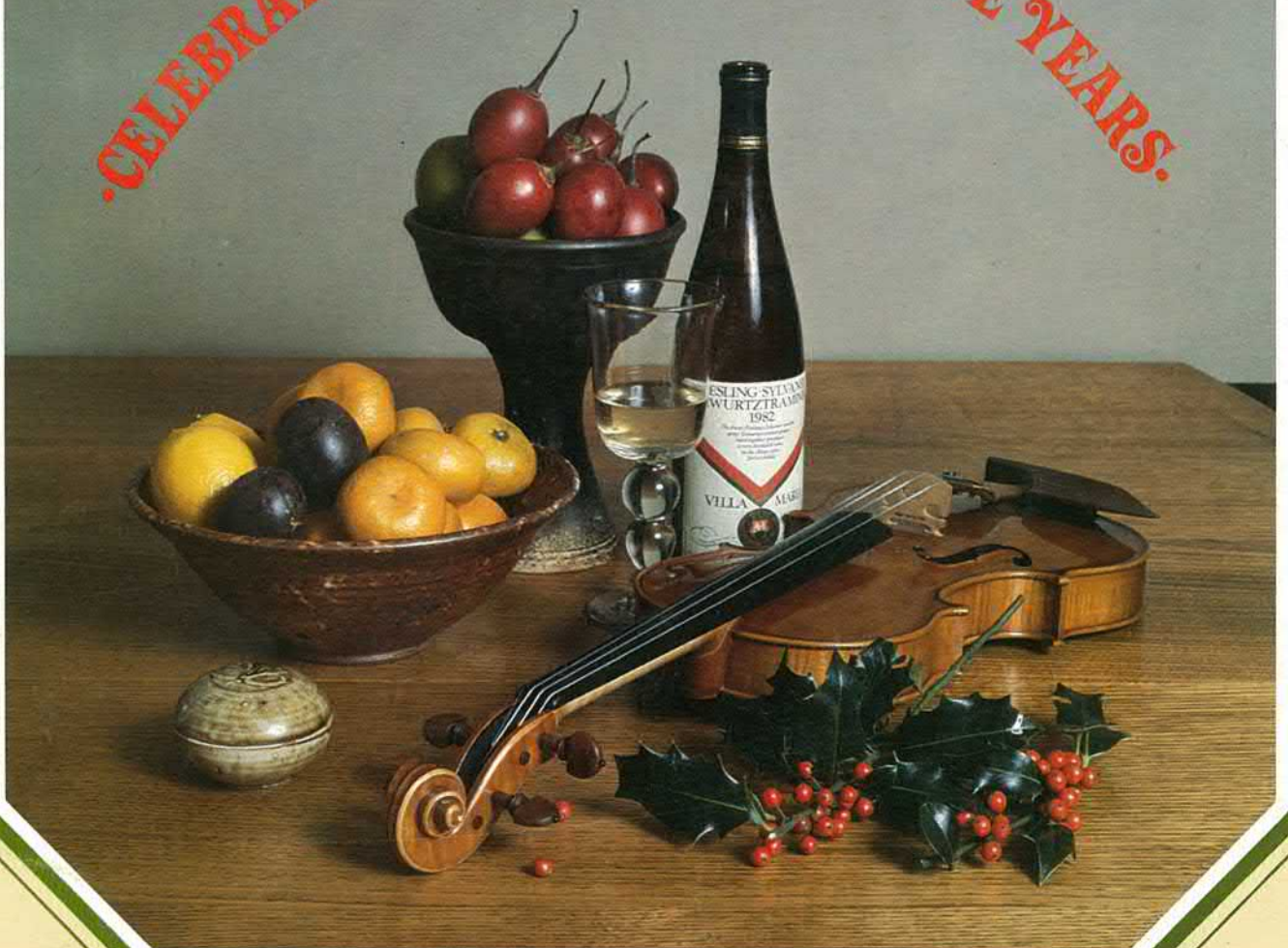


Piper

New Zealand Potter
Vol 25/1 AUTUMN 1983

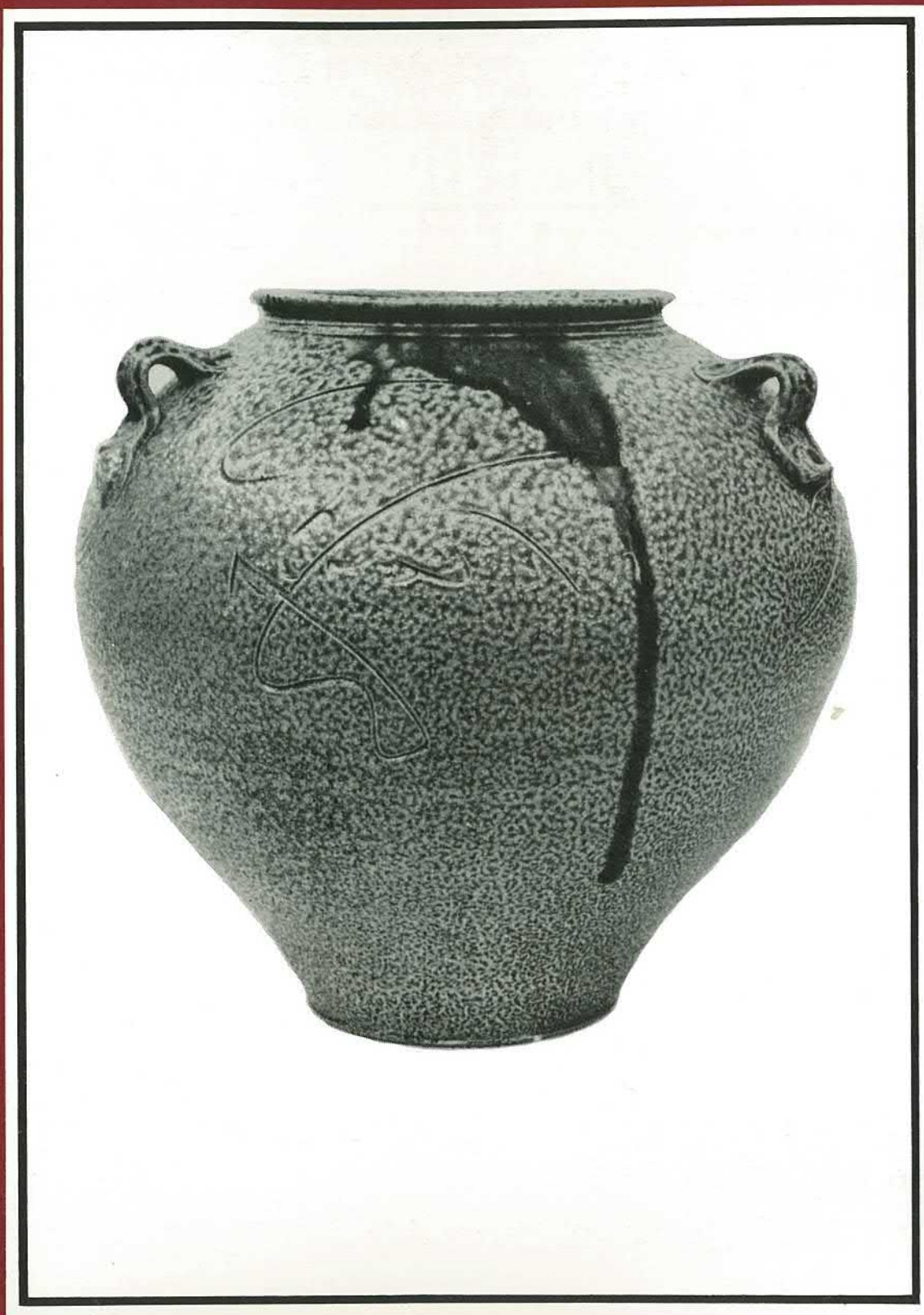
CELEBRATE WITH US • TWENTY FIVE YEARS.



COVER • STILL LIFE WITH POTS

BOWL BY BARRY HOCKENHULL • FRUIT DISH BY HELEN YOUNG • LIDDED POT BY CHESTER NEALIE
VIOLIN BY NIGEL HARRIS • WINE GLASS BY TONY KUEFFER • WINE & VILLA MARIA • PHOTO: JENNY HAMES

Jar by John Anderson photographed at NZ Craftworks by Richard Hendry



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Potter

New Zealand Potter
Vol 25/1 AUTUMN 1983

Cover: Still life with pots

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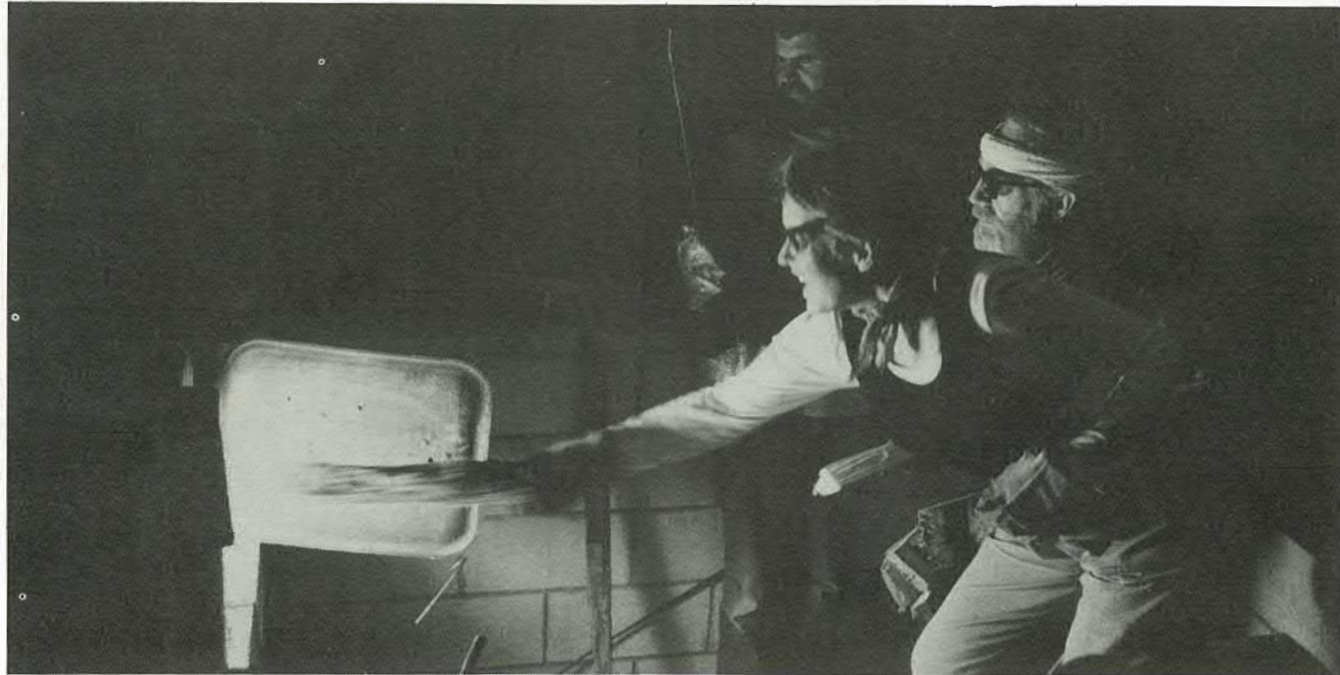
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WOOD FIRING

further to, not more of the same



Progressing forward by looking back

Estelle & Bruce Martin

In 1978 Estelle and I spent three months in Japan exploring the world of pottery and kilns. During this visit our most exciting experience was actually seeing and touching pots made in the ancient type of kilns known as anagama. At Seto we were taken into the hills to see one of the original anagama kilns of this area dating back to the 12th or 13th century (Kamakura Period). It was classified as an "Important Cultural Property" and was protected by high netting fences. It consisted of a hole dug into the clay bank and extending upwards at an angle of about 20° to a flue dug down from higher up the bank—hence the name 'anagama' which translates as 'hole kiln'.

While in Japan we were also able to see several modern versions of anagama type kilns built of brick. Most of these were straight tunnel type kilns which are really Tamba or 'hebegama' (snake) kilns. However, one we saw followed the slope and style of the ancient kilns and the pots produced from it were superb. In colour and texture they were just like the ancient tea jars from the 14th and 15th century which are often shown in museums but more usually can only be admired from photographs in books. About the 16th century anagama kilns went out of use being replaced by the more efficient noborigama or 'climbing' kiln.

On our return to New Zealand we were resolved to build and fire an anagama type kiln if at all possible and decided that the more traditional kiln was best in spite of the longer firing time and inefficiency as compared with 'modern' wood fired kilns. We were fortunate to be given plans of the traditional anagama we had seen which, together with the small amount of information available from books, was enough for us to make the decision to go ahead.

After three years of part-time digging, scraping and laying bricks, the kiln was completed. The main chamber is approximately 6 metres long by 2.5 metres wide at the widest point by 1.8 m high. The floor is stepped in three places but there are no internal supports or dividing walls as in the Tamba type kilns or a climbing kiln. There is just one large space! From the main chamber the smoke and flame passes through a perforated brick wall to a gathering chamber called a "sute no ma" (pronounced "stemma"?) and through a 300 mm diameter flue giving another 6 metres of length. The general line of the kiln floor and the flue follow an angle of 15° to the horizontal. Total volume is approximately 500 cubic feet, and the loading space, being about 350 cubic feet as space for the main fire and space

for the three pairs of side stoking areas, has to be left uncluttered.

The next problem was "How much wood?" We were able to obtain six truck loads of pine slab mixed with macrocarpa, rimu, poplar and odds and ends as well as the wood from three eight year old pines grown on our own property. Our aim was to fire for ten days—the Japanese kilns of this type were fired for 10–15 days, the longer firings producing the best results. The wood was cut to about half metre lengths or a little less when very knotty, which much of it seemed to be when it came to splitting. With this quantity of wood to be split some mechanical means was necessary so a 'Maxiforst' splitter was added to our very well used Fergusson tractor. Even so, much effort was required to get the wood into suitable sized pieces for the side stoking and to stack it all handy to the kiln. The hot, dry Hawke's Bay weather left little doubt as to the wood being thoroughly dry before use.

Pots were produced over a three month period and when dry were loaded into the kiln. No 'treatments' other than a few experiments with white slip (quite successful) and some seaweed draping (decidedly unsuccessful) were tried or deemed necessary. The function of this type of crossdraft kiln, the wood fuel and the

prolonged firing time, is to produce natural glaze effects from the ash deposits and flame flashings that cannot be produced in any other way. Most of the pots were loaded onto shelves using a heavy coating of alumina on each shelf as well as alumina pads under each pot. A few pots were placed in the sand covering the floor directly under the side stoking holes where they were subjected to much abuse from the wood being thrown on them, the ash and cake deposits being built up over them and with little expectation of their survival.

The May school holidays seemed to be the best time to fire and work proceeded for this deadline. Light-up and initial preheating of the firebox was without incident and Estelle and I managed the first three days on our own with a little help from our son and his wife. During this stage only one person really needed to be in attendance. On the third day Peter and Diane Stichbury arrived from Auckland and although very tired from driving were immediately put to work stoking as things were then hotting up considerably. The next day Richard Parker and Ian Smail arrived to join the fun. The assistance of all these people was much appreciated and most necessary. There is no way that a kiln of this size

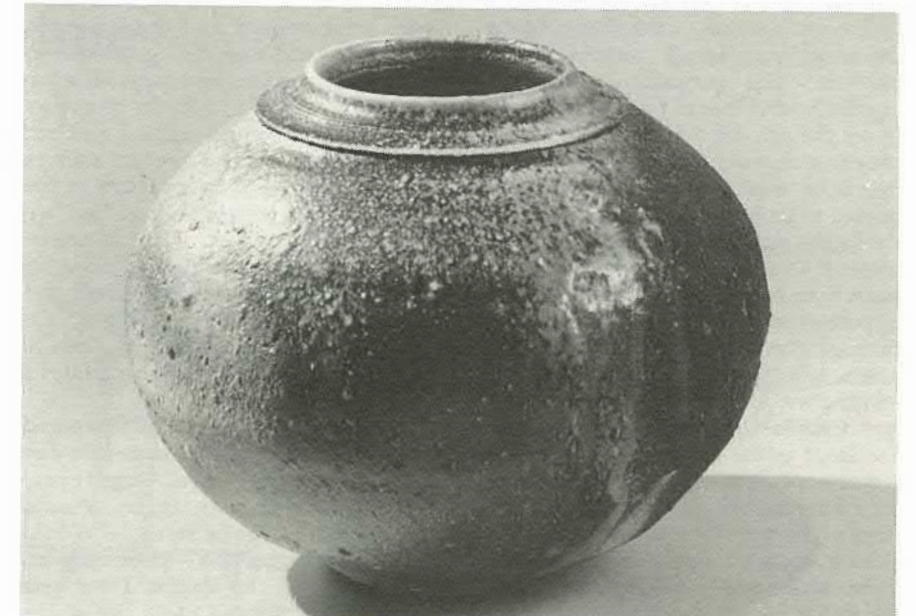


Photo: Howard Williams

and type can be fired without a team of willing helpers to take turns with stoking and to allow some time for sleep. The average amount of sleep worked out to be about three hours in every twenty-four but the excitement and stimulation was sufficient to keep us on a high for the seven days that the firing lasted.

Above: Pot by Estelle shown in Auckland. Below: Yukio Fujii. Estelle and Bruce discuss texture on one of Bruce's pots from the anagama kiln. Next page, kiln from flue end. Over one metre is underground. Photos: Craig Martin



The early stages of the firing, using the main firebox only, were easy and pleasant. The temperature climbed gradually and it was most interesting to see the ash deposits building up on the shoulders of the pots whenever the fire door was open. The colour appeared to be high enough at the end of the fourth day even although the cones were not fully over (we thought they must have hardened because of the ash deposits) so we started side stoking through the first pair of side stoking holes. After twentyfour hours side stoking we decided that in fact we had not reached sufficient temperature in the front as the flame colour from the wood appears much brighter than the true temperature. So it was decided to re-start the front fire and really cook the pots in that area. Twelve hours later we were again side stoking, the front cones having gone right over, and we were much happier with the colour right throughout the kiln. Another twelve hours was spent side stoking the first pair of side stoking holes with a tremendous build-up of coke amongst the pots in that area, then a further twelve hours and the same build-up of coke at the second pair of side stoking holes.

Almost seven days after the initial light-up the third pair of side stoking

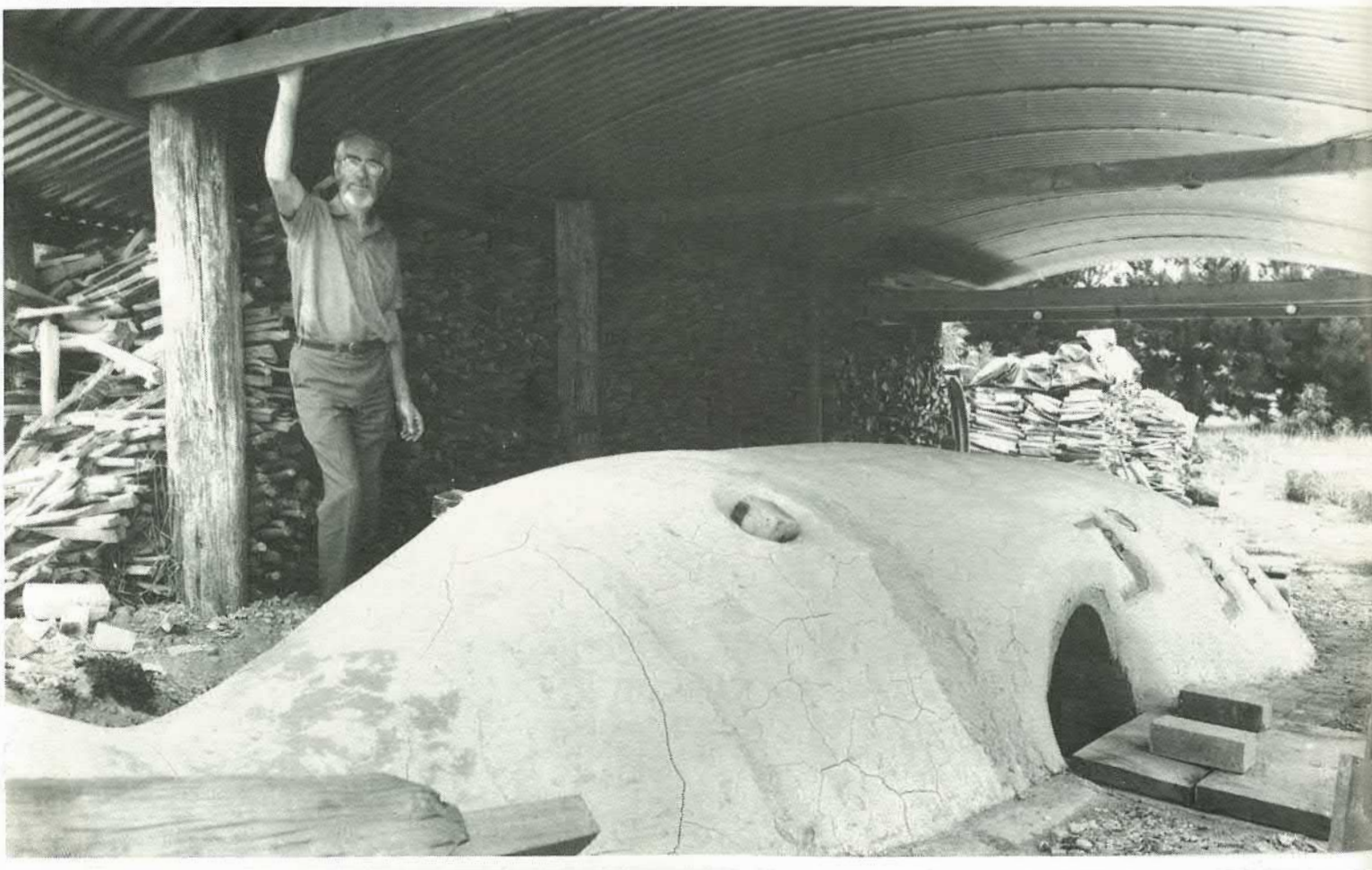
holes were opened and the long thin pieces of wood were being thrown in by Richard and Ian, who were all set to do the night shift and let the rest of us have a good sleep. All seemed well but two hours later one tower of shelves slowly moved so as to cover one of the holes and effectively tell us that we should stop. Everybody out to celebrate the end of the firing and close up all holes as well as possible. Tired and all, another two hours was spent discussing what had happened, then to bed again—at last! What a wonderful sleep!

It is hard to describe the sustained excitement of firing this large kiln day and night for seven days. Almost every aspect was unknown to us. Would New Zealand clays be suitable? Would the mixture of wood—pine, poplar, douglas fir, etc. be alright? How long should we stoke the main fire at the front? Should we stoke one pair of side stoking holes only or all three pairs at once? Maybe we should stoke alternate sides? Many many questions! The next firing will not have the same excitement of the complete unknown, nor the same sort of abandon. We were mentally prepared for a complete failure—a few minor successes would be absolutely wonderful. To have the large numbers of good pots and some

really lovely pieces that resulted was not even dreamed about! For the next firing we will no doubt expect certain results and place pots in the kiln in places where special things happened last time and be hopeful that once again these results will occur.

