

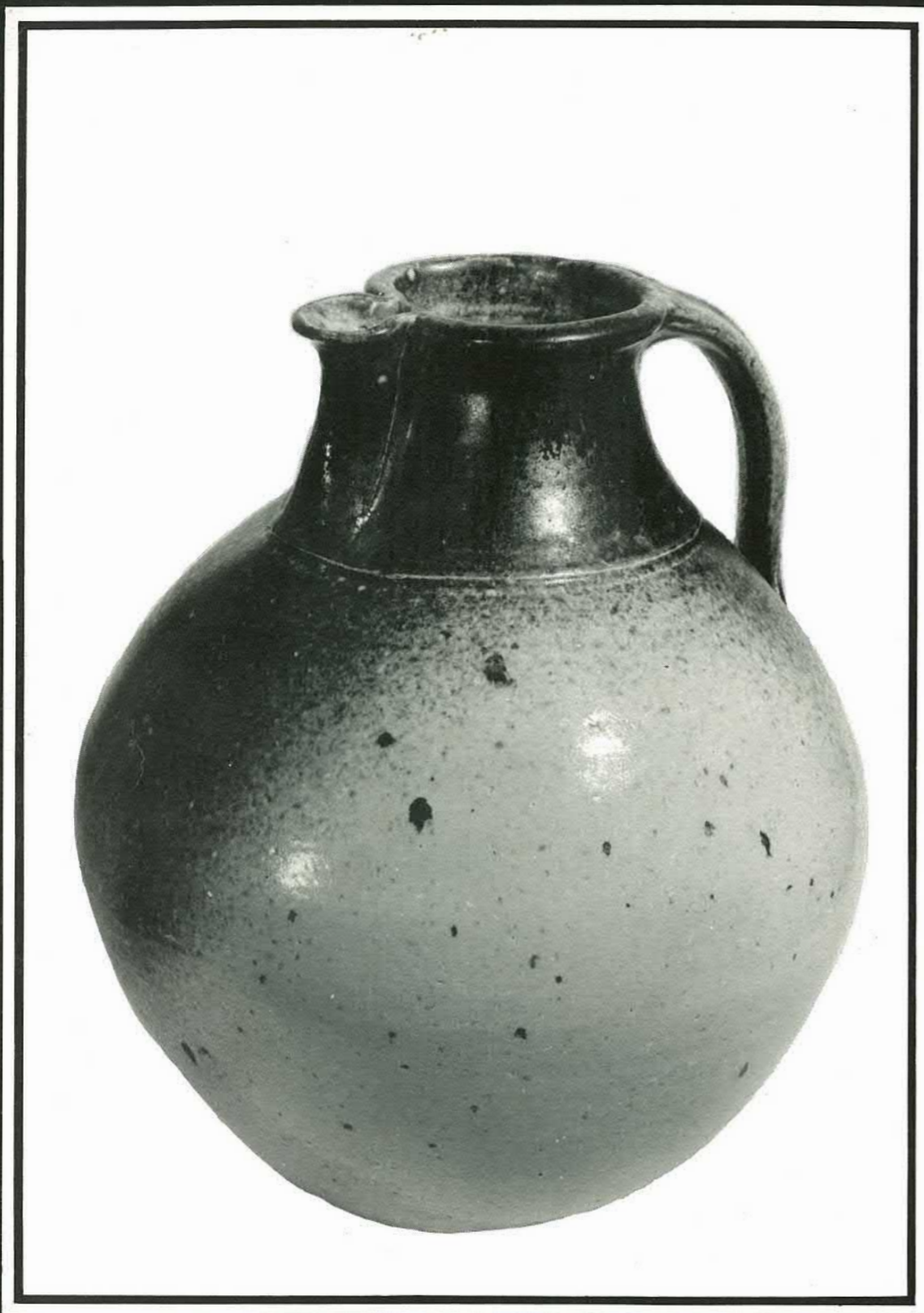


Potter

New Zealand Potter

Volume 26, Number 1, 1984

Stoneware Jug by Jan Bell, Waimauku, photographed by Howard Williams.



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Potter

New Zealand Potter
Vol 26/1 1984

Cover: Ceramic wall by Doreen Blumhardt. Christian Science Church, Wellington. Photo: Matthew Bird Page

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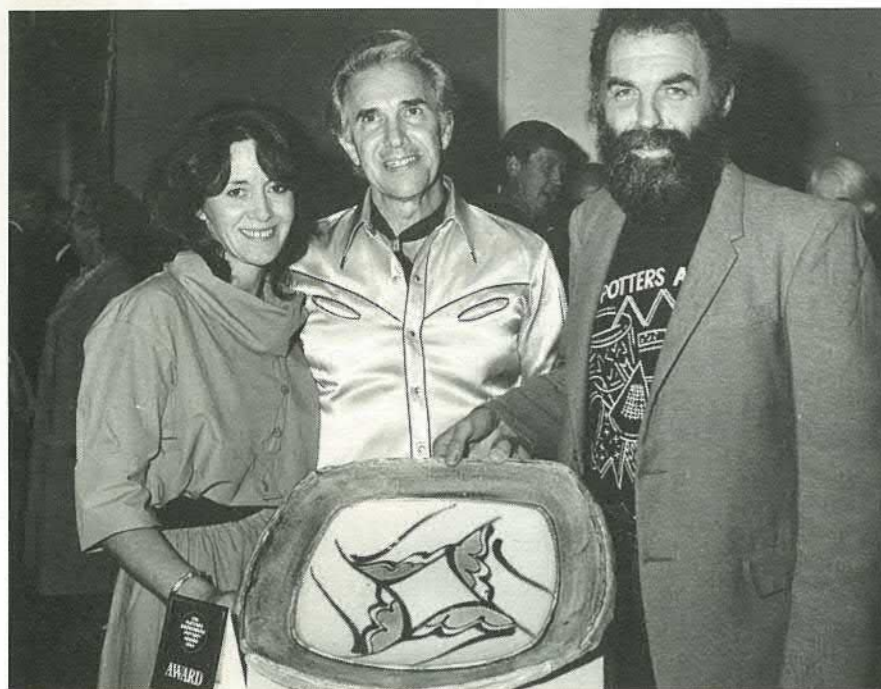
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Editor: **Howard Williams**
Assistant editor: **Julie Grace**
Advertising manager: **John Deal**
Design: **Howard Williams**
Correspondents:
Hamilton: **Sue Knowles**
Wellington: **Anneke Borren**
Nelson: **Julie Warren, Peter Gibbs**
Christchurch: **David Brokenshire**

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FLETCHER BROWNBUILT POTTERY

Auckland War Memorial Institute and Museum



The judge, Professor Don Reitz of the University of Wisconsin, USA (centre) with Award winner Merilyn Wiseman, and Merit winner Peter Lange.

Exhibition Diary.

AWARD WINNER

Merilyn Wiseman, Albany, New Zealand. Wood fired stoneware platter.

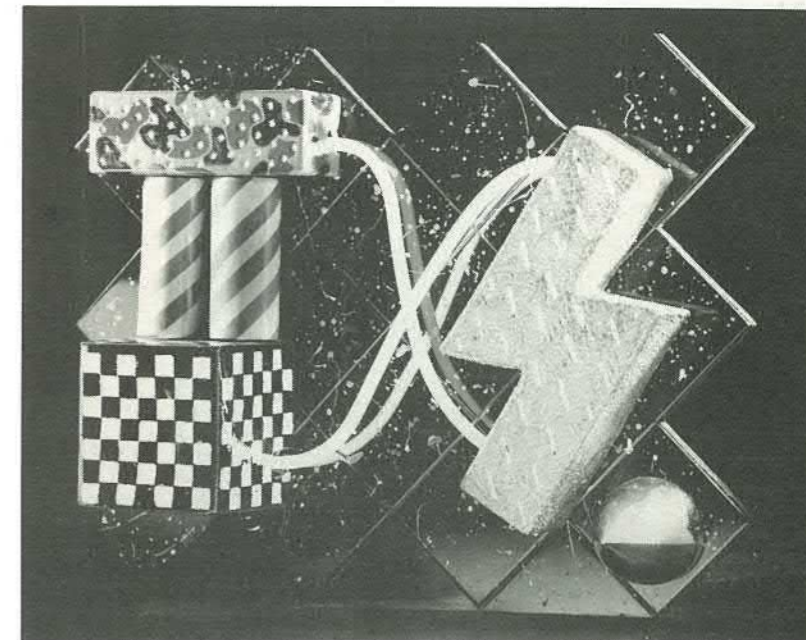


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AWARD 1984

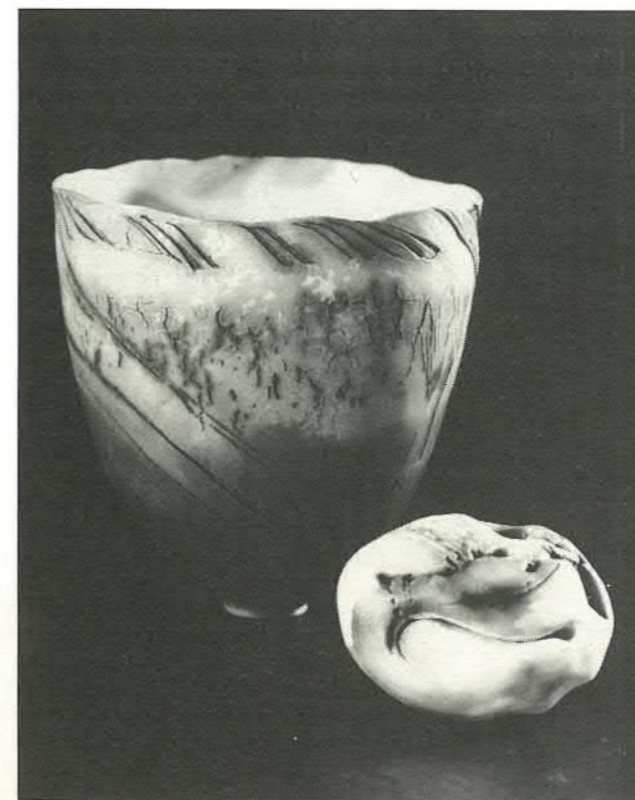
MERIT WINNERS

photos: Eric Taylor



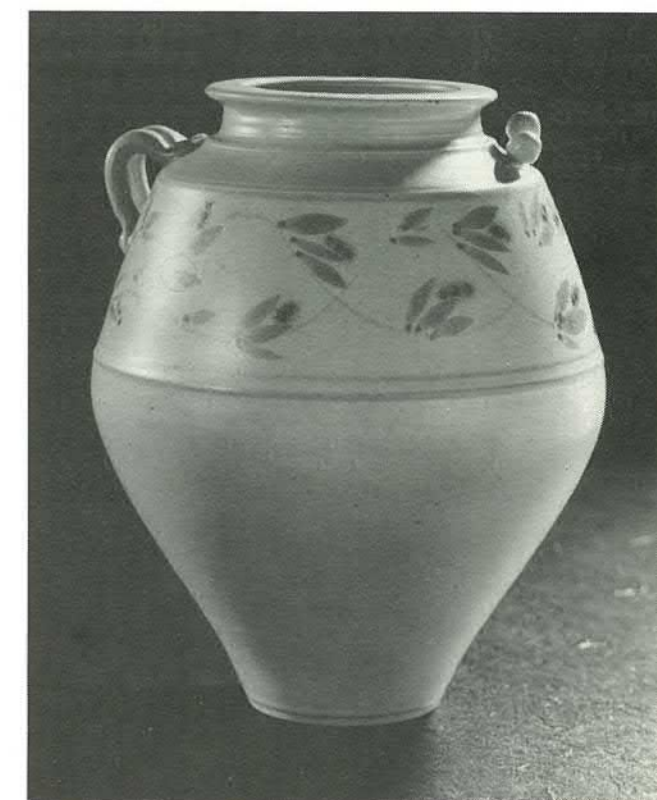
Peter Lange, Auckland, New Zealand. "IXS". Mixed ceramics and neon lights.

