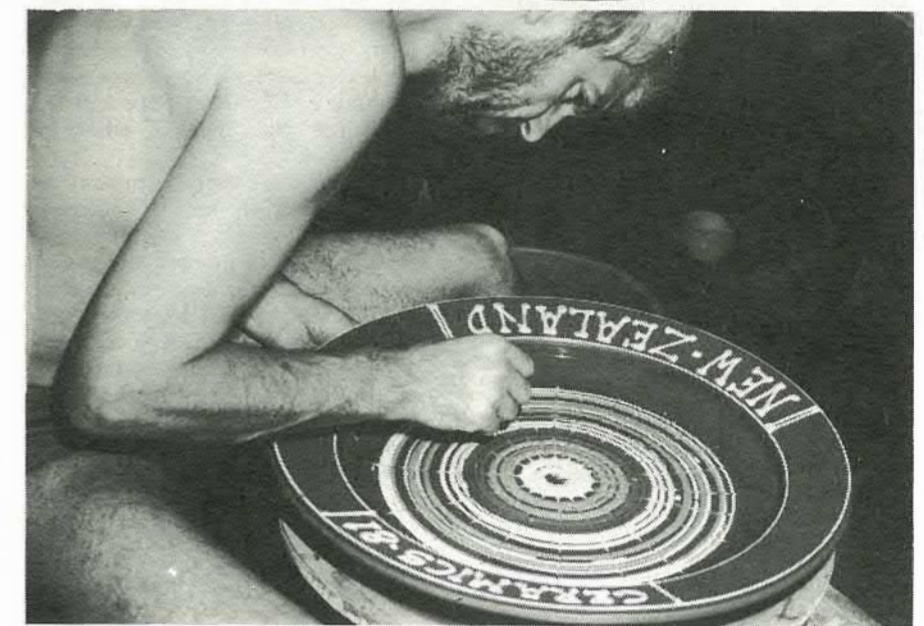
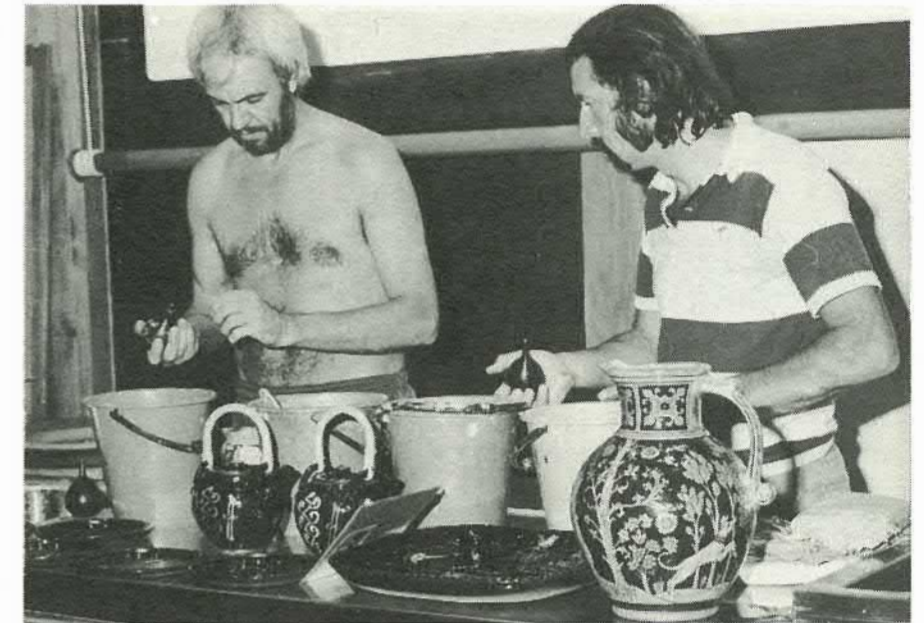
John went to the Sir John Cass Art School in Whitechapel in 1966 and a year and a half later on to Harrow School of Art. His potting developed further with a year's experience in established workshops particularly that of Colin Pearson in Kent. From then on he developed his own style first in stoneware then on coming to Plymouth in 1972 he evolved new techniques in earthenware.

His work now is dominantly in ware slipped and slip trailed. Commemorative plates in limited editions have developed as a particular specialty. Returns from his work are high by New Zealand standards "£60 for a plate at the studio, double that price in London". An arrangement with a hotel chain for platters and serving dishes keeps him busy for two to three months each year.

His mugs, plates and platters are made with four basic slip colours, yellow, green, brown and black, used as background or trailed. Wax resist and cutting back through overlain slip add additional variety to the design possibilities of this restricted palette. John Pollex used mugs to demonstrate techniques. His sure touch was exciting to watch — a quick single dip of the greenware into the background slip, wait till the immediate shine goes off, sure, quick, clean strokes with a short-necked rubber slip trailer held unerringly just above the ware turning in his fingers. Precise quartering of the design with successive vertical strokes. If the greenware had dried off too much a quick dip in water brought it back to the proper condition for background slipping.

Devotees of slipware were able to try their hand and participate in the decoration of a large communally inscribed platter.

John particularly recommended to slipware potters the book *English Slipware Dishes 1650-1850* by Ronald G. Cooper, published by Tiranti 1968. His own book in the Pitman's Ceramic Skillbooks series, *Slipware*, was published in 1979.





Frank Colson

In his talk on modern kiln technology — gas and fibre — and in his demonstration sessions Frank Colson emphasized all along the virtues of do it yourself and alternatives within the new technology. Perhaps not so new after all for Frank Colson published a set of plans for a catenary arch kiln using kaowool in 1967.

He repeated his advocacy of the sufficiency of 1/2 inch of fibre for kiln walls but we didn't see this in the demonstration building and firing of a small drum lift-off kiln, and to many the fibre question remains a little inscrutable. Technical limits were much more to the point. Fibre can be held in place with heavy duty nichrome wire loops or if you must, Kanthal A1.

On fibre: 4 lb density is not adequate for high firing: 6 lb density 1260°C is fine for back-up and 8 lb 1400°C is needed for refractory lining for stoneware or porcelain temperatures. Fibre is inert so that wood firings won't damage it. Colloidal silica (a liquid) or sodium silicate solution will act as an

adhesive, resistant to high temperatures. The inner surface of the fibre should be made rigid. The same substances with added 200 mesh flint can be used as rigidizers. There were variants in the recommended fluidity of liquids. Our advice — try these ideas out on small samples of fibre and fire them before attacking the whole of your kiln.

On firing: "Look at the pot not at the atmosphere and not only at the cone. When you've learned a bit, the shiny pot tells you much more of the condition of the glaze, than simply the cone going down can do." Downfiring to 900°C in 1 1/2 hours should be seriously considered; it substitutes for the back radiation from kiln wall, bricks that helped final development of glazes. (Comments from the audience indicate that their fibre kilns cooled slowly anyway.)

It was good to see and hear live the man who has done much to lead potters into acceptance of the ceramic fibre concept.

photos: Cliff Whiting and Stan Jenkins



The Raku firings

Some recipes for Raku provided for the firers by Brian Gartside:

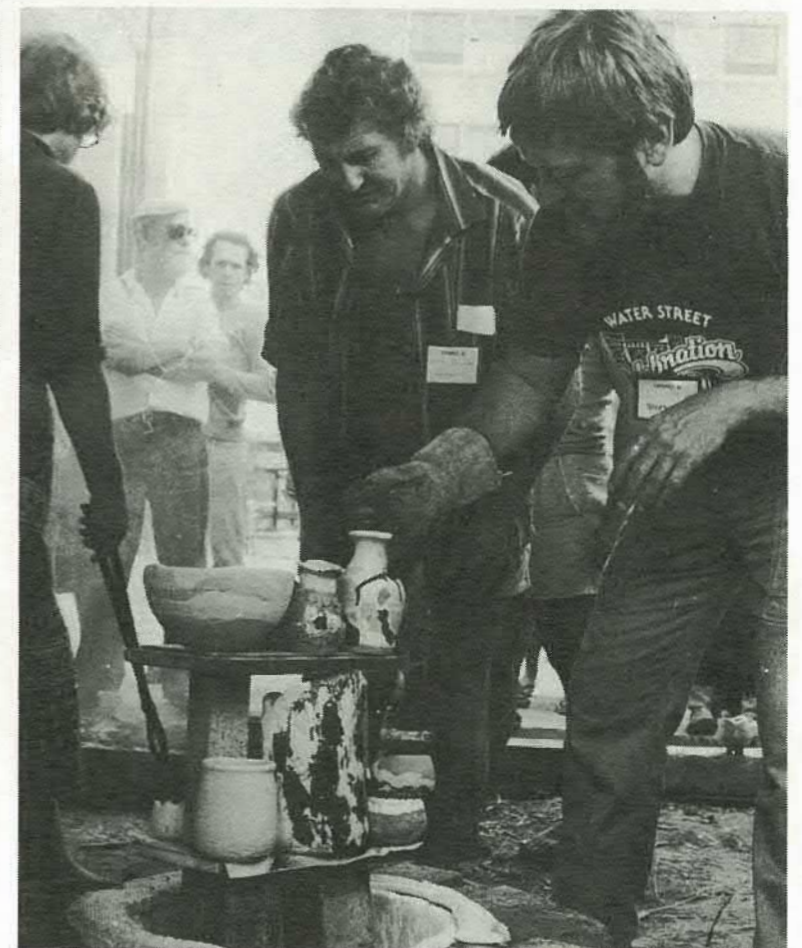
Apple crackle glaze
4 cups of either Borax Frit or Gertsley Borate
1 cup of Feldspar

Black Magic Pigment
1 cup Iron Oxide
1 cup Copper Oxide

Basic Raku Slip
1 cup China Clay
1 cup Silica
1 cup Frit (any Frit will do)
Add stains

Night Red Slip
The basic slip plus 3 cups Iron Oxide

See *New Zealand potter* vol 22/1 autumn 1980.



The National Exhibition

The exhibition, the 23rd in the 24 year history of the Society was billed as the largest display of pots ever in New Zealand. Combined displays of works by 95 members of the Society, by 57 non-member potters (out of 91 who were invited 66 accepted) and by secondary school and Teachers' College students, taxed somewhat the setting up and display facilities of the Manawatu Art Gallery. Separate galleries for each segment meant that it was not possible to view the whole exhibition as an entity.

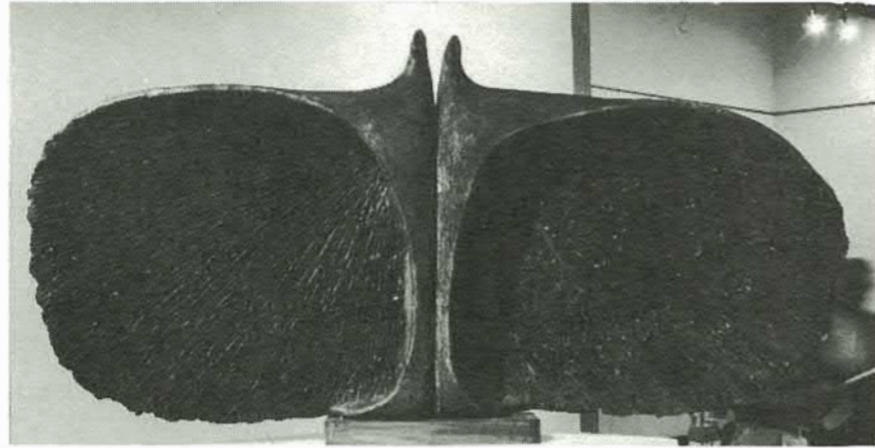
In the members and invited potters galleries were some magnificent pots and the standard, the variety of approach and the appeal of a large number

of the works shown seemed to us to reach a gratifying level of achievement. There were a few horrible low points, but only a few. Students showing of unglazed works was lively and unfettered.

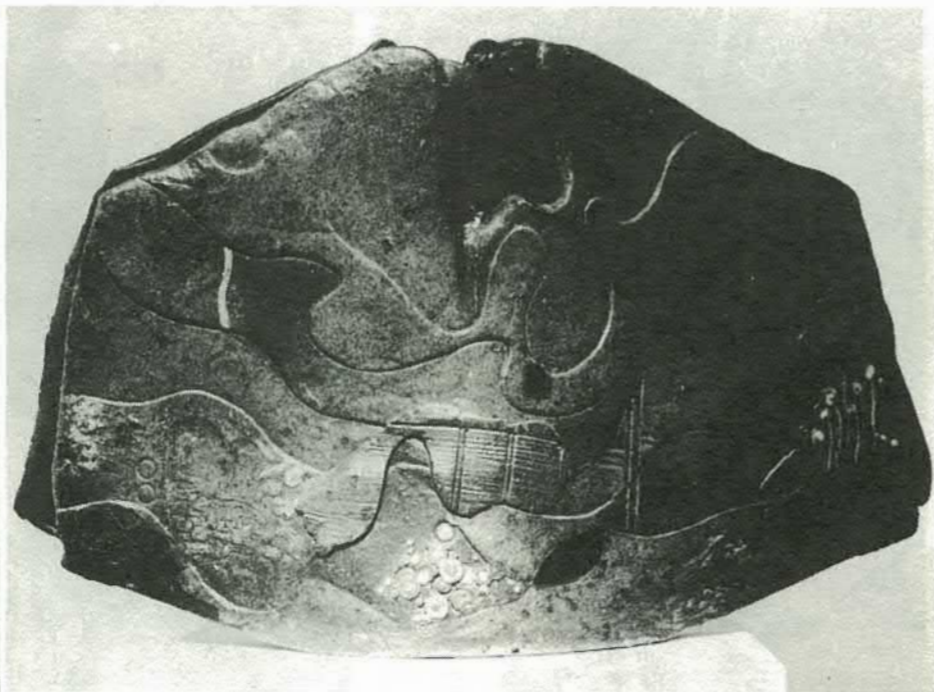
The problems of display prompted the Society to organize a discussion during the symposium where these could be ventilated. The large number of pots — around 600 and the physical limitations of the gallery produced difficulties with lighting, display stands and display space and an uneven quality in these elements was very apparent. Discussion brought out the realization that display stands of desirable quality were very expensive to make: having

been made they are very expensive to move from place to place. Thus the possibility of co-operative production of display stands and their storage in a resource centre does not remove the need for an exhibition budget of up to \$2,000 to provide satisfactory display for exhibitions of this size. The desirability of earlier planning as a whole to assess available facilities and the sharing of display experience was agreed.

Nevertheless the awkwardnesses could not detract materially from the excellence of the individual pots, and by numerous examples did not inhibit their purchase by critical buyers.



Left: Ian Firth's winged sculptural form approximately 2 ft wide.

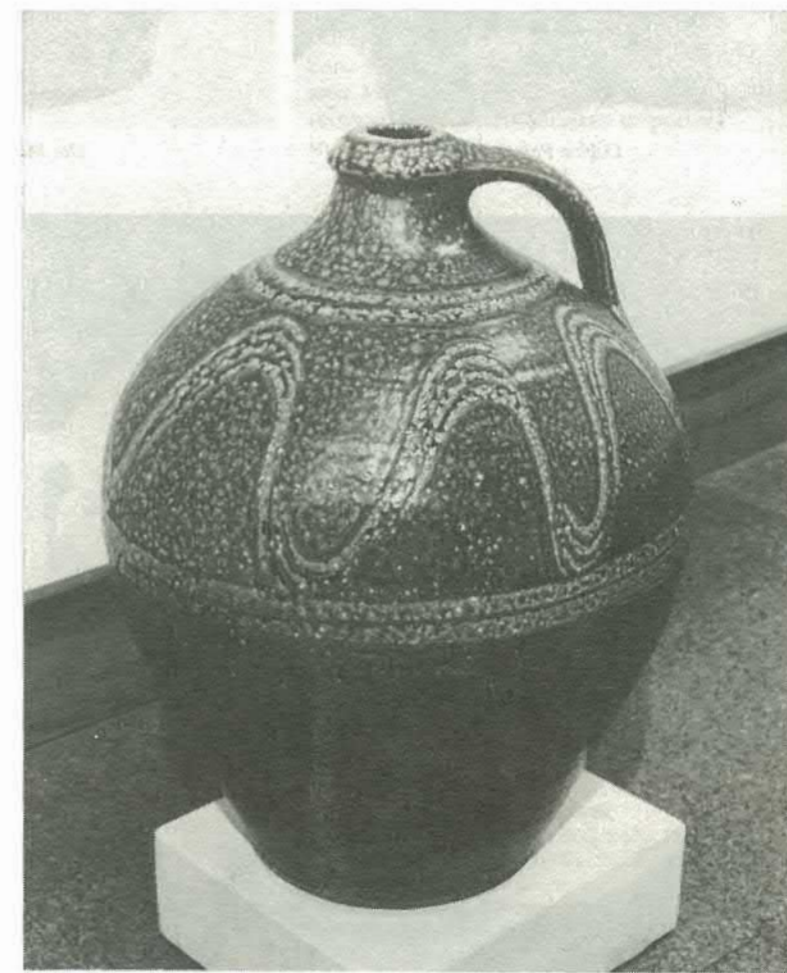
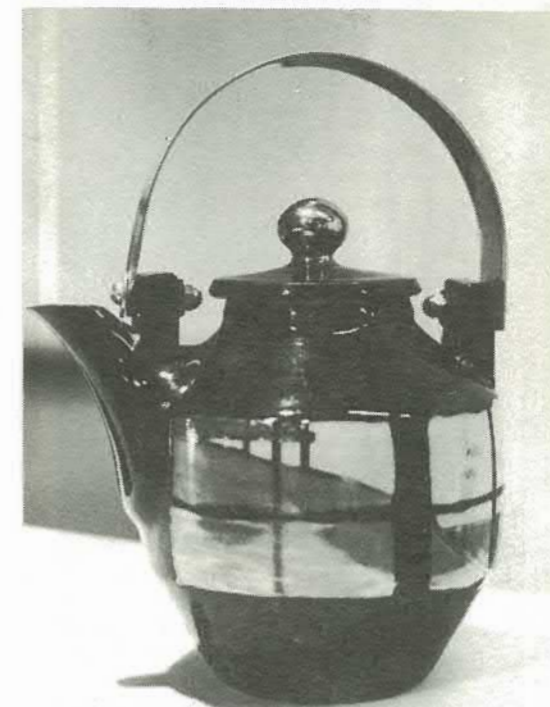


Middle left: Stan Jenkins;

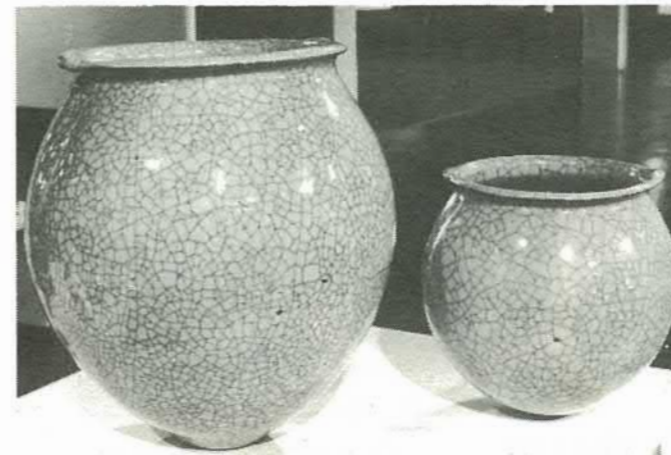
Left: Charles Holmes;

Above: Moyra Elliott.

photos: Stan Jenkins



Above left: Gary Elliott; Above right: Peter Lange;
Above: Mike Searle; Right: Nick Stather;
Below left: Julia Colman; Right: Wilf Wright.
photos: Stan Jenkins



Epilogue

Helen Mason: "We are seeing the wheel come full circle. The New Zealand Society of Potters can now once again be a gathering of all New Zealand potters as it essentially was years ago when the Society was formed."

Jan Bell: "This is the most exciting National Exhibition we have seen."