Epilogue: Following this first firing of our anagama we went back to Japan to try and find out more about firing these large kilns and returned to Himeji to stay with the potter from whom we had obtained the kiln design. Unfortunately, his kiln was out of action but we were shown other kilns, including what was claimed to be the largest anagama in Asia. The work from this anagama was superb. As a result of our visit our friend and Master Potter Mr Fujii and one of his 'deshi', Mr Watanabe, are now staying with us to assist with the repairs to our kiln, splitting wood and to make some pots ready for our second firing. Mr Fujii will stay through to assist with the loading and the next firing of Kamaka Anagama and, hopefully, help us to obtain the results that these wonderful kilns can produce. The learning process is continuous and the excitement is already mounting towards anagama firing number two.

Bruce Martin
Hastings



Okinawa yakishimé

Paul Lorimer

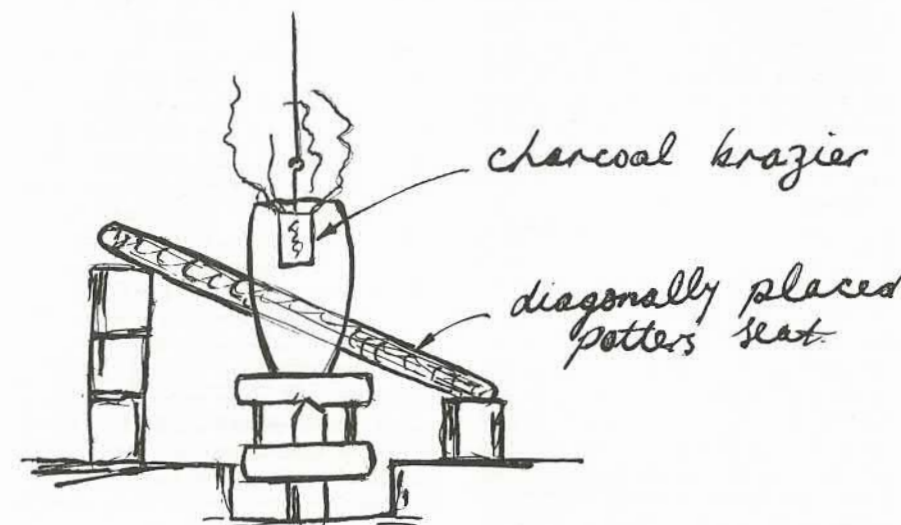
Paul Lorimer, living with his Japanese wife in Okinawa, writes "The glazed wares and the yakishimé produced on Okinawa are naturally two different topics so I have limited myself to the least appreciated one—yakishimé. I use all the techniques mentioned in the article except that I'm forced to reduce the firing cycle to 4 days and am constantly impressed by the fluency and efficiency achievable once you fit yourself into the relaxed rhythm."

Up until now Okinawan pottery (and yakishimé especially) has been largely overlooked and so still remains almost unknown today. The Okinawans though, have developed their own unique shapes and techniques which certainly deserve attention. Although many of the shapes were "borrowed" from SE Asia, China and Korea, the islanders developed these into an "indigenous" style. The climate of these islands produces a subtropical profusion of brightly coloured flowers surrounded by coral reefs and beautiful blue waters. This rather idyllic atmosphere is paid for in full by poor soils, torrential rain storms and vicious typhoons which wreak terrible damage.

Life was, and still is, hard and such circumstances created a no-frills, straightforward pottery to meet the requirements of the people. As a strong and healthy body was naturally of vital importance, this was the most prayed for favour of the gods. The same outlook spilled over to the crafts and so pottery had to be robust and strong.

Whereas the glazed wares are often very colourful, the yakishimé colours were sombre yet very subtle and can equal anything produced by the more well known yakishimé centres on mainland Japan. The tradition unfortunately died out about 25 years ago due to lack of demand caused mainly by the introduction of plastics, glass, a piped water supply and an influx of mass produced wares. However Okinawa was by far the longest surviving traditional yakishimé centre in Japan. The main products were water containers, large jars for strong fermented bean paste, sake decanters and larger jars for storing sake in bulk, mortars and burial urns.

The kilns were all tunnel kilns usually up to 20 m in length. Like most mainland Japan anagamas after the end of the 14th century, these kilns were fired in a neutral to oxidised atmosphere. The traditional method was to keep the fire low or to virtually "smoke" the kiln for a week then belt the temperature up and finish the



firing off in a day. This method of firing helped keep steam cracking to a minimum—this usually happened in firing due to high 20–25% shrinkage rate of the clay used. It produced darkish reds and browns and sometimes yellows. Due to stacking techniques orange colours were also quite common. The firing method also resulted in little of the heavy, loud, running ash glaze caused by heavy flyash build-up which was so common with mainland Japan kilns. Except for pots directly in the front of the firebox, there was only a beautiful light dusting of glaze on the shoulder with the body left free to the subtleties of the flame.

The firebox showed some changes with time—the older kilns having no separate firebox, while later on a separate chamber was built on to the front of the kiln in the manner of a multichamber climbing kiln. The side stoking holes were very close together—in some cases only 50 cm apart. No damper was used—they just slapped a lid on the stack and opened it

according to the pace of the firing.

The arches of these kilns were all made of clay and a couple of different techniques were used. If low shrinkage clay was available then a wet mix was used and heavily beaten every day for 2–3 weeks until hard. Ten tons of dry clay is sufficient for a 10 metre kiln. The other method was to barely wet the clay and then shovel it over a strong template and using tree trunks, thump the loose clay into a binding mass over a few days. This is an exhausting method but ideal for high shrinkage clays and was used until a few years ago for building large, round charcoal kilns.

Stacking was in the usual manner using saggars and stacking pots one on top of the other. Rice husks were commonly used as a silica sand substitute when stacking. This is a handy method especially for large kilns (being fire free it can be shovelled around with carefree abandon) and works perfectly for 50 kg plus pots in preventing base cracks during firing.



Because Okinawa is a chain of coral islands, the natural yakishimé clays often have a large limestone particle content which erupts through the surface when fired. The clays as used were almost always quite fine—having had stones and limestone particles removed. They ranged from ideal to impossible. In valleys and under streams excellent plastic clay was available. Then there were the highly abundant red clays of the agricultural lands which were quite easily used after impurities were removed. However on the island group where I live (the last in the Okinawas chain) the potters were downright masochists. Of all the good clays available they picked the most unusable and then mixed in cow's blood and crushed snails to give it plasticity. God knows how, but without the use of a wheel, they made unique and amazing wares—mainly for cooking. These were fired in the primitive way of stacking them in a mound with wood and grass. For anyone living between a market garden and an abattoir this method would be perfect. Clay quality seems to be ir-

relevant.

For making large pots a simple wooden kick wheel was sunk into the ground up to the top of the flywheel, ash was spread on the wheelhead or bat to prevent sticking. (There is no need to cut the base off when using ash.) After coiling, the potter then sits on a log diagonally placed and kicks the wheel around to smooth off the coil joints, moving up and down the log according to the size of the pot. Since large pots can't be made in one go, a charcoal brazier was hung inside to firm up the pot more quickly so more coils could be added. Generally one potter had 3 pots in the making at the same time.

These days though Okinawa glazed ware is still thriving, as mentioned before yakishimé has died out. However a few potters are starting to show an interest in this type of pottery again. The struggle is uphill though. Much yakishimé ware was regarded locally as cheap ware and old thinking dies hard. I hope for a revival of interest as the charm and worth of this ware becomes appreciated.

Anagama firing at Potters Convention, Taranaki '83

Jack Troy, salt glazer, anagama firer from Pennsylvania will be visiting New Zealand in October, for the annual exhibition and convention of the New Zealand Society of Potters to be held in New Plymouth at labour weekend.

"In the anagama kiln you use the flames like a brush, but you're only allowed to hold it by the very tip. Firing is decorating or, at the very most, you set the stage for decoration to happen. The potter must try to anticipate the path of the flame and direct it here and there, sheltering one pot and exposing the belly of that one. Experi-

ence counts for much, but is not at all sufficient by itself. The calculation remains more intuitive than conscious because like the entire anagama cycle of forming and firing, things work out best when, as Daniel Rhodes puts it, they "arise out of a direct and relaxed confrontation with ceramic process, a feeling for the clay, the wheel and the fire which has nothing to do with perfection in the sense of ruling out all surprises."

extracted from an article from "Ontario Potter"

Potters Convention

Labour weekend, New Plymouth. Annual Pottery Exhibition, visiting demonstrators, interesting sightseeing programme. Registration from Mrs Edwards 2 Roto Street, New Plymouth.

Summer workshop

Borland Lodge 14-22 January 1984. Tutors Chester Nealie and Peter Johnson. Inquiries to Audrey Simmons, Heddon Bush RD1 Winton. Phone 877 South Hillend.

We have good reports of this annual workshop held at Lake Manapouri in one of New Zealand's noted scenic areas. The calibre of the tutors, the organisation, and the lake, mountain and bush surroundings make this workshop internationally attractive.



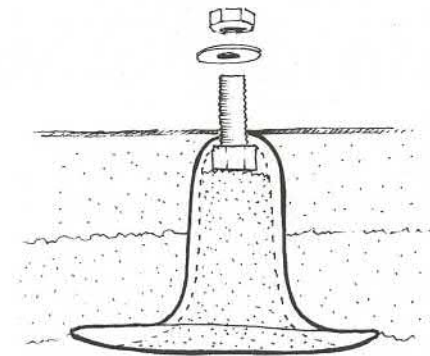
Wood fired brick and fibre kiln

When ceramic fibre first became available in New Zealand, my interest was much the same as any other red blooded potter except that I wanted to try the stuff with wood, rather than the usual diesel, gas or electricity. The only problem I could foresee was the effect of fly-ash building up and fluxing the more exposed pieces of fibre. I have overcome this till now with thin coatings of batwash after each firing, much the same as protecting a salt skin, but there is still a certain amount of damage to the fibre. However I have recently come across a refractory cement which seems to contain a high proportion of fine alumina. Used by itself as a wash, the cement develops fine mud type cracks, but dosed up with a refractory grog or coarser alumina it is held together. Applied over a series of firings it develops into a very hard refractory shell.

My kiln is a slight mutation on the Driving Creek dutch oven workhorse. The chamber is oblong instead of square and the firebox runs parallel to the kiln with a series of firemouths rather than one, more like the chamber of an oriental climbing kiln, only much smaller. It is 25 cu. ft with a small area for the odd earthenware or raku pot in the base of the stack. I find it a most agreeable size to fire on my own, as the cycle of thrown to finished pots can be very short if need be and I don't lose the rhythm of firing. The pots are all raw glazed and fired to around 1300 ° C in 12 to 13 hours.

I have used fibre in the arch of my kiln for several reasons—the ease of construction compared to bricks, the obvious insulating quality and for lightness. The kiln itself requires minimum bracing, merely fence standards and clothesline wire. In the back of my mind was the problem of rapid cooling in completely fibre kilns. Actually the brick walls and floor more than make up for the fibre arch loss—if anything it seems to take longer to cool than my last all-brick kiln.

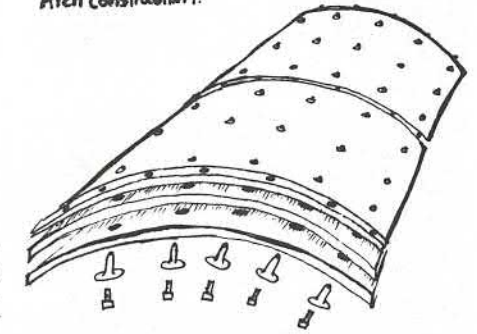
Here is a brief description of the construction of the arch which could be adapted to any shape or size. I threw a series of plugs with a flat brim 2½" long and the flange of the same width. I drilled a ⅜" hole into the tip of this when leather hard and fired them to around 1200 ° C. They were made of a local refractory clay good to 1400 ° C with some alumina added. The plugs were spaced at about 10" intervals and pushed through holes cut in the fibre (two layers, one high, one low heat duty). Bolted through each one was a stainless steel bolt fixed on the other



side of flat galvanised iron which was already held into the required arch shape by three mild steel bands and a dozen coach bolts—the remaining sockets were then plugged with scraps of fibre. This operation was all done upside down and the fibre made rigid

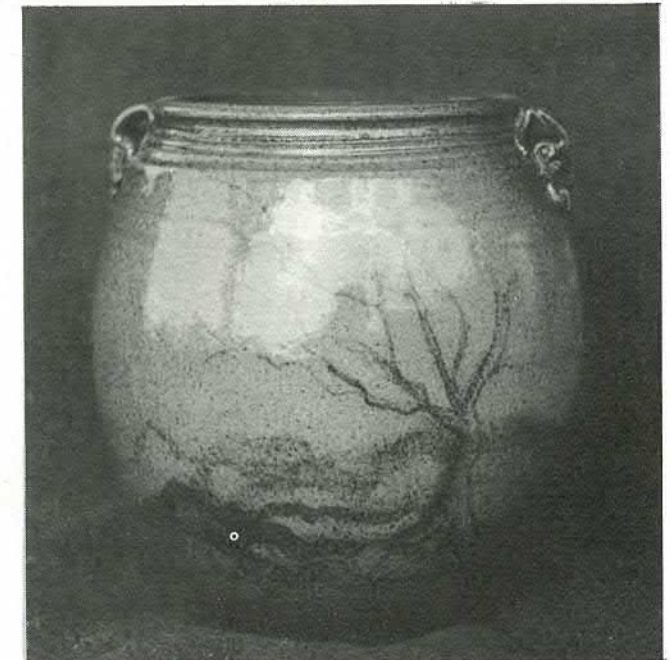
Peter Johnson, Southland

Arch Construction.



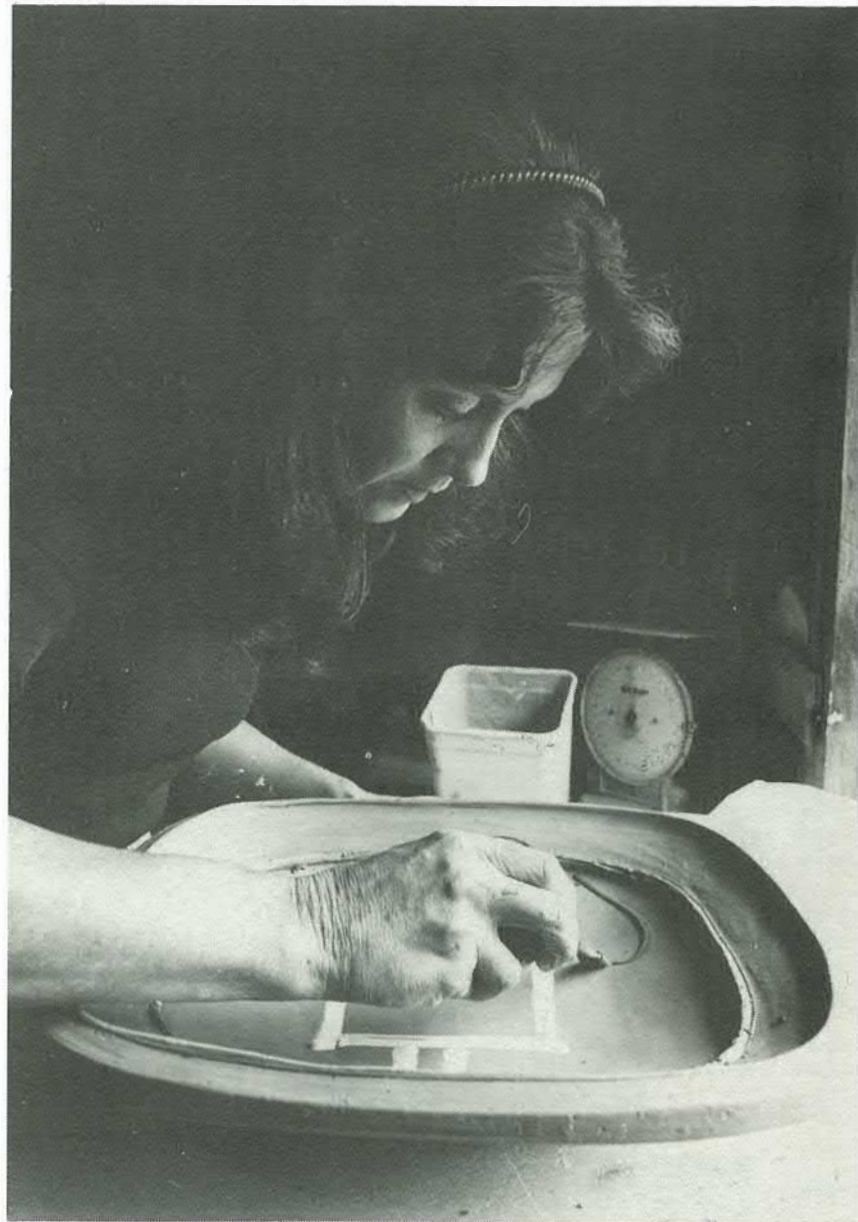
before inserting the plugs. The arch was then placed on the waiting wall and the four corners braced.

Colac Bay
Riverton
Southland



POTTING IN STYLE

On the slip trail, Merilyn Wiseman, Albany



Many years ago I set sail from New Zealand with some of my family to embark on a 4 year Fine Arts course at Goldsmiths College in London. My mother had very carefully charted a course 'through the history of civilization' which took 5 months, travelling overland from Egypt through the Middle East to Greece and Europe, and finally to England. In all the museums and at the archeological sites we visited I saw pots and shards. In places like Petra and the remote parts of Jor-

dan you could find shards scattered on the ground with as much reverence as tins on our rubbish dumps. I'll never forget the magic of picking up a handle of a pot made in Roman times, with the vitality of the potter's hand still evident after all those centuries. Years later I found myself working in a small pottery in Ireland for the summer holidays, preparing clay for the two potters who worked there. Soon after this I returned to New Zealand, certain that what I really wanted to do was to make

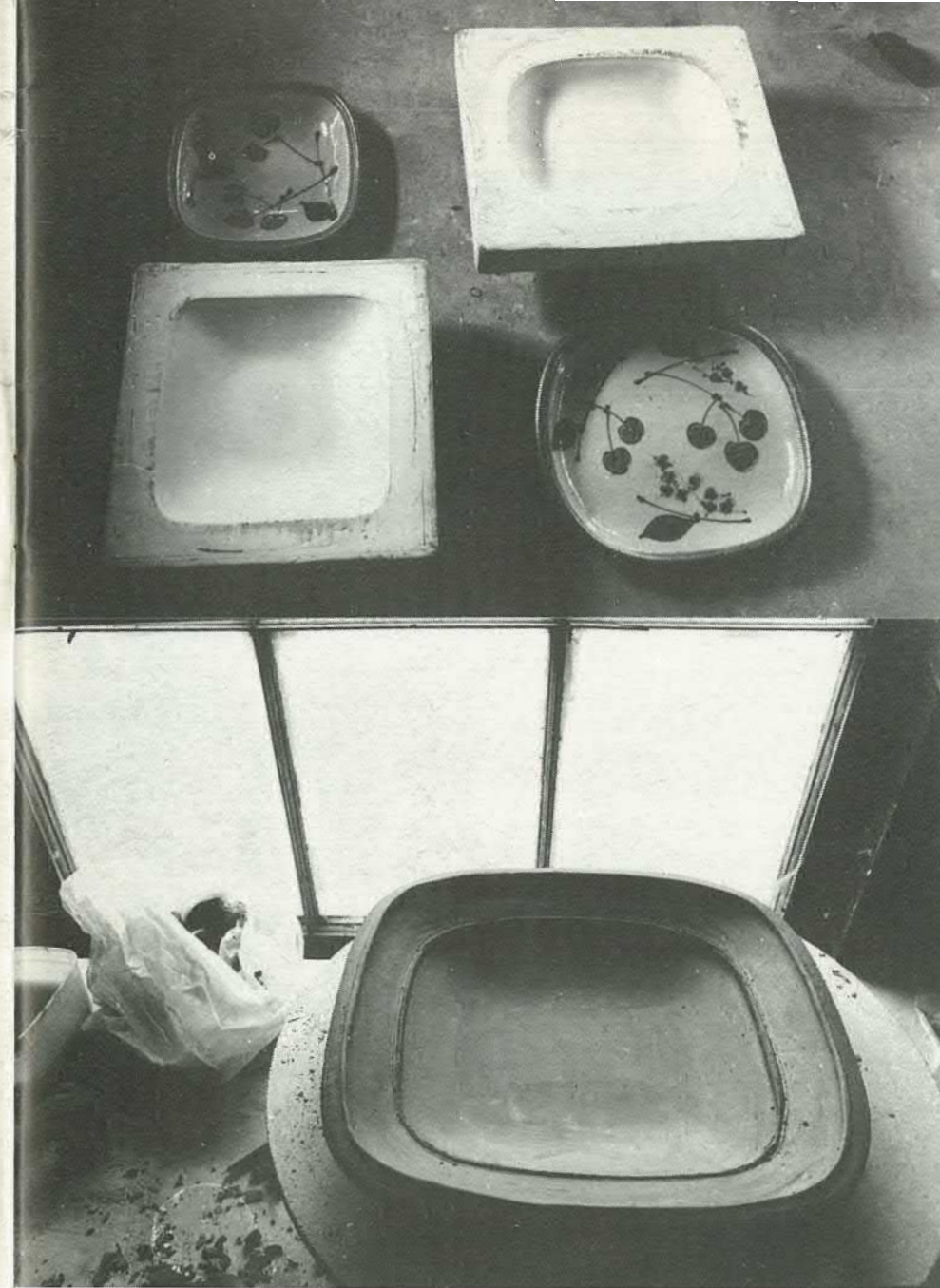
pots. And although it took some time to get it all together that is what I am doing now.

I have always fired with wood. From my first experience of watching a wood firing 7 years ago I knew this was the way I wanted to fire my pots. The physical effort, heat, sweat and direct contact with the fire through the stoking is the culmination of the 5 week work cycle. Ann Ambler and Nigel Woodroffe helped to design the kiln which has two chambers of 50 cubic ft, and a Dutch oven firebox. When we built the kiln none of us had any experience of firing a wood kiln, but the only modification I have made is to change the height of the bag wall and to add two 40 gallon drums to the stack.

In the early days when raw firings would take at least 18 hours and stoic friends split wood for me for hours on end, I never imagined I would be able to fire singlehanded. But I now preheat the kiln overnight, filling the front of the firebox with 3 or 4 manuka logs and lighting a small fire around them. It takes a little while to be sure the wood will continue to burn, and then I brick up the firebox completely leaving the damper right out. By 4 o'clock next morning there are a few glowing embers left in the grate, the kiln is warm and the chimney pulling. I still take care not to increase temperature too rapidly until 300 degrees as many of my pots are raw fired, but from then on I can really push it and I fire to 1300 degrees in 12 to 13 hours now.