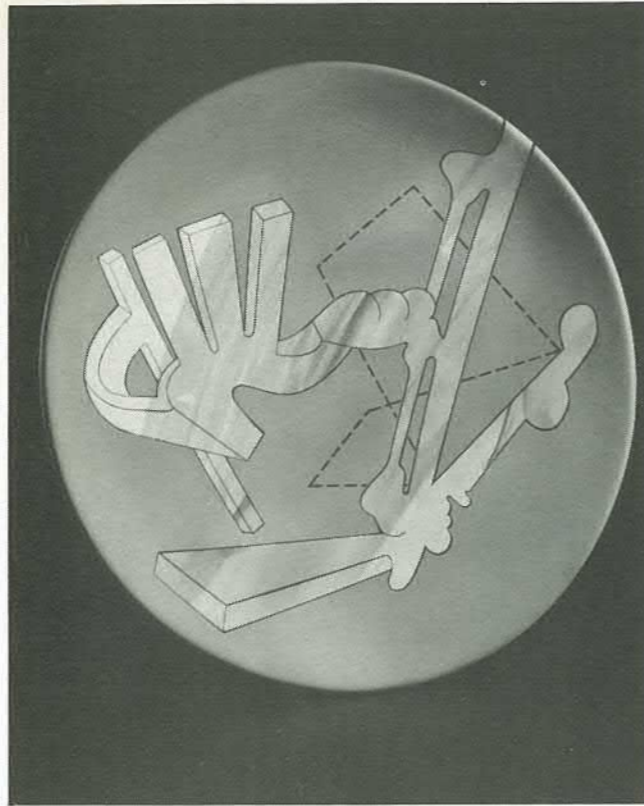
Jean McKimmon, Wellington, New Zealand. "Transformation". Hand built porcelain, pit fired.



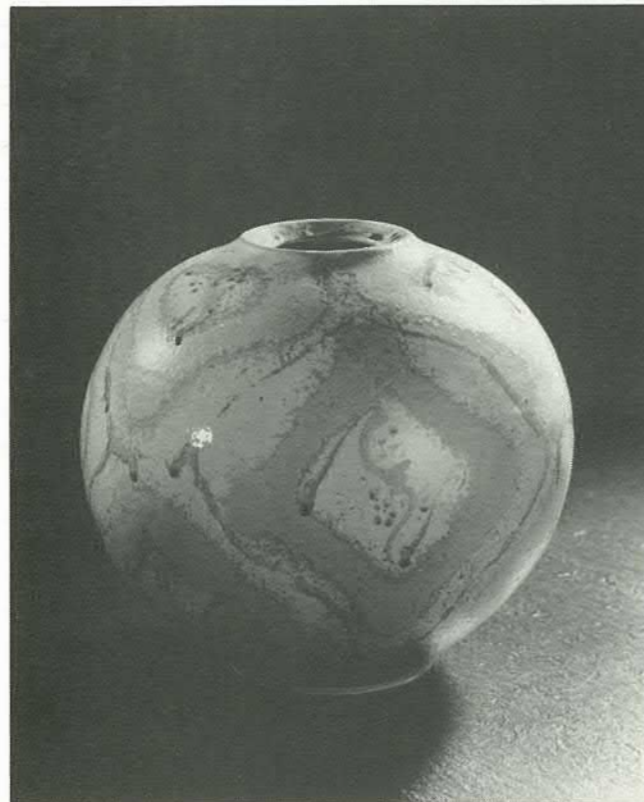
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Wayne Alty, Adelaide, South Australia. White glazed urn, copper, chrome and cobalt.



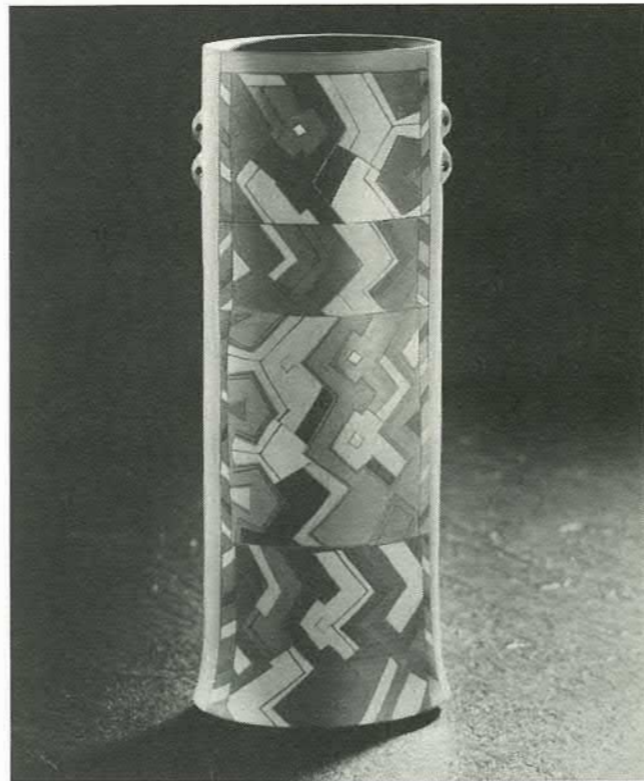


John Hopkins, California, USA. Plate, low fired glazes, under-glazes, lustres and sandblasting.



Paul Fisher, South Canterbury, New Zealand. Stoneware "Boulder Pot".

FLETCHER BROWNBUILT 1984

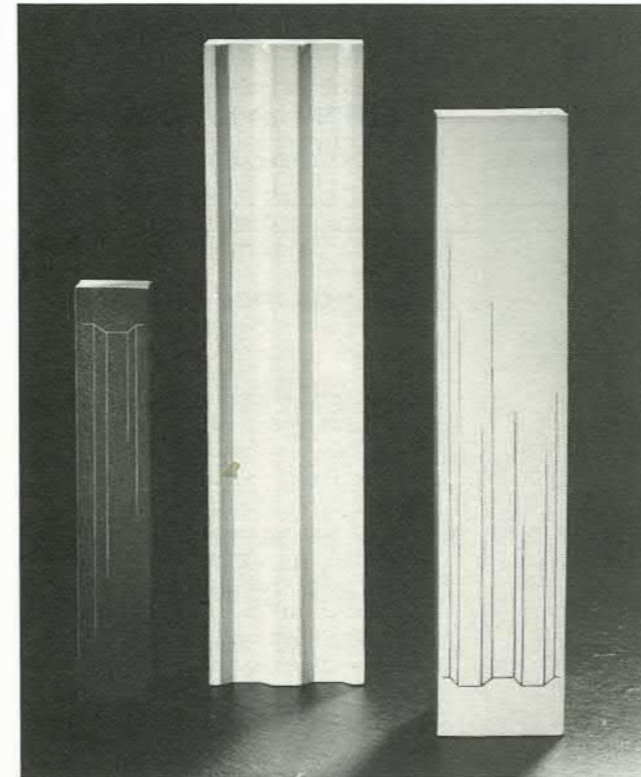


John Ablitt, Somerset, England. Burnished earthenware vase.

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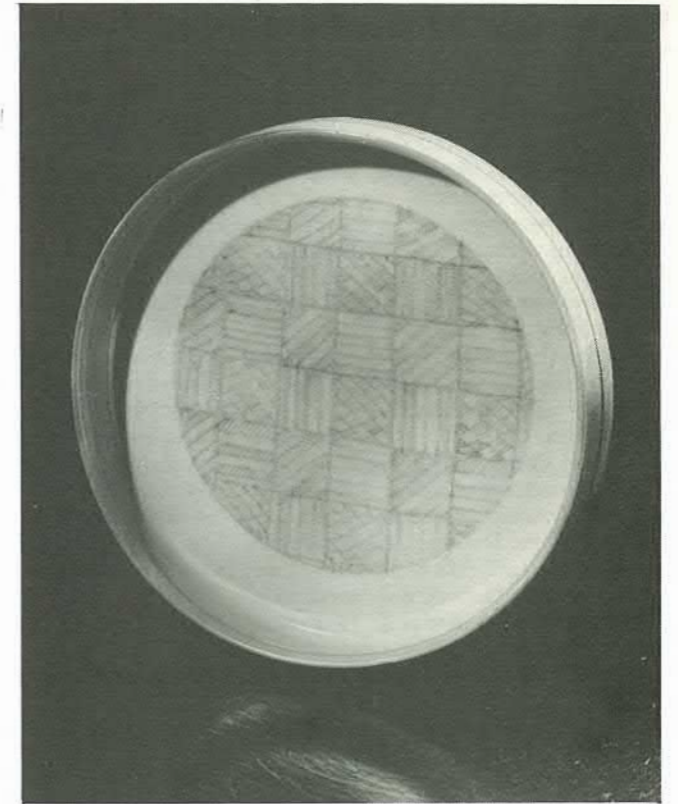
MERIT WINNERS

Photos: Eric Taylor

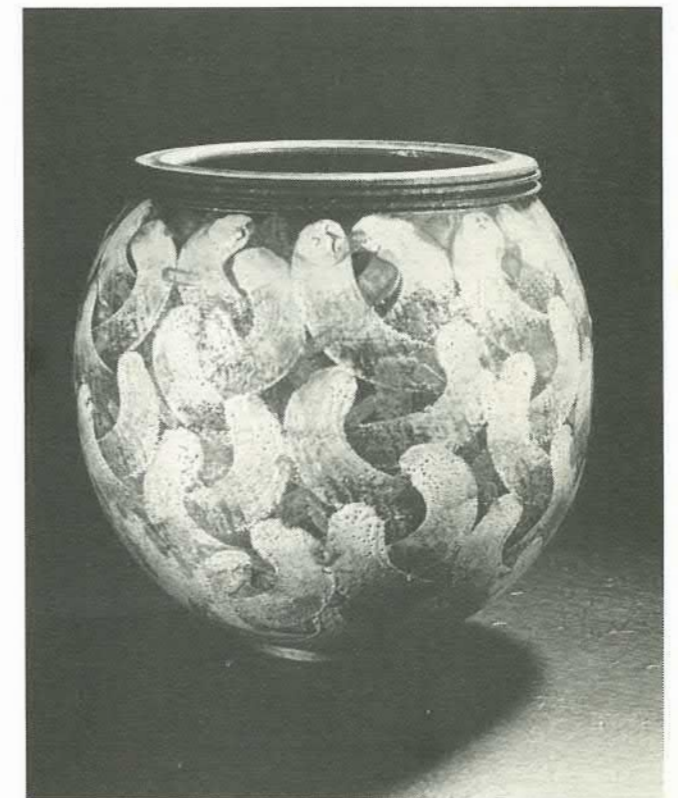


Leo King, Auckland, New Zealand. "The Verticals", slipcast architectural forms.

NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 1, 1984



Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Queensland, Australia. Wood fired porcelain dish, painted pattern.



Ron Taylor, Victoria, Australia. Raku pot.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

As readers of the *New Zealand Potter*, you will know that the long-time editor, Margaret Harris, has resigned and sold the magazine to the Petone publishing firm, G. Deslandes Ltd. Deslandes, publishers of the *New Zealand Gardener* and the *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, have printed the *Potter* for the past 15 years and have engaged me as the new editor.

The *Potter* started life as the mouthpiece of the New Zealand Society of Potters, ably run by Helen Mason, Doreen Blumhardt, Juliet Peter and Roy Cowan, with other potters in assisting roles. It began in 1958 and in the next 10 years this team built it up from a sort of club newsletter into a very respectable national magazine with a growing overseas readership.

Margaret Harris took over as editor in 1969. Although not a potter, Margaret was a professional journalist and

she enlisted the help of her husband Nigel, Wellington potter Audrey Brodie and her husband Jim, to help her build up the publication further. Many other eminent potters were called on to advise. (I nearly wrote 'imminent potters', but the dictionary defines imminent as 'threatening immediately to fall or occur.' Come to think of it I do know some potters who . . .)

Now after 15 years of excellent directing by Margaret, the *Potter* comes back into the hands of a potter for a bit more wedging.

My qualifications? A full time potter and ceramic mural maker for 24 years; author and illustrator of *NZ Pottery Workbook*; terms on the executive committees of Auckland Studio Potters and the NZ Society of Potters; committee member of CAST (Craftspeople Against Sales Tax); Editor of NZSP newsletter for six years; photographer and writer for *NZ Potter*, *NZ Crafts*, the *Listener*, *Art Galleries and Museums Association magazine*, exhibition catalogues and various St Valentine's

Day cards. Founding, and present continuous member of Albany Village Pottery and Gallery. Here endeth the skite sheet.

I hope now to bring this experience to bear on the *Potter* and to bring in good technical articles, take it into full colour, start a technical problem-and-advice column, build up a gallery exhibition calendar, expand its circulation, especially overseas, and bring it back into closer communication with NZSP. Please consider the *Potter* as your magazine and write to let me know what you would like to see published in its pages. Send in copy material and photographs—I shall only publish the best, but this means having plenty to select from.

This country has pots and potters equal to any in the world—the *Potter* should reflect this and also be one of the best of its kind. I intend to make it so. With your help.

Howard S. Williams

Editor, *NZ Potter*, PO Box 79, Albany.

EXHIBITION CALENDAR

New Vision Ceramics Gallery, Auckland.

June 11—23: Royce McGlashen, Nelson potter.
July 2—14: Chris Cockell, Raku works.
August—Brian Gartside, low-fired work and working drawings.
September 10-22: Jenny and David Shearer, Wellington potters.
November 4-17: Wood firing—"The pleasures of fire and clay."

Albany Village Gallery, Auckland

June 24—July 4: John Green, Albany.
October 7-17: Richard Parker, Northland.

NB. All galleries are invited to submit pottery exhibition schedules for inclusion in this calendar. Copy to be sent to the Editor, PO Box 79, Albany, by August 20, 1984.

Have you tried this?

Jeff Bell from Waimauku bricks up his kiln wicket after loading, but does not laboriously clam up with clay pushed into the joints—it usually dries and falls out during the firing anyway. Instead he simply coats the whole door with thick slip using an old paint brush, then soaks several sheets of newspaper in the slip bucket and "wallpapers" the whole wicket area. It remains uncracked and therefore airtight during the firing. A quick, simple, but efficient method of clamping the wicket bricks.

Congratulations to Jack Laird of Nelson for receiving the OBE in the last New Year's Honours List. Jack's influence and guidance, particularly in the Nelson area, have been exceptional and his education of public awareness in the craft of pottery has helped pave the way for many of the potters who have established thriving studio workshops in New Zealand.

Congratulations to potters Gail Weissberg, Wellington, Katherine Sanderson, Palmerston North, and Barry Brickell, Coromandel, for having been selected by the New Zealand Society of Potters to be sponsored by QE II Arts Council for the Faenza 1985 Exhibition.

RECONSTRUCTION OF AN OLD KILN WITH FIBRE

Elizabeth Woodfield, Hamilton

We apologise to Elizabeth and our readers for some incorrect figures appearing in this article as printed in the Potter Volume 25/2. We now reprint it correctly and with further explanatory diagrams.

Recently I rebuilt the glost chamber of my kiln to more than double its capacity. It was 25 cu ft and used approximately 33 gallons of diesel to cone 10. Now at 60cu ft it uses approximately 20 gallons firing in about 10 hours. Any shorter firing time and the temperature gradient top to bottom is too great.

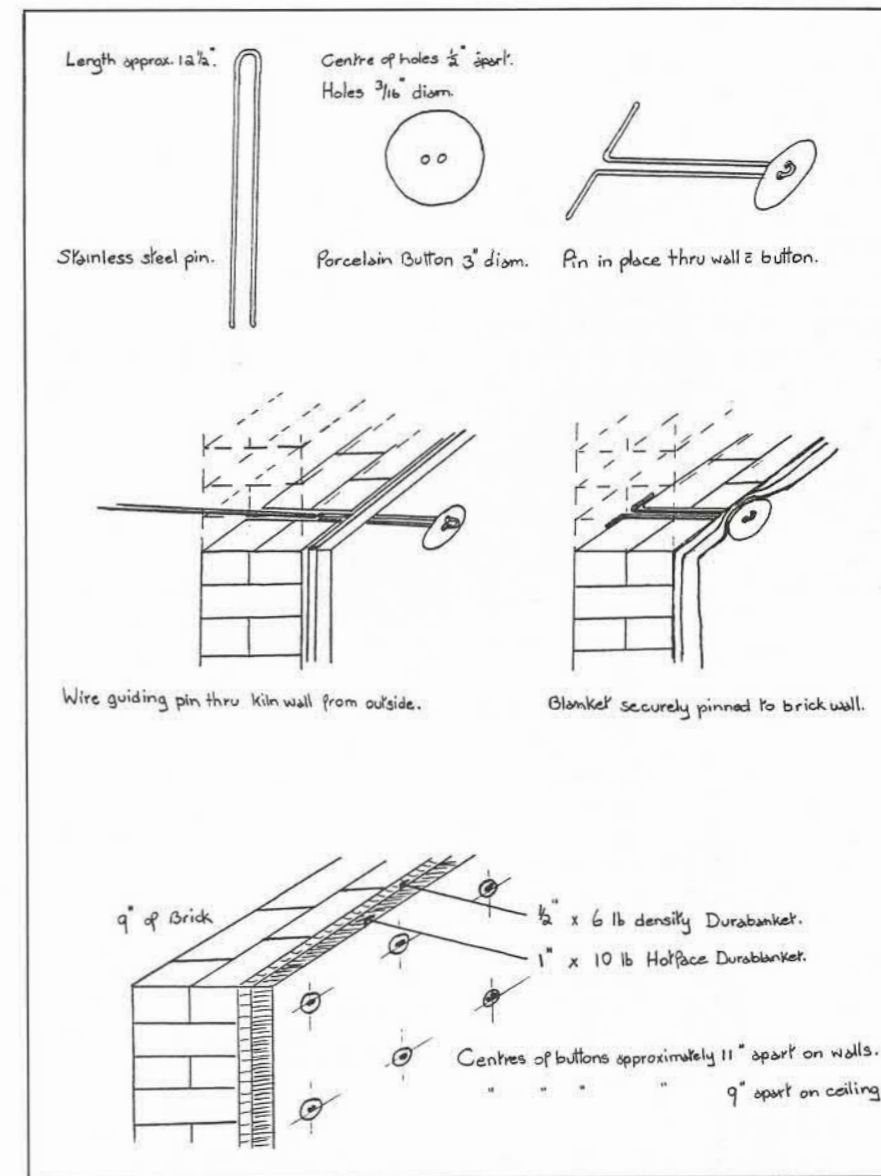
The kiln is built of brick and lined with ceramic fibre. Installation of the fibre was agreeably easy. The fibre was pinned to the brickwork by means of stainless steel pins which are threaded through ceramic buttons, the ceramic fibre and through the brick wall, then are bent back securing all. See diagram.

After carefully measuring up and marking where the fibre blanket is to be anchored, drill through the brick joints with a DB (double brick) masonry drill bit which fits on an ordinary 1/2" chuck electric drill. In some places I had to drill through 9" of brick. This was not difficult, but at very regular intervals I withdrew the drill and dipped the bit into water-soluble cutting oil to cool. Stainless steel 1/8" type 304 rod was cut into 26" lengths and bent into hairpins.

To make the pins, drill 1/8" holes with centres 1/2" apart in a piece of hardboard and using vice grips bend till the legs of the pins can just pass through the holes with no pressure. The pins cannot be forced through the ceramic buttons as the buttons would break. The buttons were porcelain clay 3" diameter, the holes being 3/16" to allow for shrinkage, the centres being 1/2" apart. Next time round though, I'll use ceramic element casings as they give more support at 10" in length.