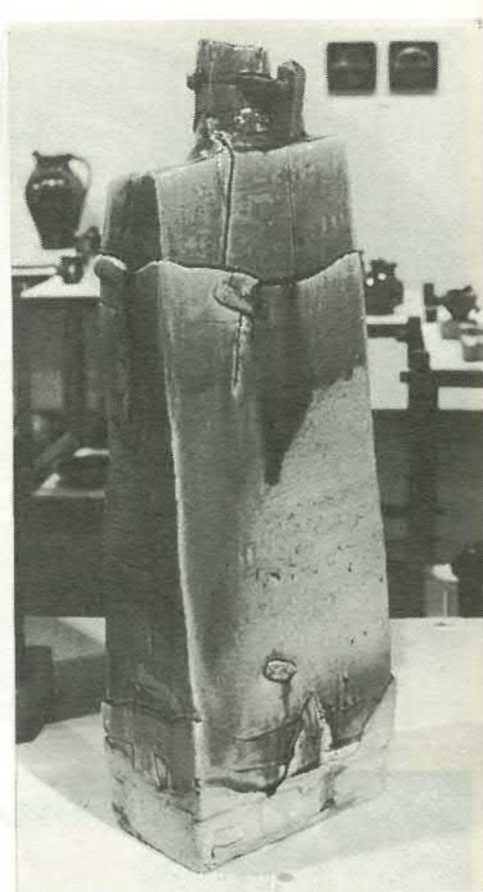
Geoff Ellett: "My feelings about the Exhibition and Symposium were crystallized in Rick Rudd's pot where his inner and outer surfaces flowed in to one another through a Moebius strip. This is what has happened to the New Zealand Society of Potters — the inside and the outside have merged and unified themselves."

Leo King (President, NZSP): "With the outstanding success of Ceramics '81 now behind us, the society feels well equipped and confident to deal with its expanding activities and responsibilities to the nation's potters."

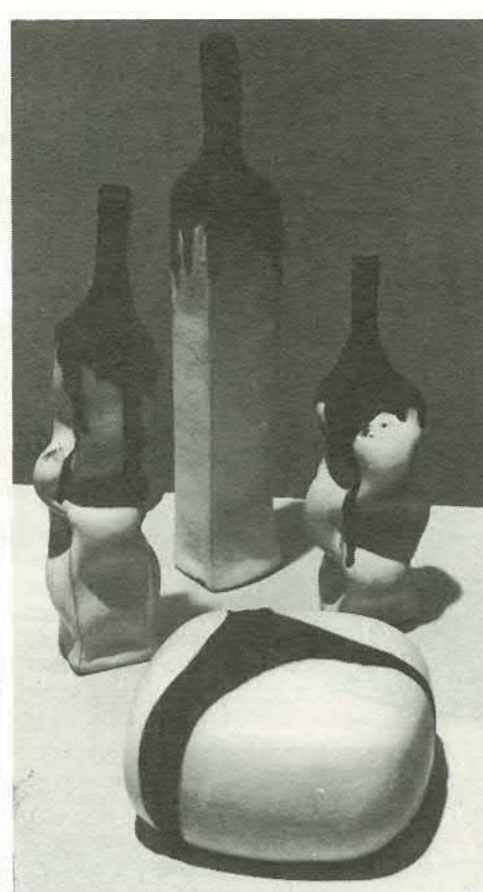
Members: NZ Society of Potters has accorded Honorary Membership to Harry and May Davis and to Len Castle in recognition of their services to pottery in New Zealand.



Above left: Rick Rudd;
Middle left: Brenda Grundy, PNTC;
Above: Deane Goldsack, Queen Elizabeth College;
Lower left: Vanessa Herbet and Vicki Campbell, PNTC; Left: Raewyn McLeod, Queen Elizabeth College.
photos: Stan Jenkins



George Kojis



Ute Mangin



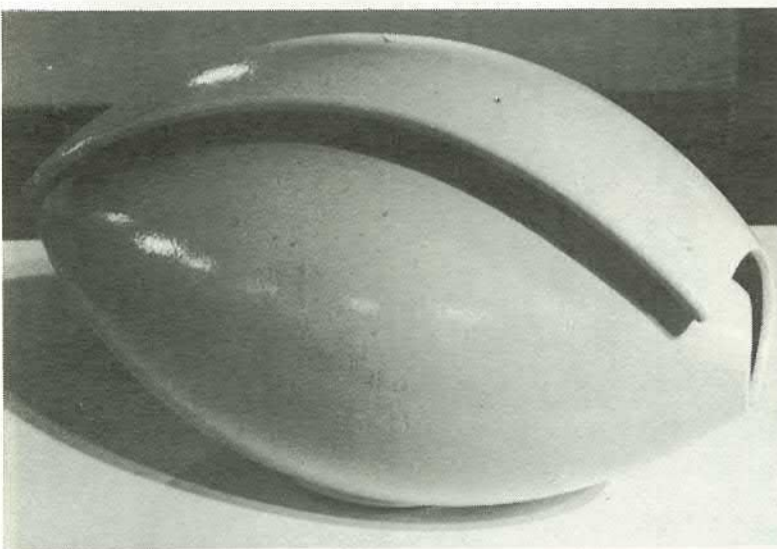
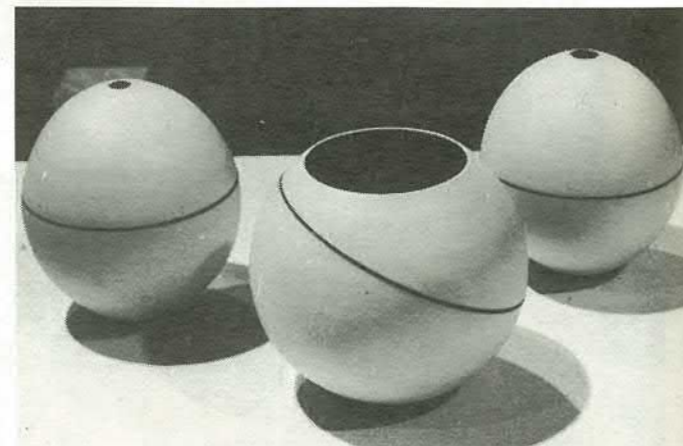
Debbie Pointon



Susan Artner

photos: Stan Jenkins

Alan Kestle



Leo King

Brian Gartside



Photography by Brian Brake

If you have wondered how Brian Brake, feature photographer of international fame, got into photographing pots then if you attended his lecture at the symposium you would have heard at least some of the background. You would have learned also how Brian Brake photographs pots, how you can improve your own photography and certainly not least, how to give a lecture.

As a young man at Arthur's Pass he met many craft people, among them Doreen Blumhardt who later introduced him to Spencer Digby, a Wellington photographer with whom he worked for a number of years. During his period based in Hong Kong in the 1960s his intimate acquaintance with pots began with the photographing of Hans Siegel's notable collection of ancient Chinese ceramics.

For photographing pots Brian Brake uses a 4 x 5 Linhof or a 35 mm reflex with long focal length lenses, up to 150 mm. The Linhof has a triple extension and the 35 mm a close-up lens for shots of detail. All shots are stopped right down to f 45. All shots are composed in the camera using full frame, and pots placed against a plain background of grey, black or white paper, occasionally a brown. A background kept far back of the pot and well lit keeps shadows away. Pots are placed on the paper which is hung so that it flows smoothly

without break from under the pot. Similarly, reflectors used a long way off can soften highly reflective surfaces. For most work two reflectors or less are used. With an incident light meter, standardization is achieved using always a neutral tone, gray, or the hand, as background.

Preferred films are Kodachrome, ASA 64 (or 25) for slides and Kodacolor for prints.

One technique especially useful is painting with light — lens open and surfaces or particular areas lit with a torch. (On a more impressive scale a memorable photograph for a Life magazine assignment of the massive columns of the Temple of Karnak in Egypt was obtained in this way.)

Advice for Potters: Your 35 mm camera is quite adequate for good photographs of pots. You need a long lens, a tripod an incident light meter, diffusing screens (white muslin or paper mounted on 30" square frames), aluminium foil reflectors the same size and two sources of direct light. Soft natural light outdoors lighting the subject through a three sided tent of screens is very suitable for pots. Even inside, natural light can be brought on to the pot by way of a reflector. Remember

when you stop down, the background will be brought into focus.

Indications of scale are difficult and generally have to be shown separately in caption or description in a text.

The audio-visual presentation of Brian Brake's material was masterly. There were two series of slides shown. One of New Zealand pots the other of the Siegel Chinese ceramics. All were in vertical format on each slide. The pot filled the frame. The New Zealand pots, principally those appearing in the recent book by Doreen Blumhardt and from another shortly to appear, dissolved gently from slide to slide accompanied by a Douglas Lilburn composition. We saw the series three times — once to whet the appetite, secondly with a detailed technical commentary on the methods used to achieve the photograph and thirdly for appreciation.

The same use of symmetry was made in the series of Chinese pots (supported this time by Bach). First came the details then a succession of the whole pots then the same details repeated.

The talk was memorable — it hasn't turned us all into first-class pot photographers but it will help us all realize that care and thought and technical approach are pre-requisites to producing satisfying photographs of pots for display or reproduction.

Potter and Town plan

Jim Booth, Chief Advisory Officer of the QE II Arts Council, told us all about his forthcoming book *Art Law* and his book tells us all about town planning as it affects artists and craftsmen. Many questions of direct relevance to potters are covered.

One general concern that should be taken up by potters in all areas because it has to be settled district by district is to press with regional councils that pottery, arts and crafts are accepted as pre-dominant uses in district planning schemes.

This subject is hot because currently regional schemes are coming up for their periodic review. Last year Southern Wairarapa craftsmen were successful in having their workshops accepted as a pre-dominant use by their council which has always been sympathetic and alert to making the district attractive to craftsmen.

Look out for this useful publication.

Reading: "Health and Safety in Ceramics", see book review on page 32 of this issue. "Ceramic Toxicology" by William C. Alexander in *Pottery in Australia* and "Glaze Materials — do you use them safely?" by H.J. Percival and J.T. Hughes that appeared in the Spring 1979 issue of *New Zealand Potter*.

Fit to Kill

Jon Amies, Waikato Technical Institute, with concern about the unsuspected harmful toxic effects that can come from a variety of potters' materials in common use illustrated his talk with a tellingly gruesome set of slides. A surprising number of substances in ordinary use in the pottery can cause distressing effects and illness in varying degrees.

As well as the dangers of silicosis, fine dusts of clay, alumina, oxides, feldspars can all cause problems with lungs and eyes. Use a mask with proper cartridge filter. Use a vacuum cleaner not a brush and fit an exhaust fan. Wear safety glasses with hot wax, when grinding, when working with ash glazes some of which are very corrosive. Avoid dermatitis, keep skin and working area clean, use barrier cream, cover cuts or scratches. Once you have developed an allergy it's there for good.

Asbestos gloves can be replaced by a special glove ("Nomex") rated up to 1400°F.

The main area of concern to potters should be the avoidance of the toxic effects of chemicals. Symptoms of feeling sick, tired or headaches should make you suspect a link and any pattern should be looked for. Three means of

A kiln designer's view Rex Sellar comments on the Colson oil-drum kiln*

Rex Sellar: Previously an architectural designer, now an amateur potter and tutor in kiln design. Has built and fired up draught and down draught kilns for low fire and high fire in brick and ceramic fibre. Commissioned by industry to test insulating materials suitable for use in New Zealand and investigated world wide, the properties, performance and costs of low and high temperature insulating materials. The designer of Rexmark kiln made under licence by Marcus Engineering.

Frank Colson was my "God" back in '76 when he first introduced me to the wonders of ceramic fibre. I enthusiastically built his Raku "Rubbish Bin" kiln and his cone 10 "Oil Drum" kiln — and I assumed it was my lack of firing expertise that produced the poor quality fired pots. I now know better. There are limitations inherent in the kiln: the oil drum kiln is much too high in relation

to its diameter for even firing.

I was disappointed that Frank Colson at Ceramics '81 did not offer new designs and improvements or at the very least spell out the limitations of these old designs. Ceramic fibre kiln design has progressed a great deal in ten years to the extent that Australian and New Zealand kiln design is now more advanced than anything yet published by the rest of the world. Most manufacturers of New Zealand designs try to consider the potters' interests as well as their own.

Frank Colson's early principles in particular the "thin wall" concept are relevant to New Zealand potters. The word of warning is that most of his statements needed qualifications before they can be applied to the cone 10 kiln design common to New Zealand.

From my experience the following limitation must be expected in using the Oil Drum Kiln.

Problems with fibre and gas fired kilns

We have received letters from a number of potters who have acquired ceramic fibre insulated or lined up-draught kilns of more than 12 cu. ft capacity fired by either LPG or natural gas, who are having problems.

The factors they have in common are first the size, 12 cu. ft or more, and attempts to use one burner only: the problems they share are difficulty in achieving temperature when aiming for 1300°C and uneven heat distribution with a hot spot opposite the burner. We have referred the problems to several potters with experience in the new materials including visitor Frank Colson — "remember these new techniques require some re-learning. Gas kilns perhaps need more care in stacking and apart from the adjustment of gas supply to the burner, two or more burners are needed for these larger volume kilns."

A lot of first principles need restating. "Always rate your gas pressure with all the valves open. You need to have both pressure and volume working together. Get your gas fitter to make this check with LPG as well as town gas otherwise the supply may in reality be inadequate."

Pay attention to the BTU requirement — each cubic foot of the kiln needs 30,000 BTU's to reach temperature. The more burners you have the more even your heat distribution will be."

Up draught and down draught: "An up draught kiln is easier for a gas and fibre beginner to learn the techniques of reduction firing. In down draught kilns

it is harder to monitor the reduction flame, patience needs to be exercised and skills developed. At least ten firings are needed before you will have mastered any kiln."

"If you can, buy a kiln where demonstration firing is offered. Remember a kiln full of pots is needed. A lightly packed kiln can be misleading. Remember too that stacking for up draught is quite different from stacking in a down draught kiln."

Before deciding which kiln to buy, our advice is look around and see the kilns operating. When you have established what you require summarise the points in your letter to the manufacturer. Before you buy ask for a written contract agreeing on such points as date of delivery, who pays freight, when and how payment is to be made and extras. You then have entered a contract to purchase, safeguarded under the Sale of Goods Act which gives full consumer protection. The seller of the goods has responsibility for the equipment itself, if the firm sells and installs they are responsible for getting the kiln into working order on site.

**Kiln Building With Space Age Materials* by Frank Colson.

You will not get better than two cones variation between top and bottom and this assumes you have mastered a complex stacking arrangement.

If you want to fire two or three larger pieces and biscuit ware you must accept over four cones variation, and biscuit of variable porosity.

Much heat is lost through the walls and in the studio you will roast unless the kiln area is well ventilated.

Unless you can light all four burners at once (or alternatively fit needle valves to each burner) there will always be a minor explosion on lighting.

Though gas is clean burning only if it mixes with sufficient primary air in the burner, the burner design is so primitive that this cannot occur at low temperature so waste fuel and a reducing atmosphere is all that can be produced.

If you don't want low temperature glazes reduced or black core biscuit, don't use these burners.

PUBLICATIONS

Pottery in Australia, 48 Burton Street, Darlinghurst, NSW, 2010, Australia. \$A9 offers excellent information in an updated format.

Ceramic Review, 17a Newburgh Street, London W1. £7.70 six issues. Number 66 elaborates on copper red glazes in reduction.

Glazed Raw and Fired Free is the title Denis Parks gave to his book *A Potters Guide to Raw Glazing and Oil firing*, Pitmans. \$NZ23.95. This American potter from the wilds of Nevada will strike the right note with potters who enjoy some adventure in their work.

Discover Ikebana in New Zealand by Suzanne Blunt published by INL Ltd, Wellington, is illustrated by use of native flora and containers by potters Keith Blight, Patti Meads and Debbie Pointon.

Craft Hunters' Guide NZ, Thompson/Littlewood/Norris. The sort of book we hope gets into the hands of overseas visitors, the sort of information we could all do with when we get out in a strange town in a buying mood. Every PRO should have it. Every library should have it. It should be among the booklets available at the desk of every Museum and Art Gallery. In handy format, \$3.00.

Please Touch. A survey of the three dimensional arts in New Zealand by Peter Cape, publishers Collins. Very interesting reading and valuable reference for those looking for background to craftsmen, makes up for some poor photo reproduction and uncertain layout. \$29.95.

Crystal gazing with Sharon Hancock

The main differences between an ordinary glaze and a crystalline one are glaze viscosity and the cooling cycle.

Crystals grow in glazes which have low viscosity. To achieve this, the amount of alumina which is the stiffening agent in the glaze is decreased considerably. Some glazes have no alumina content at all. Immediately, one is faced with a glaze running problem and solutions have to be sought to cope with this such as plenty of kiln wash and firing the pots on fireclay pats to save wear and tear on the shelves. Another effect of the reduction of alumina is a bright and shiny glaze surface. My glazes also have a high zinc oxide content which favours crystal growth.

The firing cycle is the other critical

factor in producing these glazes. The cooling process must be slowed down to the stage where the materials in the glaze crystallize.

Visualise "a molten glaze as being a completely fluid mixture of individual molecules of substances such as silica, zinc, magnesia, etcetera. Upon cooling these molecules link together in random fashion to form chains (glass). If the cooling is done slowly the molecules seek to establish patterns of bonds which completely satisfy their valency requirements. Such bonding produces a regular structure which is the framework of a crystal."*

The crystals may be large and spectacular, in groups or clusters or all over the pot in a galvanised effect. It is extremely difficult to reproduce a pattern

at will. Sometimes there will be crystals of various shapes on one pot and on another in the same firing only crystals of one pattern.

I have been experimenting with crystalline glaze for three years now in between throwing domestic stoneware and have found it an absorbing and frustrating challenge. Unlike some potters who repeat the same firing cycle exactly and vary the glaze to get different formations, I keep the glaze formula constant and vary the firing cycle. For me, a pattern seems to be emerging as far as duplicating the formation is concerned.

I use two basic glazes only, one of which is based on the common empirical formula:

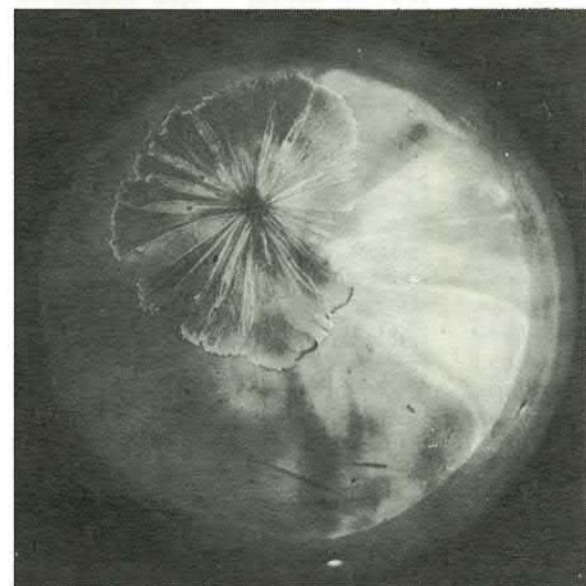
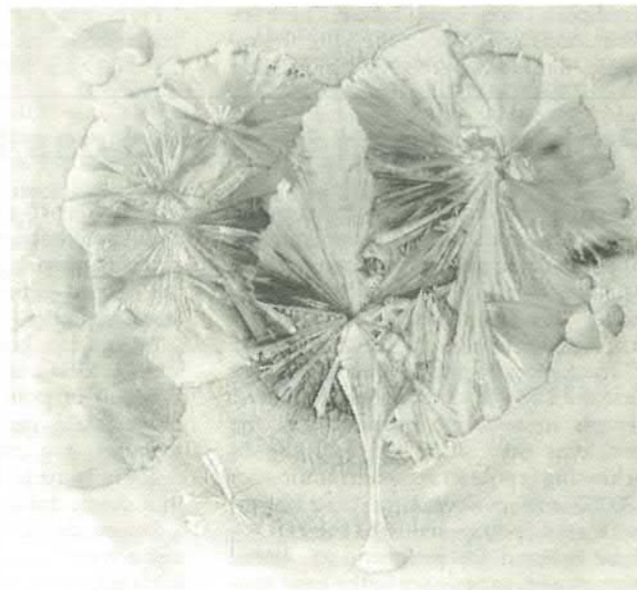
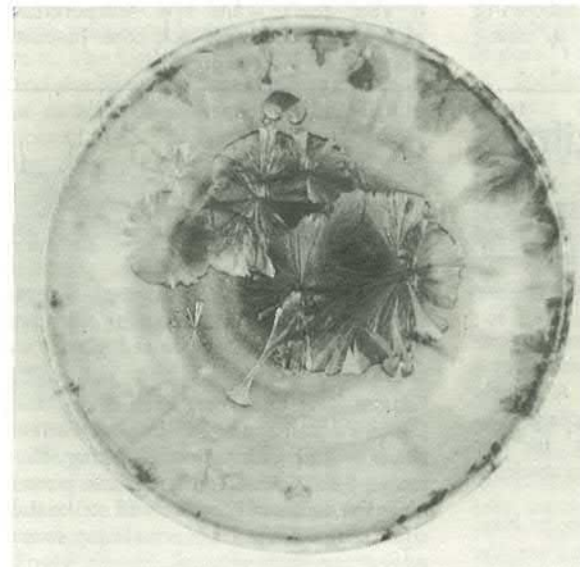


My firing cycle for the all over galvanised effect is:

0° to 1260°C	As fast as possible.
1260° to 1120°C	As fast as possible.
1120°C	Two hours.
1120° to 1080°C	Ten minutes.
1080°C	Two hours. OFF.