The kiln uses surprisingly little wood—about half a bundle of slabs—which works out to about \$25 per firing. There is still a mill about 20 miles further north at Silverdale so the cartage costs are not too high. It takes my husband Michael a couple of hours to cut and sort enough wood for a firing, and between us we can stack it in less than an hour. We stack the wood close to the kiln to save any double handling, and by replacing each stack after a firing the process of cutting and stacking wood is not a major chore. One can argue that this time could be more lucratively employed making pots, but in my experience you are more likely to experiment and delight in making pots if there is not an enormous fuel bill to face after each firing.

My commitment to wood firing has shaped the approach I have to my



Merilyn Wiseman photographed in and around her workshop by Ian Smaill.

work. Unless the pots show the effect of the fire there is little point in using wood solely as a source of heat. . . there are much easier ways to reach cone 10! I enjoy leaving parts of my pots unglazed so that the ash can build up on those surfaces. Porcelain bodies and the Macpherson White slab clay blush shades of apricot under these conditions. Recently I have been using the slab clay for moulded platters, thoroughly enjoying the tranquillity of hand building.

I began experimenting with slips about 3 years ago . . . dipping and combing, enjoying the simple way that a white slip, for instance, changes the colour of a glaze and gives immediate colour contrast on a pot. Instead of searching for yet another glaze as a source of colour I began to realize that slips could give me a big colour range and flexibility, and could be used in a wide variety of ways. Slip trailing began to interest me—it's like drawing with liquid. The technique is very old and relatively simple, requiring practice to achieve fluidity and rhythm. You have to work fast which leads to spontaneity and freshness. The use of slips enables me to decorate my pots the day I make them and in this way the decoration becomes an intrinsic part of the making process.

The fired colour of slips depends very much on the glaze used, and a wide variation of colour can be achieved by simply changing the over-glaze. I use glazes containing Cornwall Stone for their translucent quality. I have experimented with many base slip recipes and have found the following formula gives me the least problems.

Basic White Slip

Australian Feldspar	100 g
Australian Ball Clay	1500 g
Kaolin	200 g
Flint	200 g

Even so, timing the drying of the pots is critical for both pouring and trailing. An addition of 1/2% bentonite aids adhesion of the slip. Most pottery books give a basic guide to slip colourants. It is time consuming mixing and testing different colours but an empirical approach is very rewarding.

I was very fortunate to have been invited to join the Albany Village Cooperative 18 months ago. Apart from enjoying the contact with other potters instead of working in almost total isolation, the opportunity has freed me from providing a dealer with a wide selection of readily saleable domestic ware. I am now able to concentrate on a specific direction in my work, and to have it displayed to advantage in the Albany Gallery. The situation also forces me to live with my pots longer, and hopefully to learn from the experience!



Obituary

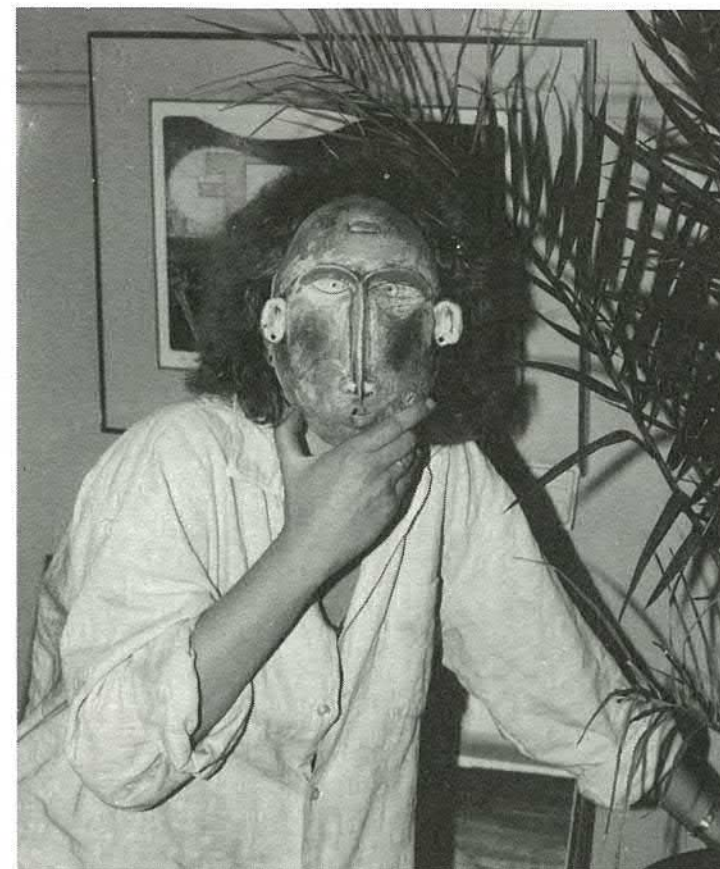
"he makes pots as a bird sings"

Michael Cardew 1901-1983

When Michael Cardew turned away from the university and an academic life in 1923 to become a potter, the move was decidedly less respectable than such a move would seem today. It was the type of highly individualistic decision he was to repeat often.

Where Leach introduced the Oriental aesthetic to 20th C British craft, Cardew was the link with English slipware surviving the industrial revolution in small country potteries. He captured the spirit of country craft, first at Winchcombe—a pottery he revived—then at his pottery in Wenford Bridge, Cornwall. Michael Cardew's strength of personality, understanding of and competence in his craft translated into vigorous pots often with free slip trail decoration. The work he was doing in 1975 when I visited him at Wenford Bridge still displayed astonishing vitality. My meeting with him and later his colleague Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie supplied me with the fundamental principles of what craft is about and for that I'm most thankful.

Margaret Harris



Porcelain 12" black stain drawing.

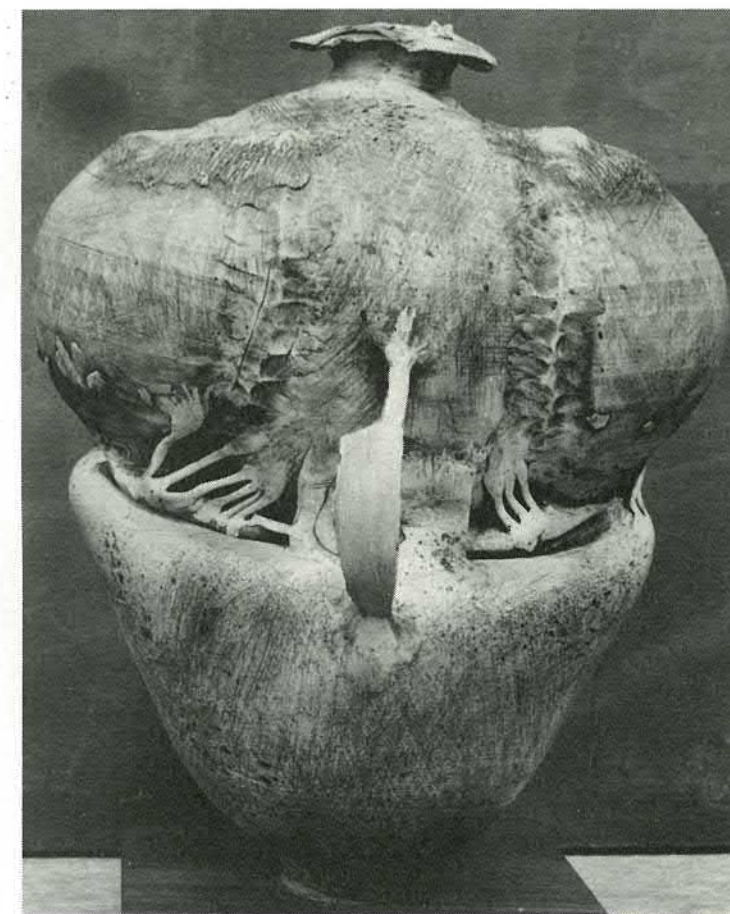
Porcelain 13" thrown and distorted.



Gail Weissberg, Wellington having fun

I spent two years at the Wellington Polytech doing graphic design followed by a year at the Dunedin ceramics course. Since then I've been spending half my time on ceramics and half painting and drawing. I've recently abandoned the attempt to make a living from this as I felt I was becoming a Philistine. Now I have the freedom to experiment and explore the things I enjoy doing without worrying whether or not they will sell. I work mainly in porcelain because I love drawing and designing on it. I like colour so I have been using china paints on some items to achieve bright and startling effects, but I'm looking for alternatives because it's difficult to be free with these paints.

I do some throwing but find it a gruelling process and can't wait to alter the forms and draw on them. I have resisted the temptation to distort coffee mugs as the surface is ideal for creating colourful designs which have proved popular with buyers if time consuming for me. I like to make many different objects as vehicles for drawing. I love anything that looks human—masks are delightful as they are symbolic of many things and are fun to play with.



Luscious lustres

Patti Meads, Wellington

Viewing the 14th 15th and 16th century lustres in the Louvre collection in Paris three years ago was for me an overwhelming experience. I felt a longing to use lustres in a wider and more varied way than I had previously, as a total decoration. By reading widely and trying any promising idea I slowly evolved my own technique that basically is lustre on lustre broken up with the use of a medium.

Originally I used gold and platinum on a clear or optical blue glaze but 18 months ago I tried these lustres on a soft, matt black glaze and this gave a totally different very dramatic result. I went on experimenting and found that different grades of gold lustre gave me different tones, for instance one would give bright gold, another red copper colours which heightens the richness of the final result. On the clear or white glaze the thinner grades of gold fire to rose or lavender depending on the base glaze but on the black the thinner gold is a rich copper through to bronze. Exploiting these variations is something I'm learning more about each firing.

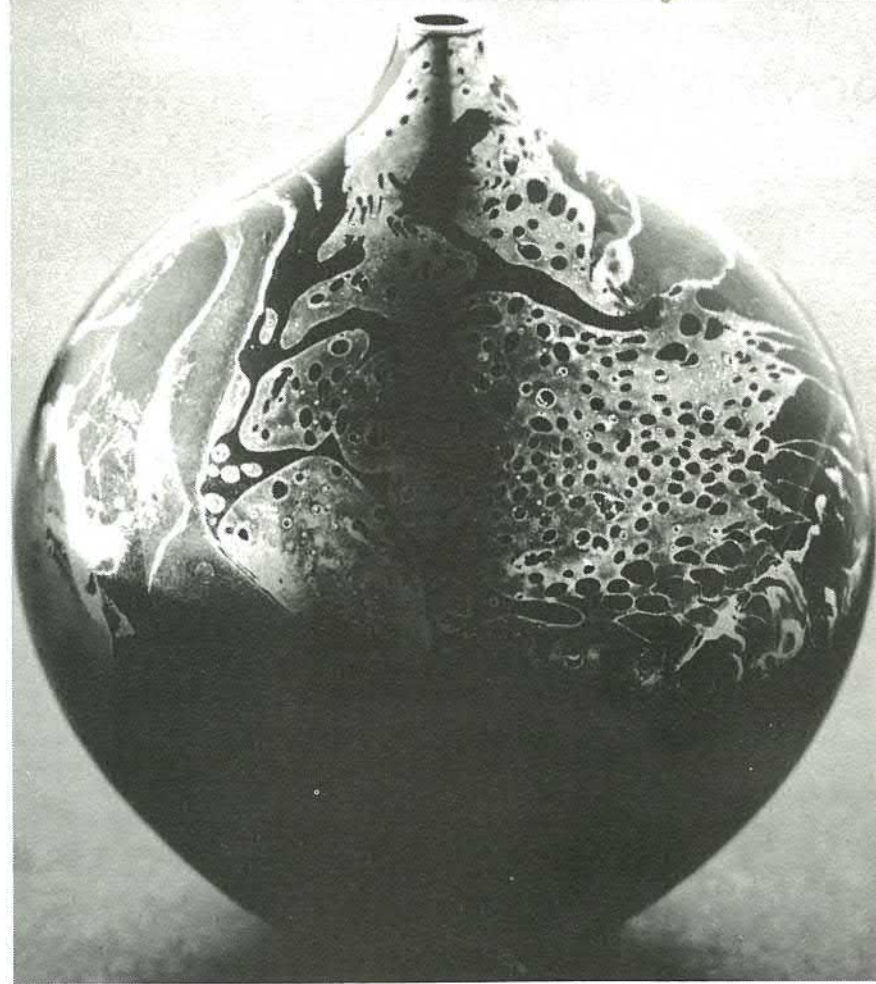
I use an electric kiln and biscuit fire to 960-1000°C then glaze to 1200°C to 1240°C and finally begin applying lustres which are only fired to 750°C. Sometimes several applications are necessary to achieve the desired effect.

The richness of the lustre decoration demands simple forms to complement the extravagance of patterning. I find a band of silver and gold on rims or edges defines the patterned area effectively. My forms are thrown and hand-built, one favourite is an egg shape which lends itself to lustre in the Faberge tradition. Large plates are a wonderful basis for experimentation using gold and platinum. I'm only now beginning to control the lustres on this form.

Because I enjoy the techniques I have evolved and gold and platinum are becoming increasingly expensive, I recently decided to use coloured commercial lustres as well. They have led me on to making Victorian type jardinières for which they are a most appropriate decoration.

Everything I read, everything I try makes a change in my work — the results are always different. That's what I love about it.

Photos: Right, with coloured lustres by Jenny Hames. The remaining black and gold lustres: Michael Overend. Examples of this work have been shown at Faenza, Italy.



Magic mocha

Wendy Masters, Kapiti Coast

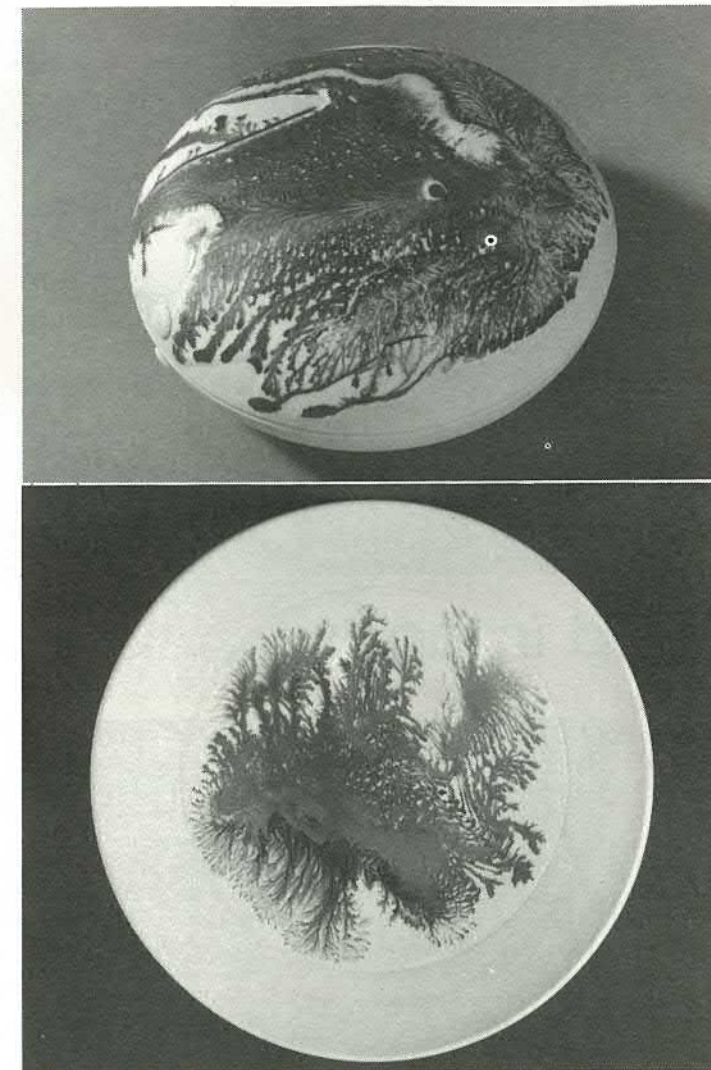
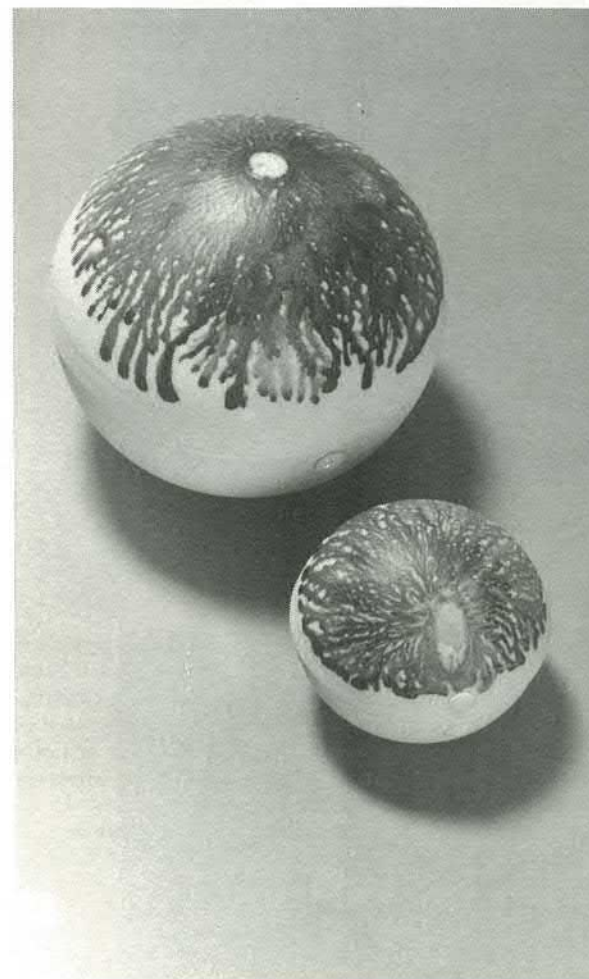
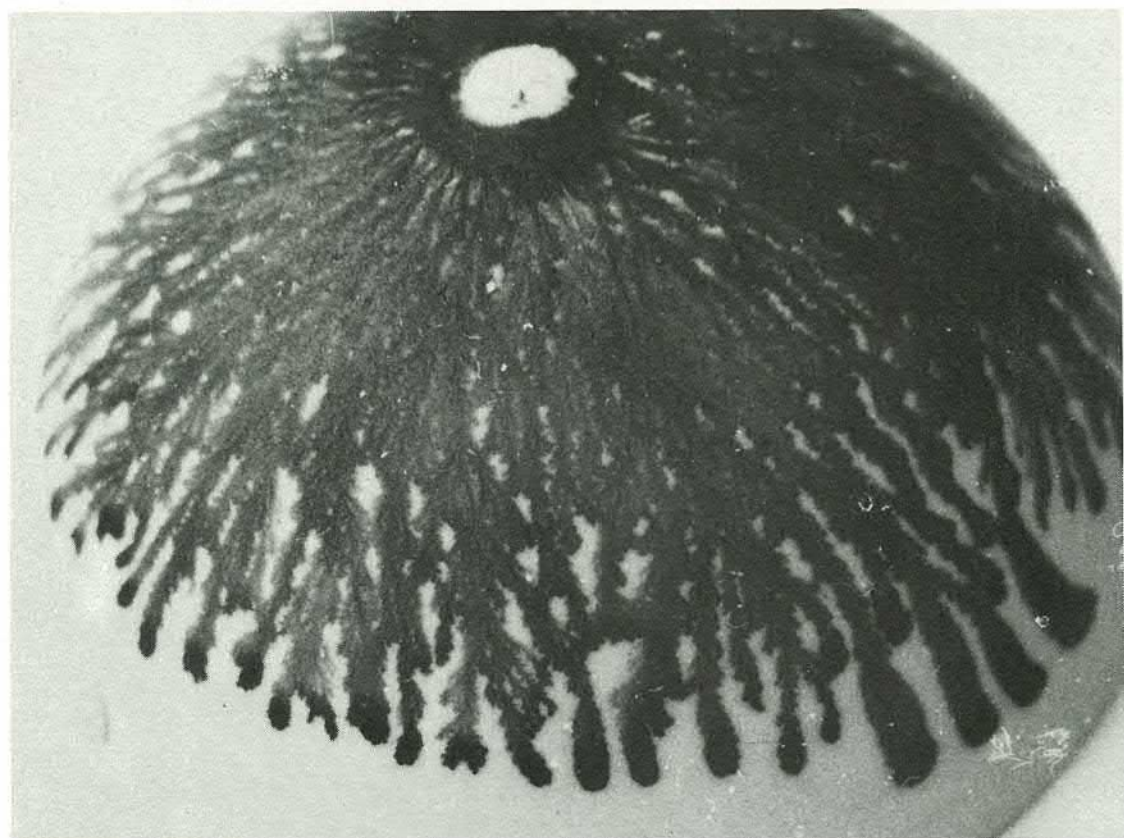
Having a graphic design training I enjoy combining these techniques with the form and function of pots. For the "mochas" I concentrate on clean, simple forms to set off the intricate patterns which are formed in the surface layer of slip as the colouring runs.

I use porcelain (Potclays) slip on either the same body or on stoneware. Various liquids can be used to carry the oxide colouring—vinegar, tobacco juice, coffee (hence the name mocha I suppose) and several others. I prefer tobacco juice for the way it runs in wavy, feathery lines compared to the straighter lines of vinegar. To make the tobacco base liquid, empty a packet of any tobacco into a saucepan, cover with water and simmer for half an hour (open the window—it stinks). Strain off the liquid and store it in a lidded jar. Use this base to mix up different colours in small lidded and labelled containers. I use mainly cobalt carbonate, iron, nickel and rutile in a proportion of 30 mls tobacco juice to approx. 1 g of oxide. Dry glaze stain can also be used.

To apply, the pot should be medium leather hard and held firmly while part or all of it is covered with slip. Immediately stir the mocha mixture with

an eye dropper or brush, let a few drops fall into the slip and tilt the pot to control the way the colour runs. If the pattern is not successful it can be wiped off with a wet sponge and the slip and the colouring applied again.

Rims, borders and other areas can be protected with brush-wax against the slipping and sponging process. Hands should be rinsed frequently or gloves worn, as the oxides are being used in a very concentrated form.



Fired to top temperature in reduction, the clay and oxides are lovely unglazed. I haven't yet found a glaze which enhances the patterns without either melting or obliterating them. Some stain translucent glazes work reasonably well though, and the mocha area can be sponged with water so it will pick up a thinner glaze coating.

Mochas are a happening akin to watercolour painting and in spite of many failures I always look forward to having another go.

Left and above: Wendy Masters' mocha, flowing in brown, amber and grey/green colours resembles a landscape on plates where she can exercise most control. Below left: an example of Wendy Masters' other style using an etched floral motif. Photographed by Richard Hendry at NZ Craftworks.