To put it all together, a friend inserted a wire from the outside of the kiln through the drilled hole, impaling the fibre blanket which I pressed against. Then I threaded a button onto a pin and the legs of the pin followed the wire as it was withdrawn. The fibre was then pressed against the brick wall, and the protruding pin ends were bent back on the outside of the kiln. The door is steel, lined with fibre attached in the same manner.

The exposed bit of the pins inside the kiln must be protected from flame



and direct heat, so buttons of fibre were glued in place with sodium silicate. Some of these protectors have come off where I have knocked them, so I have made repairs by applying fire cement over the exposed wire and stuck scraps of fibre over them.

I still get small carbon buildups directly above some of the four burners. As these cannot be chipped away from the fibre without damaging some of the blanket, it is best to remove the carbon as you observe its growth during firing, checking regularly. Then the fibre is not damaged.

Although ceramic fibre is expensive, the fuel savings well and truly justify it.

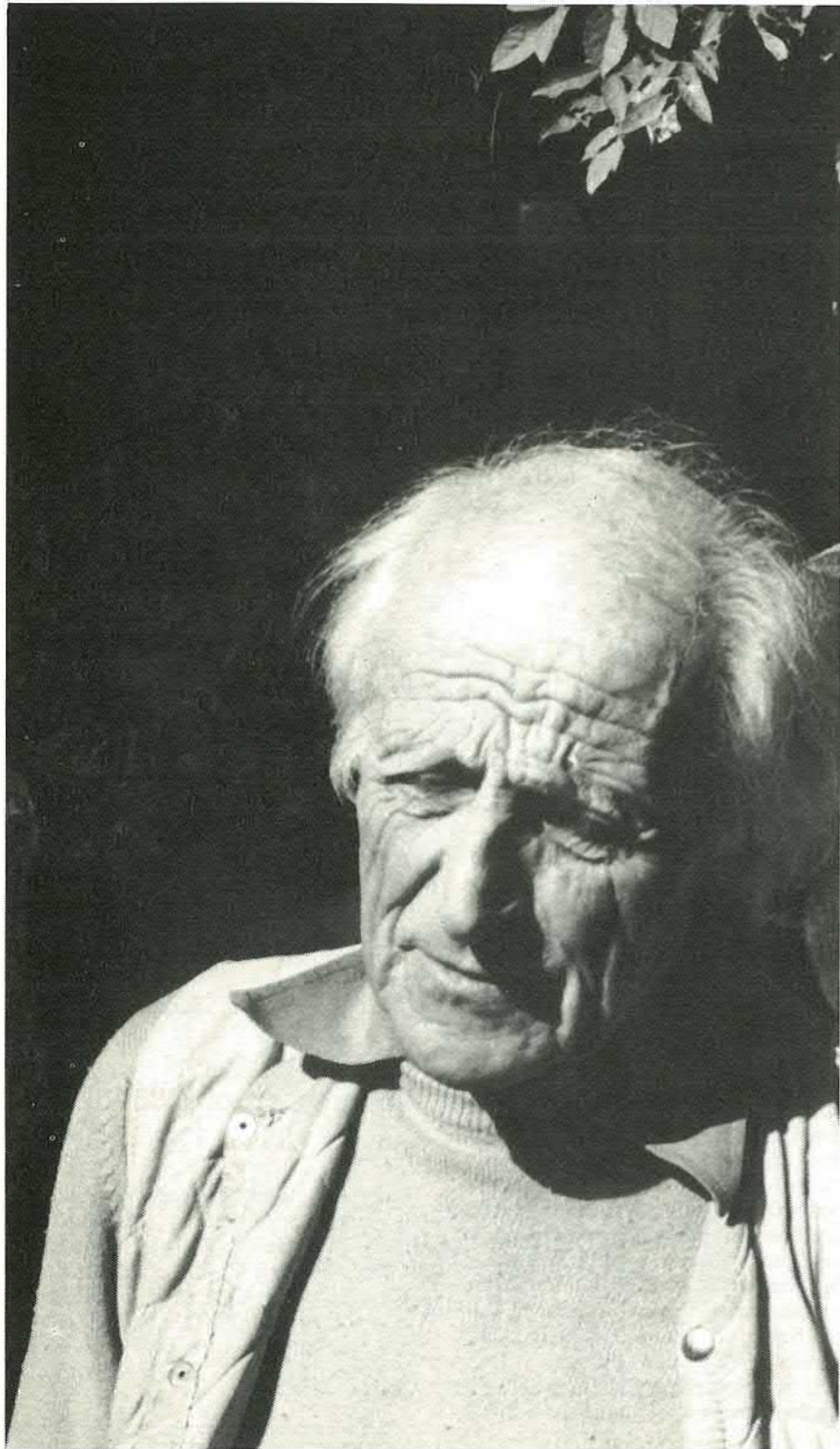
Borland Lodge Pottery School 1985

Otautau Potters Club presents the 1985 Borland Lodge Pottery School to be held from 12th to 20th January 1985. Tutors are Len Castle, Auckland and Peter Johnson, Colac Bay. Enrolments close November 1984. Inquiries to Audrey Simons, Heddon Bush, No 1 RD, Winton. Phone 877 South Hillend.

MUD AND WATER MAN

By Katherine V. Goldsmith, England

Michael Cardew, May 1982. Photo: Stan Jenkins.



Michael Cardew, master potter of startling intellect, brilliant craftsmanship, and often acidulous wit, defied the description of a typical potter. He was more of a peasant Renaissance man and his cottage and pottery in Cornwall was a pre-industrial home of an artist who made few concessions to the 20th century.

His famous lunches showed his faceted genius — quoting Edward Lear with a sparkle in his eye, (“My grandmother had a long friendship with Lear, but they never got around to marrying”). He would haul out of his haybox a massive bronzed receptacle of appetising smells and place it amidst the profusion of Leach pots and vernacular bread. Following the repast one would be unceremoniously shuffled out while he got down to his music with other members of the formidable blue-stockinged septuagenary.

Michael Cardew, MBE, CBE, produced simply magnificent pots — the handmade, the robust, the traditional English slipware. He won a scholarship to Oxford to read classics at Exeter College, but didn't entertain the academic life that his scholarly mind dictated. No doubt to the dissatisfaction of the dons, he spent all free time learning to throw pots at Fremington in Devon from W. Fishley Holland — from where he would return with armfuls of colourful and often gaudy pots.

When he came down from Oxford, he learnt of Leach's new pottery at St Ives and cycled down to beg them to take him on as their first English apprentice. Leach had with him the famous Hamada whom he had met in Japan, and together with Tsurunoske Matsubayahi, potter engineer and chemist, they built their Japanese-style climbing kiln.


Leach was clearly impressed by this young man. “Handsome as a young Apollo with a straight Greek forehead and nose, curly golden hair and flashing blue eyes, who had a sudden temper which disappeared nearly as fast as it arose . . . he had an exciting temperament between the two polarities of intellect and intuition; when the two came together the result was wonderful. He was a lovable man, my first and best student.”

By the middle of 1923, Cardew had established himself at the pottery, bringing with him two Devon traditions, the technique of pulled handles, and his kick-wheel which became the prototype of the well-known Leach wheel. Influenced by Fishley Holland, Cardew revived the slipware tradition and created most of the pottery's production of slipware in the three years he was there.

Draughty pottery sheds and an involved artist's disregard for comfort led to his contracting the pneumonia which was to plague him throughout his life. A prodigious worker with remarkable energy, he clearly disliked theory, and eventually regretted not taking notes from Matsubayahi, who was a renowned authority on technical problems.

If Leach said that Cardew's pots expressed the man, certainly the firing expressed his temperament. Leach remembered his inability to curtail his impatience when unpacking the first firing of the climbing kiln, and allowed him to unload the slipware pots from the third chamber before the others, only to discover Cardew furiously hauling out his pots and hurling them over his shoulder into the stream behind. Man and kiln cooled down, and that evening Cardew was to be seen wading about in the water retrieving his abused pots.

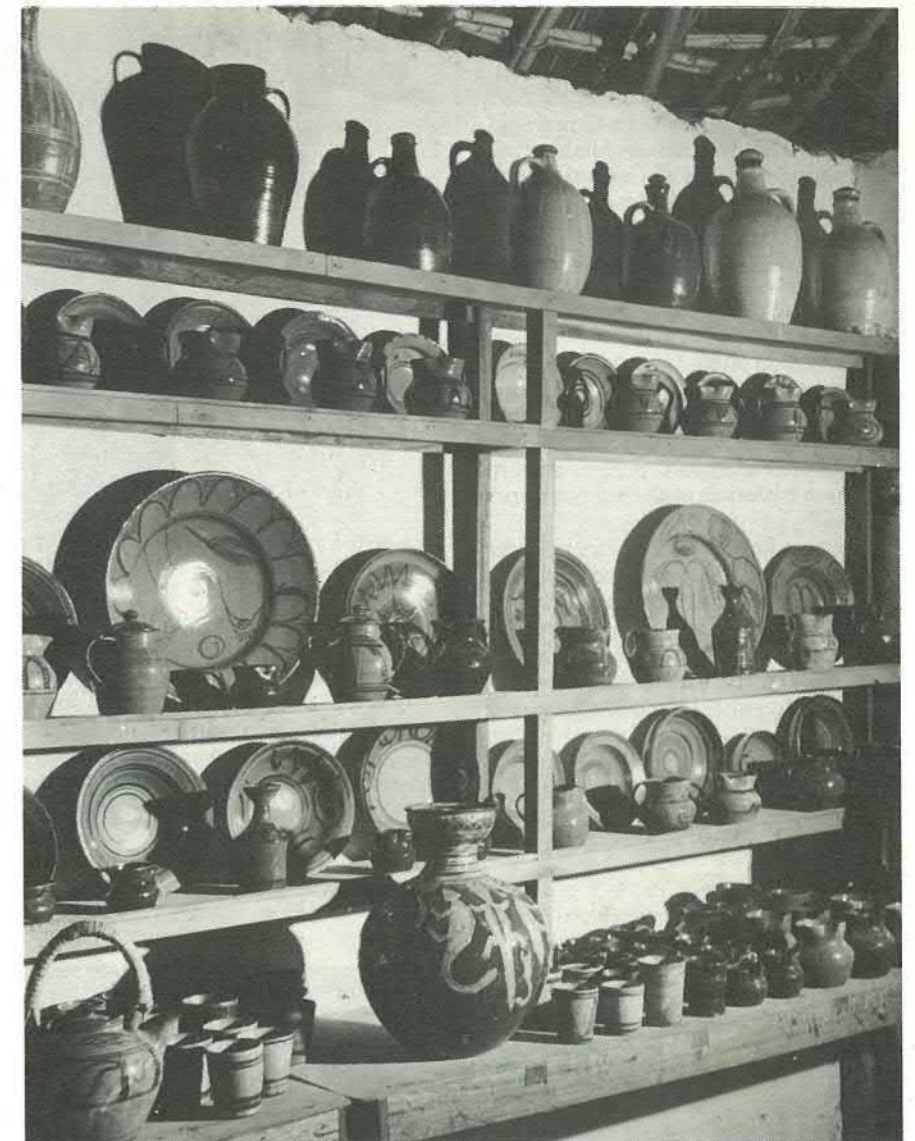
His love and enthusiasm for slipware earthenware was sustained when he came across the derelict Greet Pottery in Gloucestershire which had been started in 1800. He renamed it Winchcombe and enticed back one of the old pottery workers, Elijah Comfort and started producing robust and warm domestic slipware. In happy productivity, he lived in complete discomfort in a wooden shack at the end of the garden, with a barrel of rainwater outside the door for his daily bath.