The sunbursts, rods, and flowers appear when I fire to 1270 or higher, then cool. The crystal growing range seems to be from 1000°C to about 1160. So far, the pattern which has emerged for me are rod and leaf structures if I soak for 4 hours at 1060–1070, regular circular patterns at 1100°C for 3½ to 4 hours. Sunbursts tend to grow more in the 1120–1160 growing range.

The bodies I have used do not appear to affect the formations at all. They are Triple X, RMK II, No. 18, and David Leach porcelain. I have superb formations on all but, of course, the colour is better on porcelain than stoneware. Of the 4 methods of applying the glaze, dipping, pouring, brushing and spraying, I have found dipping gives the best results. I fire the crystalline pots in an electric kiln and use a standard pyrometer but am thinking of investing in a digital meter. This should enable me to reproduce the same firing cycle more accurately. I see no reason why I could not produce crystals in my gas



Sunburst formations 3–4 cms in diameter, blue crystals on cream background. Crystal glazing on a dish (close-up above right), paper weight and vase.



kiln except that I would not have the same degree of control. I have no experience in seeding crystals.

The pots illustrated show the different effects that can be achieved using the same glaze but a different firing cycle.

Because of their abnormal firing cycle and composition, crystals are rather hard to produce. Expect lots of failures

— I have lots of crystals on the shelves and none on the pots! But a successful pot is well worth the frustration.

Sharon Hancock
19 Pembroke Street
New Plymouth

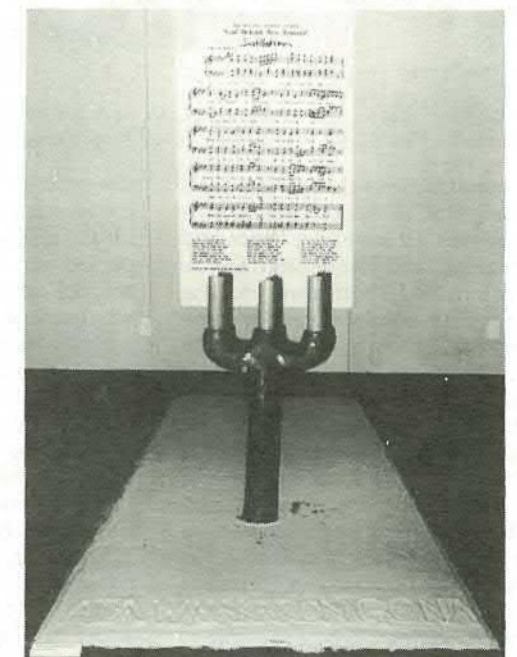
*The Potters Dictionary of Materials and Techniques by Frank Hamer.

Lament for Aramoana at Wellington's new CITY ART GALLERY

Art over the centuries has frequently been a vehicle for political propaganda or protest, and social comment. It is the widespread opinion today that artists should see themselves and their work as an integral part of society; that art should exercise an influence.

Aramoana, a native reserve and coastal area in Otago Harbour, and the proposed site of an aluminium smelter, became a focus for debate in Otago about the political and economic processes increasingly manipulating the use of land and the personal freedoms of New Zealanders. The issue vehemently divided Dunedin into those for and against development of Aramoana. It was also a locality with which a number of artists from the Dunedin area felt a passionate identity. The new City Art Gallery in Wellington invited a number of these Dunedin artists, both visual and literary, to contribute to an exhibition using Aramoana and the smelter as a basis for work.

The works were concerned either with documenting the coastal marsh landscape, or with the smelter, and the desolation of a piece of land and water by its all pervading pollutants.



Russell Moses' large dark pit-fired hand-built clay candelabrum with its three beeswax candles burning throughout the exhibition, and standing on an expanse of light-coloured Aramoana sand in front of the text of

"God Defend New Zealand", made a moving entreatment for the land.

Seddon Bennington
Director

SAINT AUBYNS POTTERS



Back row: Jan Bell; Middle row: Bruce Martin, Denis Rowe, Jackie Crespin; Front row: Estelle Martin, Ingeborg Jenssen, Chloë King, Fairlie Rowe.

After a year of planning, eight Hawke's Bay potters, Jan Bell, Jackie Crespin, Ingeborg Jenssen, Chloë King, Bruce and Estelle Martin, and Denis and Fairlie Rowe, committed themselves to the idea of a selling co-operative. For some time there had been a need for a quality gallery in Hastings, as most Hawke's Bay potters, because of difficulties with town planners and councils, have sold the bulk of their work outside the area. Co-operative selling had been considered previously by many small groups but until recently there were not enough full-time potters to make the idea viable. By 1979 new potters had moved into the Bay, and the concept of co-operative selling became feasible.

We took quite a time to make sure we had a sound framework upon which to build, believing that the conditions and procedures must be firmly established in a businesslike way at the start.

The co-operative now needed a home. We wanted an environment to

complement our craft and Vidals Winery was approached and welcomed the idea. This beautiful old winery has the perfect atmosphere; a licensed restaurant, delicatessen and wine bar as well as wholesale wine sales made it already a popular meeting place. On 6 October 1980 to the accompaniment of a band, good wine and a beast on a spit barbecue, St. Aubyns Potters opened with a flourish almost unheard of in Hastings, despite a severe earthquake on the previous night when some of the pots came tumbling down.

Five months later we are finding the advantages of such a business are many. The contact with fellow potters is a demanding and stimulating experience with each new kiln load creating wider impact and a desire for higher standards. The social contact with the public is far more rewarding and interesting than we anticipated.

The gallery opens from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday to Saturday. Each potter

"owns" the shop on their duty day, rotating one day in eight, the good of the shop being the foremost consideration. A personally signed card by the maker, is included with each purchase. The books are finalised daily and the shop left clean and tidy with the banking ready for the next person on duty.

Once a month the group gets together with chairman Jeff Bell and accountant Keith Brown, to receive the monthly payout (10 per cent is retained to cover shop expenses) and to discuss any business written into the meetings agenda book kept in the shop.

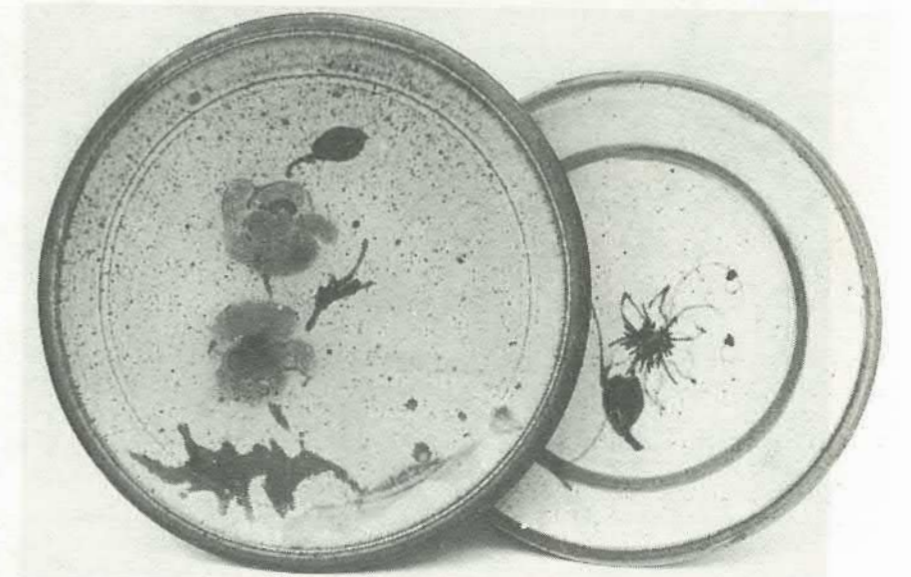
St. Aubyns Potters are more than satisfied with the way the venture has been accepted. This year we intend increasing our scope by inviting guests to exhibit.

Jackie Crespin

St. Aubyns Potters, Vidals Building, 913 St. Aubyn Street, Hastings.



Upper left: Ingeborg Jenssen.
Above: Bruce Martin.
Upper right: Jackie Crespin.
Middle right: Denise Fairlie Rowe.
Right: Estelle Martin.
photos: Bill Keams



Jan Bell-Chloë King's ceramic wall sculpture

Motivation

The people of Havelock North had outgrown the small public hall that was used as their library. A grand community effort was put into the raising of money so they could have a large roomy, well equipped library and community centre. Donations and assistance poured in.

For some time we had wanted to make a wall sculpture, suddenly here was magnificent building with an 18 ft long, empty wall in full view of the main doors, an opportunity not to be missed.

An approach was made to the Havelock North Council, the Librarian and the architect, Len Hoogerbrug, who were delighted with the prospect of a wall sculpture made by two local potters.

Design

After several weeks deciding on a theme, we chose to depict Te Mata Peak and the surrounding hills which dominate Havelock village and is a very prominent land mark for many miles. "Te Mata" means the eyes, and the spirit of the hill is able to keep watch from his lofty vantage point.

Working Model

The first small model was made in Eastbourne while we were there for an exhibition and workshop. When we came back to Hawke's Bay we began work on the final concept. We realised

now that we had unconsciously been influenced by Wellington's harsh land structure while working on the first model, so now we began drawings which conveyed the essence of Hawke's Bay's softer and more sensuous hills and rivers.

Working Plan

The first drawing was transferred on to a 3" grid paper pattern. Now we had a 16 ft 4 in. long master plan. Each unit of the design was divided into pieces to fit our 18 x 12 kiln shelves. These were then traced onto a large cloth covered flooring board, and we were ready to begin.

Construction

Clay was pounded onto the board, forming the flat back of each piece, walls and supports were added and each piece was roofed over. Small air holes were left until we could turn the pieces over to create the pin holes on the flat back surface. Each section was divided with plastic and the whole project was kept at an even consistency until the last piece was completed.

Bisque Firing

As we were working during a very cold wet spell of winter, drying took a long time; care and patience were necessary, but at last it was time for the fire. All went well but the day after firing, Hawke's Bay suffered a severe and damaging earthquake — 5 kiln shelves

broke, but providence was on our side, every piece was safe.

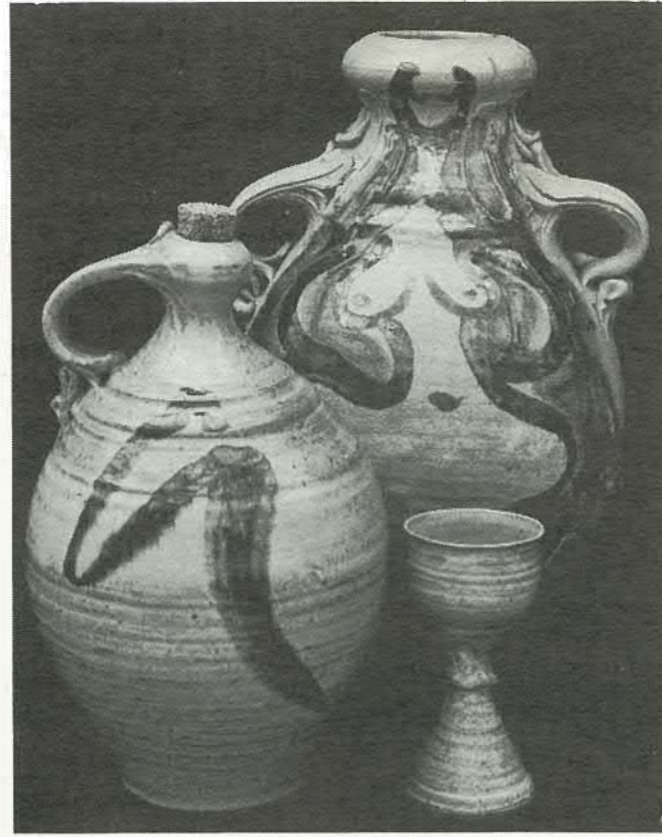
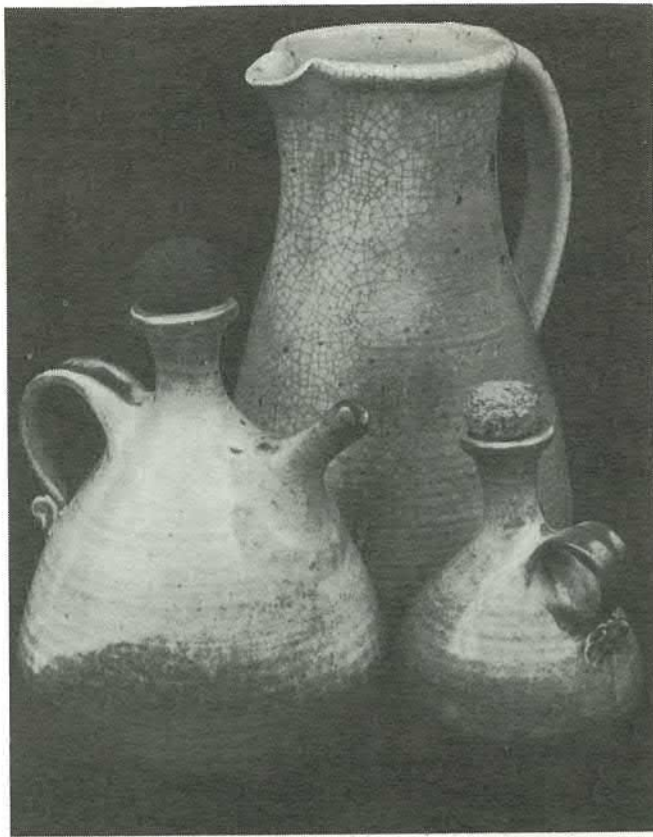
Glazing

We had tested several glazes and used as many local materials as were suitable, papa, wood ash, pumice and sandstone. Fractured rock from the Rimitukas provided a beautiful rugged surface on some pieces. We used broken coloured glass for the river and other surfaces had different oxides, slips and glazes. The firing was a cracker! We were surprised to find we had a 19.6 per cent shrinkage instead of the 12 per cent allowed for, fortunately in this instance it did not matter.

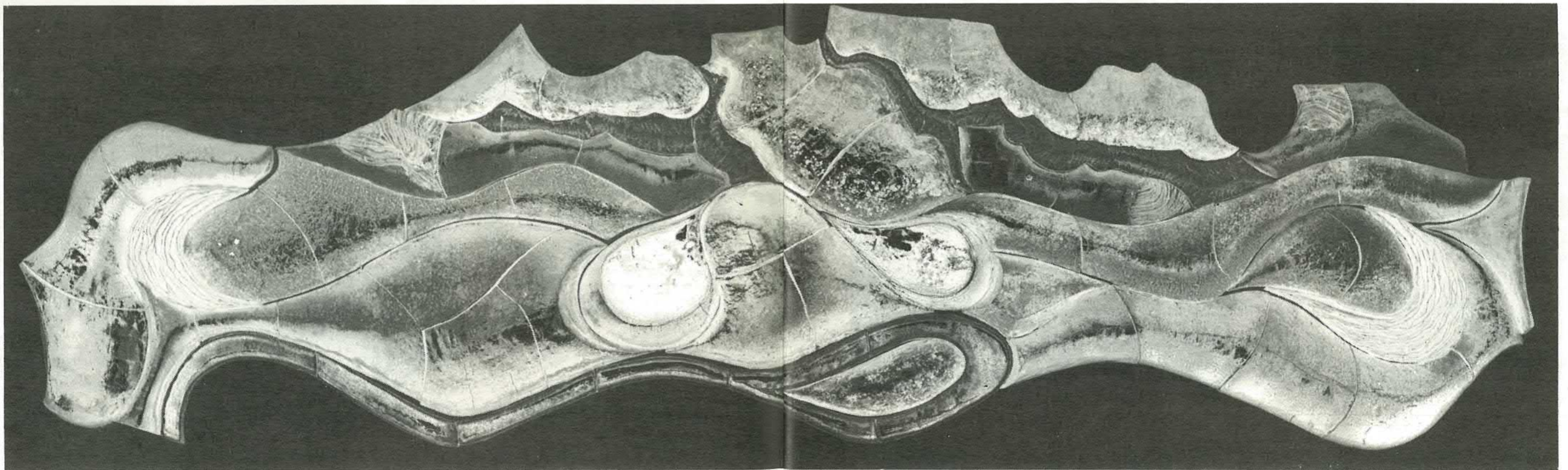
Mounting

Jeff Bell now shared the responsibility of the final stages and drilled the original supporting board, which now became the master template, with corresponding holes to match the pin holes provided in each ceramic piece. The template was mounted on the wall and the pin holes drilled into the block wall — a hard dirty job. After the template was removed the steel pins were glued into the wall and left for one week to set. The sculpture itself took only a day to mount — using K20 Araldite one to one mix, the pins eliminated the need for much propping or support and it went up easily.

A week later the Mayor invited us and the people of Havelock North to attend the official opening.



Left and above left: Jan Bell.
Right and above right: Chloë King.





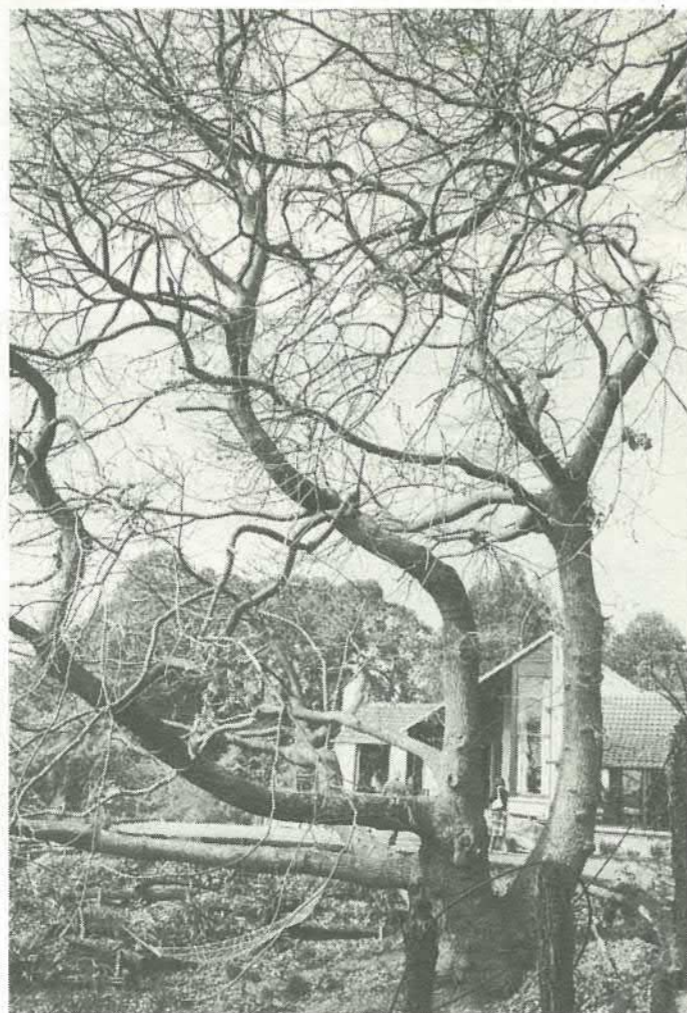
Denis & Fairlie Rowe

Chestnut Hill Pottery

Denis and Fairlie Rowe hold "Judy's Punchbowl" which won them the 1980 Tokoroa Pottery Award carrying a prize of \$400 for the best pot following the theme "The Entertainers". Of the winning pot, judge Mirek Smisek said "the pot is a very happy combination of function and fun. It fulfills the criteria of an entertaining pot excellently. It is competently made and very inventive with an imaginative treatment of the handles. It expresses good feeling for the clay medium."