Photos: Kingsford & Baigent

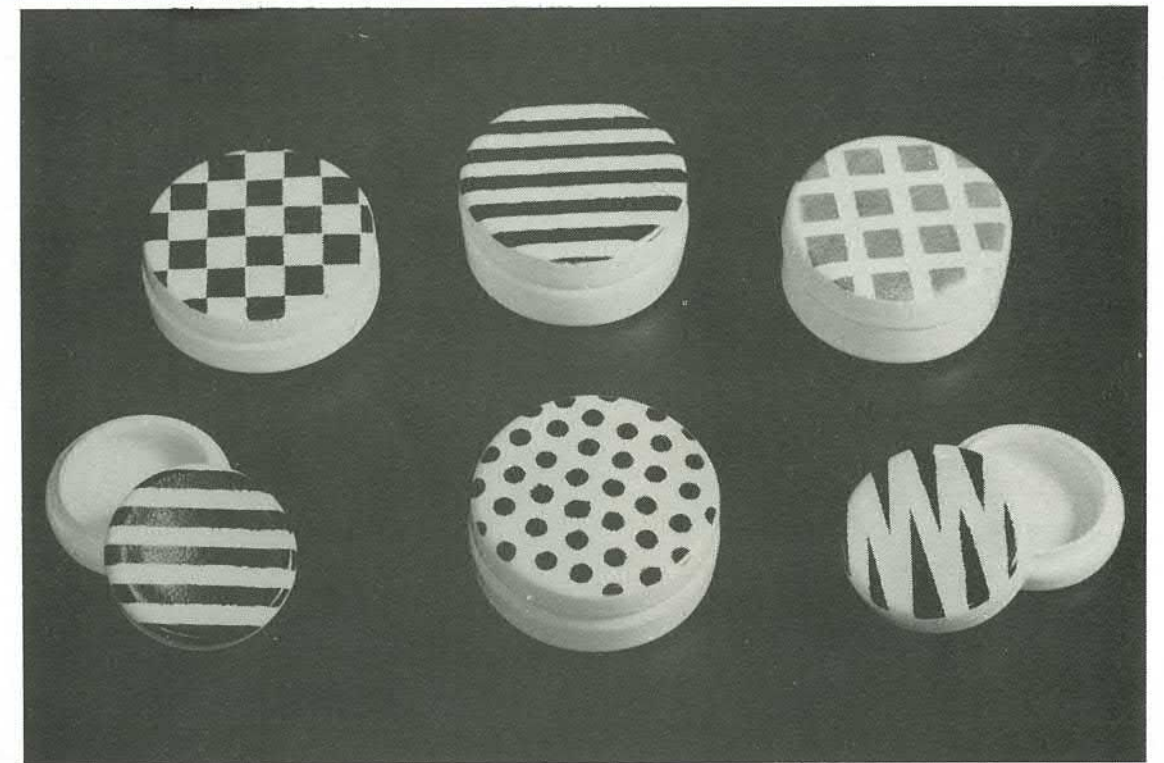
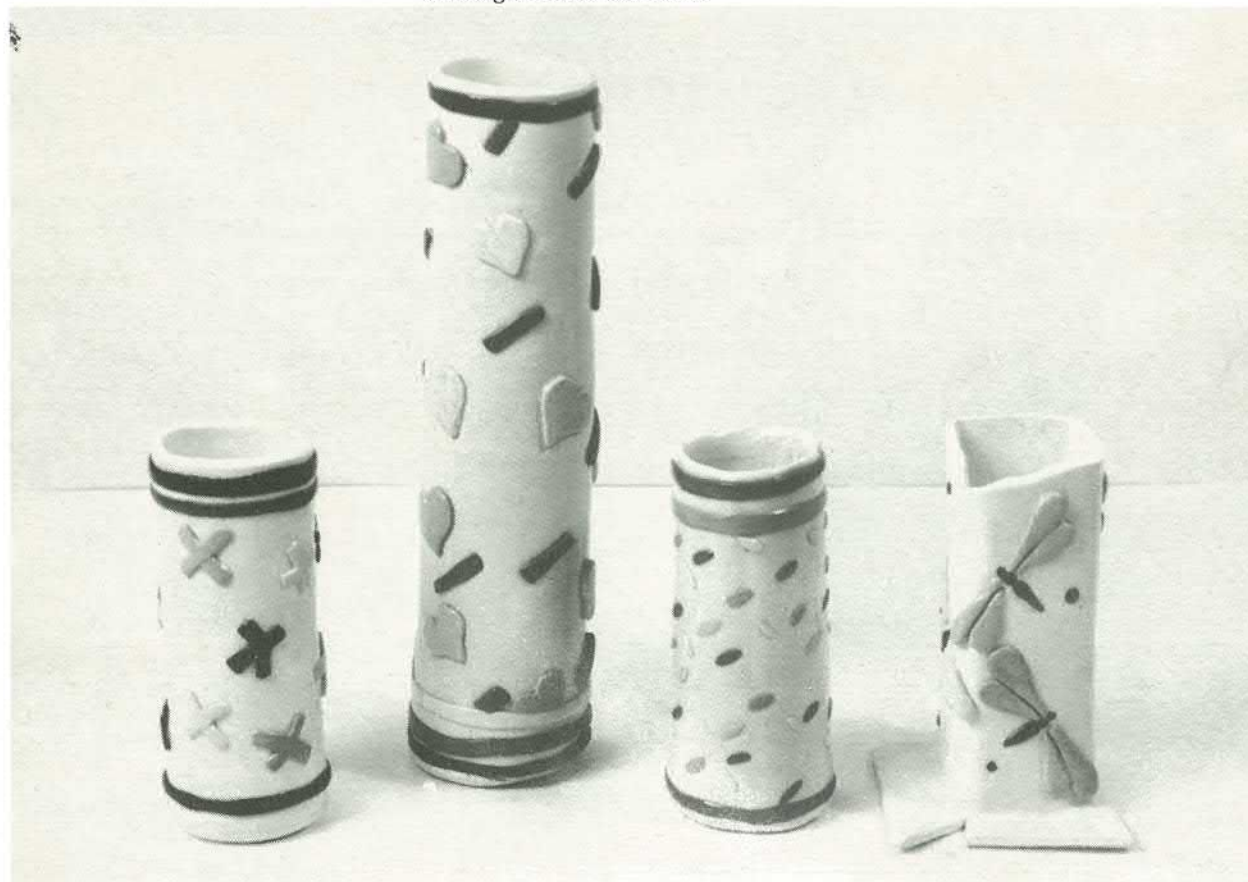
Vivid images, Sue McLeod, Nelson

Most of my work is thrown on an electric wheel although I handbuild some pieces. I use a white earthenware body predominantly and fire in an electric kiln. The decoration is brushed or air-brushed on to the work with onglaze colours and lustres, firing a separate third time. I enjoy exploring line and colour combinations with the vivid colours available in china paint.

Although I'm a New Zealander, my

training was at art school in England, where the ceramics tutor, a sculptor, emphasised the importance of definition of form and clarity of line. He introduced me to 13th century Spanish Hispano-Moresque ware, Chinese Sung and the work of Lucie Rie. As well as learning traditional clay forming methods I took advantage of industrial techniques available at the school, such as jolleying, casting and making ceramic transfers.

I love drawing and keep sketch books for possible ideas and bizarre notions. Most of my forms are containers of various sizes, where I explore an aspect of the form, decoration or both. As the idea develops I move intermittently between paper and clay. Injections from movies, New Wave music, art deco, jiving and contemporary painting and print-making are essential to my creative muse.



A travelling Australian exhibition

The first property of the Australian exhibition is that it is interesting. On closer inspection the second laudable property is the impressively high standard of technique that the large majority of works exhibit. The third striking feature of the exhibition is the free use of colour. From here on you either like 'em or hate 'em.

We felt a little of both — the impressive large hexagon plate by Malcolm Stewart, the fine, earthy constructions of Marea Gazzard, the timeless salt glazes of Janet Mansfield, the sumptuously vulgar lustres of Alan Peascod — and on the other hand the imitation wall papered, interlocking cardboard, cubes and "arranged" porcelain cloud formations.

Here are substantial and creative happenings in Australian pottery. We have evidence of satire, of fun, and expressive decoration — a flourishing, independent pottery activity. Would an equivalent New Zealand exhibition seem as lively?

Audrey Brodie.

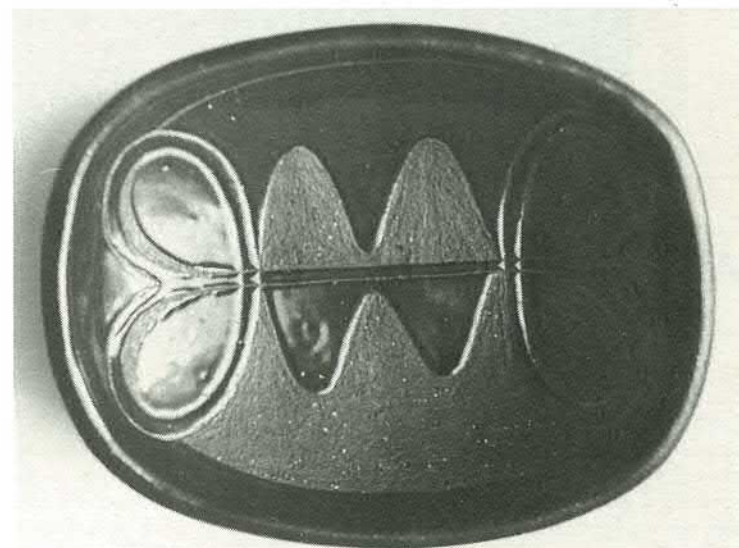
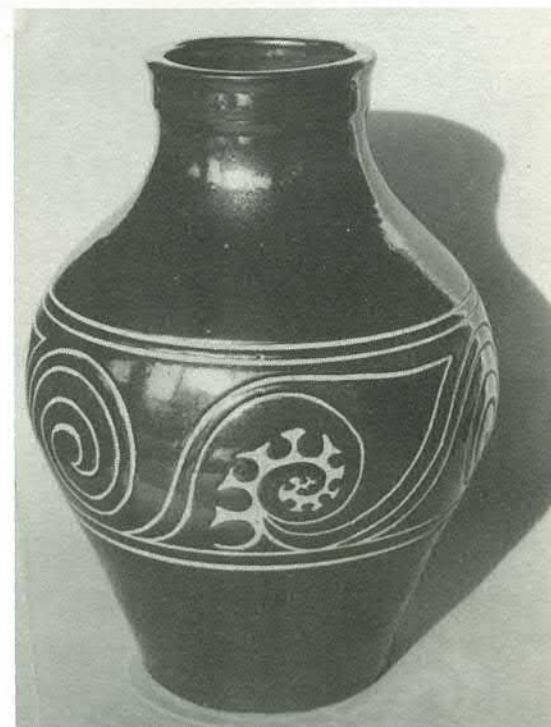
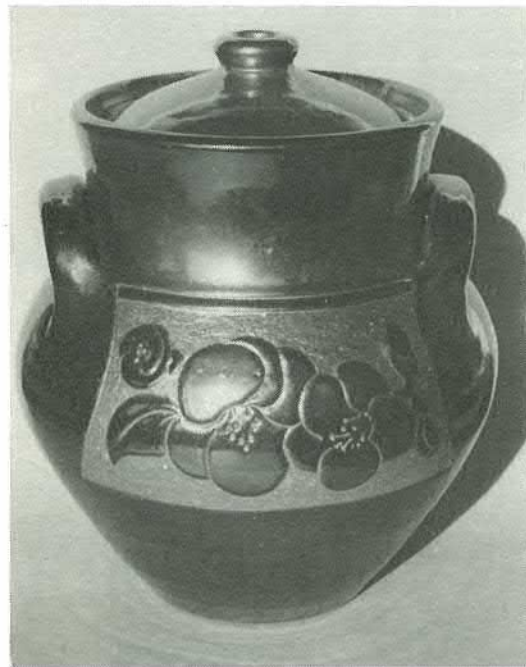
Carving on slip, Gillian Pope, Dunedin

Lately I have been particularly interested in using the visual and tactile difference between slip clay and clay body. The slip, a local clay-ash-manganese mixture, fires to a satin finish—rich dark brown to black, which contrasts nicely with the lighter, toasted and textured surface of the coarser clay body.

Pots are sprayed with the slip glaze when green, and areas of the glaze are carved away when dry, to leave the design in low relief. If the glaze has been sprayed on thickly the design when fired has fat, rounded edges which emphasise the relief.

I like to use simple bold repeat designs where the positive/negative

image can be reversed or simple repeats where slight variations can achieve an interesting whole. I do a lot of sketching. Many sketches are used in print making, others are adapted for use on pots. On recent jar forms I have used abstract fern designs and on large crocks designs based on japonica blossoms.



Porcelain in the solid, Sue Clifford, Southland

From rural Southland with no formal training and next to no contact with the mainstream of New Zealand pottery, Sue Clifford of Wyndham has developed her chosen style to the point where she had work selected for the last international exhibition at Faenza, Italy.

"I was born in Dunedin in 1958, and after leaving school I imported beads from Africa and Peru, working as a self-employed maker of ethnic jewellery. Hours spent threading necklaces

and making ear-rings no doubt instilled in me the patience required to handbuild. A change in fashion brought about a change in occupation and in 1978 I became a full-time ceramist working entirely in hand built porcelain.

Believing that weight should be relevant to form, I spent a year experimenting with porcelain bodies to produce one that would fire in a solid piece. This could have been done in stoneware but as porcelain is so cold to

the touch in its vitreous state, it again became my chosen body.

I prepare the clay body in the powdered state and in this I thoroughly mix 25–50% sawdust, depending on the form to be made. Water is then added and the resulting mixture, with a consistency of wet concrete, is poured into temporary wooden boxing or plaster moulds approximate to the shape I require.

After the pieces are thoroughly dried (two to three months in a heated room), they are bisque fired to 1000°C in an electric kiln. As this produces thick clouds of smoke I leave the kiln lid propped open two to three inches until the smoke has dissipated at around 500 °C to save some wear and tear on the elements.

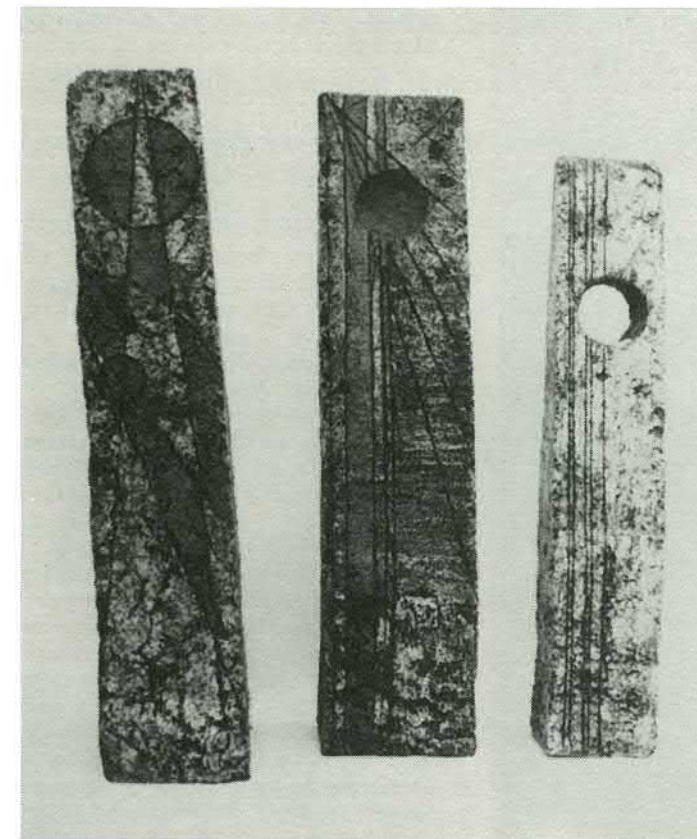
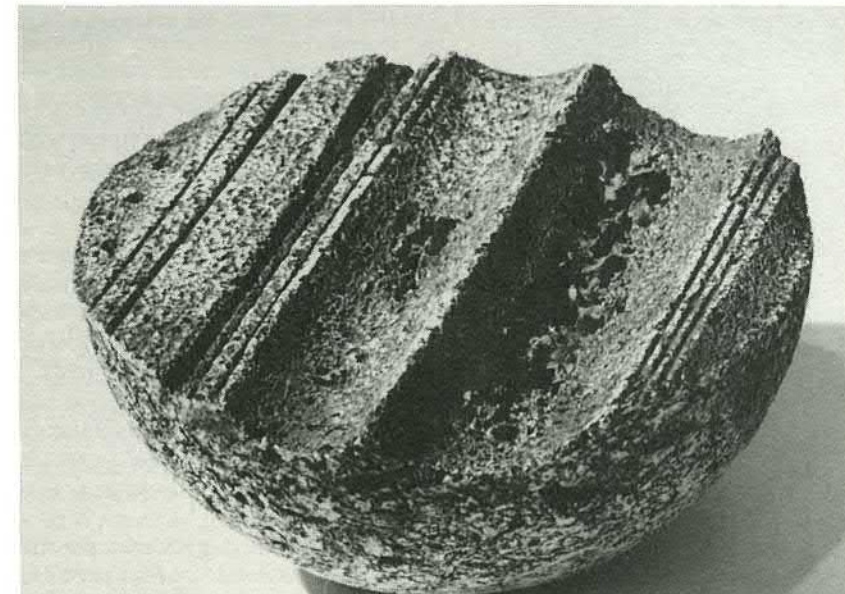
After bisque firing the pieces are hand carved and filed to the form required. This is a very dusty procedure and although I am not yet showing signs of silicosis and I do wear a good quality mask, I frequently suffer ash burns to my throat, face and hands.

After carving I apply the following oxide wash.

Nickel oxide	20
Red iron	50
Cobalt oxide	100
Manganese	20
Chromium oxide	10

The pieces are then fired to 1300 °C.

At present I am experimenting with metals embedded in the forms before the final firings. This gives some spectacular results, eating into the clay when the right combination is used. This year's work will be mainly devoted to perfecting this technique.



Nigel Harris

Maker of violins, violas and cellos

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NEW ZEALAND

For exhibitionists

I was looking after the pottery exhibition at a gallery when a woman strode towards me saying "The trouble with pottery is that it is too easy to make!" I gasped a strangled "Ah, er" but she launched forth—"It is thrown in minutes, it is decorated and glazed in even less time. Not that time of involvement assures you of a better command of form, even with handbuilt work. You can, with the skill that is presumed by the title of 'Potter' produce a reasonable article without too much bother. But why do you put it in an exhibition?" "The best technique doesn't guarantee an exhibition was for the rarer pieces where concept, skill and luck have combined to give an extra quality, and surely when an exhibition is presumed to be of a high standard, your integrity should encourage you to present only these pieces?" "The best technique doesn't guarantee an exhibition pot—some I've seen have been exceptional pieces, notwithstanding the purists' idea of acceptable technique".

She was obviously not to be argued with, so I cowered a little lower behind the pile of catalogues. "The trouble with pottery is, that it is very hard to achieve a good pot for exhibition—too much of this is modest in the extreme. You'll never have an exciting or stimulating exhibition unless you are more discriminating".

"Ah, yes; well . . ." I mumbled weakly, that could make for a pretty thin exhibition perhaps . . . ?"

But she elected not to hear and swept off. I met her again at another exhibition a few days later. When she approached me, all the arguments I had been turning over in the meantime evaporated, and I was left with "Well, do you mean that exhibitions are for exhibitionists? We potters are a modest lot . . . ?"

"Of course not," she interrupted "come round this exhibition and we'll talk about it".

"Now, here is a good pot, admittedly a close copy of a 16th century original, and why a young person with the education and environmental pressures of today should produce the style of such a different era I can't say, but the piece stands well enough in its own right, certainly an exhibition piece, yet rather like seeing a Van Eyck type painting in a contemporary art show.

Perhaps this is where potters have an advantage—traditional concept and methods are still encouraged strongly . . .

This piece reminds me of a sea worn rock"—"But that's not traditional, or even useful! Is it really pottery?" I ventured.

"It's about time you people reconsidered your prejudices" she said. Pottery is a broad term now. If you wished you could talk about 'ceramics' for non functional pieces made of clay—it seems a bit pedantic. Just consider each piece in its own right. Is it good of its type? Is it a good example of this potter's work? Does it convey other qualities or emotions? You do not compare an ancient Chinese print with an impressionist painting but both are valid and acceptable in their own fields.

Look at this teapot, it is full bodied and well balanced, its handle and spout are indisputably right, I can feel the warmth within when I look at it, truly a fine example, but this bowl—its foot ring turned with 'flair', its edge bumped fashionably out of shape to achieve a "Zen tea bowl" effect. No amount of sitting cross legged on the floor will reveal to us the complexities of the Zen philosophy in relation to pottery. This bowl is fit only for that onion dip that people serve you at parties".

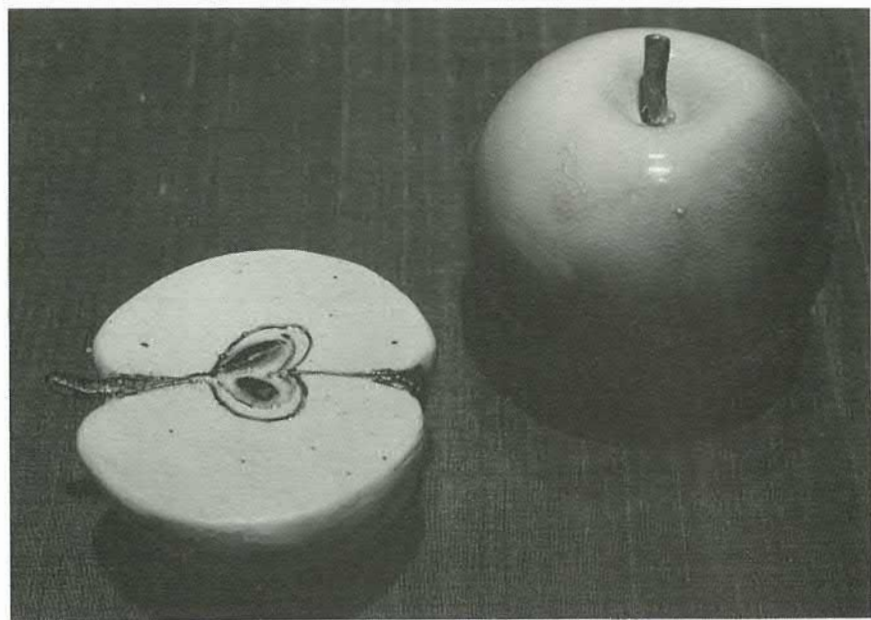
I was beginning to like her a bit better. We passed over lots of pleasing enough pots that she suggested were not exhibition pieces but suitable for a sale of work. She even agreed that this was a good way for the potter and his public to become friends because both benefited from the contact.

But pottery exhibitions in their present form were generally overweighed with ordinary pots and this made them dull when they should be exciting and thought provoking.

I was beginning to see the point of her argument and had to agree. We parted with a little more grace on my part than on the previous occasion.

I had to admit that what I had taken to be an overbearing intrusion into "our" domain was really a valid and well intentioned comment.

But, all the same, I hope you don't get her at your exhibition!



Left: Apples, clear porcelain overlaid with rosy copper red by Jenny Shearer of Wellington, bought by Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, for their permanent collection.

The art of Njoman Suara

text and photographs by Theo Schoon

On the west coast of Bali is the small potters' village of Pejaten. The people are rice farmers who for centuries created their own domestic earthenware pottery for every conceivable purpose. These are standardised items perfected over the centuries into their characteristic shapes and forms. There is also some decorative work and the most striking of these are the crowning pieces for thatched shrine and temple roofs or wealthy people's homes. But there was no art pottery until fairly recently. Occasionally whimsical or humorous figurines were made for their own use. The domestic ware and roof ornaments were sold in nearby villages in the marketplace.