Here he brought his bride Mariel Russel in 1933 and only moved out when their third son was born, back to his origins in Cornwall. Here he signed his pots  the latter a symbol of Wenford Bridge, rebuilt the kiln, held exhibitions and built up the reputation he enjoyed until his death in 1983.

At Wenford Bridge he could work on higher fired wares, but the war had started and as pottery wasn't an essential industry it was not encouraged. Mariel became the breadwinner by teaching, and Cardew took a job at the West African Institute of Arts, Industries and Social Sciences in Achimote, in what is now Ghana.

Initially, Cardew had wanted to work within the pottery industry and had a short stint at Copelands in Stoke-on-Trent, making tea-sets. Six weeks was enough of this unrelieved craftsmanship and he came to believe that the small pottery was a “better factory” where art and technology could be combined. Hence H. V. Meyerowitz's scheme in Ghana excited him — traditional culture, craftsmanship and the resources.

Tragedy struck: Meyerowitz died and the scheme was abandoned. Disappointed, Cardew took off inland



Showroom at Abuja Pottery Training Centre 1958.

Photo: D. MacCrow, editor of 'Nigeria' magazine.

down the Lower Volta River to the small village of Vumé-Dugame which was a traditional centre for pottery. As elsewhere in Africa, pottery was exclusively the preserve of women who hand made coil pots and fired them in open heaps.

Cardew stopped there, built a kiln and tested glazes from the local savannahs. The results were magnificent pots — some deeply bronzed with flashes of rust and orange. He learnt about Africa's raw materials the hard way.

In the meantime he almost starved on £120 a year. Obviously happy and intent on his work, his disregard for his health took its toll. He got median otitis, poisoned hands and again, pneumonia. He narrowly escaped being murdered in his bed by a raiding party from a nearby province, his mosquito netting taking a slashing instead. Forced back to England to

endure a cure for bilharzia, he returned to Wenford Bridge and launched into stoneware, adding a down-draught first chamber to the existing kiln.

At the age of 50 he became pottery officer in the Nigerian Department of Commerce and Industry — he was to do a survey of the resources of Nigeria for a prospective pottery industry. To his delight his report was well received and on his recommendations, his Pottery Trading Scheme was opened in Abuja.

From there on his life was a series of comings and goings. Returning sometimes to the cold of Cornwall, he potted, and his African experience was absorbed into his pots. He held London exhibitions and hilarious courses in Cornwall for enthusiastic and, I daresay, 'tough' students. He didn't suffer fools gladly, but his courses became famous.

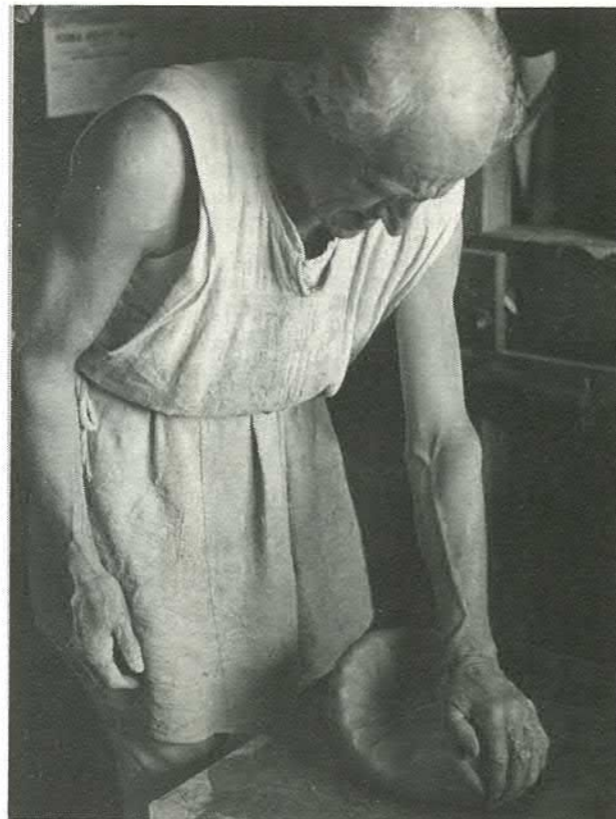
continued overleaf

Potters in New Zealand will remember his tour in 1968, lecturing and demonstrating before he went to Australia to start a pottery for Aborigines in the Northern Territories.

In the early seventies, Alister Halum made two films of Cardew, *Abuja Pottery* and *Mud and Water Man*. When Leach saw the latter he rang him and said, "If you had never done anything else in your life, this film would have made it worthwhile".

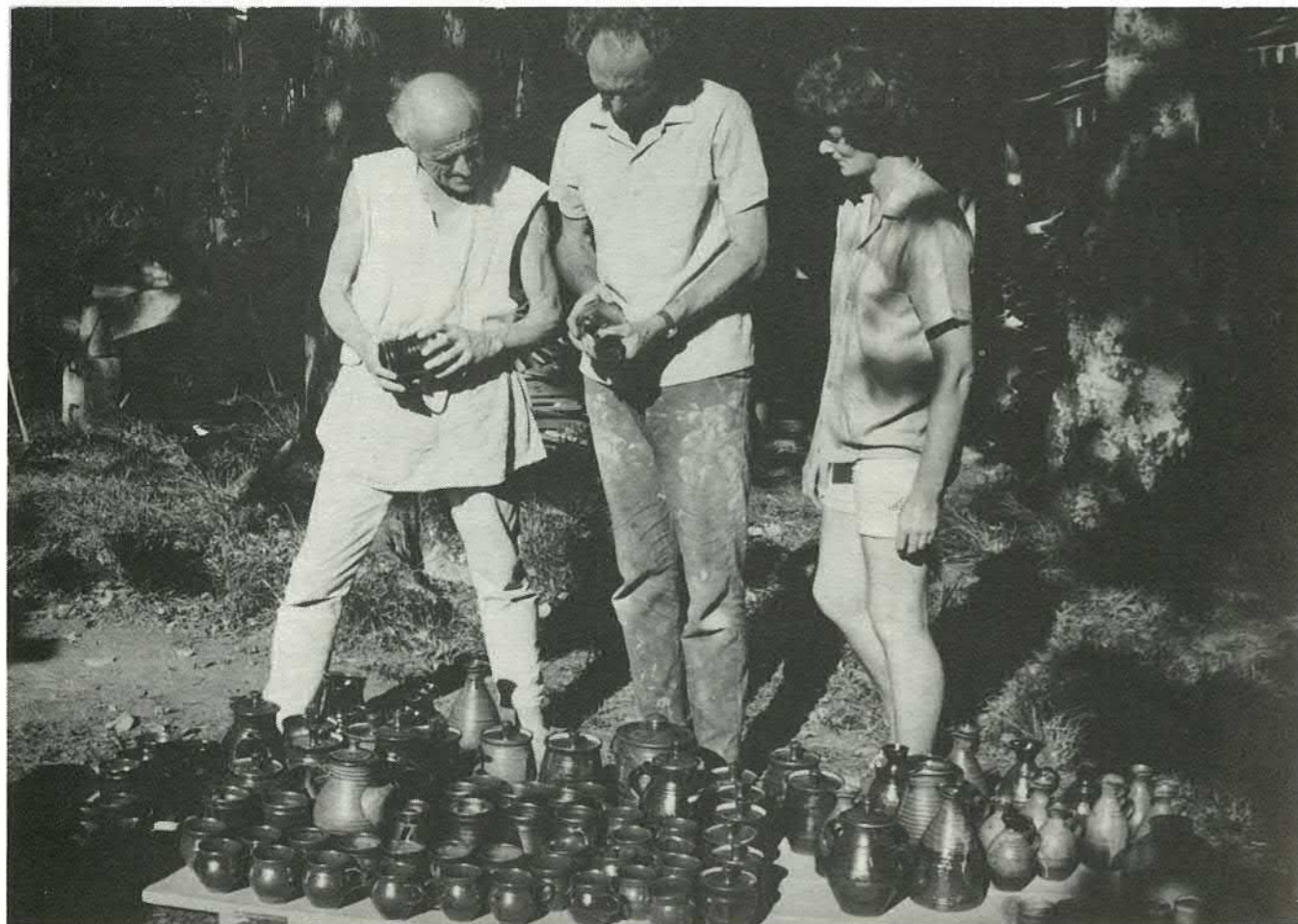
John Houston, art critic and broadcaster, said of him, "His career began as a search for the means to work; it continued as an exploration of the nature of those means. His example and his influence is to turn potters back to their own materials as the prime source of work".

The man has gone, but his pots remain, and while museums lock his creations away behind glass doors, I must use those I own — I know he would have scoffed at attempts to explain his art, turned his back and returned to the wheel to do it again, and again. . .



Cardew during NZ tour, 1968.

Unloading a kiln of Peter Stichbury's pots, 1968. Cardew with Peter and Diane Stichbury.



THE POTTERS ARMS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

by Peter Lange

TOURISM DESIGN AWARDS

Entries are invited for the 1984 Tourism Design Awards. The awards are made every two years to recognise good design in facilities, books, souvenirs, activities and other matters concerning tourism in New Zealand.

To be eligible, entries must relate to facilities, programmes etc which are already operating and available to tourists but which have not been in existence longer than 10 years. Award winners are presented with attractive wall plaques and certificates. A number of commendations are also made for good design and recipients receive a certificate.

In the interest of promoting good design in the tourism and related industries, every endeavour is made to publicise the awards. The award ceremony takes place in Parliament Buildings in October.

Further information, together with the conditions of entry and application forms are available from: The Secretary, Tourism Design Award Scheme, PO Box 95, Wellington. Entries and supporting material close with the Secretary on July 31, 1984.