The work of Denis and Fairlie tends to overlap with Denis throwing the larger forms while Fairlie alters and decorates. Fairlie thinks of her work as folk pottery.

Details of the 1981 award in the advertising section.



The potters' house — John Scott design — as viewed from the workshop through the 100 year old chestnut tree, a registered notable tree.



More workshops for Wellington potters

At last Wellington Potters Association has rooms of its own. Finding central premises in land-hungry Wellington was not easy so we were thankful to hear of a community health group leasing an old hospital with more rooms than they needed. We are now happily domiciled in a detached ex-laundry set amongst trees and lawns. With the help of a small Arts Council grant on a \$1 for \$2 basis we completed the conversion late in 1980.

We have planned a year of comprehensive and varied courses. The address is Hansen Street, Newtown, Wellington, and enquiries are welcome to Daphne Hendrie, 11 Busaco Road, Hataitai, 862 567.
Jennifer Shearer
President

Tuition in Wellington is also available at Wellington High School in town and in Eastbourne at Creative Workshops, Muritai Road (ring George Kojis, 627 527).

AWARDS

Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award 1981

Entries for this award worth \$NZ2,000 are open to potters the world over. This year there will be no category or theme. The winner and selected entries will be displayed in Auckland from May 30 to June 14, 1981. Entries in by May 8. Forms available from Fletcher Brownbuilt, Private Bag, Auckland.

Faenza International Exhibition

Ted Dutch has had work accepted in this prestigious exhibition held each year in Faenza (not Florence), Italy, in 1979 and 1980. In 1980 he was on the list of 50 ceramists to be considered for prizes. Five pieces must be submitted, with photos sent in advance and entries airmailed later. The *avant-garde* or different would have most chance of selection. Applications from International Manifestations of Ceramics, Palazzo Municipio, Corso Mazzini 93, Faenza, Italy.

Above: Denis and Fairlie Rowe at work; Middle left: wall plaque 40 cm x 1 metre purchased by Hawke's Bay Art Gallery. This and other work by Fairlie.



Honour for potter

Amongst New Zealand's potters no more fitting recipient of honours could be found than Doreen Blumhardt who was awarded the C.B.E. this year for her services to the arts, particularly pottery.

Pioneering, influential and visionary, for 30 years Doreen worked to bring the craft movement to New Zealand education, was a founder of NZ Potter, the NZ Society of Potters and the Craft Council in between teaching and travelling.

Doreen's achievements in the early days have been well documented. While the range of her work is wide, she enjoys most making big terrace pots. She has fired with a series of oil burning kilns and is now firing with gas.

Doreen considers her most important contribution to New Zealand potting has been through teaching as Head of the Art Department at Wellington Teachers' College where she introduced the coming craft to trainee teachers, at her home studio, and as she travelled the length and breadth of the country spreading the word.



Doreen's work is influenced by her environment. Her home is a craftsman's treasure house in a luxuriant garden won from a blackberry covered bank. It is a work of art. The verdant greenery around, the rugged hills and the harbour scenery are truly inspirational.



*photographs Above: The Evening Post
Left: Greig Royale*

Inter-change between Pacific and New Zealand potters

When potters from Fiji and New Guinea came to work at Driving Creek Potteries, Barry Brickell made sure the occasion allowed for a two way exchange of working methods, techniques and ideas.

Kelesita Tasere from Fiji and 17 year old Pius from Rabaul were sponsored by the New Zealand Arts Council as part of its cultural exchange programme. Kelesita is one of a few older women in the potting region of Fiji who inherited the traditional skills to pass on to future generations. Pius is more a decorator drawing complicated ethnic patterns on his pots. The New Zealand potters and the visitors left to right; Kelesita Tasere from Fiji, Barry Brickell, Lorraine Clarke, Pius Kinalu from Papua New Guinea with work made at Driving Creek. The jug thrown and decorated by Pius in sgraffiti over a cobalt slip is based on traditional elements of pattern. The big pot by Barry Brickell is decorated by Pius. The bowl thrown by Lorraine again is decorated in Pius's



distinctive patterns. The handbuilt square form made by Doug Wasywich, rated by Pius this time with applied clay. The undecorated pot is entirely by Kelesita.

Kelesita Tasere from Sigatoka, Fiji

her potting methods described by Barry Brickell

Clay

We looked for a fine plastic terra cotta clay to which local river sand was wedged in until it had a texture resembling the clay she used in Fiji. She preferred a rather moderate addition of finer grade sand (about 20 mesh) which did not reduce the working plasticity of the clay, in fact it is a fairly tight body compared with say my normal open textured terra cotta. A sample of her native clay was reddish and moderately plastic.

Working

A ball of clay is thumped out into a cone by hand when fairly soft then put aside to dry a little. A rough circular base of sacking tied around like a wreath then supports the cone, apex down, while it is being beaten. A smooth pebble or stone held in one hand is the anvil on the inside and a simple flat beating stick in the other does the work. The cone is slowly rotated and grows in size as it becomes thinner. Lots of rapid beatings make for a smooth texture and shape. A point is reached at which one must stop to allow the clay to stiffen a little more (in Fiji the warmth of the sun does this as one works), because the stiffer the clay the thinner and larger it can be worked up. Beating ceases when the clay is surprisingly stiff.

The method is sound in that it is a compressive technique — the clay is never stretched if done properly. Special attention is paid to the rim using a finer anvil if need be. Beating is carried out in a rhythmic spiral fashion, no one part of the pot receiving more than the other. Decoration or embellishment are added after the forming is complete.

Firing

The traditional method is surprising to us. The dry pot is simply placed on hot embers of a small fire of burnt down sticks. Then fresh sticks are placed around and over the pot and allowed to burn. This rather sudden firing did shatter several larger pots. Kelesita's own clay is apparently more tolerant. The pots are moved about with a stick and more fuel added if need be, so that they become red hot all over and therefore slightly biscuited. Then the pot is hooked out with a stick or crude tongs and placed on a triangle of three bricks to keep it upright, and a piece of Kauri gum (in Fiji not our Kauri gum but similar), firmly grasped in one hand is rubbed on and around the rim first while the pot is steadied by the other hand using a stick, etc. The gum rubbing is a vigorous movement of the hand and one must be quick to get the whole pot covered before it cools. The outside is done first working down and

turning it, then finally the pot is glazed on the inside as this is the part which retains the heat longest. The gum crackles and smokes when the pot is very hot and gives off a rather choking vapour. The fired colour of the glaze is related to the temperature, a very hot surface will char the gum and give a dark toasty gloss. If the pot is too cooled the surface will prevent the gum from melting and rubbing properly and will give an unattractive, stringy glaze.

Ideally the colour of the fired clay will show through the glaze and be enhanced by it. The soft, rich, lead-like glaze is attractive and surprisingly durable in ordinary kitchen use. When not primitive firing, a wood fired biscuiting will obviously give a more variable colour range than a pot pre-fired in a biscuit chamber due to the odd carbon black patches which show through the glaze. For larger pots we did, however, find it necessary to pre-fire in a biscuit kiln and lift out with tongs for glazing. A bonfire was kept going for the heating of the pot if it cooled too much. In any case it is better to glaze inside first, reheat carefully then do the outside.

Kelesita always made herself comfortable kneeling on a rug just before starting her glazing which is a process requiring intense concentration for the two minutes or so needed to glaze a porridge bowl.

BAROQUE POLITOCAUST

Brickel's baroque of pots, sound and steam at New Plymouth

(His text, magnifying glass in back pocket.)

The term is only an attempt to find expression for personal, combined experiences. It is not very descriptive or accurate, I suppose but sounds well. I wanted a phrase to express the dignity of NZ's primeval dignity and man's both disastrous yet inadvertently kindly interventions upon it. In order to present this for the first time in a gallery or public setting, a theatrical sense of exaggeration and boldness might be required. I found the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth were not only enthusiastic but went out of their way to accommodate it. The above is virtually a dictionary meaning of the word "baroque". My sister and brother-in-law Andrea & Robert Oliver being enthusiasts and performers of "baroque" music I invited them to join in with my scheme, we subsequently found that both the music performance and the steaming politocaust events were sufficient unto themselves and not necessarily complimentary in an "altogether" sense. So we alternated our parts and the audience flowed from one to the other, initiated by blasts from the steam whistle. The hearty and earthy nature and humour of the music was either complimentary or disiplinary to the mystical nature of the steaming terra cotta forms in their native habitat, depending on which way you looked at it. My idea of steam usage was two fold. Firstly, in a mystical sense and secondly, to imply a sense of engineering. As an enthusiastic amateur engineer I wanted this important, almost sacred quality, the mystical and poetic dignity of hand-crafted civil engineering structures, mellowing in our rich, natural environment is sacred territory for me.

While there is no direct association with politics the terra cotta forms are peoplic (people-like) and perhaps skittish. Whenever groups of people come together political forces seem to naturally evolve. This is inevitable as the behaviour of say, cows in a farm paddock. We all like to comment on this phenomenon and it is one of our richest sources of cultural intrigue. I don't like excessive intellectuality in art, however and wanted to use texture and sensuousity via the plants, boulders etc. to create, if possible, a sense of earthy joy. I want my intellect, whatever remains of it to be used merely as a "conceiving iron" and let the good old-fashioned tools do the work.

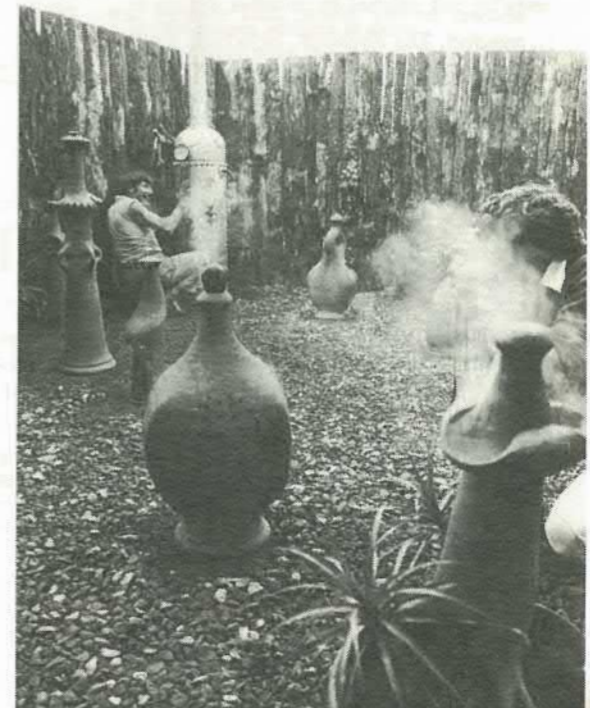
During the steam performances, 8 or 10 "politicians" were in steam at once; the others not "in session" being relegated to their silent seats in the house. Low pressure coal steam was supplied by underground pipes from a small, attractive wood-burning vertical boiler (a politician in its own right!). In the night air, with the use of coloured stage lighting, the aromatic quality of the steam was greatly intensified as it wafted silently from the various orifices (orifices) of the various political rather regions. I just wish the scale of the forms had been much grander. Next time eh.

The 40 odd terra cotta forms were mostly coiled, some compressed coiling and throwing and a few thrown only, with the elements welded together. Most of them belong to series repeatable, with variations on the theme, and had to fall into a system of biological-type classification, with new generic names as yet unknown to the plant and animal kingdom. Such is the incomparable uniqueness of the native fauna and flora of New Zealand.



Torsomorph, Businomorph and all, steam up at Govett Brewster Gallery. The music was provided by Andrea and Robert Oliver of the Ensemble Dufay who performed a concert of 16th and 17th century music.

photographs: Taranaki Newspapers



Build your own filter press

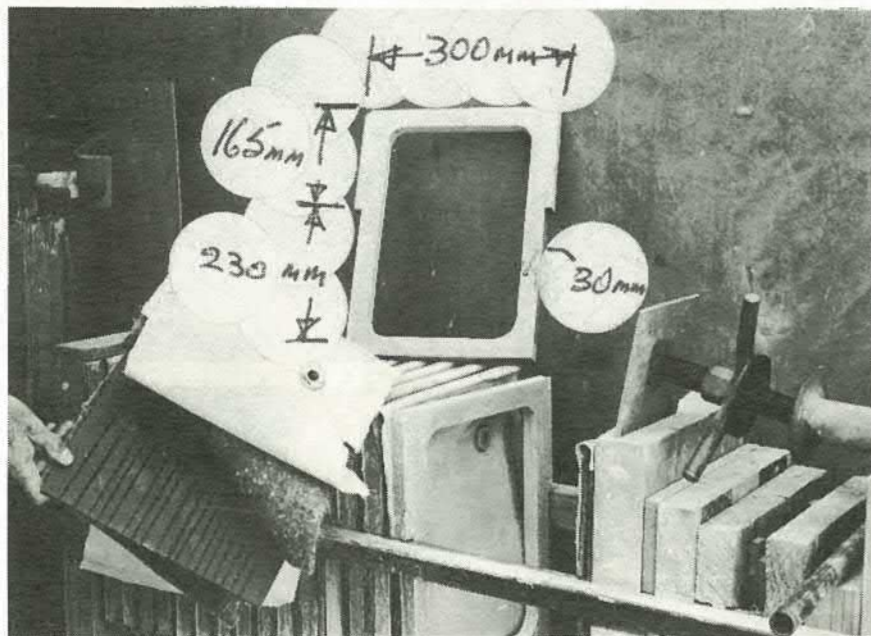
Owen Cobb

This filter press can be built quite cheaply. Firstly the compressor; any small unit capable of working up to 138 kPa (20 p.s.i.) will do. I have an open refrigerator unit that has proved ideal for the purpose. The compressor should have its own small air tank of about 50 litres (1.75 cub. ft) to which is fitted a pressure switch, pressure relief valve, pressure gauge together with an outlet to the slip tank and an inlet from the compressor head. These fittings on the small tank prevent contamination by the slip and the consequent inevitable malfunction. The slip tank needs to be of about 140 litres (30 gals.) capacity and able to stand a pressure of 138 kPa. DO NOT use a petrol drum. A smaller tank can be used if you are prepared to exhaust the pressure and refill when the first fill has been pushed into the press. Check with your local Marine Department Inspector because air receivers below a certain size do not require certification and this will probably be the least costly way out of the problem. The compressor air tank is connected to the slip tank with a flexible nylon pressure hose, the hose fittings being either welded or screwed into the top of the slip tank. The same type of hose is used to connect the outlet fitting from the side, near the bottom, of the slip tank to the press. The press is a 60 x 60 x 4 mm angle iron frame securely welded at the ends, about 1.1 m long and 285 mm wide, measured inside the rectangle, supported on 300 mm wide 75 mm thick by 1.1 m long timber ends. I used laminated beam offcuts from a local manufacturer and the cost while greater than a 300 x 50 mm solid piece, gives less chance of deflection and possible leakage. The cells are cut from 20 mm high density particle board to the sizes shown in the photo and sixteen are needed. The divisions, of which seventeen are needed, are cut from 6 mm tempered hardboard, although I think that 10 mm marine ply would be better. Then 2 mm deep grooves are cut in both faces, and a hole drilled 70 mm to centre from top and side, the diameter being selected to suit either a brass grommet or the 3/4 inch threaded brass tube and brass backnuts that I used. The filter cloths are cut from 4 kg jute carpet underfelt and a light canvas or cotton cloth over the felt. Both the canvas and the felt will last a lot longer if you treat them first with green Metalex. Cut the hole in the felt about 50 mm diameter to let the grommet, or the back nuts if used, hold the top cloth hard down on to the hardboard division. Commercial nylon filter cloths are available but are

almost three times the price of the felt and canvas. The screw to hold the cells and divisions tight enough to prevent the slip leaking out can be any kind that can stand the strain (about 3 to 4 tonnes) I find the fixed square thread shaft and loose nut, made up as shown, to be the best. The pressure warning clips over the screw, and stops you undoing the press with pressure still in the tank. After twice being knee deep in slip, I found it really necessary. Mark the top

of the divisions in some way so that the holes all line up with the brass barrel nipple fitted through one of the 75 mm ends through which the slip is fed into the press from the tank.

It is possible to press about 45 kg of clay in three to four hours with the pressure switch to 138 kPa and the differential at minus 14 kPa. After this time the press can be unloaded, the clay cakes cut out of the cells and placed in racks for further drying if necessary.



It's cheaper than you think

We asked Air New Zealand for details on costs, packaging and insurance to assist you to transport your pottery by air.

Packaging

It is essential that you think carefully about your method of packaging and the selection of materials to be used. Potters who put so much effort into their work would be

amazed if they could see some of the tatty old cartons and wrappings that are expected to protect their wares in transit.

Packing cases or cartons for pottery should be of plywood or strong, heavy cardboard. Cartons which have been used previously have lost some of their strength and their effectiveness for protecting contents is reduced. Recycled cartons, therefore, need extra inside packing and outer

reinforcing. Different materials can be used for inside protection, but it must be capable of absorbing the impact of any bumps or shock the carton may receive. Even in the best hands some knocks are unavoidable. The new granulated chips or slabs of polystyrene are excellent for the purpose.

Make sure you separate each item inside the carton. Placing them too close to the outside, too close together or across each other can cause breakage or chipping. Make sure you pack out the base of the container which takes most of the impact at least 3 inches. Remember that the final delivery is done by contract carrier and it is important that you don't make the container too heavy for one man to handle. Twenty kilo (42 lbs) is the optimum.

If you are sending overseas the same applies, but don't use straw. Straw, wool, or any such material as these are not permitted by agricultural authorities in many countries. If regular consignments are planned it would be worthwhile seeking the advice of one of the specialist packaging manufacturing companies. They stock cartons of varying types and will design to order.

Insurance

From 1 June 1980, regulations for the carriage of goods removes transporters' liability for highly breakable goods like pottery, so there is no automatic insurance against breakage. (Air New Zealand say they would be reasonable if there was an unfortunate mishap where blame was clearly theirs.)

However, a full risks cover can be arranged very simply at the time of consigning by declaring the value of the goods and paying a small premium of \$1.80 per \$100 value which is entered onto the consignment note. A minimum charge of \$2.50 applies. Note that if you have four boxes in a consignment they should each be declared individually, because if there was damage to the box which happened to contain goods of most value, you would only get compensated for the stated average value of the four boxes.

Transport

Domestic flights serve 23 centres. If you want to send a package to a town without a direct air service Air New Zealand has a network of surface operators who carry goods to such places as Balclutha from the nearest airport. This means that there is virtually nowhere in New Zealand that can't use air cargo.