Although the Balinese have been familiar with fine Chinese stoneware and porcelain for centuries, it never sparked any interest to emulate it. The people stuck to what they could produce cheaply for everyday use and it was adequate. The Chinese ware was a luxury only a few could afford and for some time the Chinese stoneware and porcelain plates were cemented into temple and palace gates or walls. When Europeans discovered these fine antique plates they soon found their way into Western antique collectors' hands leaving yawning holes in the walls where they had once been.

There had been however, both in Java and in Bali in the early Hindu period, an extensive and lively art in terra cotta for ritualistic purposes. These figures bear a strong resemblance to the terra cotta figurines of ancient Mexico. This art was mainly based on a rich variety of forms made from strips and coils of clay. Although only a few traces of the art are left, in a limited range of domestic ware like piggy banks and children's toys in Java, I learned as a child that this art was still alive when a worker at my father's brick and tile factory was sent to mind me and he entertained me the way they entertain their own; by making clever and lively sculptures of people and animals from such strips and coils. These were, however, rarely fired.

In later years I was to see the whole range of this art form in Bali, not in clay but in rice paste. A variety of temple offerings from rice cakes are regularly made. The rice paste is covered with dyes and made into a substance very like clay. Figurines and other constructions are made, each with a symbolic or magical significance. These Terracotta animals at Kesongan village near



Jokjakarta, artist Pak Sidac. Right: comical musicians and dancers, 4" by Njoman Suara.

New Zealand Potter

clever and complex creations are deep fired for strength and permanence then mounted on large supports fixed in place with skewers or tooth picks. The knowledge of this art is common to all Balinese. The women in a household can make them, and do so as a matter of routine.

Njoman Suara of Pejaten as a child saw these things being made and amused himself by making them in his father's pottery. He was about ten years old when a painter friend of mine saw him and suggested he make tiles and illustrate anything he like from everyday life, and offered to help him to market the work at a very good price. Njoman Suara was astonished to discover that his tiles sold extremely well and soon he was making more money than his parents. There was no mystery about the boy's technical ability right from the start. It was as though he had inherited the entire repertoire of an ancient culture and could instantly work with the sureness and deftness of his predecessors centuries ago. There was no doubt that this boy was an artist in the true sense. His exuberant imagination and strong artistic awareness enabled him to work prodigiously yet none of his creations were alike.

During an epidemic he lost both his parents, and Njoman Suara became sole breadwinner to his many brothers and sisters. However he prospered. The luxury hotels in Bali bought many of his tiles to cover walls and any surfaces that needed enrichment. He also made large figurines of a comical nature which found uses in exterior and interior decoration. As with all good things in Bali villagers noted his success and began copying his work in a big way flooding the market with inferior versions and eventually spoiling his market. Tourists do not know the difference.

I was fortunate to come across a stack of Njoman Suara's work in Kai It studio in the Tabanan district, and photographed till I ran out of film. Artistic plagiarism in Bali is on a grand scale; it becomes a cottage industry for villages and it is disastrous for any real artistic talent. It is fortunate that the wealthy patrons in Bali are more discriminating and knowing than the tourist for they insist on genuine Njoman Suara creations for their apartments and gardens. Hundreds of similar tiles may be seen in Sydney's art shops, but few are those of Njoman Suara.

A New Zealand potter has been teaching stoneware techniques in Bali for some years now. Brent Hesselyn, a former pupil of Yvonne Rust, built the first stoneware kiln there and several others since. A wealthy hotel owner interested in ceramic art and an art collector, became his patron, helping



him in the difficult task of bringing changes to a basically very conservative people. It takes time and patience. It is paradoxical that such an intensely artistic people are difficult to teach in artistic matters. As soon as western innovations present themselves by way of new materials and techniques their innate traditional and refined taste deserts them. It requires a very special westerner to introduce new methods in such a way that the worst cases of confusion are avoided and guide graceful continuity from old to new so that there be no break in the tradition.

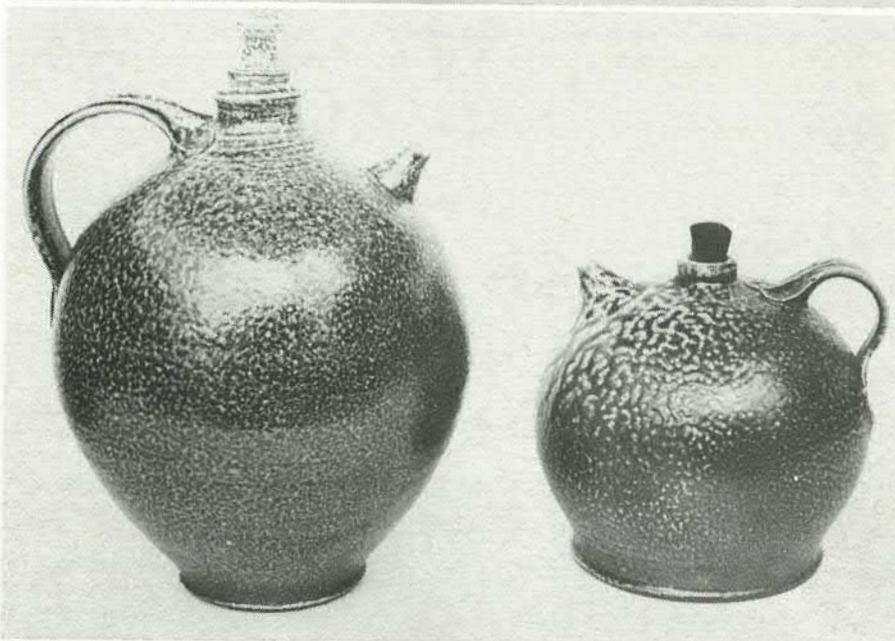
A rich legacy will be lost in Bali (and indeed in other "developing" countries), when insensitive modern education causes them to abandon their traditional approach. The Western style art teacher pales beside the village craftsman and artist. It is still the village tradition which produces artists like Njoman Suara.

*Theo Schoon was born in Indonesia and came with his family to New Zealand in 1939. He was not at home at art school and left, preferring to make solitary explorations away from the mainstream of New Zealand life in the 1940s and 50s. A skill learnt from an East Coast Maori carver led him to carving patterns on gourds he grew himself for the purpose, and with his sketch book and camera he made other detailed studies. His observations of Maori cave drawings, landscape patterning in the Rotorua thermal region and greenstone in Westland are described in his book *Jade Country**. After a long period overseas he has come back and is living in Tokomaru Bay on the East Coast where "I hope soon to have my hands into clay."*

*published 1973, Arts, Australia.

Left: tiles by Njoman Suara. Above: firing the open kilns with rice straw, Kesongan, central Java. Vessels and flower holders.





Domestic ware

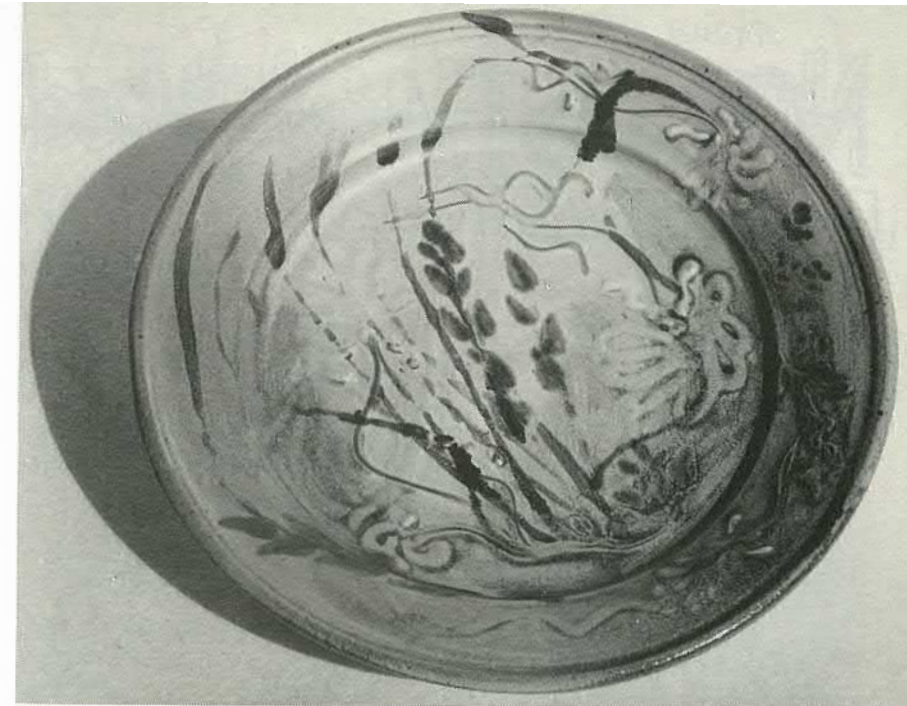
Lively pots for everyday use are produced by many of our potters a high percentage of them salt glazed and wood fired.

Here is work by Ross Mitchell-Anyon of Wanganui, John Sepie, Westport, and John Anderson, Northland.

Into colour

Dish, flourishing slip trailed design wood fired by Ann Ambler, Northland.
Bowls by Warren Tippett, Auckland, calligraphic brushwork and bright colour application in art decor style.
Jar with "landscape" decoration, Royce McGlashen, Nelson.

Photographed at NZ Craftworks by Richard Hendry.



NO COST/Almost WoodKiln

Acquire/borrow/scrounge

- Car
- A trailer or van or ute.
- A spade
- 100-200 bricks
- Any kind of bricks will do.
- Scrape them clean of soil or cement
- level a small area (remove turf)

DRY wood

for people with no knowledge ~ Almost

Notes by Brian Gartside/1983

If I first saw Peter Johnson, of Colac Bay, build this Kiln at the Palmerston Symposium. It and its variations have since been built dozens of times in workshops and classes and gatherings

- AT Whangarei
- Warkworth
- Mt Pleasant
- Thames
- Tauranga
- Pauanui
- Auckland
- Tokoroa
- Taupo

FOR

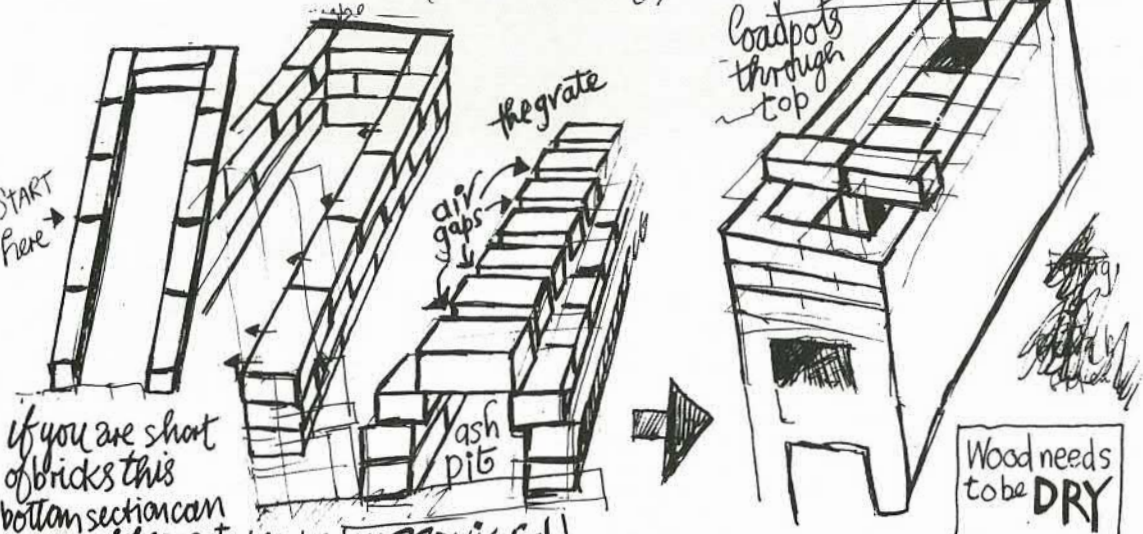
- Bisque
- Earthenware
- Raku
- Low fire salt
- Raised pit fire
- Stoneware
- Salt glazing
- (with air and diesel assistance)
- Cooking (steel top)

IT FAILED ONCE (wet wood burned well but did not give enough heat)

It cannot fail with DRY WOOD and a person who wants it to work ... it only needs one ...

STAY WITH THE FIRE ~ THE PERSON IS AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT

About 1/2 hour to build About 3 hours slowly to bright red heat longer with wet bricks



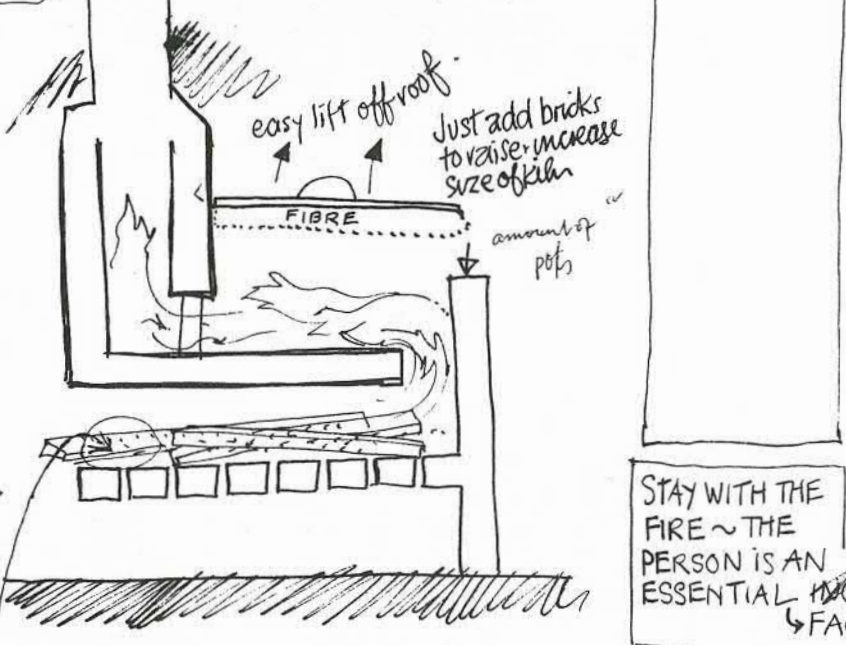
If you are short of bricks this bottom section can be built with concrete blocks

IMPROVISE!



If you are short of bricks for the chimney use a pipe or steel drum no shelves

DON'T TAKE BRICK DRAWINGS TOO LITERALLY MAKE IT UP AS YOU GO ALONG



start a small fire at the mouth of box extend fire to full length of fire box (take about an hour) Allow lots of space above burning wood for the air to help the flame develop for bisque be extra cautious here

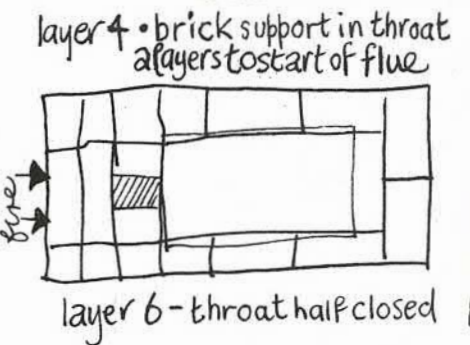
LITTLE COST Variations (for those with partial knowledge)

EXPERIMENT WITH

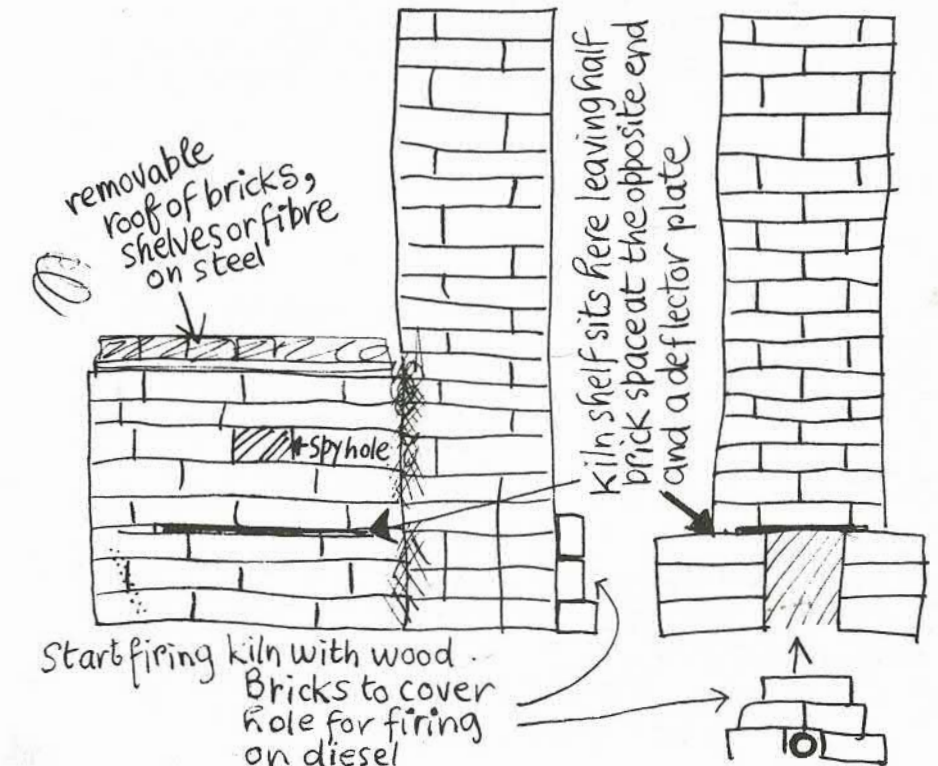
- air control at fire box and ash pit.
- Block openings with bricks (partially)
- flame direction
- splitting flame with brick or with pots
- using a damper in flue or on top of chimney if you can reach it!
- Try piling the pots on top of each other or leaning together it is possible to block the kiln so be watchful of this
- Try making lightweight, lift-off lid. glue fibre onto thin make glue using sodium silicate, talc, and water. steel. (to creamy consistency)
- Try any glazes. "Apple Crackle" mixed in will help high temp. glazes to melt. * Rakuglaze
- * 8 Gerstley Borate 2 Feldspar (will actually fire to any temperature.) or Borax Frit
- Use cones to measure the heat - work (not really necessary as it possible to lift off lid and see glazes partially or fully melted.
- Experiment with any pottery technique you might have heard of.



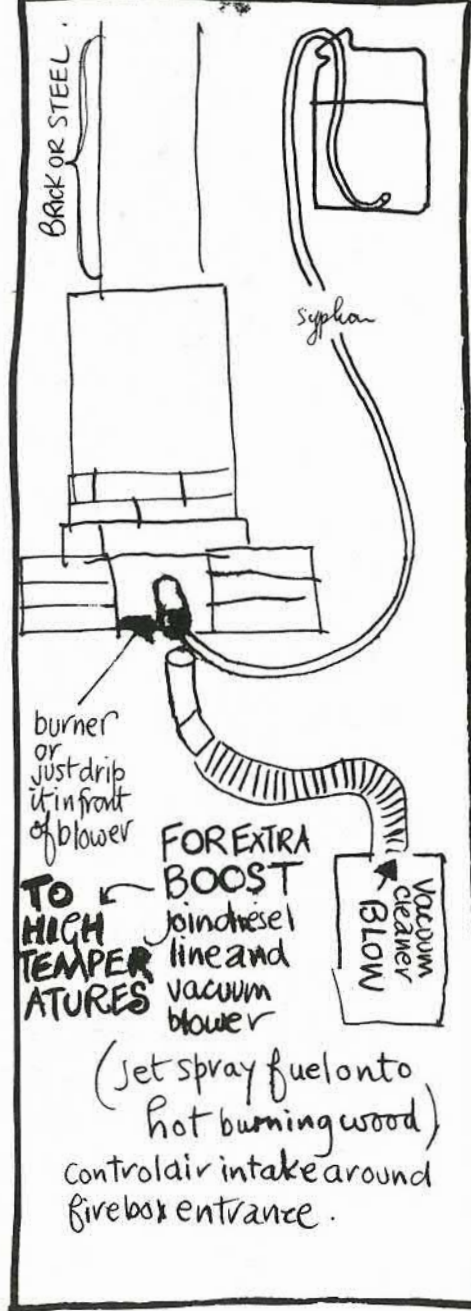
Quick-fire salt kiln

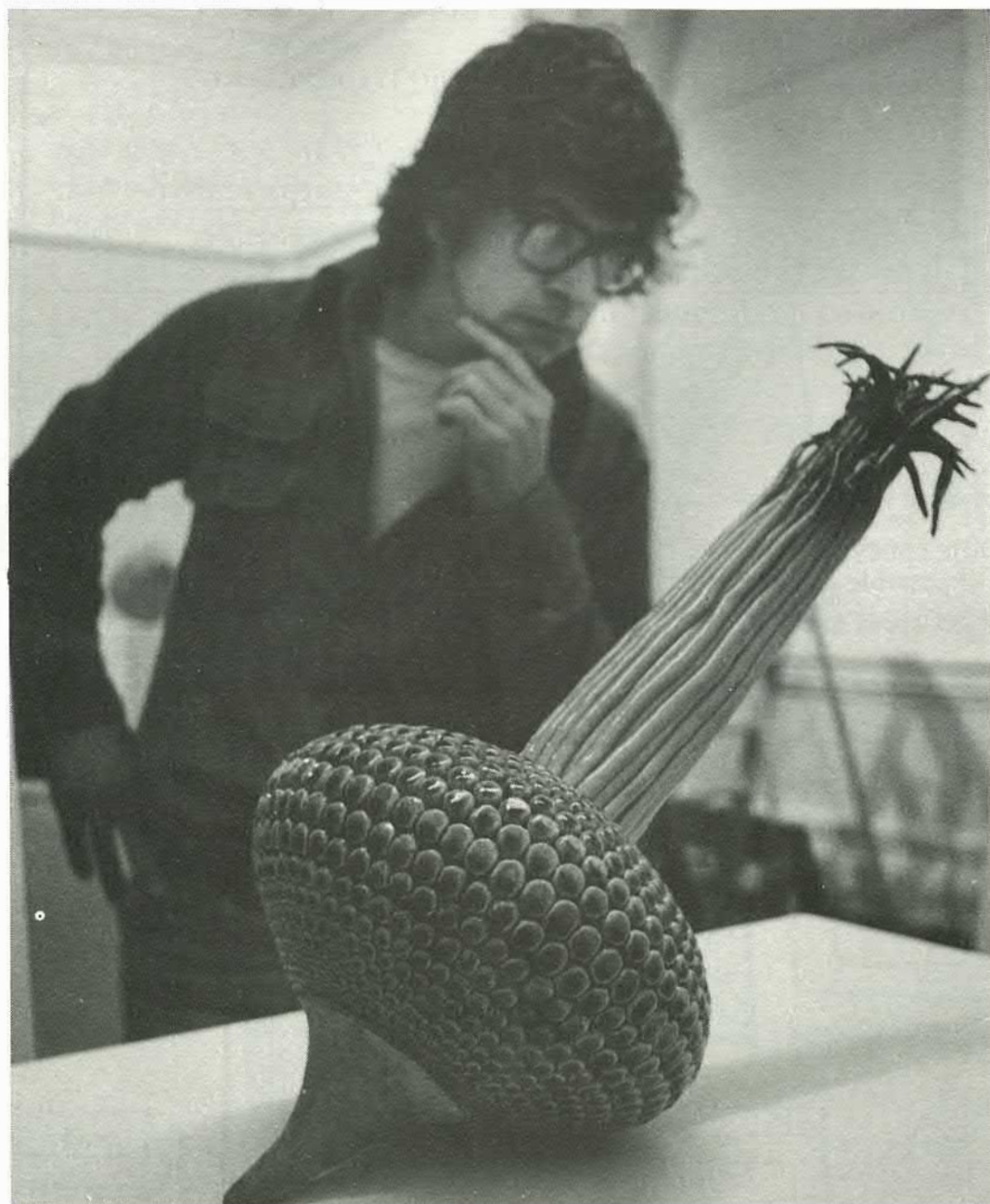


These notes and drawings were supplied by Jenny Etherington of Matiere or Margaret Homer of Rotorua The kiln was built, altered, and fired many times at Tawhara Summer School - 1983 3 hrs to stoneware temp. and salt!



more details of this very fast and efficient small salt kiln will be published in the next issue





Larger than life Peter Masters, Wanganui

Growth forms I've been working with for the past three years are inspired by an interest in the sea and its life and the growing forms and patterns of vegetables such as marrows and squash. Although the basic idea might have its roots in perhaps an earthy turnip, my "turnip form" could belong to the cosmic world.