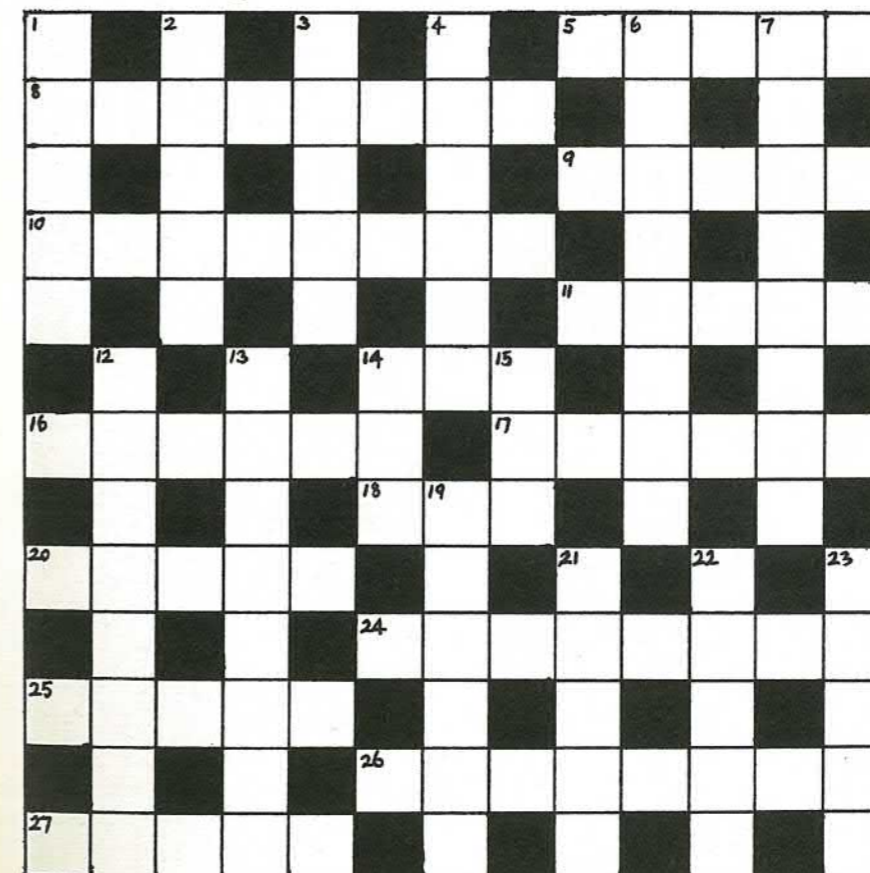
ACROSS

5. Mixing chlorine with a natural glaze ingredient could be a battle. (5)
8. None nice at this temperature. (4,4)
9. Potter found in a church beyond the meadow. (5)
10. Escape from a wild rake in a boxing match. (5,3)
11. Babe became confused before the beginning of the year at Westminster. (5)
14. One after 8. E3
16. Do South Island potters do this at this time of the year? (6)
17. Made the emu sad but cheered up. (6)
18. A little exercise for the primate. (3)
20. If a good man has only a little inside he's a bit of a pudding. (5)
24. Sent dirt back in and sounded harsh. (8)
25. Work this one out. (5)
- 2z. Flavours some of the suspension agents for lustres. (8)
27. Something burning in the loaf I reheated. (5)

DOWN

1. Used for diving in dangerous Cuban waters. (5)
2. Dig in between. (5)
3. Sneak around a garter for example. (5)
4. Harmonious use of a unit facing N.E. (2,4)
6. Do potters do this to relax or do they tell fibs? (3,5)
7. How you feel after a bad firing or when your neck and side are not right. (8)
12. What you could do if the glaze does. (5,3)
13. Held to your ear he gives you the wind up. (8)
14. Eat stirred into a drink. (3)
15. Scottish lass turned me down. (3)
19. A feldspar made from the leftovers of a burnt joint. (6)
21. The kiln is not working. (5)
22. Sit on a fish. (5)
23. Hide the glaze ingredient under the road. (5)

Answers to crossword on page 25.



FULBRIGHT CULTURAL GRANTS

The New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation is offering two 45-day Cultural Development Grants, tenable in 1985. These grants are open to New Zealand citizens who would benefit from observing and studying cultural activities in the United States. Each award provides round-trip air travel and a daily maintenance allowance of US\$85.

There is no set application form and applicants are requested to submit a written proposal to the foundation. They should also arrange for two references covering their professional work to be submitted independently.

Selection will be based on the foundation's assessment of the candidates' performance and potential, and the contribution the successful applicants could be expected to make upon their return to New Zealand.

The closing date for applications is July 31, 1984 with: The New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation, PO Box 3465, Wellington.

THE POTTERS' SHOP

Wellington

Opening day for the Potters' Shop, August 7, 1983, saw the fulfilment of a dream for a group of Wellington potters — to own and operate their own retail outlet.

We spent eight months searching Wellington for the right premises for our own co-operative. We knew what we didn't want — a city shop on the busy main thoroughfare. The Thorndon area drew us back irresistibly.

Number 324 Tinakori Road had the right feel about it. It is in an area slightly romantic, specially zoned for preservation as an historic part of Wellington, and is surrounded by other specialist businesses which add to the atmosphere. It is an atmosphere which encourages visitors to browse and to talk about the pots and their purposes.

The Potters' Shop is on the site of the original Thorndon bakery residence and it has been attractively and appropriately restored. Windows run from floor to ceiling. It is a space with a 14 ft stud, and is light and elegant. We chose furniture and shelves with care so that our pots would be enhanced in an uncluttered setting.

The members of the co-operative are: Paul Winspear, Judith White, Mary Smith, Jenny Shearer, Julie Palmer, Isobel Martin, Raeburn Laird, Maureen Hunter, Craig Hall, Murray Clayton, Flora Christeller, Beryl Buchanan, Gwyn Bright, Margaret Beckett.

We are all established potters — professionals or serious craftspeople — who strive to set and maintain a high standard which will satisfy us and promote a good image of Wellington to tourists and visitors from other parts of the country.

Most of us have had exhibitions in local and provincial galleries, have conducted workshops in other areas, and are members of both the New Zealand Society of Potters and the Wellington Potters' Association. As we are a very disparate collection of personalities, our pots reflect this, so there is a wide variety of pottery from which to select.

The aim of the venture is not to sell more pots. In fact, we have difficulty in keeping up with demand! What we are trying to do is to balance the solitary life of working alone with the unified spirit of running a shop together. Equally important is to improve the quality of our pots, stimulate each other and scrutinise our work in the search for higher standards.

We share in all the duties and responsibilities and find that our individual strengths and weaknesses balance out. A monthly meeting gives us the opportunity to try to solve the problems of such an undertaking through the "slow and sometimes painful democratic process. Consensus decisions are worked at steadily.

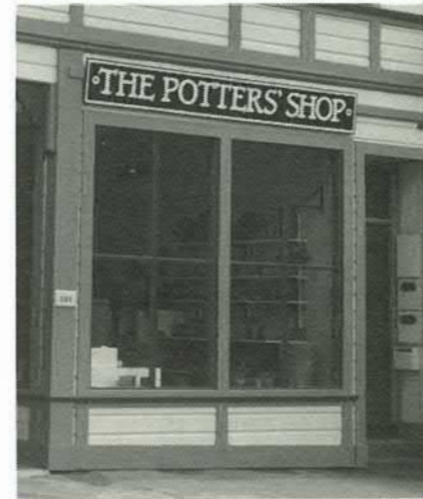
In any group of 14 strongly individualistic people, opinions often differ and we encourage every voice to be heard with increasing directness. For any one of us to be dominant is not in accord with our principles, and this is protected to a degree by each member taking the chair and acting as secretary in turn for one month.

A regular feature is a series of promotions — Spring Fever — Christmas Notions — Outdoor Living — etc. Already, we find one of the most stimulating aspects of these is our own response in presenting new ideas with greater expertise. The quality of our pots has improved each time. A weekly feature for the window space is "Potter of the Week".

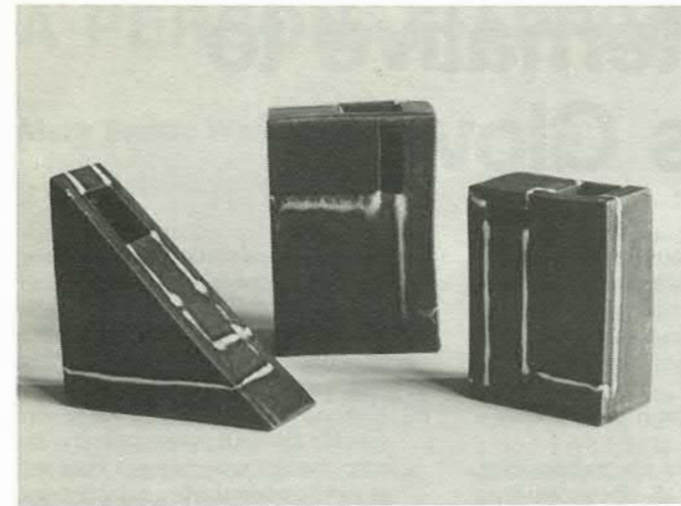
Pots are constantly on the move: they move out of the shop, of course, but more — the duty potter is free to change completely what is inherited from the previous day. This gives rise to such comments as, "I was in the Potters' Shop four days ago and you've got a whole new range of pottery!" For each of us, there is a special pleasure in seeing our pots attractively displayed.

Customers express genuine interest in buying directly from the potter. They ask questions about the construction of the pots, firing and glazing and how different effects are achieved. Recently, a group of American tourists insisted on the potter autographing her pots, albeit with a wax crayon! Another potter was amused and delighted to have her photograph taken holding the pot with the Japanese purchaser.

Have we achieved our aims so far? Most of us would say, 'Yes'. Recently, one of our group said, "The Potters' Shop is the best thing that has happened to me".



NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 1, 1984



Top left: Murray Clayton, Slab Stoneware.