Getting packages to and from city depots or airport can be a hassle. You can phone Air New Zealand and they will arrange to pick up your shipment, fly it to its destination and then deliver it right to the addressee at a city or suburban address. This service costs 5c per kilo at each end (minimum \$1.30), a small extra cost for ease and convenience. When sending by air in New Zealand you can no longer collect cargo at city depots. There is now a choice of having packages delivered to the final address or leaving it to the recipient to collect from the airport. As some airports are a distance from a city clearly delivery of the package saves a lot of trouble. Clear addressing of street number, street and the suburb hastens the procedure.

Customs regulations make this type of service more difficult with shipments going overseas. Air New Zealand serves most major cities in the Pacific basin and has ar-

rangements with other selected airlines for shipments to be sent to any destination in the world where there is a regular airline service. Full delivery service can be arranged at some points and you can get details of this from Air New Zealand Cargo Offices.

Costs of air transport are sometimes assumed to be high, but this is not necessarily so.

Take, for example, a 22 lb/10 kilo parcel on a few sample sectors.

Wanganui-Auckland	\$3.90
Auckland-Nelson	\$5.70
Nelson-Dunedin	\$5.40
Tauranga-Wellington	\$4.60
Wellington-Auckland	\$4.80
Napier-Christchurch	\$5.40

All shipments are charged on a cents per kilo basis with a minimum of \$2.50 being charged. This means that up to 5 kilo (11 lbs) can be sent for just on the minimum price. The cost for heavier packages is arrived at by multiplying the weight in kilos by the appropriate rate to the destination. Details of these are in New Zealand domestic timetable. You can ring your local air cargo office.

These rates are for the freight air priority of cargo which gives delivery in most cases some 48 hours after despatch. If you need a quicker service, the Jet-X priority gives an overnight delivery and Courier Cargo priority gives a next flight out service for the really urgent consignments. Obviously the quicker the service the higher the rate you pay.

The costs for sending cargo overseas varies with distances to be covered. Here again are some sample costs for a 10 kilo package from Auckland.

Sydney	\$18.90	Min. Charge	\$17.02
Melbourne	\$21.30	Min. Charge	\$17.02
Brisbane	\$21.30	Min. Charge	\$17.02
Suva	\$16.10	Min. Charge	\$16.20
Singapore	\$58.10	Min. Charge	\$21.31
Hong Kong	\$58.90	Min. Charge	\$19.20
Honolulu	\$51.60	Min. Charge	\$25.00
Los Angeles,			
San Francisco	\$72.10	Min. Charge	\$25.00
New York	\$81.10	Min. Charge	\$32.20
London	\$99.40	Min. Charge	\$33.00

All rates subject to alteration.

There are special discounted rates for shipments weighing over 100 lbs/45 kg. Even more favourable rates can sometimes be negotiated with Air New Zealand where frequent large shipments (from 100 kg upwards) are despatched.

A point to be aware of. If you send bulky but light weight packages you will be charged on the volume. To work this out you multiply the length by the height by the width and then divide by 7000 if measuring in centimetres, 427 if you are measuring in inches. The answer will be the volume weight you will be charged on if it is greater than the actual weight. This may sound complicated, but this situation could apply to pottery despatches.

Here is an example of this — take a package weighing 10 kilos and measuring 18" x 20" x 15" = 5400 ÷ 427 = 13 kilos
45 cm x 51 cm x 38 cm = 89148 ÷ 7000 = 13 kilos

In this case you would be charged on the volume, i.e., 13 kilos.

A further example:

Still taking a 10 kilo package this time measuring

12" x 20" x 14" = 3360 ÷ 427 = 8 kilos
30 cm x 51 cm x 36 cm = 44080 ÷ 7000 = 8 kilos

The charge would be based on the actual weight of 10 kilos in this case.

If you want any advice on air freighting Air New Zealand offer their advice freely.

Wellington potter Paul Wotherspoon has enough experience of despatching his pottery by air to have the procedure streamlined.

He has a dozen returnable containers, which are transported back to him at 50 per cent of the cost of the outward despatching charge. He was fortunate in being able to buy at auction for \$12, stoutly built wooden boxes in two sizes. The larger has an inside measurement of 300 x 300 x 500 mm, which were exactly the correct dimensions for packing his ware.

The top and bottom of the boxes extend beyond the sides which give added protection to the contents and provide a flanged edge on the top for bolting the lid onto.

Paul has a five inch strip of pinex softboard along the length of the box to cushion impact on the bottom and he does not use additional packing. He has divided the box with a cross wooden partition to keep the contents stable should the box fall on its side.

Packing is by means of corrugated cardboard sleeves. Paul's flatware very conveniently stacks on end. The only breakages have occurred when he has packed baking dishes one inside the other without cardboard separation. He says it is worth spending time thinking out to the last detail what you want to get into your box so a system of protective packaging can be worked out to be used over and over again.

Paul has reversible lids to the boxes. On one side of the painted white lid in clear black paint he has the name of the consignee and the appropriate fragile sticker with room left for the air cargo codes. On the inside of the lid he has his own address with, return at 50 per cent cost also written clearly in black on its lower right corner. It is simply a matter of turning the lid over for the return address to show.

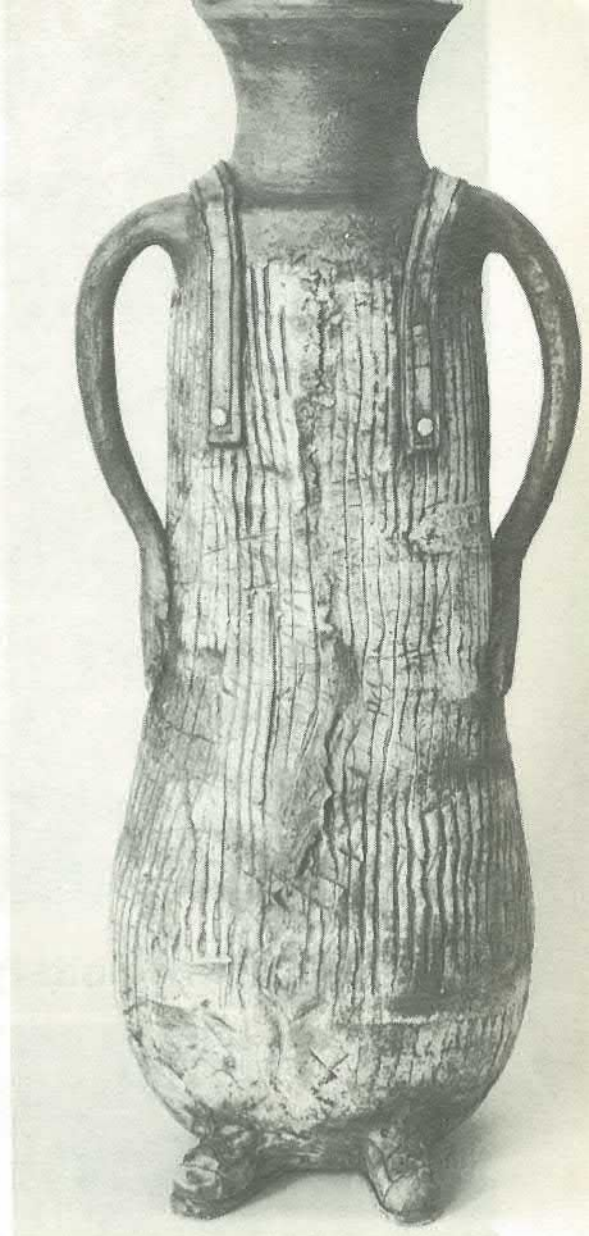
Paul now pays the cost of the freight to the customer's door. At first the customer paid the freight, but when sales tax had to be added to the cost last year he took up the freight bill to soften the extra cost. He thinks he will continue to pay the freight both there and back (50 per cent less). Customers unpack immediately the boxes arrive because there is no mess, and to assist with their quick despatch back, he includes a filled-in consignment note for return. He says it is worth making sure your customer understands the procedure and does not lose the consignment note or it will cost you money.

Because Paul's package is so secure he hasn't bothered to take out insurance, reckoning that he was not likely to lose \$100 worth of pots in a year.

Air freighting from door to door has proved for him to be most efficient in time and energy for a most reasonable cost.

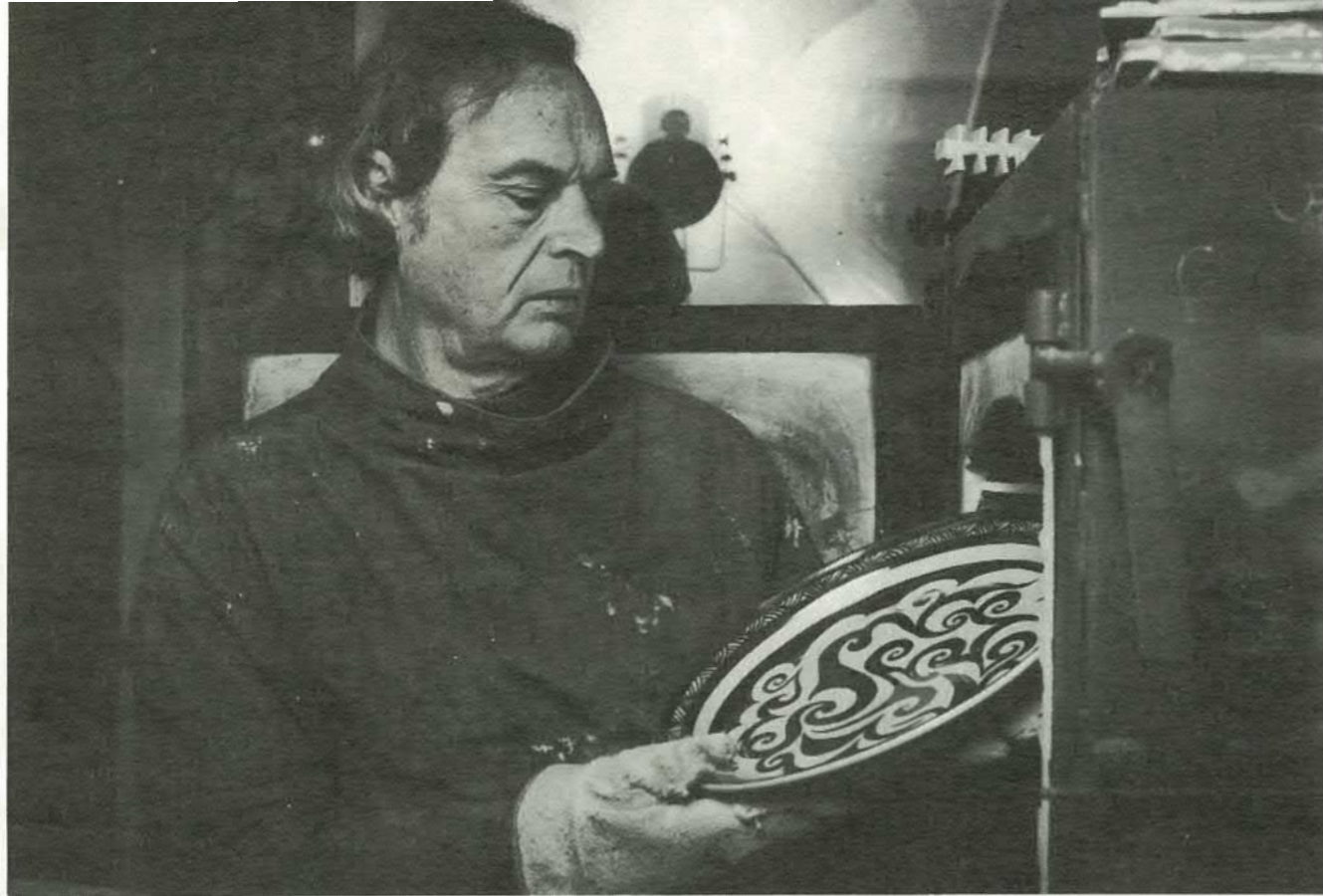
In Napier Salute to Bacchus

This theme for an exhibition of ceramic sculptures and pottery held at Winecraft, Marewa Village, Kennedy Road, set Muriel Moody's imagination dancing. She was joined by Jo Weissberg and Debbie Pointon to provide a lively show. Winecraft Gallery and wine shop emerged from a lifetime interest in wine and the arts by Ian and Joyce Vigor-Brown. This was their first major exhibition from contributors outside Hawke's Bay.



Setting up the exhibition, Muriel Moody, Jo Weissberg, Debbie Pointon. Right: the only exhibit requiring a label, "John Boy" by Jo Weissberg. photographs: K.E. Niven and Daily Telegraph





A philosophy of pottery — A standard for judging Jack Laird

Waimea Pottery
1 November 1980

Dear Margaret,

I have been pondering my reply to your letter in which you raise a number of points on which you suggest I might write for the Potter. As articles embodying a personal philosophy may sound like pontification, I would rather offer my thoughts in the form of a letter in reply to yours. Some enforced idleness (for which I was beginning to acquire a taste), after a period in hospital, has given me time for reflection on a number of things which have been of much interest to me recently. Among these is the murky area of standards and their relationship to the selection of pots, both by the potters themselves of their own work and by external judges.

Failing an all-pervading set of parameters universally accepted, a state which may have pertained in Mediaeval and Renaissance Europe, and in other societies with a long stable history of small cultural change, individual judgements must inevitably be personal and subjective. In pottery here today, this results in pots created within one set of parameters, often being judged by entirely different and possibly inappropriate criteria — certainly criteria to which the potter may have made no references during the pot's creation. The selector is choosing between chalk and cheese and his preference is determined by whether

he wants to draw graffiti or it is lunch-time. This is pointed by the number of incidents in which pots, after an initial rejection, subsequently come to repose in a national or other significant collection either here or overseas, and is evidence of the confusion which reigns in potters' and selectors' minds.

I admit I do not see in the present state of flux and turmoil, the necessary cultural stability emerging which would promote greater unanimity of opinion. This view is reinforced by the apparant inability of a number of selectors, judges and potters to be articulate about the reasons and processes by which they select or reject. Robin Welch was an example on the television programme on the last Fletcher Brownbuilt Award Exhibition. To persistent and direct probing about his criteria and basis for judgements, offered vague references to world standards (whatever they may be), and his main point of reference was that Robin Welch "would have liked to have possessed it". One cannot get more subjective than that.

Paul Melser in a personal statement in the last Potter made what I consider an invalid distinction between the kind of potter he calls a craftsman, and the kind of potter he calls a designer, and then goes on to describe his approach to his own work which is precisely the approach of a sensitive designer, and all sensitive craftspersons. His castigation of decoration may be a statement of his own stance, but

should not be extended or justified by blaming pressures from retailers. To do so ignores what Bernard Leach refers to as the leaping joy of creativity that has compelled potters from ages immemorial to add a coda of decoration to the sonata of the pot. But it is not my intention to carp. Paul has stated some very hard truths which we need to think about. We need to think hard about the pressures that are put on potters to create the "novel", the "outrageous". Is it good to let the competitive rat race creep into the quiet world of our craft? Is it necessary? Do we want it?

It is interesting to see how Paul's concern is underlined by the write up in the same issue about the Dowse Art Gallery's "Then and Now" exhibition. In this the criteria are stated as requiring progression, to "risk glorious failure", to be adventurous, all else is condemned as "playing it safe". Should one examine Hamada's work with a ten year interval on the same limited criteria, then he too would be deemed to be playing it safe. Is there no place for quiet reflection, the subtle development of values which are not of the jumping up and down kind. They were there, but because they were not remarkable they were unobserved. To me this is judgement sated and blunted by novelty, the more extreme, and an example of the kinds of pressure put on potters to abandon more serene forms of creativity.

A perusal of the last edition of the

New Zealand Potter

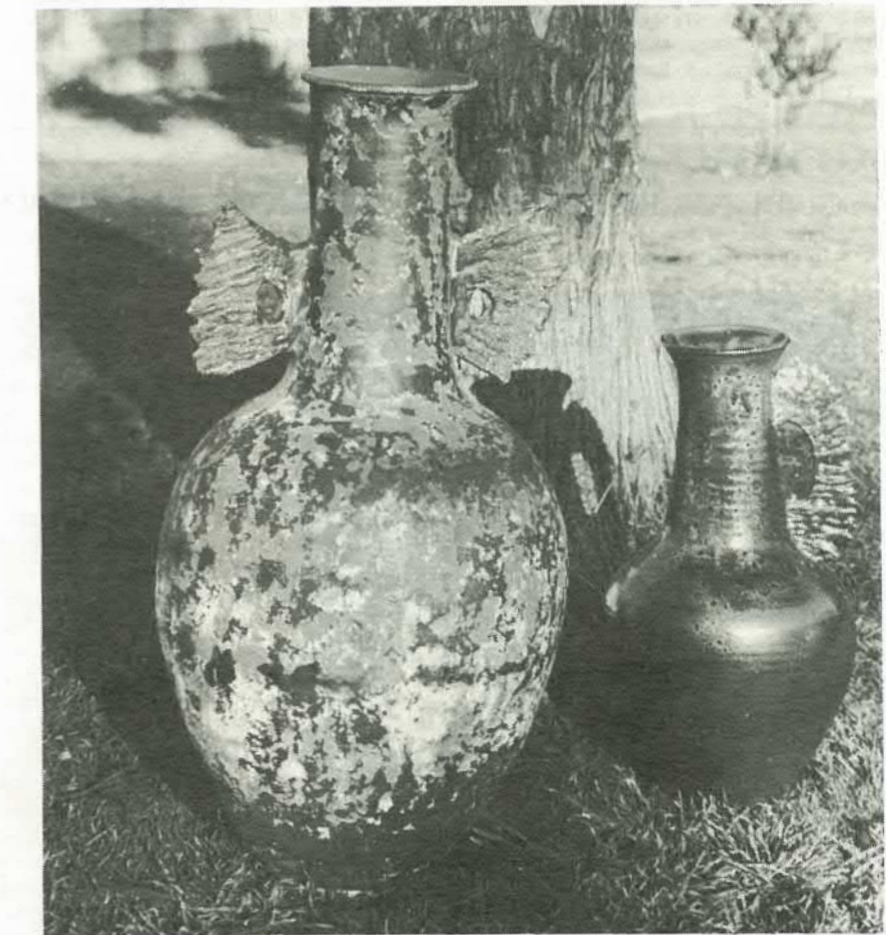
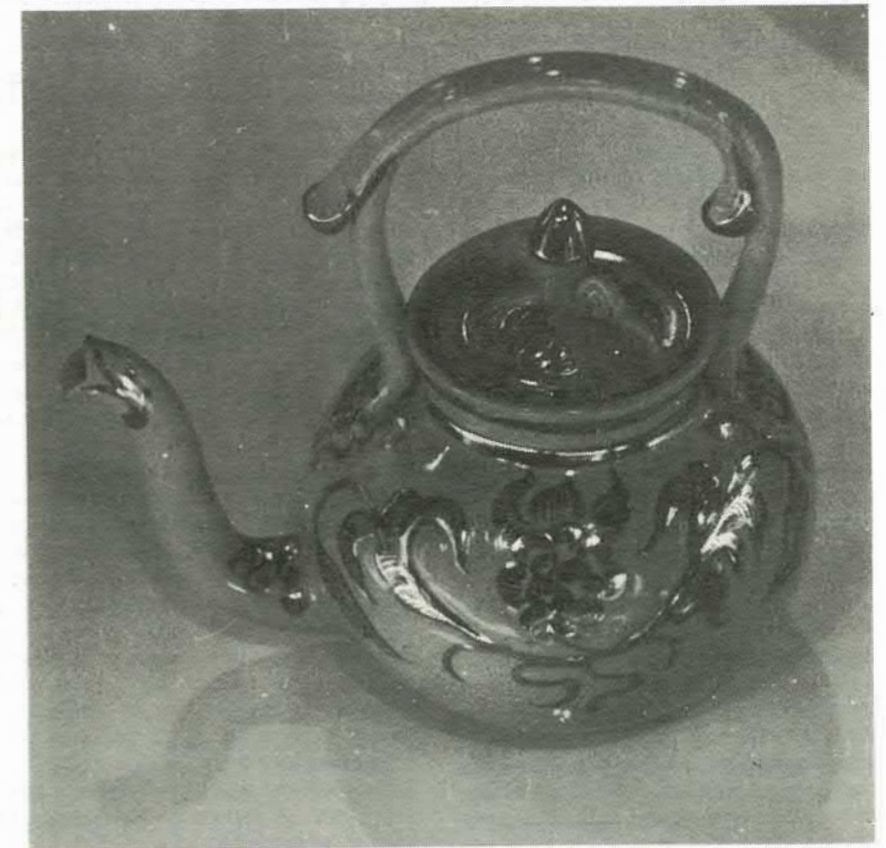
Pottery is fascinating because of the wide diversity of approaches and philosophies fervently expounded as absolutes by different potters. The resulting pots, nevertheless while diverse, are consistently delectable. What is lacking, however, in the pottery movement is a tolerance to match its diversity, an acceptance of not only different pots, but a recognition that different life-style objectives, differing personal philosophies will lead to totally different approaches to pottery. To me they are substantially all valid and relative to Eric Gill's axiom that "an artist is not a special sort of person, but that every person is a special sort of artist".