The forms started as small stoppers in floor bottles then they took me over and became large (up to 24" diameter and 36" long). Those with only two contact points with the surface on which they stand are more visually dynamic because they appear to be about to roll or tip. The forms with patterned surfaces have a tension between the ovoid and the projection.

The ovoid section (except those over 20" diameter which are coiled) is thrown in two stages. Firstly a closed "onion" dome with a thick one inch wall which is inverted when leather hard into a chuck and brought up leaving a hole large enough to allow one's hand to manoeuvre inside. The projection is constructed by wrapping a thin slab around a cardboard cone. This is luted to the ovoid overlapping its wall on the inside supported in position with pieces of foam rubber (cracking in tight bends can be rectified by the addition of fibreglass or nylon to the clay body). With the pierced growths, small tapered coils pushed through from the inside present no support problems.

The clay body I'm now using is stoneware (MacPherson's Slab), and there have been no problems of separation of ovoid and projection in spite of shrinkage differences of up to 4%. The use of a deflocculated slip has improved joining. Some projections are of a white earthenware body which partly melts at 1300 ° C, but since this is a very short body, its limited in its application. The recipe is:

Australian Ball Clay	
(1% iron)	60
Talc	40

A variety of slips ranging from totally non-sodium receptive (talc) to porcellanous (hence very glossy) give contrasting surfaces. Oxides are usually sprayed on to the porcelain projec-

tions with an atomizer. When applying to an ovoid a touch of wax emulsion is added to the oxide so it does not rub off when handled.

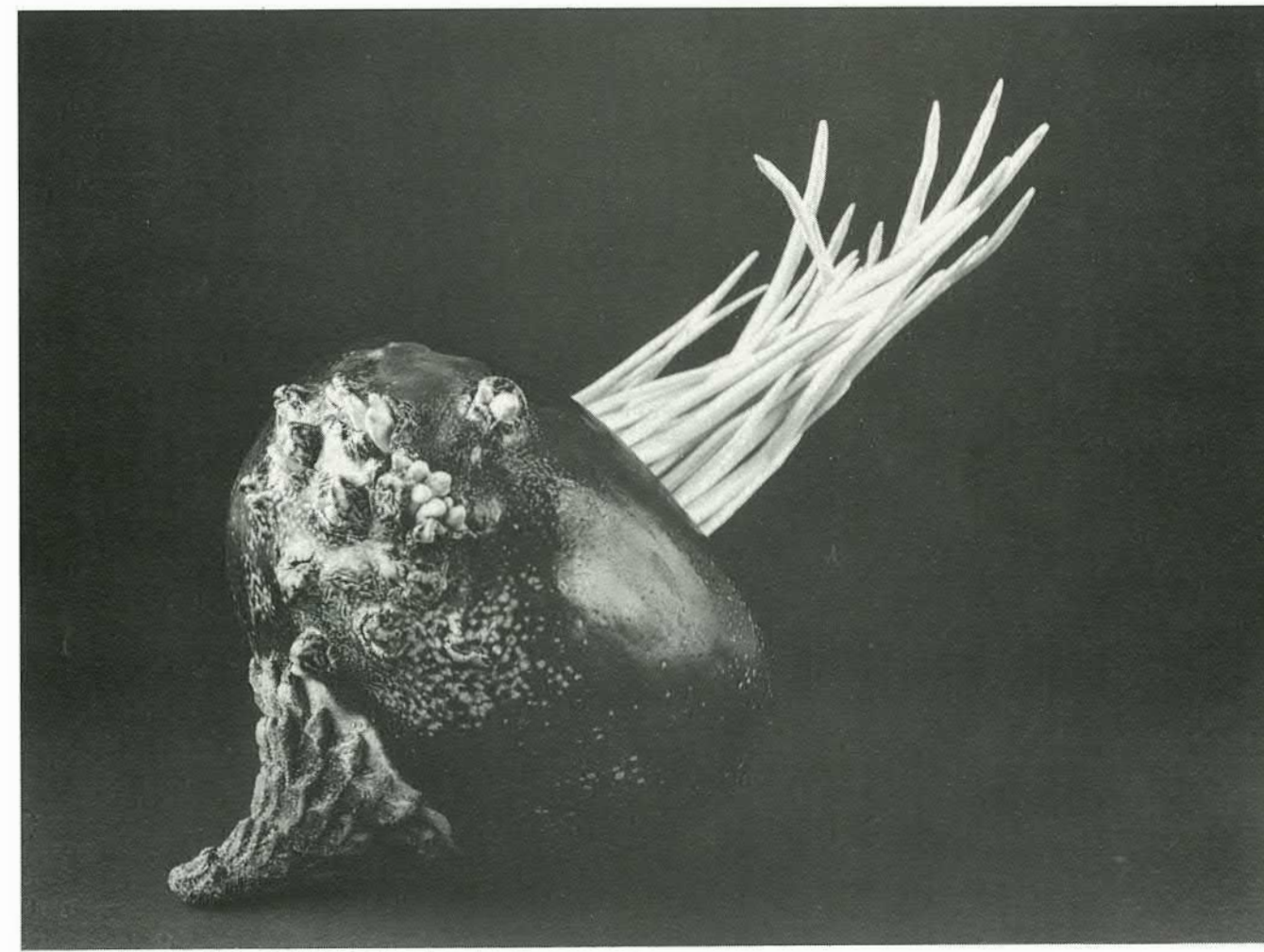
SLIPS AND OXIDES	
SLIPS (percentages)	
MILES' BASIC SALT SLIP: (glossy cream white)	
Edgar Plastic Kaolin (EPK)	47
Flint	25
Feldspar	25
Bentonite	3
	100
Iron Oxide	7
Cobalt Oxide	0.25
(dark blue)	
Rutile	8
Cobalt Oxide	0.5
(blue-green)	
Rutile	8
Iron	6
(rust)	

OXIDES (parts)	
Iron	2
Rutile	1
(rust/orange)	
Rutile	2
Cobalt Oxide	1
Gertsley Borate	1
(dark blue-green)	
Rutile	1
Gertsley Borate	0.25
(gold)	

ADDITIONAL SLIPS AND OXIDES	
SLIPS (percentages)	
MATHER/PITCHER SALT SLIP: ¹	
Feldspar	40
Edgar Plastic Kaolin	40
Lithium Carbonate	10
Borax	10
	100
Rutile	20
(quite dry bright yellow breaking to salmon and white)	

PENLAND SCHOOL SALT SLIP: ²	
Kaolin	15.70
Ball Clay	15.80
Nepheline Syenite	31.60
Flint	31.60
Borax	5.30
	100
Red Iron Oxide	10
(very shiny metallic red-brown breaking to green-brown)	
TALC SLIP:	
Ball Clay	50
Talc	50
	100
(dry creamy white to light yellow-ochre)	
Red Iron Oxide	10
(oxblood to yellow-brown)	
Red Iron Oxide	4
Manganese Dioxide	2
Cobalt Oxide	1
(brownish dark blue to black)	
ALBANY SLIP:	
Albany Clay	100
(a shiny dark olive-green with yellow-green highlights)	

Pierced root growth, stoneware, porcelain projections, salt glaze, cone 10. Work photographed by Peter Masters



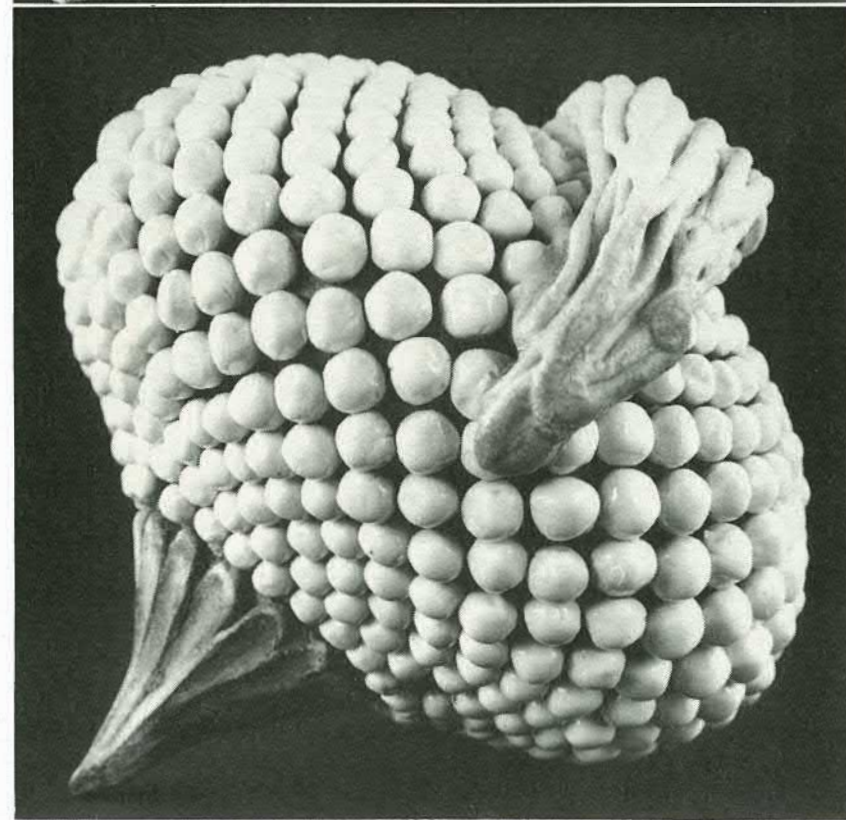
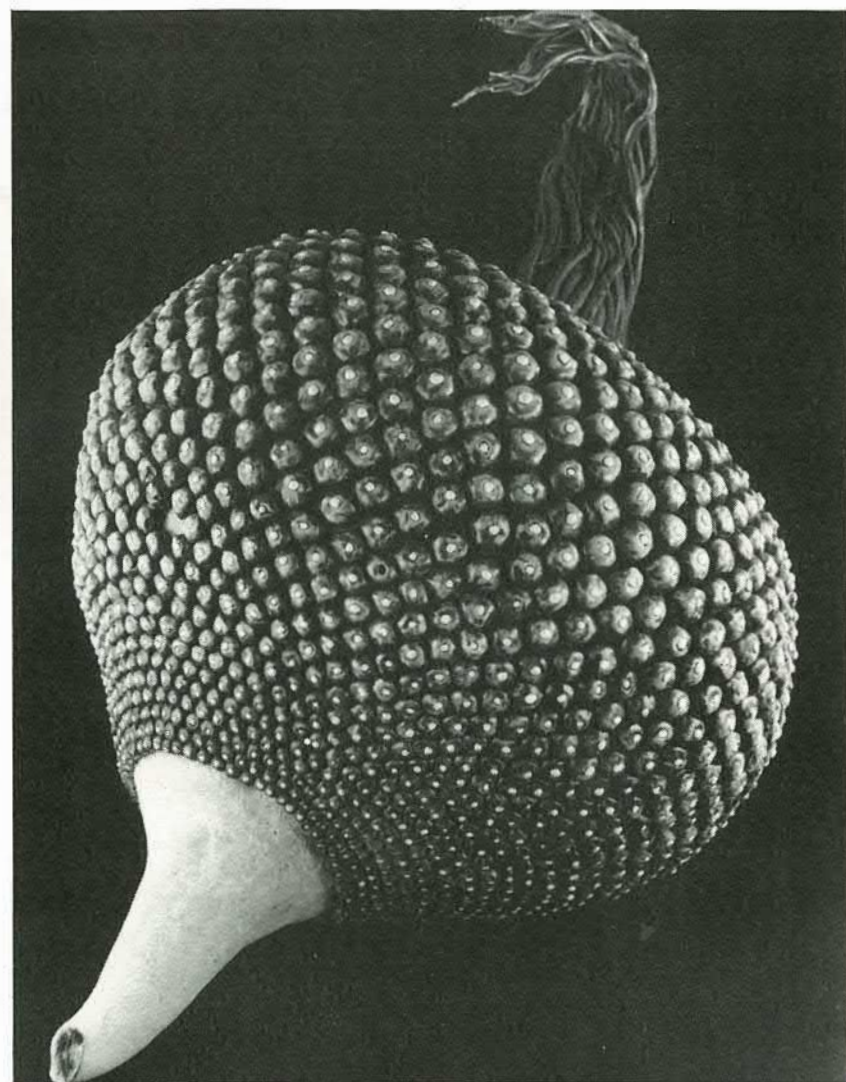
REITZ ENGOBE: (cone 8-10) ³	
Kaolin	60
Feldspar	15
Flint	15
Ball Clay	10
	100
Iron	
Cobalt Oxide	2
(semi-matt bluish black, breaking to shiny dark blue)	
OXIDES (parts)	
DARK BLUE:	
Iron	15
Cobalt Oxide (ground)	2
'BRIT' GREEN:	
Rutile	5
Cobalt Oxide (ground)	1
Gertsley Borate	2

1. John Coyne (Editor), *The Penland School of Crafts' Book of Pottery*, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1975) p.13.
2. *Ibid*, p.13.
3. Jack Troy, *Salt Glazed Ceramics*, (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1977), p.75.

All growth forms are salt glazed to minimize handling of work. A broad spectrum of colour and variety in surface treatment provides the desired surreal quality I'm looking for.

For firing, pieces have been stacked vertically in a conical chuck with a coil of salt wadding around the ovoid. This is in effect, a saggar, and thus the extension has remained dry (usually with an oxide wash). Recently because projections have become longer and a dry extension is not desired, they are fired as they are, either in an oxidised or mildly reduced atmosphere in a natural gas downdraft kiln, and given a medium salting (about 10 kgs for 20 cu.ft).

Most of Peter Masters education was in Canada where he taught art after qualifying from the University of Calgary, and Tacoma, Washington, USA. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1979 and is currently Head Ceramics, Senior Technical Division, Wanganui.



Above: "Dying tap root" growth forms. 38" stoneware with porcelain projections and inserts, salt glazed. Below: porcelain with white earthenware, 9" also salt glazed. Both pieces in collections in the USA.

Twenty-five years of New Zealand Potter

The *New Zealand Potter* represents something of a record for an 'art' magazine in this country. After 25 years it survives and flourishes. Looking back it's not hard to see why: for 23 of its 25 years it's been run by an editor operating from home with small overheads.

The *NZ Potter* began within the framework of the second national pottery exhibition in 1958. Editor for the first ten years was Helen Mason, a journalist from the founding generation of craft potters. New Zealand was one of the first countries to produce a magazine for potters, providing technical information when there were few books of reference available. The publication started off on a firm footing of sound articles in modest format. Helen Mason was assisted in aspects other than editorial by a committee handling subscriptions and production, Doreen Blumhardt, Terry Barrow and Lee Thomson serving on this during the first ten years. Roy Cowan and Juliet Peter were jointly producing the *Potter* when I was invited to be editor in 1967. The editorial committee warned they could not pay me, but if the magazine expanded they could see a small profit eventually, meanwhile with the first year's \$100 honorarium I bought a typewriter and began. My qualifications were an arts degree, training in journalism, drawing and design and art history, and I had done

some potting. Previous writing experience with the Department of Trade and Industry, four years as editor of the department's trade promotion magazine, made the collection and presentation of material for publication no problem for me. I put my mind to the job with energy and enthusiasm and within eight years increased subscribers from 600 to 6000, half of them overseas.

From 1972 I have been solely responsible for publishing the magazine. The title editor over 12 years is somewhat of a misnomer — I'm manager, secretary, banker, reporter and editor. I correspond with possible contributors (up to five letters are needed, no expensive phone calls), I write to all subscribers (includes reminders), and advertisers, work with my husband with layout and design, liaise with the printer during production, and despatch twice a year (includes 160 parcels for counter sales), all of which adds up to a full time job. There is public relations work on behalf of potters in New Zealand — correspondence and information requested from overseas people who know the magazine but don't know the potters national body. Two early editorial committee members, Audrey and Jim Brodie have stayed with the *Potter*. Both brought to the task long continued experience in writing for, editing and publishing technical journals. They have made a distinctive

editorial imprint on what is internationally recognised as an informative craft publication presented with flair and style.

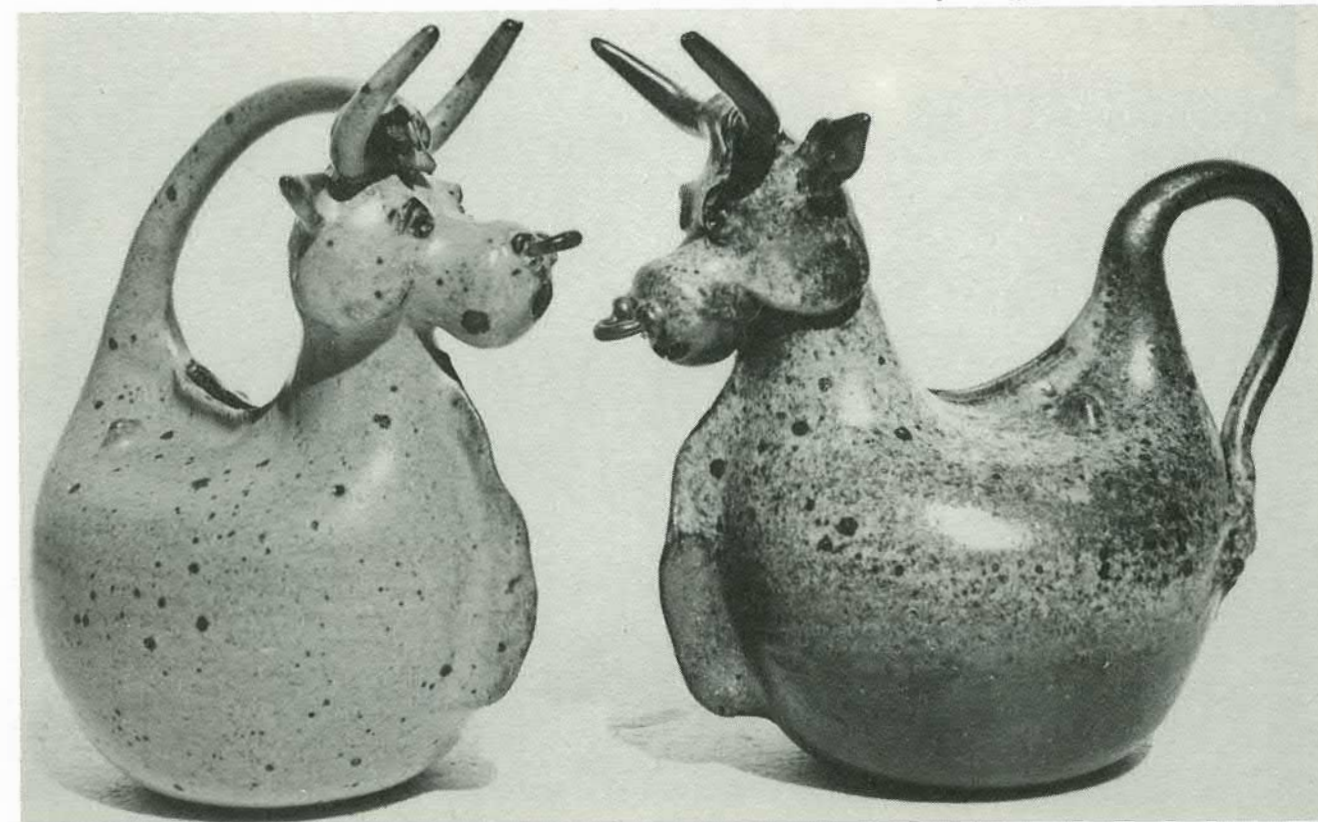
For a number of co-incidental reasons neither I as editor nor the editorial committee are able to continue beyond 1983.

As editor/publisher I would like to ensure that the journal continues as a vital objective contribution to New Zealand potting and a true reflection for the world of the achievements and standards of our potters. Many possibilities are being considered. One of these is to transfer ownership to an established publishing house with experience in specialized magazine production and distribution who would employ an appropriate editor. This would at least ensure stability of ownership and finance and editorial independence. We are also aware that some individual persons are interested, and would expect groups might be interested also. Which ever course is followed there would have to be suitable arrangements made over goodwill and stock.

We would like to hear from would-be publishers appropriately qualified financed and backed.