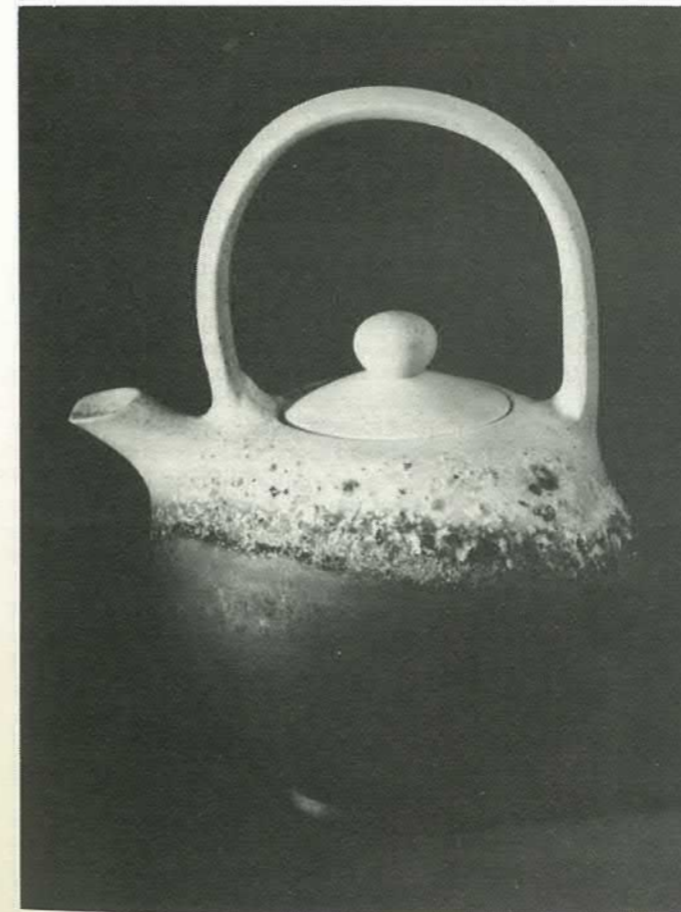
Top right: Beryl Buchanan, Stoneware.

Centre right: Mary Smith, Stoneware.

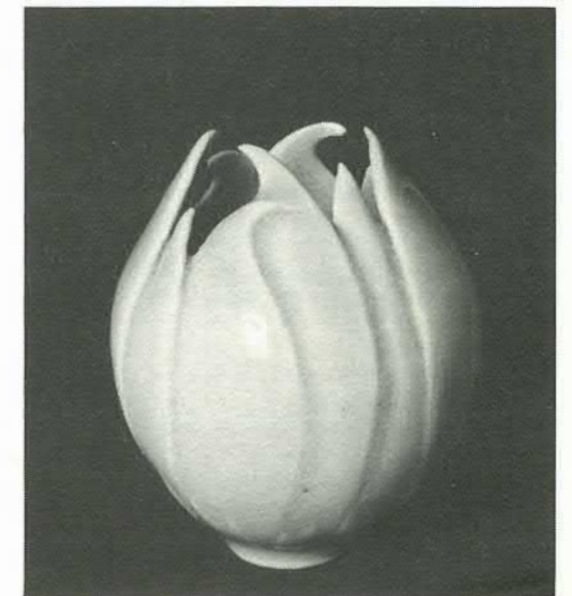
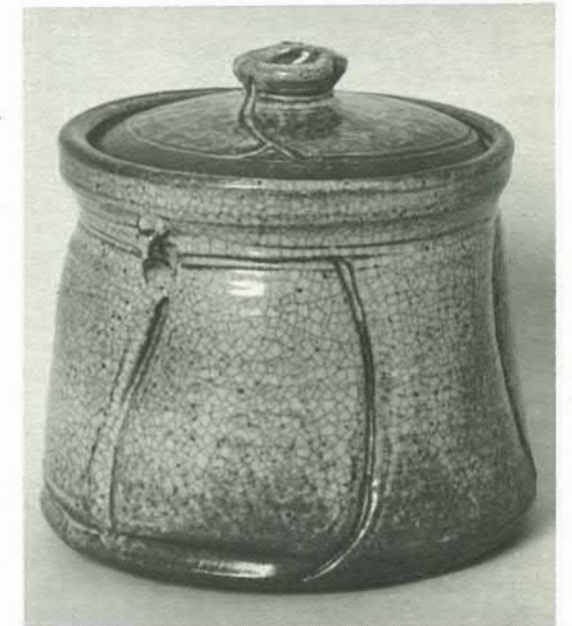
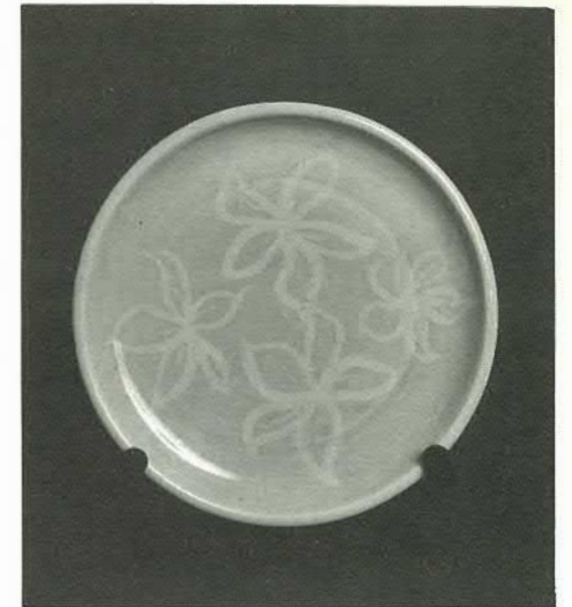
Lower right: Isobel Martin, Carved porcelain, Celadon glaze.

Lower left: Jennifer Shearer, Porcelain saggar fired, 1300 °C.

Photographs: Jenny Hames



NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 1, 1984



A Useful Alternative to Asbestos Gloves

by Jon Amies, Hamilton

Sources of asbestos can include: talcs, French chalks, vermiculite, spackling compounds, older kilns and furnaces, serpentine and of course, *asbestos gloves*. Some American sources name greenstone but I don't know whether this includes the New Zealand carving greenstone. (Yes, it does. — Editor)

Diseases which can be caused by asbestos include:

- (1) by inhalation: asbestosis, lung cancer, mesothelioma;
- (2) by skin contact: asbestos corns;
- (3) by ingestion: still under suspicion.

It is believed that even inhaling small amounts of asbestos dust might be responsible for cancer in a small percentage of people and obviously the greater the exposure to any chemical, the greater the risk. Furthermore, the chances of getting lung cancer from asbestos are greater if you smoke. This is an example of the problem of the synergistic effects of two chemicals. A synergistic effect is one in which the combined effect of two chemicals is many times more damaging than either one alone. The risk of getting lung cancer in people who both smoke and work with asbestos is statistically 92 times greater than people who do neither. One of the problems with insidious cancers such as those mentioned above is that they may take 20 years or more to manifest themselves.

Depending on your circumstances you will have a varying exposure to asbestos and the logical idea is to keep the body burden as low as possible. If there is exposure through working with asbestos in arts, crafts, etc., and particularly in the case of this article, pottery, there will be an increase in the body burden of asbestos, so therefore one must take all factors into account before deciding to use this material. Remember the greater the body burden, the greater the chances of contracting an illness.

There are alternatives to using asbestos gloves and mitts, but whether one adopts these substitutes depends on how hot the articles to be handled are. In some cases where an object is less than 100°C and is to be handled briefly and lightly, strong leather gloves may suffice, but caution is urged in this case.

I wondered how hot the outside of a 9 inch thick brick kiln was, and how hot the bricks in the spyholes were. With an oil fired kiln at cone 9 falling, the following measurements were made:

- (1) Kiln bricks, 20 cm from spyhole — 115°C.
- (2) Spyhole soap: in normal position 15 cm inserted, 8 cm protruding with some gases coming out; the junction of the kiln and soap was 160°C, and the part of the brick to be handled was 125°C.
- (3) Spyhole soap: 8 cm inserted, 15 cm protruding with hot gas escaping, the junction of the kiln and soap was 260°C, and the part of the brick to be handled was 120°C, presumably because of the cooling effect of the outside air.

Raltex Ltd, Palmerston North, make felt gloves and mitts from a green aramid fibre (Nomex®) which have outstanding "high" temperature properties. The mitts are made with a double thickness of felt in the hand, fingers area and wrist, coming in the ranges of 12", 14", 16" and 18". The gloves which are a single thickness come in the range of 14", 16" and 18". I passed around a pair of these gloves when I gave the toxicology lecture at "Ceramics 81" and I am still using them. Out of habit I have usually worn a pair of cotton liners within them, but this is just a personal preference.

The properties of Nomex® can be listed as follows:

- (1) Permanently flame resistant;
- (2) Will not melt or drip, but goes into a frangible char at about 380°C.
- (3) Good direct flame insulation (will damage the gloves if exposed for too long as the charring temperature could be reached). It is difficult to ignite even with a direct flame and it is self-extinguishing after the removal of the heat source.
- (4) Long wear life — tough and durable.
- (5) The fibres hold up well to acids and chemicals.
- (6) Comfortable to wear.
- (7) The felt has an excellent resistance to heat and is virtually unaffected at temperatures up to 200°C. Tests have confirmed that after exposure for 1000 hours at 200°C in dry air, Nomex® retains 65% of its original strength. Temperatures in excess of 200°C are not recommended. As can be seen from the kiln mea-

surements (detailed earlier) and the fact of the large silica contraction at about 220°C (a kiln shouldn't be unloaded at this temperature), the gloves could be very suitable for potters.

- (8) Nomex® is a synthetic fibre and would dry out very quickly if immersed in water or got very wet as can happen during raku firings. The articles hold their strength while wet but should not be left for a considerable time in an area where the temperature is just below the dew-point of water as the Nomex® fibre can suffer hydrolysis and would be spoilt.

The company prefers to supply in lots of 50 pairs but will do batches of 25 pairs at a slightly higher cost, so it would seem that the craft retail supply houses would be the place to stock them. Safety firms such as Wormald Stereo Safety Ltd stock them. Western Pottery Supplies (Auckland and Hamilton) have indicated that they will stock some in the future. Incidentally, other items made from Nomex® by Raltex include aprons and fire blankets.

There are other high temperature resistance gloves on the market. Included in these are gloves made from Zetex®, a fabric that offers all the protection of asbestos without its health hazards. Zetex's® aluminoborosilicate fibres are a replacement for asbestos, offering superior performance for many applications. Zetex® withstands continuous high temperatures of up to 593°C and higher short duration temperatures. Zetex® is unaffected by most acids, alkalis, solvents, dilute sulphuric acid (but not to hydrofluoric acid and corrosive environments at elevated temperatures). Zetex® is reputed to offer better dimensional stability, abrasion resistance and strength than asbestos while providing a softer hand and feel. The Zetex® gloves are 14" long with a 10 oz wool lining but regrettably, owing to a variety of reasons, are relatively expensive. Alltech Associates have a branch in Auckland.