This puts a selector in an unenviable position. However, if a selection process must be undergone, for whatever reason, it is incumbent on the selector to state the parameters by which he is judging in certain and unambiguous terms. If nothing more it clears the deadwood from his own thinking, and will lead to a more willing and ready acceptance of selection decisions by those subjected to selection.

You raised the question of influences: In your words you ask, "Do you think the current trends for appreciating old architecture and country furniture, art nouveau, etc., will be reflected in potters and ceramists looking to some of the techniques and styles of the past?"

As pottery is just about the oldest form of craft known to mankind, I doubt whether anything new in fundamental techniques remains to be discovered. Even slip casting was known to the pre-Hispanic Incas. In this respect the modern craft pottery revival is essentially a movement of re-discovery. The adoption of styles from the past is a different matter. Archeology uses the evidence of ceramic artifacts to date and measure past civilisations. Apart from their useful durability the forms and decorations of ceramics are distinctive indications of the kind of society which created them. These pot forms and decorations (style if you like) are valid as comments about a particular culture as the unself-conscious expression of it by craftspersons, and therefore valid only for that culture. To be relevant to our culture they must first undergo a metamorphosis. By then the process has lost any claim to be unselfconscious, and the element of intellect is already introduced.

In fact the pottery movement as a whole is not only *not* an expression of our culture which is materialistic, technological and competitive, but a rejection of it and a protest against it. If then, we have rejected the cultural base for expression in our craft, what is left is subjective and personal and on this



Above: gold lustre 2 pt teapot, porcelain, pale green celadon glaze from Jack Laird's exhibition at the Suter Art Gallery, Nelson.
Below: winged amphorae, the larger one 1.3 metres high. Eroded black slip glaze with blue copper barium glaze, or with golden amber slip.
photos: Nelson Mail

basis it is impossible for a consensus of values to arise on which objective assessments can be made. Within a defined and established tradition the craftworker walks a clearly marked road, but this is denied to us today. We are all the products of the influences which have shaped us personally. These are the resources from which our creative inspiration springs. They are most strong when they have become part of our ground being, composed as it were in the depths of our subconscious to nourish the growth of new ideas. I know from personal experience this very often takes a long time and that influences in my early days in London are beginning to emerge in my pots now, after 30 years.

Currently my obsession with decoration in lustres springs from many hours of fascination with the magnificent Islamic pots in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Influences in my handle forms are emerging which I can trace to a study I made of decorative ironwork about the same time. This is a totally different process from seeing ideas embodied in other peoples' pots and going home and trying out something like it. However, to be fair, it is also possible that something in a pot one sees can crystallise and bring bubbling up from the subconscious a rush of embryonic forms.

The danger here is that they may not

have become mature enough to survive a comparison with that which prompted their emergence, nor yet developed enough to carry further conscious involvement.

It is unfortunate that such a large part of our potting environment bears the emphasis on the innovatory or what Paul Melser calls "the noticeable, the outrageous". Potters are under pressure to abandon steady organic growth in favour of less well founded experimentation that is in conflict with natural development. Ideas become more important than the pot and are projected unassimilated and unevolved. So in answer to your question, at least part of it, yes I do think current trends in appreciation will influence potters as they will influence all creative people. But they will influence different potters in different ways. Superficially in some cases by a facile eclecticism, and more profoundly, if less immediately in others by being assimilated into a totality of being and emerging as an unselfconscious expression in clay of that potter's being.

In this there will be no place for consciousness of status, no production of pots in anticipation of a selector's predictions — just the potter and the eternal dialogue with the clay and the fire.

Yours sincerely, Jack.



Following the subject of Jack Laird's thoughts on selection and influences, is a citation placed alongside the winning entry in a competition open to young Japanese craftsmen at the World Craft Council Conference in Kyoto in 1978. Selector was Rose Slivka then editor of *American Craft Horizons*. I noted it because to me it summed up a great deal. The winning entry was not a pot, but a kimono with a wave patterning by a photo printing technique. The kimono was displayed in an appropriately almost vertical position, sleeves and shoulders supported by transparent threads.

Rose Slivka's words were:

"I like the reference to traditional form and pattern in an abstract and modern myth. It is an object poem. The contribution is straightforward and the surface printing beautifully executed. It pays respect to function, to landscape, to form, to craft, to art, to ideas about life and nature, and then transcends to become its own thing. It is the function of craft to transform life into things and things into life."

Editor.

Book Review:

A GUIDE FOR EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS AND STUDIOS

Health and Safety in Ceramics.

At last — how to be a potter and stay alive! This three-part booklet should be compulsory reading for all those involved in the practical side of pottery and ceramics, and especially those in a teaching situation.

Compiled by the Institute of Ceramics, Stoke-on-Trent, the first part deals systematically with handling problems with ceramic materials, dust hazard, toxic materials of particular concern, glazes and ceramic colours. The second part considers the safety of the finished ware; while the third part details Machinery Safeguards, Mixers, Pug Mills, Potters Wheels and Lathes, and also the location and operation of the Electric, Gas-fired and "Ad-hoc" Kiln!

Concise, non technical, yet authoritative.

This raises the one point of criticism — the style and presentation is about as exciting as last month's Customs Schedule. Spice and urgency could enliven the text by pointing out such things as Barium carbonate being the principal ingredient in many potent rat poisons, Borax used in ant-killers,

while colour photographs of the beautiful, but deadly Barium/Copper glazes used effectively by studio potters, could carry a visual message that would linger long in the memory. It can be argued that such treatment is beyond the scope and budget of such a publication — but I am sure a more lively text and more exciting visual presentation would turn it into a best seller and at the same time get the message across more effectively.

From a New Zealand point of view, there is another problem: this booklet sells for £2.00 in England, but by the time it is on the New Zealand market, via an Australian agency (for the English distributor, Pergamon Press), the retail price would be about \$10.00. This seems rather excessive for a flimsy covered, 35 page booklet of austere presentation, no matter how vital the information it contains!

However, every potter should own a copy of this informative booklet.

Steve Rumsey

A place for quality

The New Zealand Craft Centre is now operating in the crafts council rooms in Wellington. The centre is looking for high quality work for sale to business houses, banks, government departments. Articles made from indigenous materials and perhaps identifiably New Zealand in design will be particularly acceptable. Send a sample or photographs of your work to the Director, New Zealand Crafts Council, P.O. Box 11233 Wellington. (Freight and insurance must be at your expense). The center sells on commission, 20% for members of the Crafts Council and 33% for non members.

FOR SALE

Pottery/Land 5 miles from Levin.
1¼ acres, small cottage, workshop
and kilns — 60 cu. ft stoneware and
60 cu. ft sale glaze.

Ring Levin 87 819 (lunch times)

or

write to D. Wolland, R.D. 1, Levin.

Waimea Potters The Post-sales-tax Dynasty

Paul Laird

In 1964 Jack and Peggy Laird set up Waimea Pottery in Nelson as a studio village workshop producing domestic ware. On 2 November 1979 after a lengthy battle, government announced that craftspeople were no longer required to register for Sales Tax purposes, provided that they met the definition of a craftsperson, and that sales did not exceed \$50,000 per annum. Son, Paul Laird traces subsequent developments at Waimea.

From 1964 up to 1979 Waimea Pottery continued to develop and flourish, and at the end of 1979 we were faced with quite a few major decisions as to the future direction of the pottery. Were we to shoulder the tax burden and continue as we were? — a team of people combining to produce a known and well accepted ware; and hope that our efficiency quality and technology would enable us to compete with the smaller pottery units. Alternatively would we have to rethink the entire basis of the pottery, formed initially as a village workshop providing jobs for local people and offering training in a workshop environment for young studio potters.

The more we dwelt on the subject the more it appeared to us to be a particular tax on the selected few of us in village workshops. So, regrettably, we wound down the team workshop system. This was quite an ordeal involving unions, Labour Department, redundancies and seeing valued staff leave, due to a government department decision sprung on us.

We discussed many ways of running the pottery and decided on our present system, not at all sure as to how it would work on the long term. We — Jack Laird, Paul Laird and John Clift — are now "Waimea Potters"

The decision to function as individual potters, renting the workshop and equipment enabled us to preserve the Waimea image, and at the same time experiment with our personal ideas. My father has become increasingly interested in lustre decoration; John Clift, who has worked at Waimea for a few years and I encourage each other to look for new firing techniques, clay bodies and glaze effects. Our output is kept within the required limits for taxation purposes and we also keep our individuality. Our small showroom is run by my mother and we have retained a number of our old retail outlets.

Richmond Pottery and Ceramics previously known as the Mapua Tableware department of Waimea Pottery has for a number of years been entirely separate, with Dad designing and me throwing samples before full-scale mould making

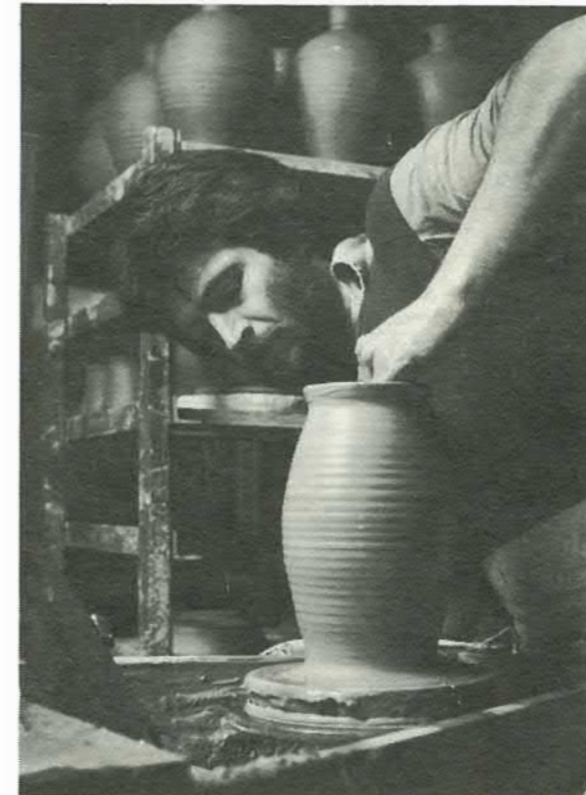
commences, as a craft service to industry.

An aspect of our pottery has been our training particularly in apprenticeships or providing opportunities for more skilled operations. We are proud of the many potters who have successfully graduated to their own workshops; though it has cost us a lot of time and effort.

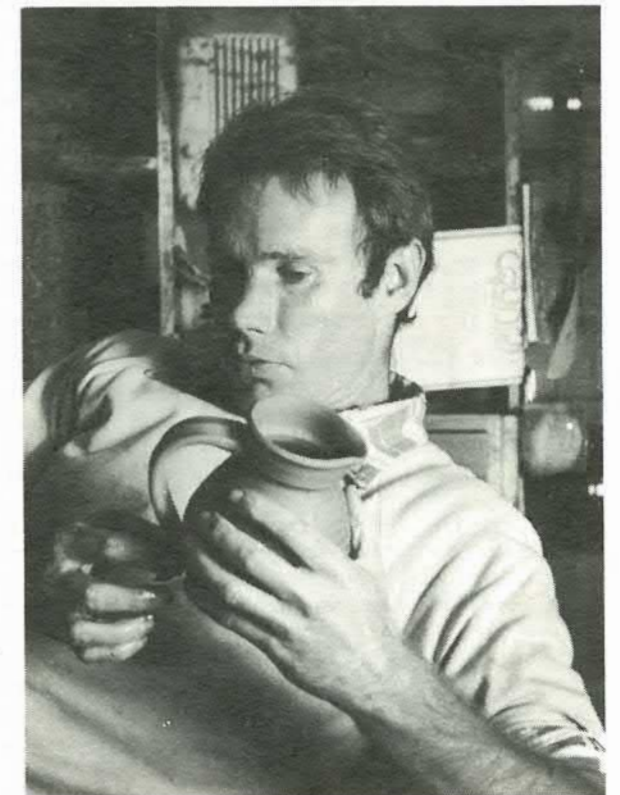
The apprenticeship scheme is a 10,000 hour or five year programme which is designed to provide both skills for the potter, and five years production for the pottery in return. It seems to be in the nature of most New Zealanders to want to be his own boss. However, unless there is a return to the pottery of skilled production, the employer is left in the position of being out of pocket and understaffed if the trainee leaves, particularly before his training is finished.

It has been our policy to train from scratch, as often prior training was more of a hindrance than a help but in our present system an already fully trained "craftsperson" can be offered an opportunity to be an individual potter at Waimea producing his/her own work for sale through established outlets.

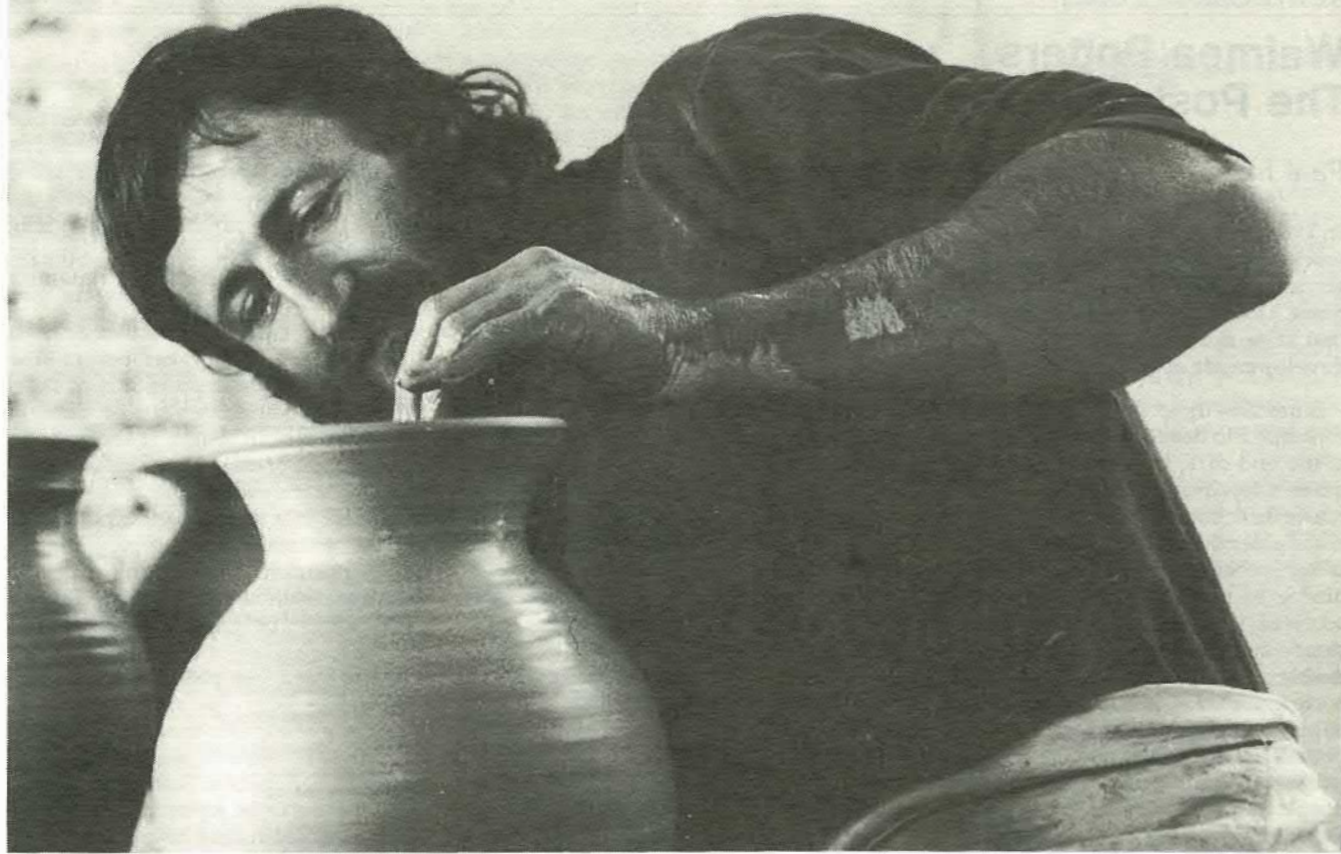
Under the present system so far, there appears to be a lot less pressure and much more fun, stimulation and variety in our work. So out of a bad government decision we have, I think, ultimately benefitted, after a great deal of agonizing, and having to abandon a sixteen year effort to provide a pottery which had social as well as cultural significance in the locality.



Paul Laird



John Clift



Royce McGlashen — production potter

In 1966 I began a five year apprenticeship with Jack Laird at Waimea Pottery in Richmond. This was an approved Labour Department scheme entailing a bond between Jack, the Labour Department and me. The training covered all aspects of work in the pottery — throwing, turning, assembling, glazing and a little decorating, plus firing the Waimea kilns.

Most of the time was spent production throwing to Waimea design. It is sometimes difficult enough to throw what you see in your mind, but it is often even more difficult to throw someone else's design and it requires a lot more application of yourself and a lot of patience from your employer or master.

This training was very good as it allowed me to throw eight hours a day on different shapes and sizes throwing many times to a pointer. Over the period of five years I threw thousands of pots. Some would say production throwing, especially with an electric wheel, takes the romance from pottery. I found after two or three years of this regime, my own personal styles became more relaxed and this holds true to the present day. I am relaxed throwing on the wheel. Shapes can be seen more easily with a relaxed attitude and you can overcome problems between the clay and yourself more readily.

I think there have been only five or six potters in New Zealand who have had the opportunity to complete such an apprenticeship. It requires two things — a willing worker, and a person dedicated to the craft who is willing to share his knowledge.

Nelson has been unique in New Zealand being able to provide work at all levels of the ceramic field. We have industrial brickworks and many individual potters scattered throughout the area, and Waimea craft pottery workshop. My training was in this middle area between the industrialist and the individual potter and I realise this is an excellent area in which to obtain a sound working knowledge of craft pottery — and of course I was paid, which enabled me gradually to buy materials and equipment for setting up my own workshop. While working at Waimea I had my own studio at home. It was here I developed my own ideas in shape and decoration.

I believe an apprenticeship scheme in craft pottery would lift standards of domestic ware, but I would make some changes to the scheme before I would implement it in my workshop. The apprentice would initially work a normal 40 hour week for a weekly wage — make my shapes and designs — but as experience and skill develops and apprentice and potter gain confidence in each other the hours worked on the



pottery designs would be reduced and the apprentice would work on his own designs. As the years and experience increase the balance would change accordingly. The apprentice could spend more and more time on his own designs but be still under the guidance of the master potter. The apprenticeship would usually culminate in the apprentice moving on to establish his own studio.

New Zealand Potter

Such an apprenticeship scheme would help to avoid the situation of a keen potter setting up with insufficient knowledge and experience to form a lasting career.

After six years at Waimea I went to Australia and worked at Montville Pottery in a beautiful part of Queensland, then I went on to an English pottery in Norwich. All this was good experience in varying types of workshops.