Margaret Harris
Wellington April 1983

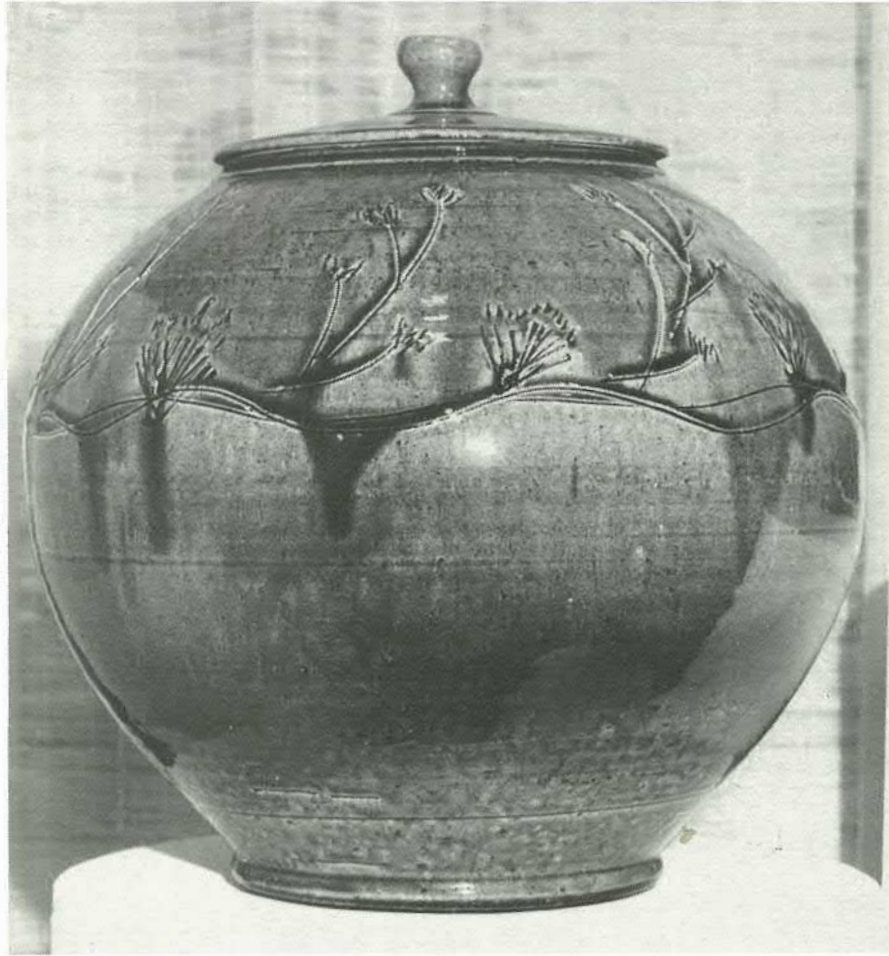
Moneyboxes by Ian Firth. Photo: Richard Hendry



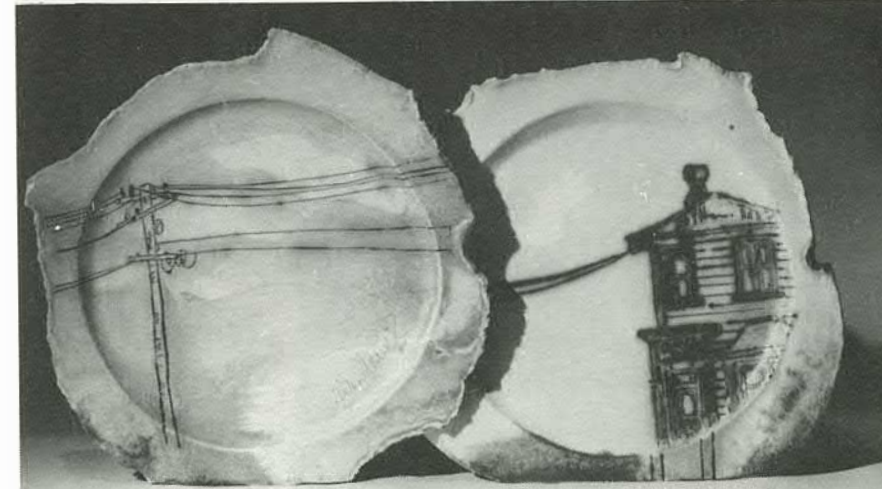
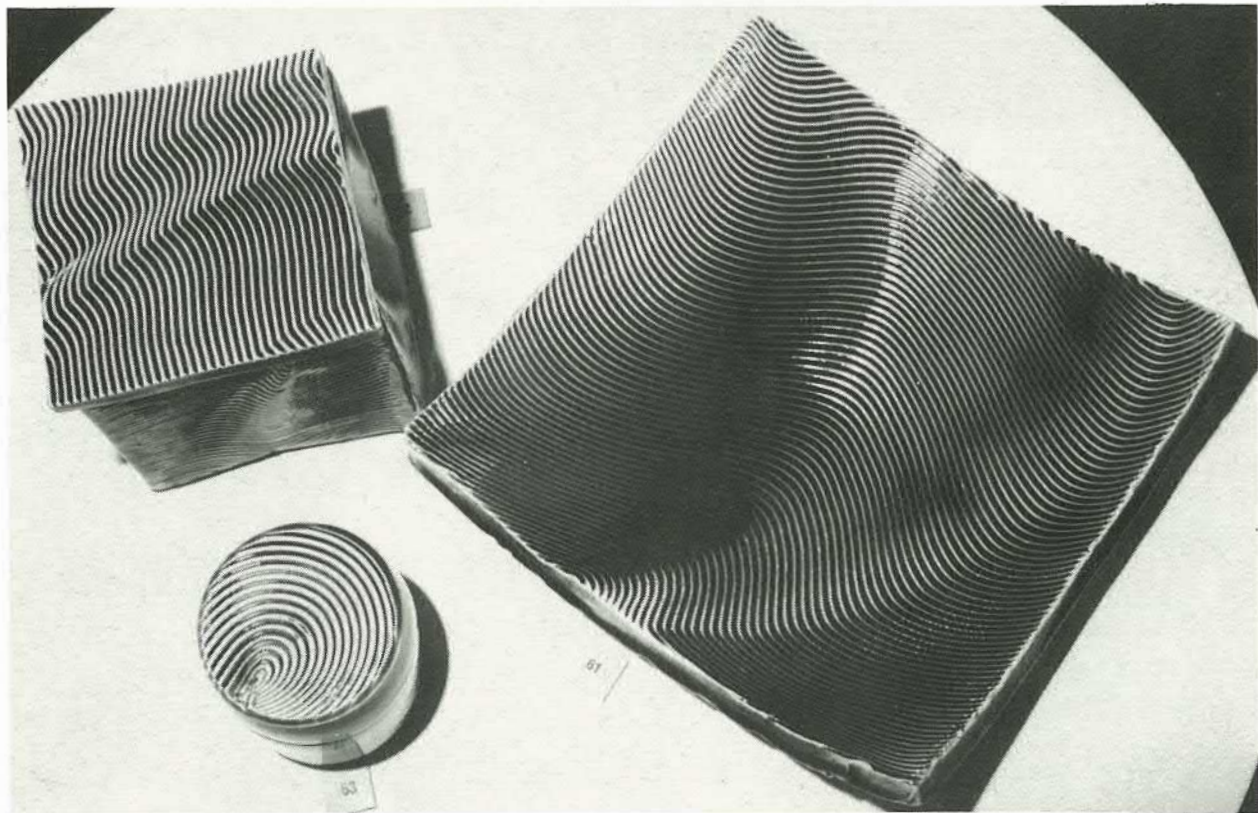
Two potters from Westland

Bruce Williams After a year potting with Yvonne Rust, I came to the coast on her suggestion five years ago. I have not been disappointed. The resources for the potter are endless. I live a hundred yards from a coal source, twenty feet from a wood supply and three miles from a clay pit. Although the economics for preparing one's own clay can be argued against, I find the satisfaction outweighs the economics. Two years ago another potter and I built a ball mill 24" x 24" at a Harry Davis workshop in Nelson. Although it cost \$300 to set up, this is our most useful piece of equipment and the expense was soon recouped. All pots are raw fired with or without glazes and then salted in an 80 c.ft kiln fired with coal, driftwood and mill slab.

Grant Hudson has been working on the coast since 1970. All pieces are wood fired using slab wood from nearby sawmills. He has been using some porcelain clays to develop distinctive optical patterns.



Photographs are from "The Coasters" exhibition at Alicat Gallery, Auckland.



New Zealand Society of Potters 24th annual exhibition

Two rear teapots, salt glazed by Renton Murray, front, Ann Ambler. Plates with townscape design Gloria Young. Pinched and carved porcelain bowls, celadon glaze by Jean McKinnon. Crackle glaze in grey breaking red on the rim, Julia Colman. Salt glazed jar by John Anderson.

Photos: Howard Williams

Fire and flower— Pots for Ikebana

Keith Blight, Northland.

Though many of the pots I make are able to stand on their own as sculptural pieces or simply as pots, most can also be used for Ikebana and some are made specifically for that purpose. Early connections with the art of Ikebana has meant that a large percentage of my work has been used by Ikebana artists. I emphasise the word artist because at its highest level the arrangements created take their place beside the great works in art, a fact which has been recognized in Japan for centuries and is being increasingly recognized elsewhere. When exhibiting, I usually invite a well known Ikebana artist to do arrangements in some of the pots. The show may look quite well with most of the pots in place, but when the pots with arrangements are added it takes on a whole new life. I say whole, as the combination of container and flowers are both essential elements and the selection of the arrangement is often inspired by the container. Most of the pots are my own conception, though some seem to be influenced by Japanese form. Some pots are made to order. I rarely refuse as its a challenge to create a suggested form, and perhaps improve upon it and this can broaden my own concepts and lead to a new series of pots.

"I think of Ikebana as sculpture with plant materials, so container (Nageire) and plant material must work as a whole creation. We work in three styles:

All containers by Keith Blight. Ikebana arranged by Maureen Easton left and right below, by the late Sue Blunt right and below centre.

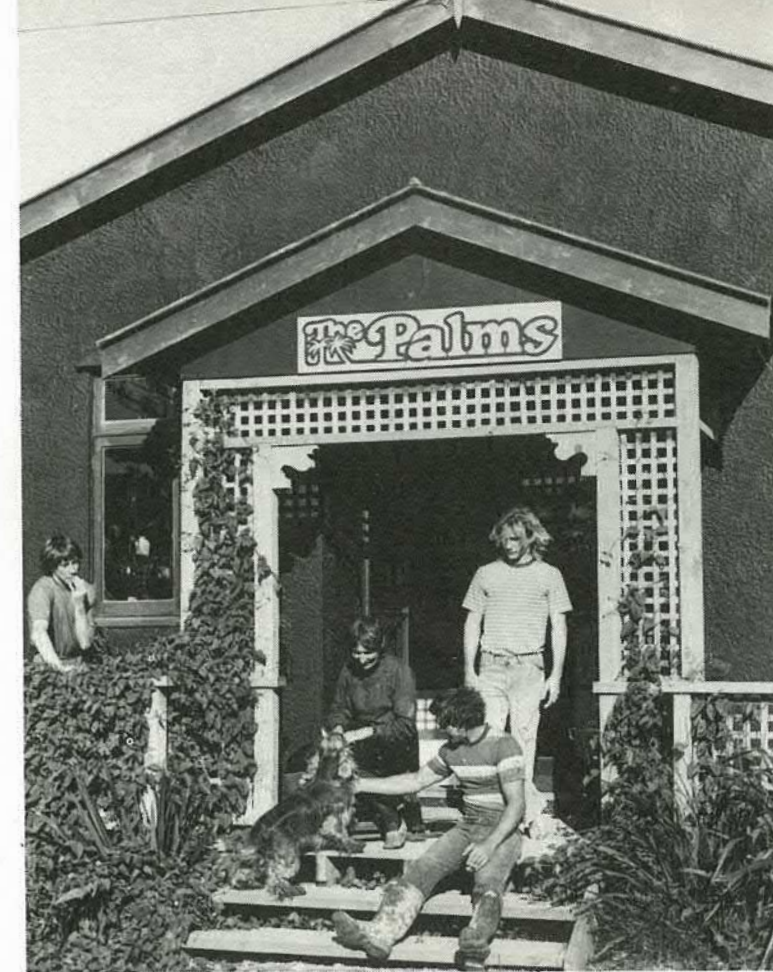
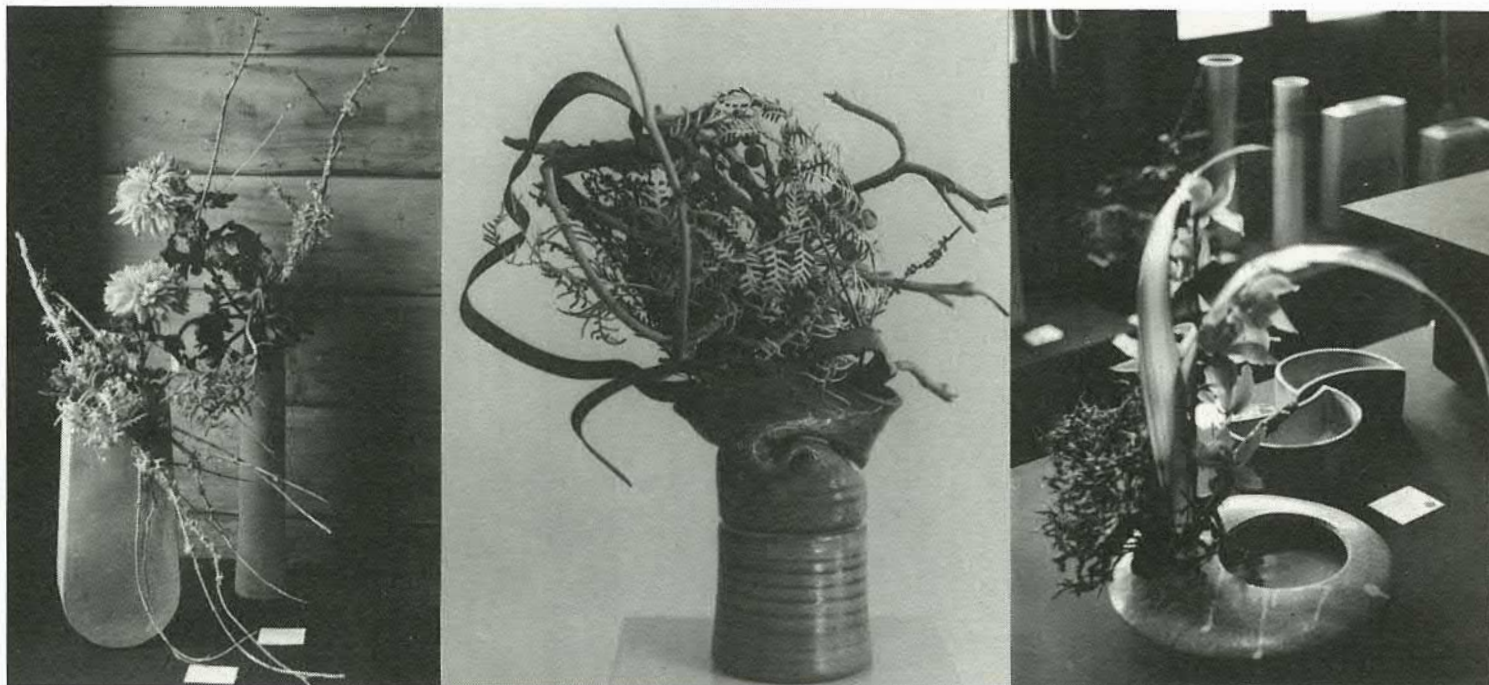
- natural plant materials and simple containers
- taking plant material and imposing our will on it, for example stripping bark from stems for desired colour
- taking unusual containers in combination with unusual materials, for example metal offcuts in a twisted pot."

Sue Blunt, Sogetsu School of Ikebana

Maureen Easton



"Ikebana is a complement to the potters work. The pot comes from the earth, the growing foliage and flowers from the earth, and from the innovative creativity of the two comes a happy marriage of beauty of form, of space and colour."



The potter family Hockenhill Ann Ambler

Barbara has been potting professionally for ten years. A keen part time interest sustained her through the years when her three children were small. Barry a builder of no mean skill assisted in kiln and studio construction. Barbara has always handbuilt her work and has developed a rapid spontaneous technique which allows her to express her awareness of the natural world with a versatility that is always fresh. Gradually Barry's interest in pots became greater than building and he approached the clay and the wheel with a craftsman's attitude and a functional integrity that is evident in his pots today.

For a while there was a struggle to align the family finances while Barry was learning to throw, so his ability to turn wood bridged the gap while Barbara carried on steadily making pots. The children's growing interest in the creative work going on around them was seen regularly at the annual children's exhibition at Albany Village Gallery with Scott, Melissa and Arran all exhibiting work. Barbara and Barry are both members of Albany Village Cooperative.

When Scott, the eldest, left school in 1979 the workshop at Wright's Road Albany showed three distinctive ceramic styles. Barry's thrown domestic ware—some salt glazed—Barbara's delicate pinched porcelain and Scott's developing "star fly" fantasy.

Then came a significant step forward for the family when the old Methodist Hall on 1/2 an acre of land at Wayby and owned by Warren Tippet was offered for sale. Barry saw the possibilities there for having a smaller house and larger workshop with the added advantage of a craft outlet for his family. Barbara has long been a collector of beautiful pots, glass and furniture—some of it very old—and her discerning eye has enabled her to create a gallery of quality New Zealand craft at The Palms in the converted Methodist Hall. The house behind, designed and built by Barry, reflects the interest they both have in natural wood surfaces, interior brick walls and slate floors. Barbara uses wide shelves, deep window sills and other display areas for her collections. They are all knowledgeable gardeners with Arran keen on roses although Scott would rather surf at Mangawhai Beach than pull out weeds.

Scott has discovered that slip casting his box forms instead of slab building is a preferable way of forming these vehicles which convey the imagery of his space fantasy figures. While he insists that his direction is more abstract, the "star fly" gets better in spite of him. He is now working on a much larger scale with a white clay body, colour and lustre.

Arran spent the latter half of 1982 helping Barry finish the house and

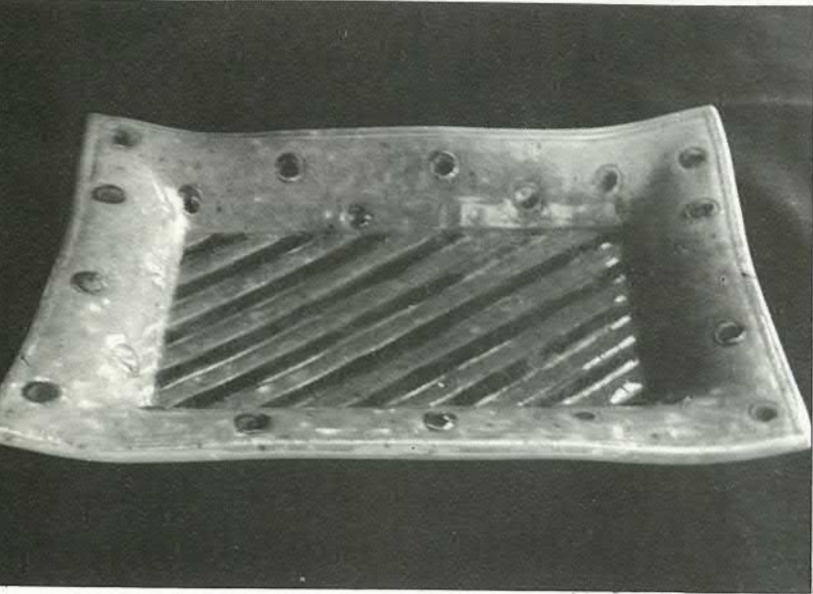
gaining building experience. He started studying at Wayby Farm Pottery with me in a reciprocal arrangement of tuition for assistance in the pottery four days a week. On the fifth day he makes handbuilt fantasy figures and animals which sell at The Palms Gallery.

In 1981 all Hockenhills made an expedition to Japan to look at old pots and visit potters from Mashiko, north of Tokyo to Arita in Kyushu. The impact of this trip revitalised their feelings for form and decoration.

Barry "I really respond to the Japanese pots. The softness of the bottoms of the pots appears to be in contact with the earth. I feel very humble and have more sympathy for my own pots as a consequence."

Barbara "Perhaps I can decorate after all and get a lot of joy out of it. This is an avenue to explore now with confidence, but I'm finding the apparent simplicity of the Japanese decorative style deceptive."

Scott "It was good to see what could be done. I want to experiment with a lot of things so I changed my work immediately. I admire the acceptance of pottery in the lives of the people." Arran "A really lovely place. I saw lots of pots and spent a lot of time in the fun parlours of Tokyo playing the pin ball machines."

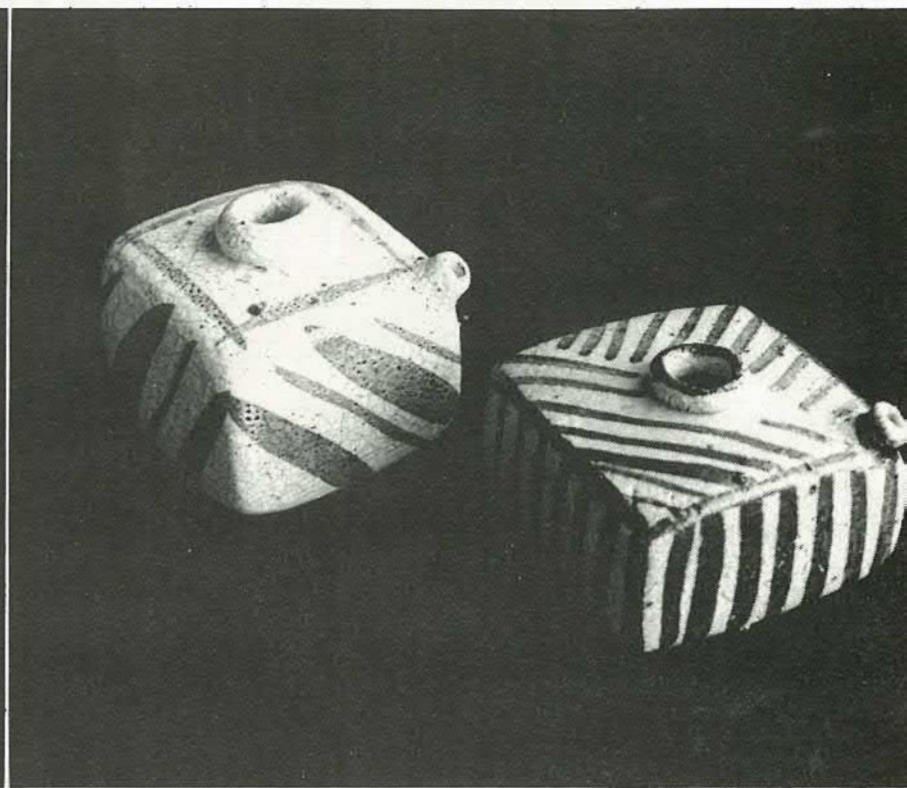
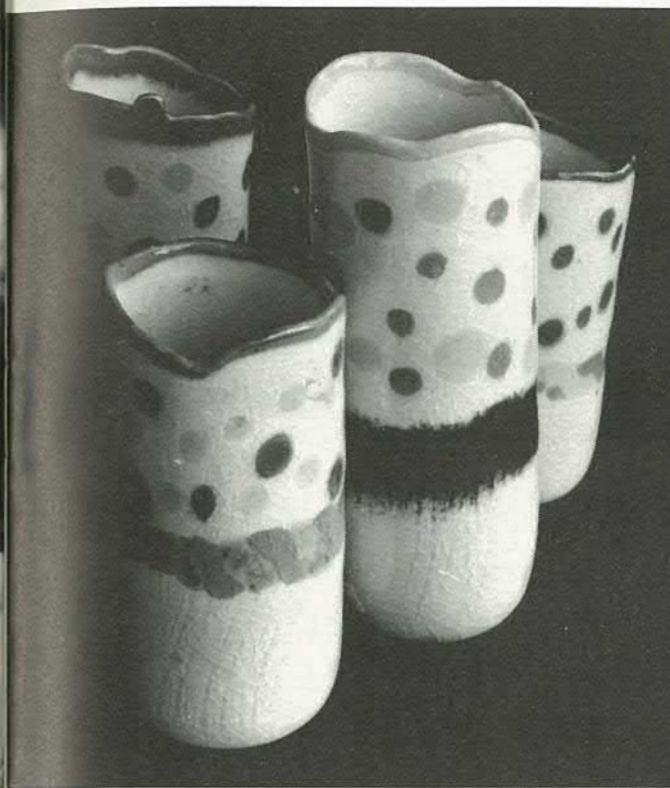
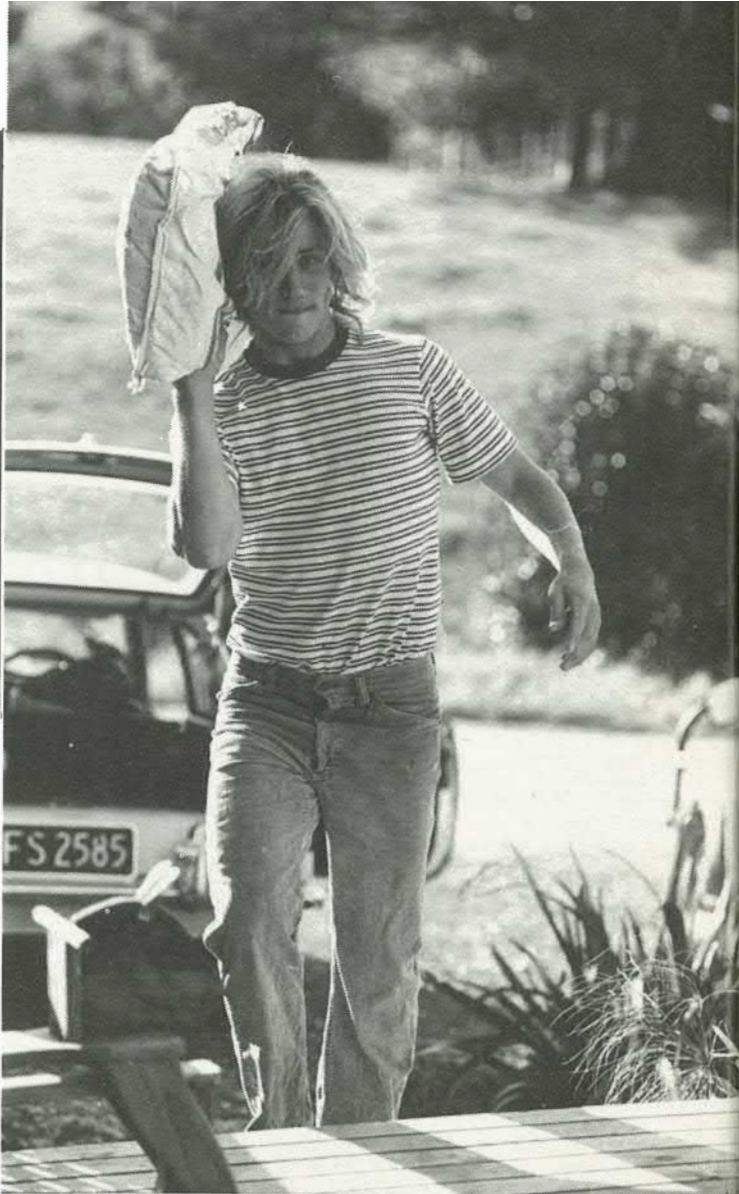


Scott's work.