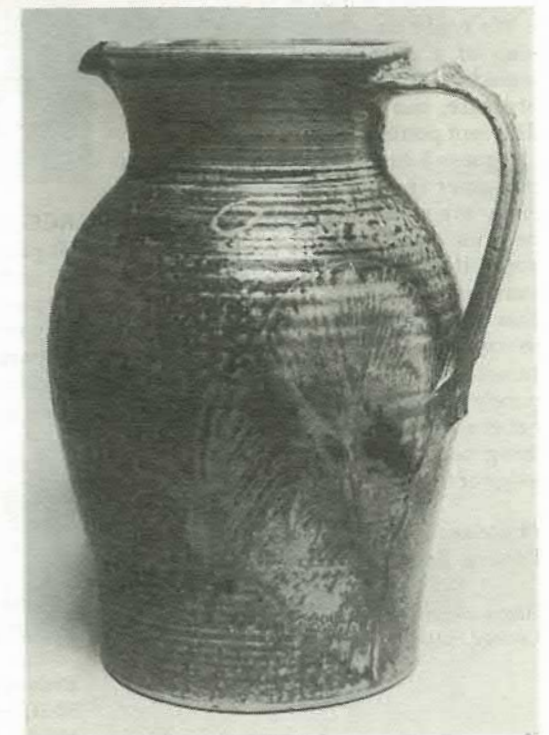
On returning I married Trudi, bought a cob cottage at Brightwater (four miles from Richmond), and we were lucky enough to be able to buy half an acre across the road to establish a pottery. We wanted pleasant surroundings for retailing our pots so we commissioned Ian Jack an architect friend to design Cobb Cottage Pottery. The showroom on the main highway from Nelson to Christchurch and the West Coast opened in 1979 — the workshop was added last year and we are gradually landscaping with native trees, alpine plants and herbs.

The two buildings enclose a courtyard. The workshop comprises a large work area including clay and glaze storage area, pug mill, tile press, electric kiln and wheels. There is a separate glazing and decorating area which the kiln trolley rolls into, plus a kitchen area and upstairs general purpose space. The kiln is housed in an attached kiln area which can be completely closed off from the workshop.

I'm very strict about working hours. I like to be there at 8 a.m. until 5 or 6 p.m. with the usual coffee and lunch breaks. I find the discipline satisfying.

The pottery is designed for the flow of work — to save time and energy. We buy locally produced clay although I would like to process my own clay. I use an electric wheel which allows for faster production with greater concentration on the pot itself and a saving on my energy. Seventy-five per cent of production is domestic stoneware with thirty items in the range. Each day I set myself a goal including some time for individual pieces — thrown sculpture, slab ware, big pots and textured pieces. A day of throwing is followed by a day spent turning and assembling. When I have sufficient dry pots I fire the 10 cu. ft electric kiln. It takes approximately ten firings to have sufficient bisque ware for a gloss firing. Trudi waxes and sorts the pots ready for glazing. In three weeks I make enough pots for the 120 cu. ft oil kiln. It takes two further weeks to glaze and decorate and stack the kiln.

My style of work is changing more to decoration based on a New Zealand theme including a landscape series on large pots and wall plates. All my other decorations are based on native flora. Where it used to take me two days to



decorate, it now takes three very long days. Some of the large pots take an hour or more to decorate and I really enjoy this work.

The kiln is on a trolley allowing me to stack from all sides with the trolley close by the supply of glazed pots. It takes a day to stack and the trolley is rolled into the chamber and sealed with a fibre door. The kiln fires with 6 pot burners for 10 hours using 60 gallons of fuel. We fire once a month. At present I am working on my own. I have had one assistant Paul White who was with me for three and a half years and has now set up his own workshop near Foxton.

From each firing we select pots for exhibition and for our own showroom. Sales vary according to the time of year and in the busy summer period we employ someone to look after the showroom. Pots are supplied to shops on a monthly roster system which enables buyers to come to the district and co-ordinate their collection of pots. I feel it is important that the buyers see what they are buying.

Our buildings are designed to incorporate facilities for holding residential workshops. Our first was held this January and we have another in May. We hope these will become a continuing function of our workshop, because I would like to pass on my knowledge and exchange ideas.

We had a break away two years ago visiting South America and going on to England where we looked at pottery machinery. We bought an old screw tile press which I look forward to getting into working order and tile making may expand to create an opportunity for another person in the workshop.

We enjoy travelling and we like the idea of a potter/pottery exchange. It would involve a lot of letter writing to organize, but worth it to experience a different potting scene.

I guess I could describe myself as a prosumer (production/individualist). I enjoy my work. My philosophy would be this: Once you have committed yourself to a life of making pots your standard by necessity must be high. You must believe in your own ability to create a pleasing, saleable, functional pot, even if its function is purely decorative it must achieve this. I believe in being willing to try something new and to expand ones knowledge of the craft.

Royce and Trudi McGlashen, Cob Cottage Pottery, Brightwater, Nelson.

Above right: Cob cottage built 1856 and Cob Cottage Pottery 1980.



RCG Stable Greyish Cream Matt Glaze — 1290° Reduction

50 parts	Feldspar
10 parts	Dolomite
15 parts	Calcite
20 parts	Silica (Australia)
40 parts	China Clay (New Zealand)
1 part	Iron Oxide

with more iron it goes greener and greener, till it goes brown.

Ash Glaze — a Sandy Creamy Matt Glaze

6 lb 4 oz	Feldspar
2 lb 8 oz	Dolomite
7 oz	Calcite
3 lb 12 oz	China Clay
10 oz	Ash (Unwashed, through a 40 mesh sieve)

Can add some iron or illmenite.

Brown or sometimes Yellow Wash

50:50 iron oxide and rutile in a water solution. Spray on top of the glaze. The rutile breaks the surface of the glaze.

Pots in the poo Robyn Stewart

At the end of a year's tuition, mainly from Margaret Milne at Auckland Studio Potters Centre, the class was shown several films one of which particularly inspired me. It was the well-known film about the Pueblo Indian potters of San Idelfonso that shows Maria Martinez with members of her family making and firing very beautiful black burnished pots. All were hand-built from local clay, some decorated with slip or carved then burnished with a smooth pebble and fired in a simple bonfire with animal dung for fuel.

When I left the big city to live in Northland I was determined to try this method of firing. With no money to build or buy a kiln, but plenty of cow dung at hand this seemed to me a great idea. Eighteen months and many disasters later, I took from the ashes about a dozen pots I was pleased with. A clay dug from the bank of a stream running through the farm was plastic enough for handbuilding and furthermore burnished and fired better than any of the commercial clays tried.

The mixture:

5 clay
3 grog
2 talc

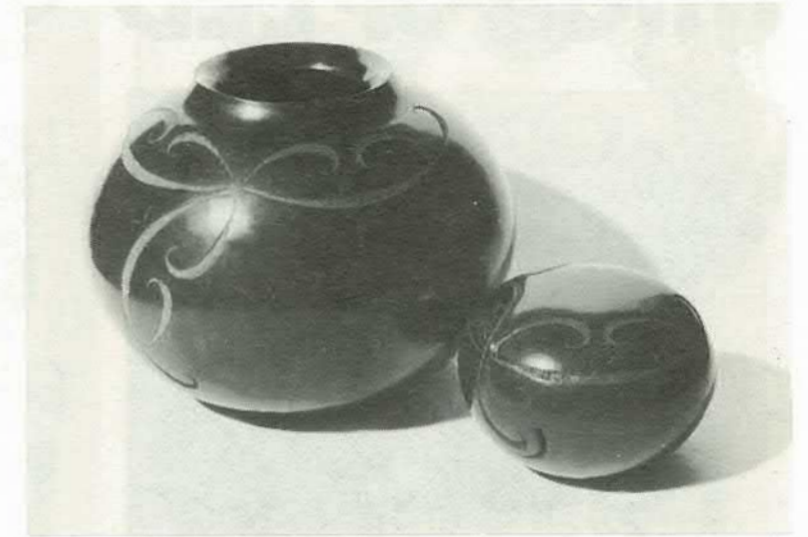
All pots are coil, pinch or slab built. I enjoy carving and burnishing (using a teaspoon then my fingers). It's a time consuming method but satisfying to me.

Pots are stacked carefully in a pyramid on a metal grid with enough space underneath to start a small wood fire and completely covered with dry cow-pats then pieces of old iron trays, tin lids or corrugated iron and finally a thick layer of dried pulverised horse manure over the lot. Grass clippings I've discovered serve the purpose quite as well.

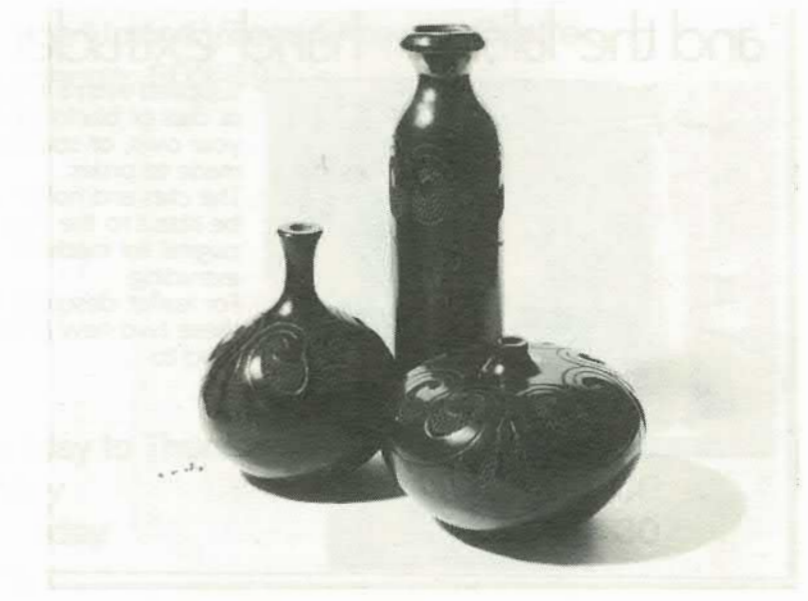
Firing extends over a nerve wracking 24-48 hours, the length depending very much on the weather. Unfortunately Whangarei's climate is rather different from Mexico's. A firing can be started on a sunny breezy morning and by late afternoon the weather is dull and humid which slows things down considerably. It is an advantage to have shelter of some sort over the kiln in case of sudden downpour. The fire will smoulder away and can be safely left for hours with little to be seen but the occasional wisp of smoke.

This firing method is not ideal for firing coffee mugs and casseroles, but it is exciting for decorative pots.

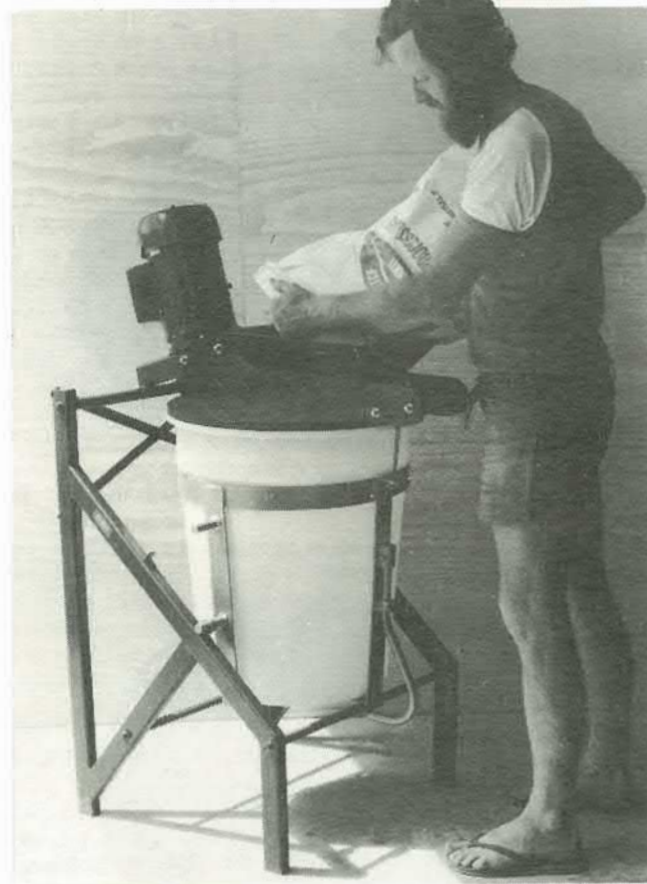
Robyn Stewart, Whareora, R.D. 5, Whangarei, shares with her family, sheep, cattle, ducks and dogs, one hundred acres at Mt. Tiger at the base of Whangarei Heads. She is interested in breeding sheep for natural fleeces and spinning as well as potting.



Black burnished low fired pots by Robyn Stewart. photos: Howard Williams



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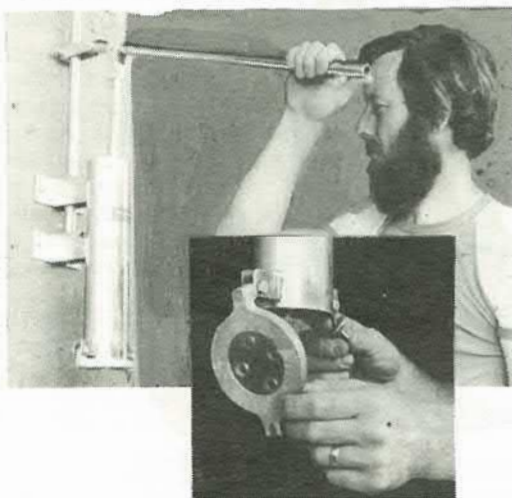


Dry ingredients are added to water while mixer is working.

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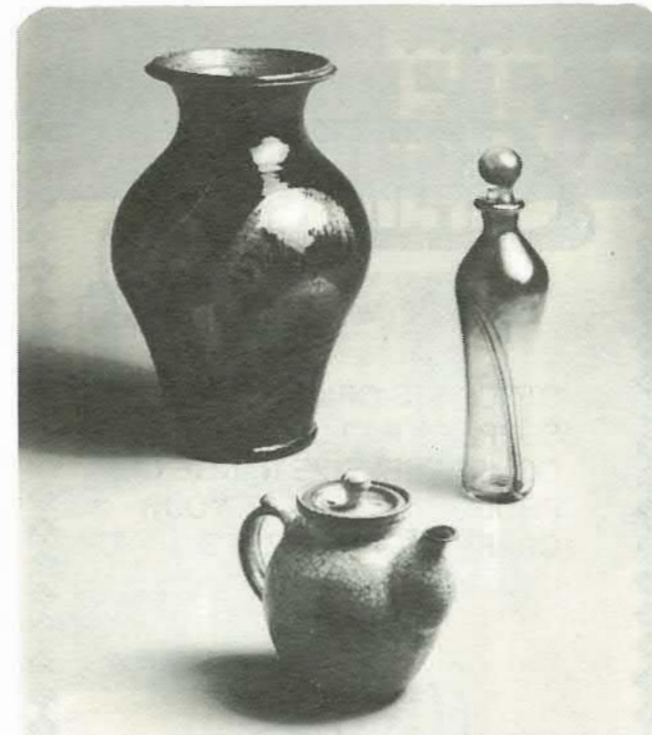
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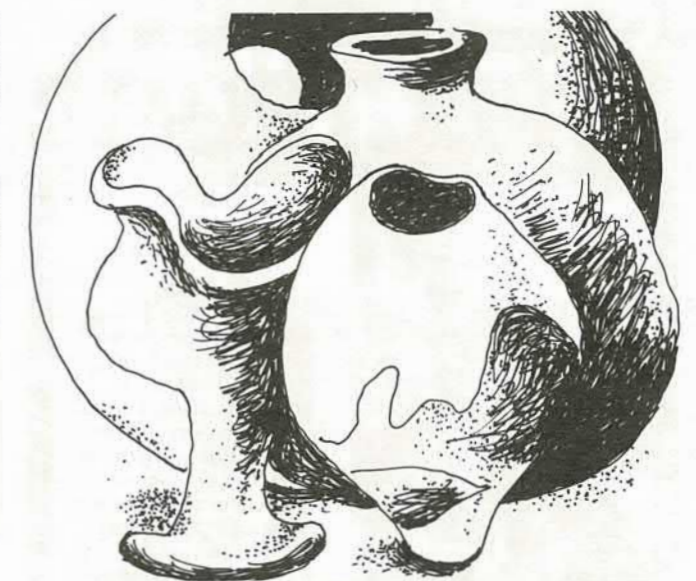
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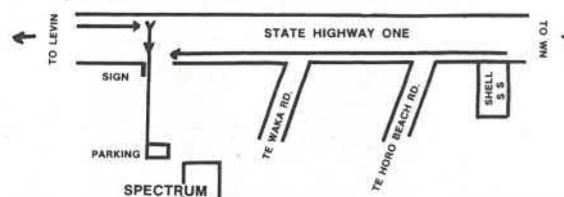


Here Campbell stands by the chimney of the wood fired kiln, masterminded by Glen Beattie, while the buildings progress well (October '79).



Looking from the other side — a pergola over the garden area takes shape (February '80) and the indoor display/kiln area is roofed over. The "mess" in these pictures is now all gone — (March '80).