Shino type glaze

85 — neph sy
 15 — china clay
 magnesium glaze

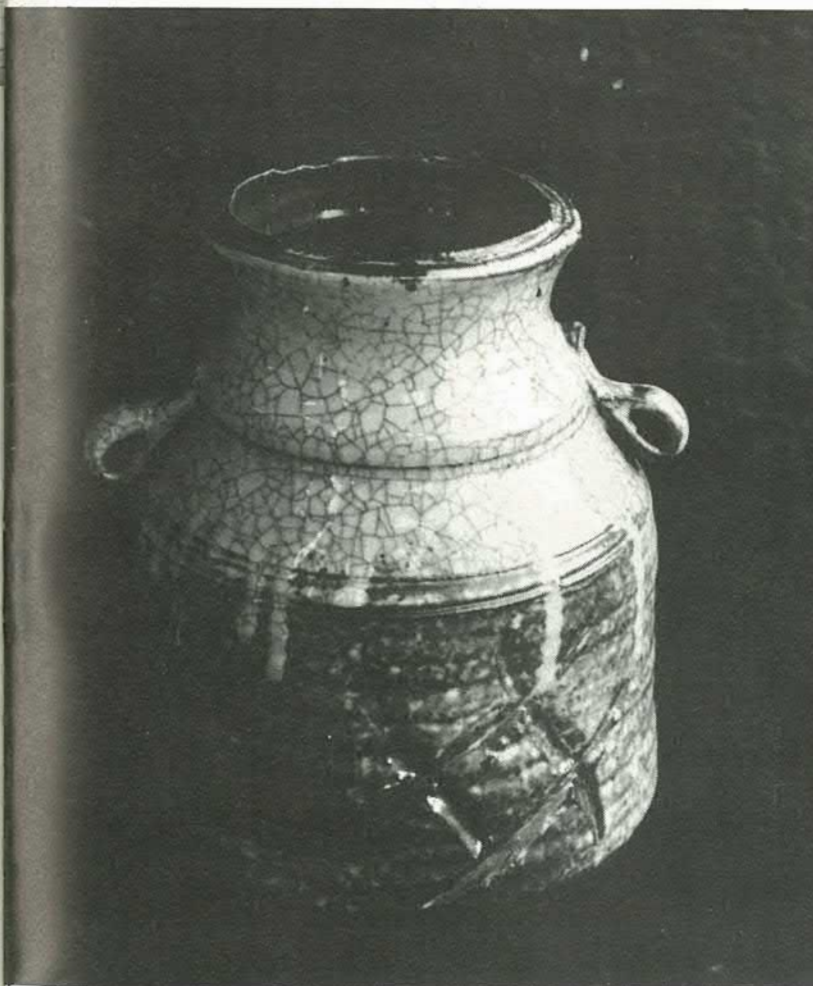
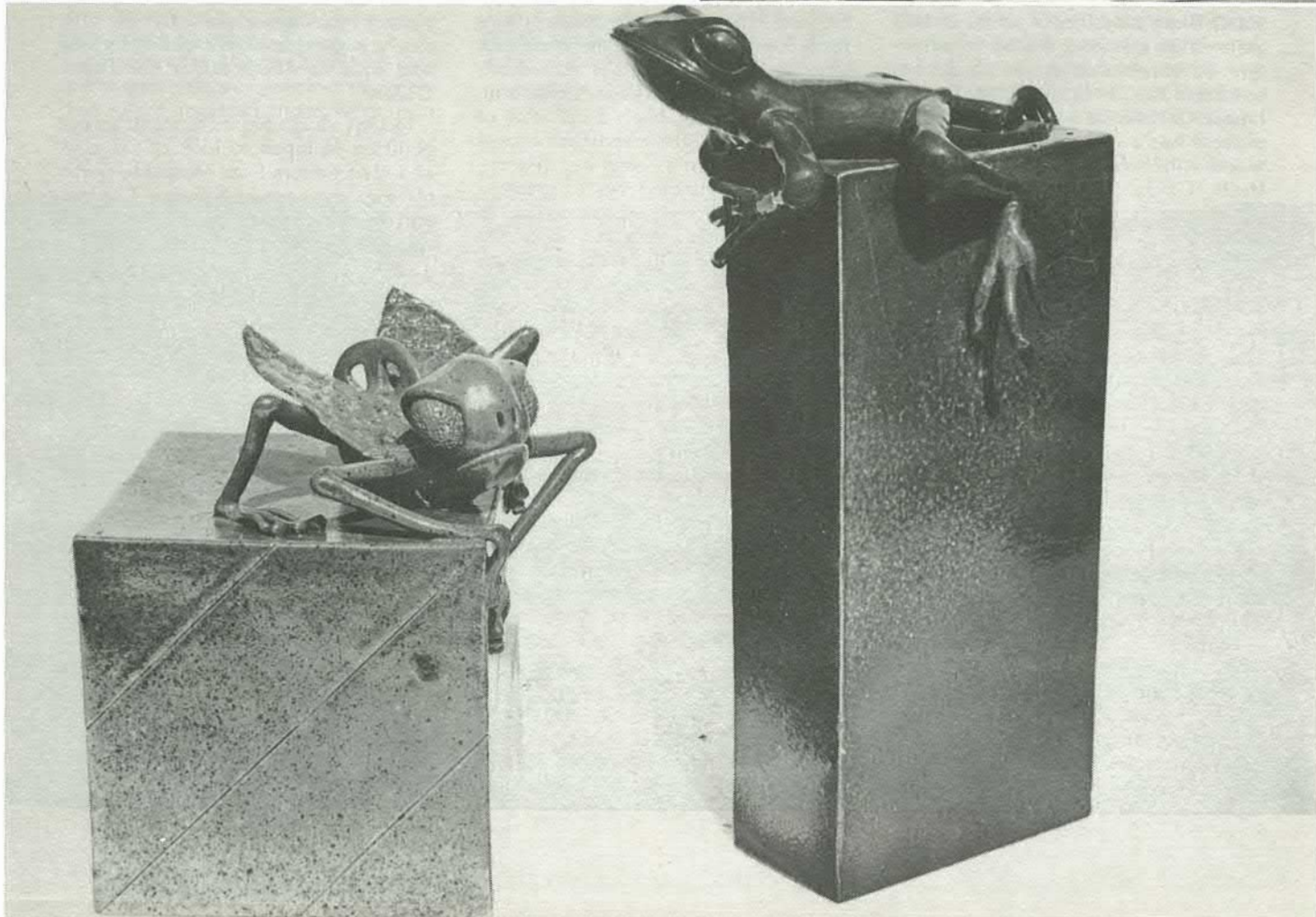
45 — NZ feldspar
 5 — kaolin
 15 — talc
 13 — Colmanite (SBF)
 7 — Dolomite
 20 — Flint



Barbara's work in porcelain, above and below right. Left Barry's shino blossom jar.

We are firing a 20 cft gas kiln for reduction shino type and copper red glazes. The 7cft electric kiln is used mainly by Scott for his porcelain flash inglaze lustres. We use commercial clays blended to individual requirements.

Photos: Ian Smail



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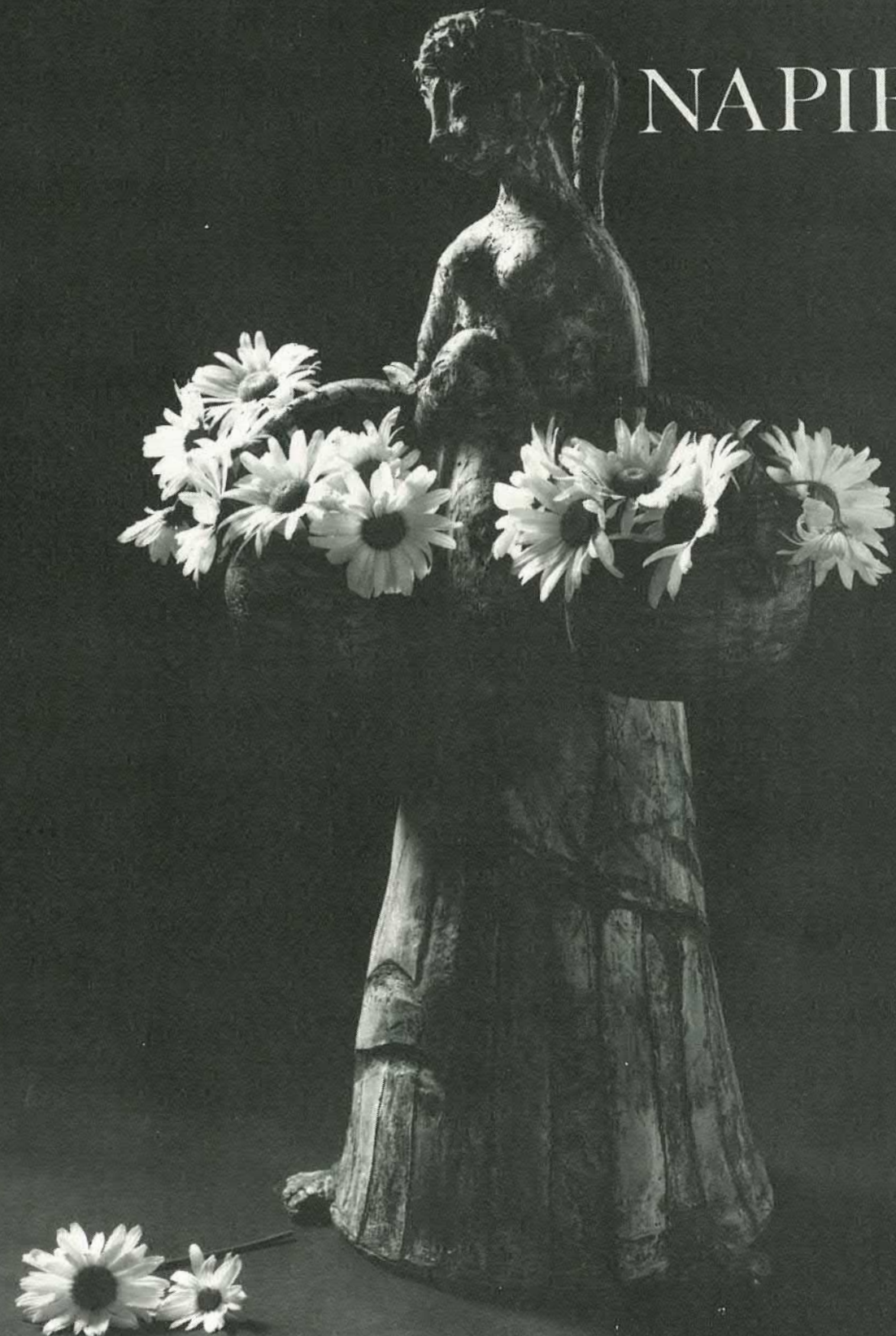
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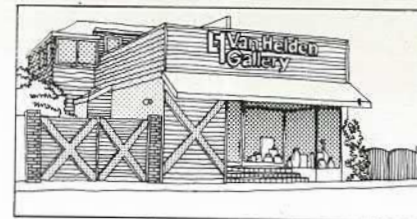
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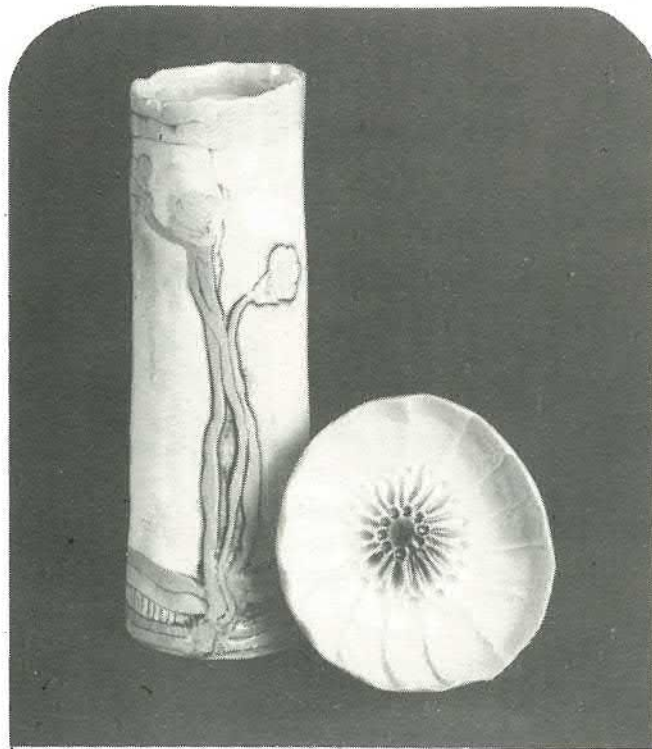
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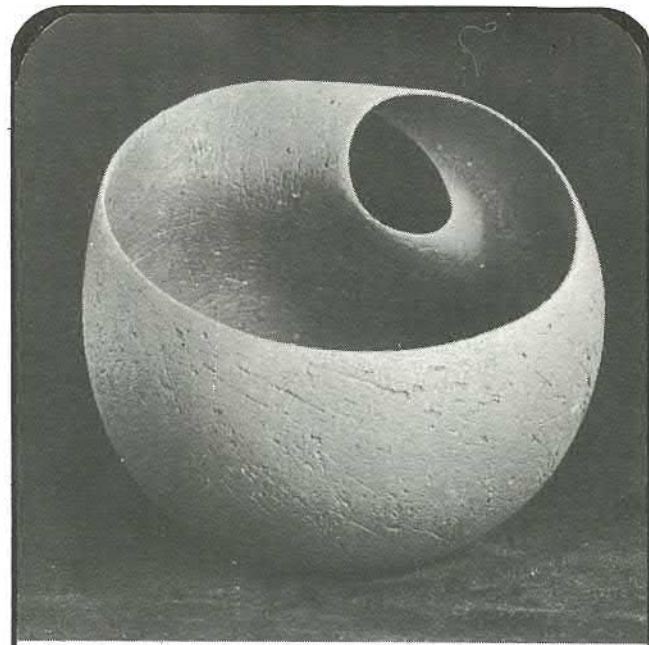
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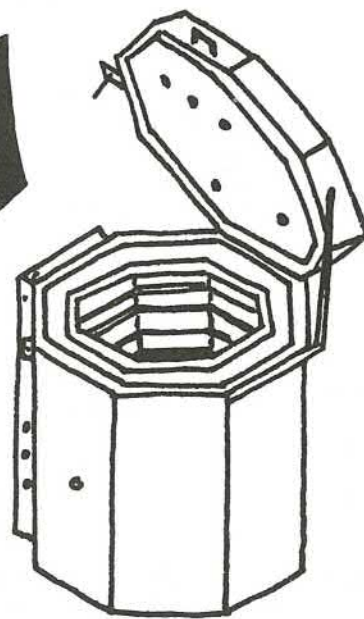
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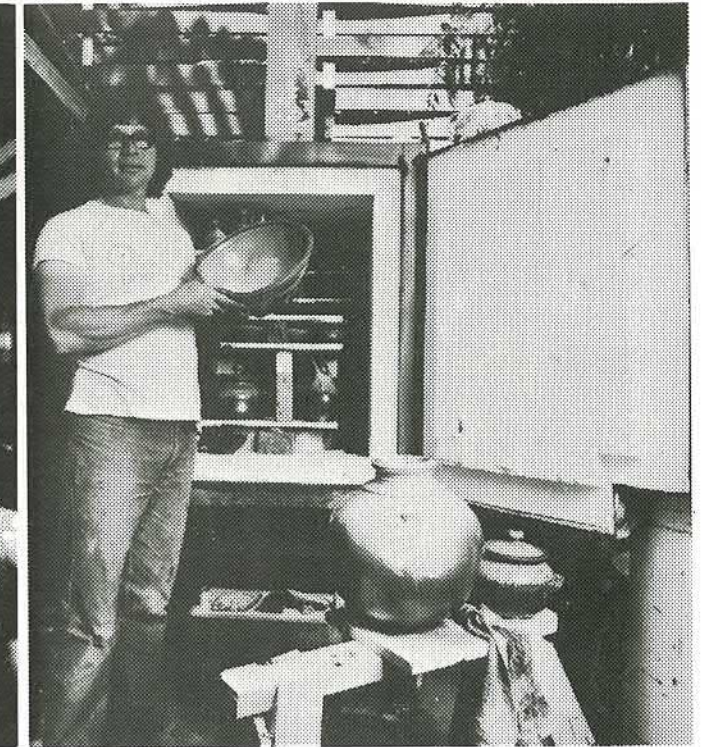
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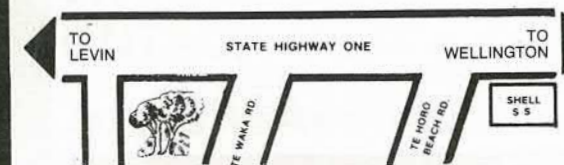
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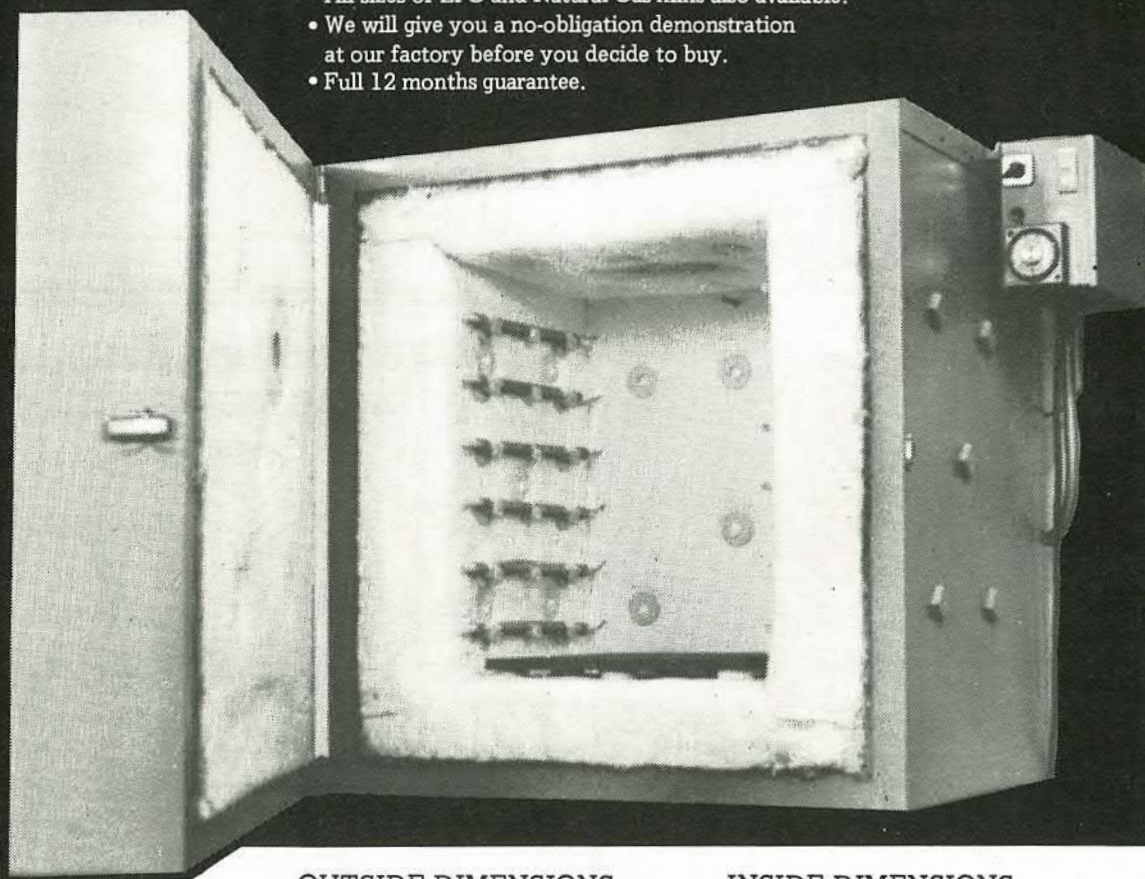
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