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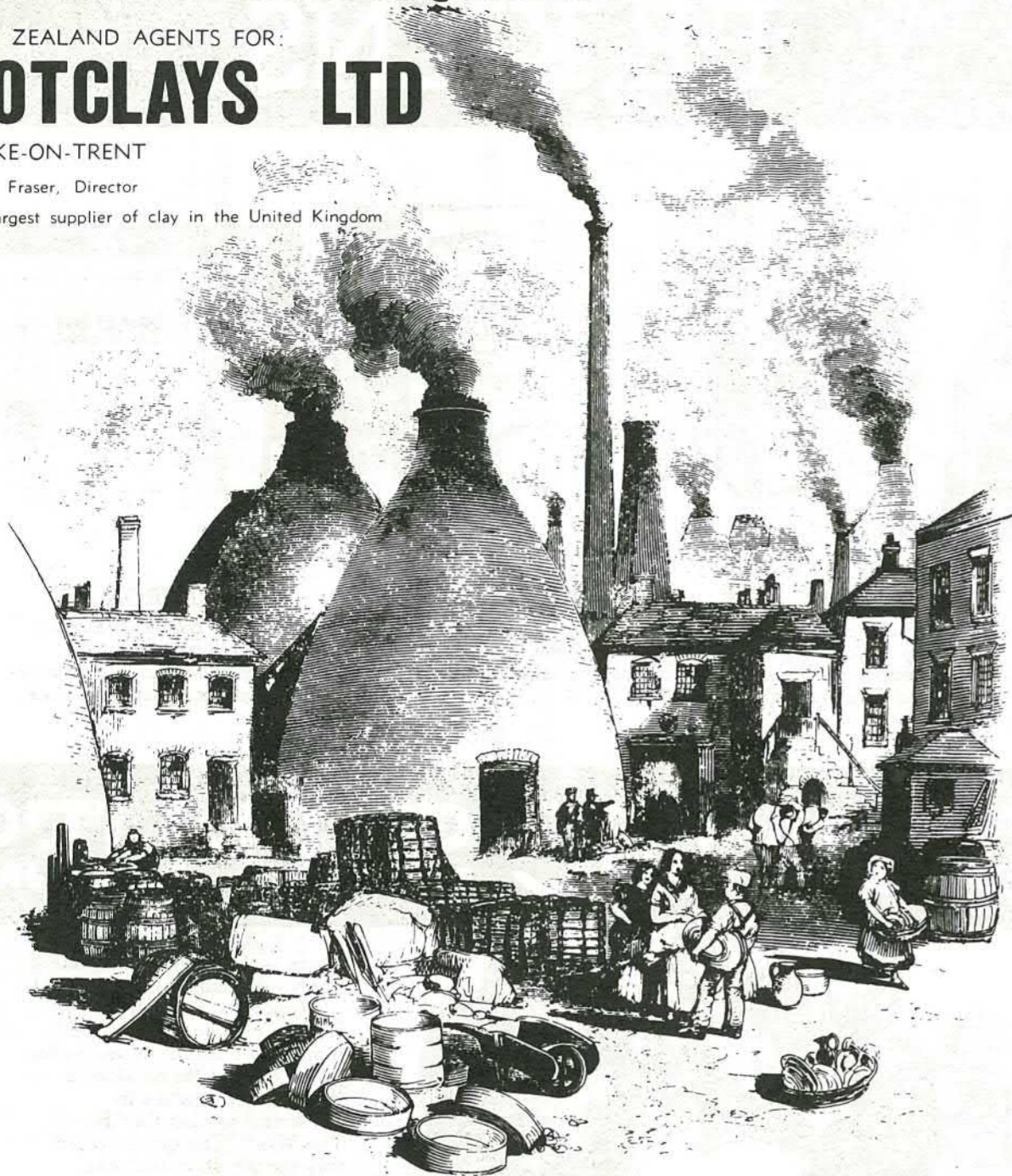
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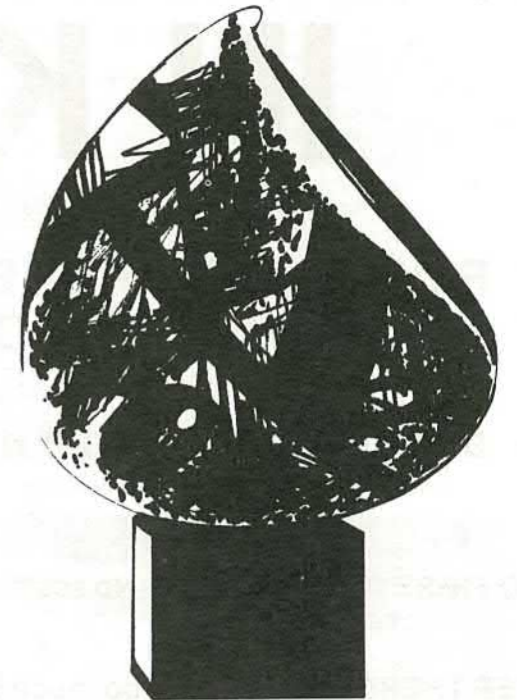
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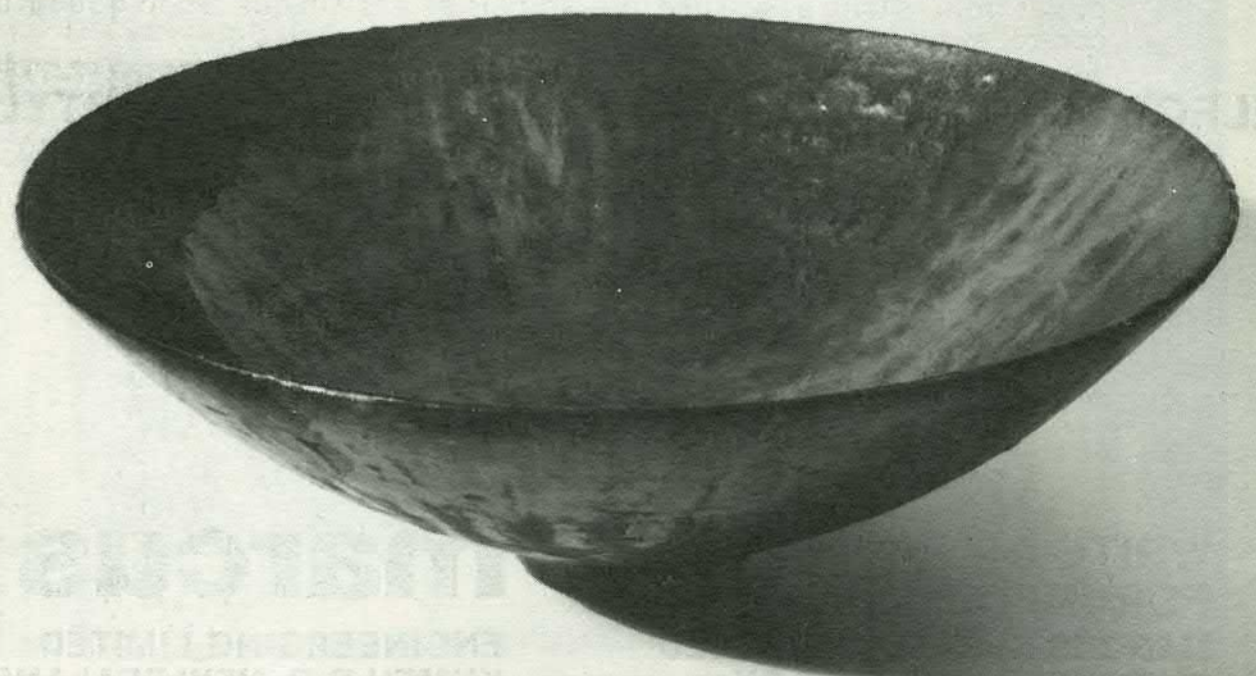


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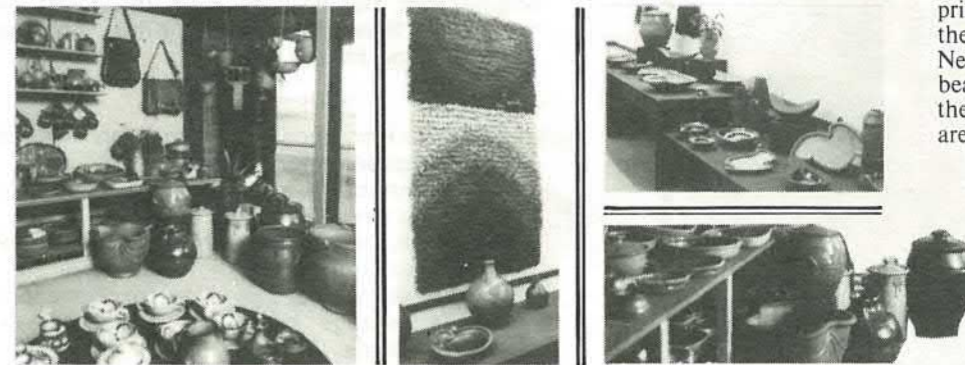
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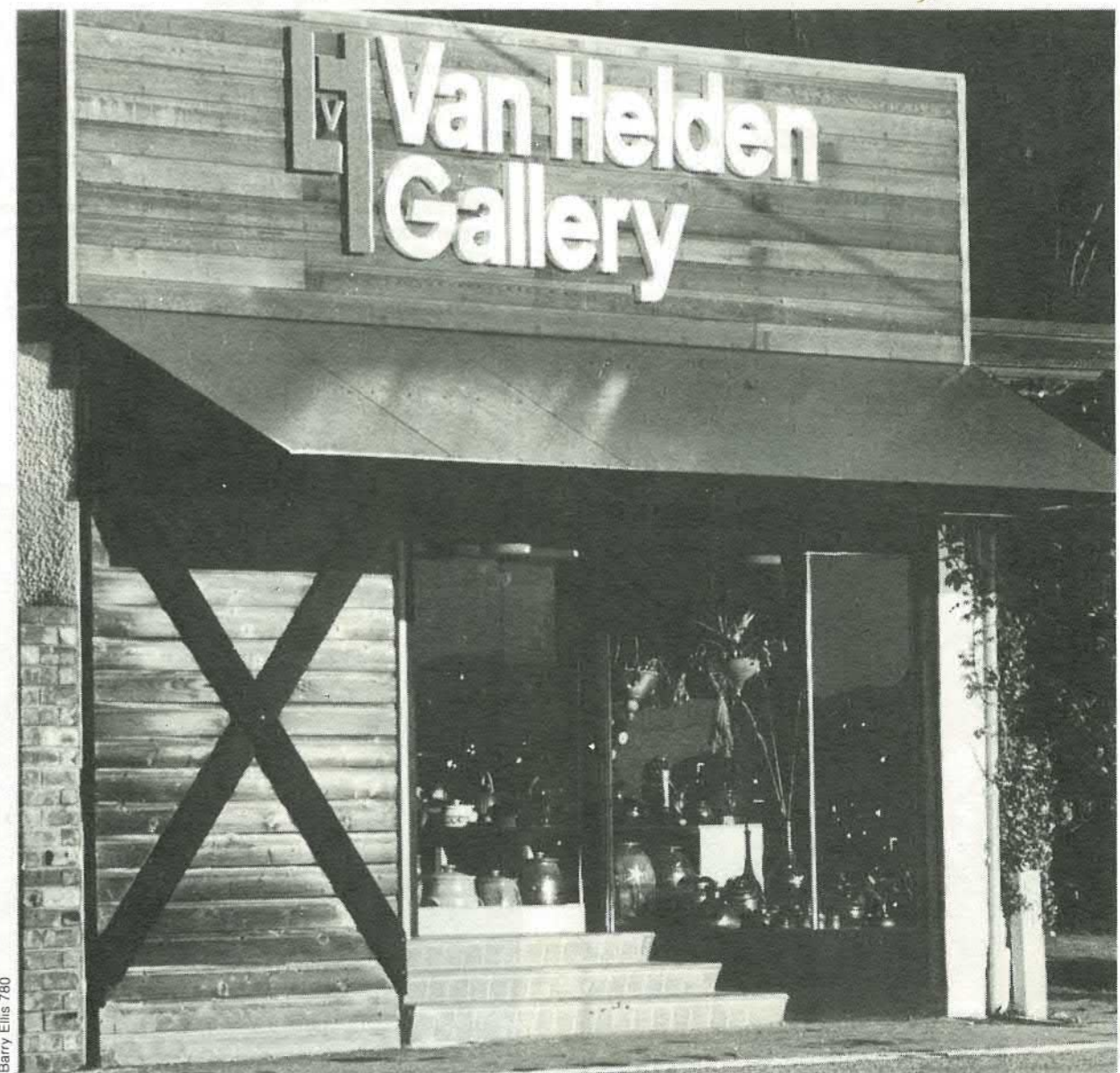
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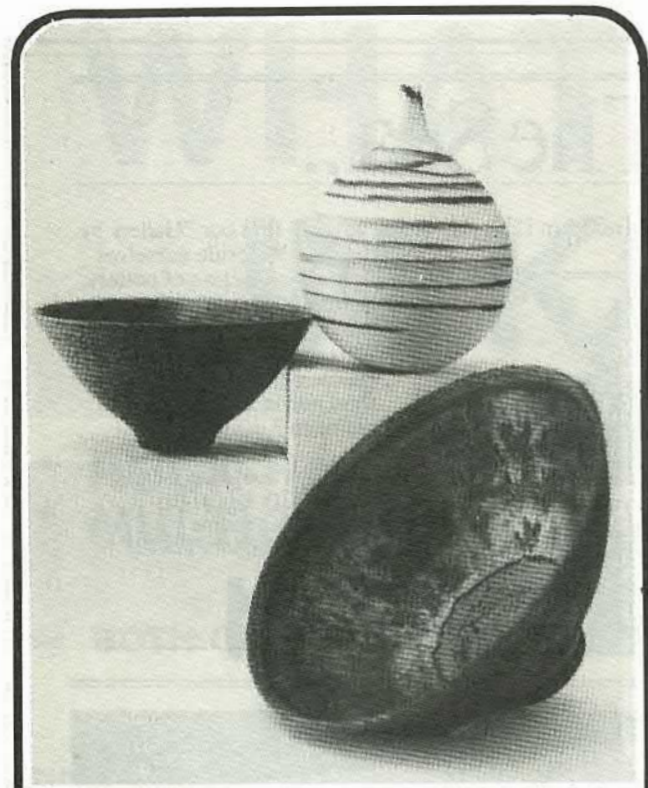
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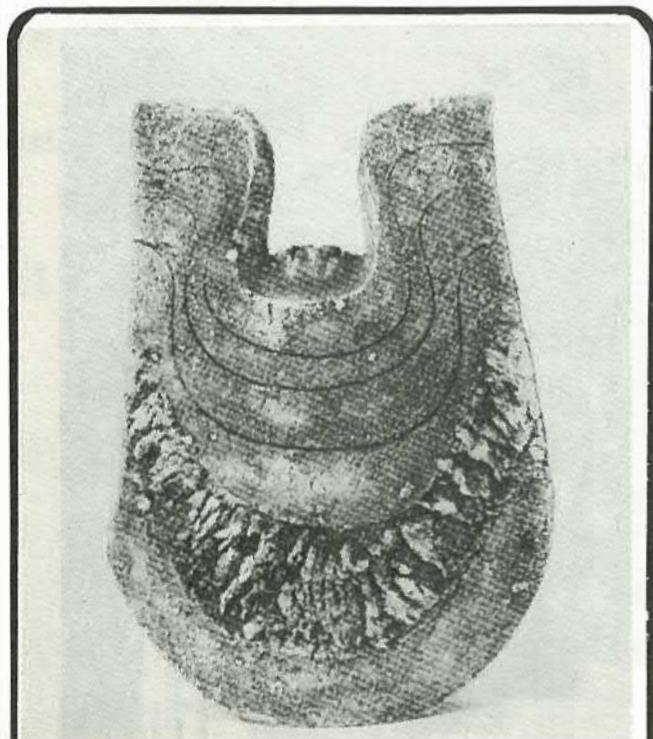
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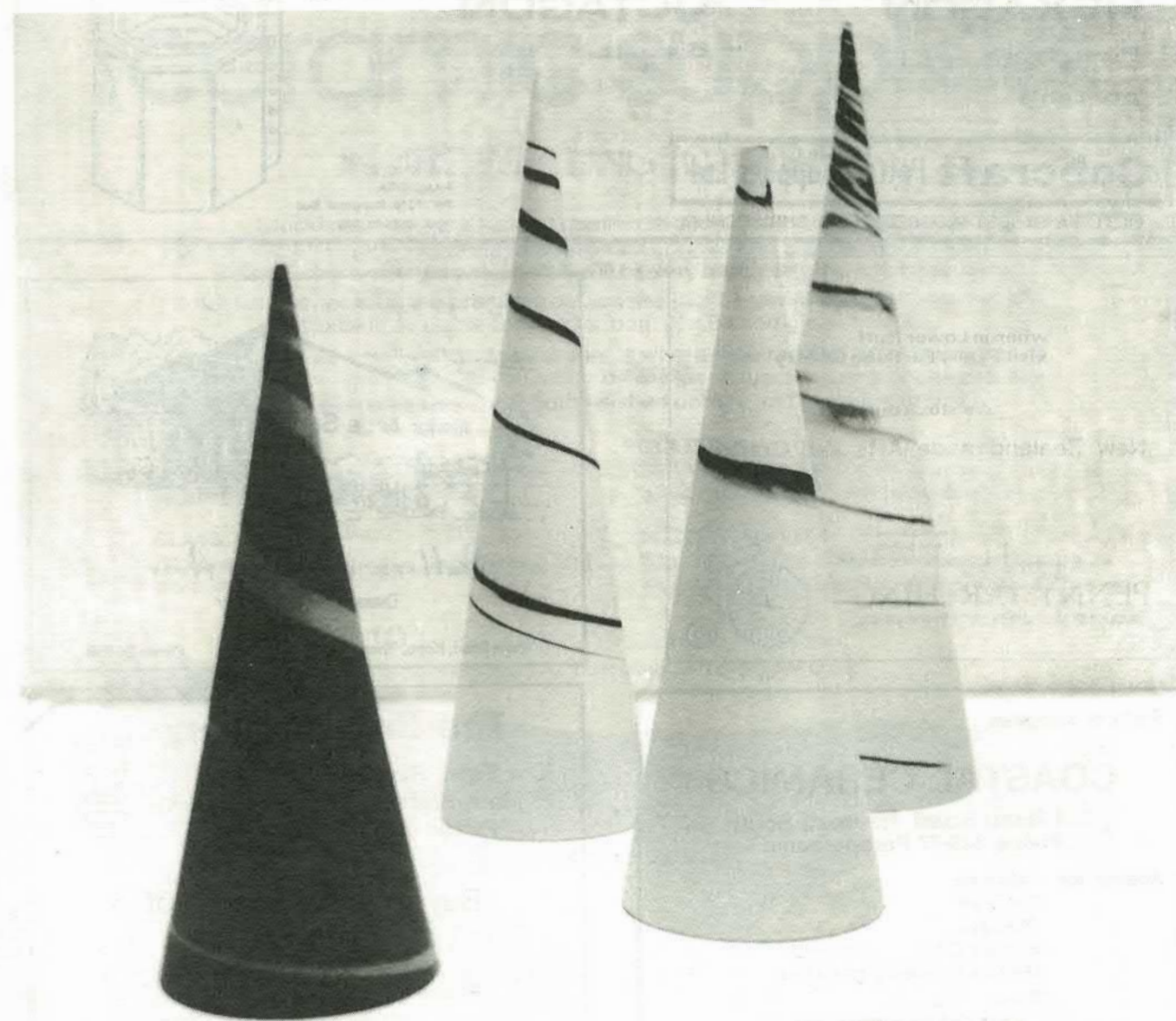
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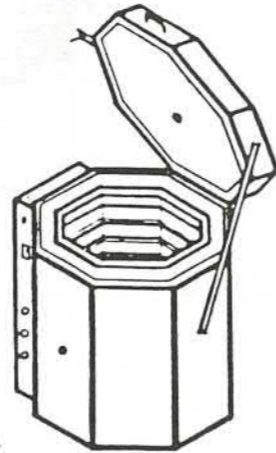
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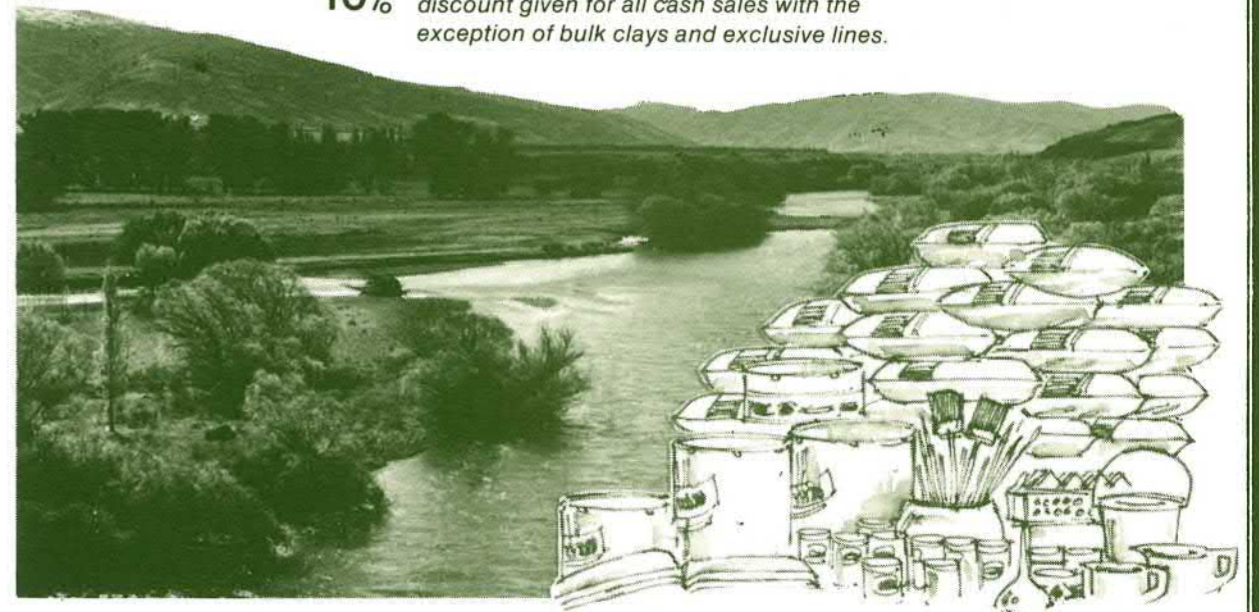
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