References:

- (1) *Artist Beware* — Dr Michael McCann
- (2) *Personal Communications*
- (3) *Safety Products Catalogue*; Alltech Associates Pty Ltd

A PERSONAL APPROACH TO CLAY

Mary Smith, Wellington

My pots are traditional rather than innovative but with a strong New Zealand bias. Jack Troy helped me a lot when he said, "You don't have to make Japanese pots". The influence of traditional Japanese form is obvious in the type of pots I make, but my creative inspiration comes from the country I have lived in for all of my 24 years — the hills, harbour and bush of Wellington.

The Japanese/Kiwi dilemma is not my only contradiction. I am a wood-firer at heart but live on a small suburban section bordering on the town belt. I have tried to reproduce the spontaneity and unpredictability of wood-firing by developing a rather risky method of saggar firing. Tending to become bored with shino and copper glazes which are perhaps better suited to gas firing, I have extended the versatility of my 7.5 cu ft Elecfurn kiln by experimenting with a modified form of salt glazing.

In the past, saggars were used to protect the ware from the harsh imprint of the flame, but I use them to protect the kiln fibre from the volatile nature of this type of firing. Each firing includes only 10 or 11 pots which are set inside the saggars on pats of fireclay dusted with alumina. The survival rate is about 30 percent.

Alongside every pot I place two small cylindrical crucibles made of slab clay, each containing about two teaspoons of salt and the same of washing soda or soda ash (sodium carbonate). Into each saggar goes one small piece of charcoal, a couple of handfuls of wood shavings and pieces of toi toi flowers soaked in brine and draped across the pot.

Most of my pots for this saggar firing are made from a mixture of Winstone's S.C.80 or White Slab clay and Western Potters' Earthstone. The whiteness of porcelain enhances the dramatic effects of this process, but the loss rate is higher than with stoneware.

All the saggars have holes similar to teapot strainers to allow some air circulation and to prevent the saggars blowing up. Consequently, I fire with a reduced atmosphere so that the necessary reduction comes from the kiln and is not dependent on the saggar.

One problem I have not yet resolved is that the crucibles tend to explode or melt from the force of the sodium compounds and cast shards of glazed clay onto, or inside the pots. Nevertheless,

although every saggar firing is "definitely my last", the small number of pots that do survive provide sufficient encouragement to try again.

My next project is to explore further: Murray Clayton, a fellow member of Wellington's "The Potters' Shop" and I are planning to build and share a wood-fired kiln on his rural property at Ohariu Valley, an area which is close enough to be part of Wellington City but distant enough to have the open space for wood-firing.

Saggar fired stoneware by Mary Smith, all with celadon glaze inside. Teapot has salmon matt salt glaze outside. The pair of faceted bowls are salmon-lustred salt glaze. These pots were in the NZSP Annual Exhibition, Dunedin, 1984.

Photos: Jenny Hames.



SONGS OF THE GULF

by Louise Guerin, Wellington

Louise Guerin visited Denis O'Connor during the summer while he was working towards his show, Songs of the Gulf, to be held later in the year at the Auckland City Art Gallery. He talked about some of the ideas behind his work.

Photos: Louise Guerin

Denis O'Connor began his work with clay making domestic pottery, but over the last five years, ceramic sculpture has become a much larger part of his output. Initially there was little interest, if not downright antagonism, towards what he was doing. However, he carried on with his own ideas and feels there is now a much more receptive climate for the kind of work he wants to do; not that the views of others influence his direction.

"I'm driven to do it, regardless of the acceptance of others, but it makes it so much easier when you don't have to battle with kindergarten concepts — when what were once very much craft areas are being accepted professionally as art and are being shown in art galleries as such."

He does find the climate of acceptance helpful. "It makes it easier for people like myself when you don't have to struggle against either your potter peers not accepting you because you don't make pots, or against an art world which sees clay work as craft and therefore not very high up the ladder of creative pursuits."

"I'm pleased my work is going to be exhibited somewhere like the Auckland City Art Gallery because institutions like that have never really touched clay before. They've always seen it as a craft medium while they are fine arts institutions and a fairly strong line has been drawn. I think it means that the art scene in New Zealand has matured when something like this happens."

"It's something that has happened only recently in America, too. The Whitney in New York only recently put on the first show of clay work to be held in a major East Coast museum. It's taken that long for them to acknowledge this new contemporary clay movement."

Initially, Denis found his sculptural pieces difficult to sell. "But if you keep doing it, people sooner or later accept the fact that it's not a shot in the dark and start taking a serious interest. The fact that people get excited enough to purchase pieces means I can get on

with more work. That's not the reason why I do it, but if people didn't buy, sooner or later there'd be so much stuff in this house you wouldn't be able to get in the door!"

He is interested in knowing who his buyers are and enjoys meeting them. "I can often relate to the people who buy my work because they've felt some sort of empathy with an idea that's been there. In New Zealand, it's a very small market so over a period of 5 or 10 years, you get to know your clientele. They're a fairly dedicated bunch! Some of the big work is now being collected by institutions and corporations which is quite good too, as the work then becomes public."

He responds in a personal way to the work of others he admires. "When I look at any creative work I relate to the concepts behind it. The person who made it presents himself very strongly for me and I read the work with that in mind. If I can relate to what they are trying to express, that work becomes more meaningful for me. But if it's just

purely decorative craft work, then my interest fades fairly rapidly."

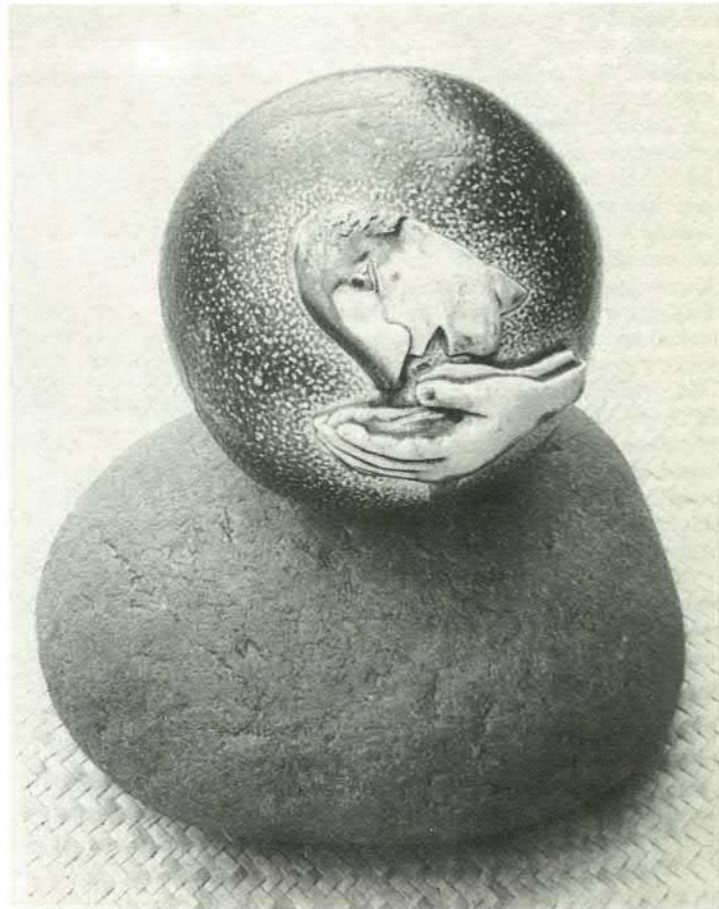
He is after enduring qualities himself. "I'm after creating a mythology that isn't going to disappear next year when a new trend hits the craft world. It's going to have to stand strongly on its merits from here on so I like to get the feel of a solid antiqued quality to it."

The themes of his work are slowly emerging as he explores ideas repeatedly. "Most artists, when you look at their whole career retrospectively, have only about three or four different themes in their work which they have refined over years and years of repetition and thinking about it and mastering different materials."

"I'm not quite sure at this stage of what mine are; they reveal themselves over a very long period of time, but one of the strongest seems to be balance — the sense of balance in your life — as a person and as a result of the forces that are going on in each of us."

He is aware that too much talk about the processes behind action can eventually be obscuring, but feels the area rates exploring. "You're getting into territory here that's psychological and spiritual and all those things... But it's about bringing to your work a quality that just pure craft hasn't traditionally

"Pillow Stone" 1982. Salt glazed porcelain mounted on greywacke boulder.



"Birth Stone" 1983. Wood fired swamp clay. 1500 by 600 cm.



"Stone Tide" and "Stone Sound" 1982. Salt glazed porcelain.

"Fish Lintel" (detail) 1983. Wood fired swamp clay, unglazed.



been involved with. It is part of looking for a sense of meaning about the culture you're living in."

His latest work is very much to do with a sense of place — Hauraki Gulf, Auckland. Much of its imagery is drawn from the New Zealand coast.

"I've lived on Waiheke Island for 12 years; in fact I was brought up in Auckland, so I've spent a hell of a lot of time observing coastal rituals and developing a vocabulary of coastal hieroglyphs. That's when your thoughts and the way you feel are shaped by spending a lot of time looking out over the water!"

"I'm drawn to certain sentinels if you like, which I use as symbols of emotional feelings and inner stress. It's a sort of visionary attitude towards the environment. There's a whole encyclopaedia of coastal objects really. I'll use anything! Boats obviously play a big part and I've developed a strong vessel theme, using the word vessel in its widest context."

"Over the past four years I have also drawn on the concept of stones, using it to express many different strands of ideas. It provides a really rich metaphor for different concepts I'm interested in getting across." The names of some of his work begin to explain this: Birthstone, Keelstone, Flagstone, Lodestone, Whetstone, Keystone, and so on.

The *Songs of the Gulf* project was begun in late 1981 and will probably number about 40 pieces in all. Plans are that ceramic works will make up only part of the exhibition. Denis has also been building up a fascinating collection of other items from and relating to the area where he lives. Detailed documentation, both written and pictorial, will be presented in a hand-bound album box. Raw materials will also form part of the installation, along with geological specimens and fired clay shards.

Some of the areas and themes explored include: personal, regional and universal myths; language and the printed word; folk art, including neglected aspects of New Zealand folk art particularly associated with coastal regions; the lost arts of the mariner, such as chandlery, scrimshaw and model making; the lore of stones; the dignity of tools and their metaphysical qualities; the celebration of process; and homage to the original Maori coastal dwellers and to the European immigrant scowmen and their fellows.

As Denis puts it, "The *Songs of the Gulf* series is a philosophical statement of sorts. It's a group of work that encompasses a lot of ideas I've had concerning the magic of object making and your relationship to the place you were born and live in."

Maria Kuczynska and Alan Watt at Christchurch

by David Brokenshire, Christchurch

Maria Kuczynska is a Polish sculptress from Gdansk. She was a gold medallist and jury member at Faenza.

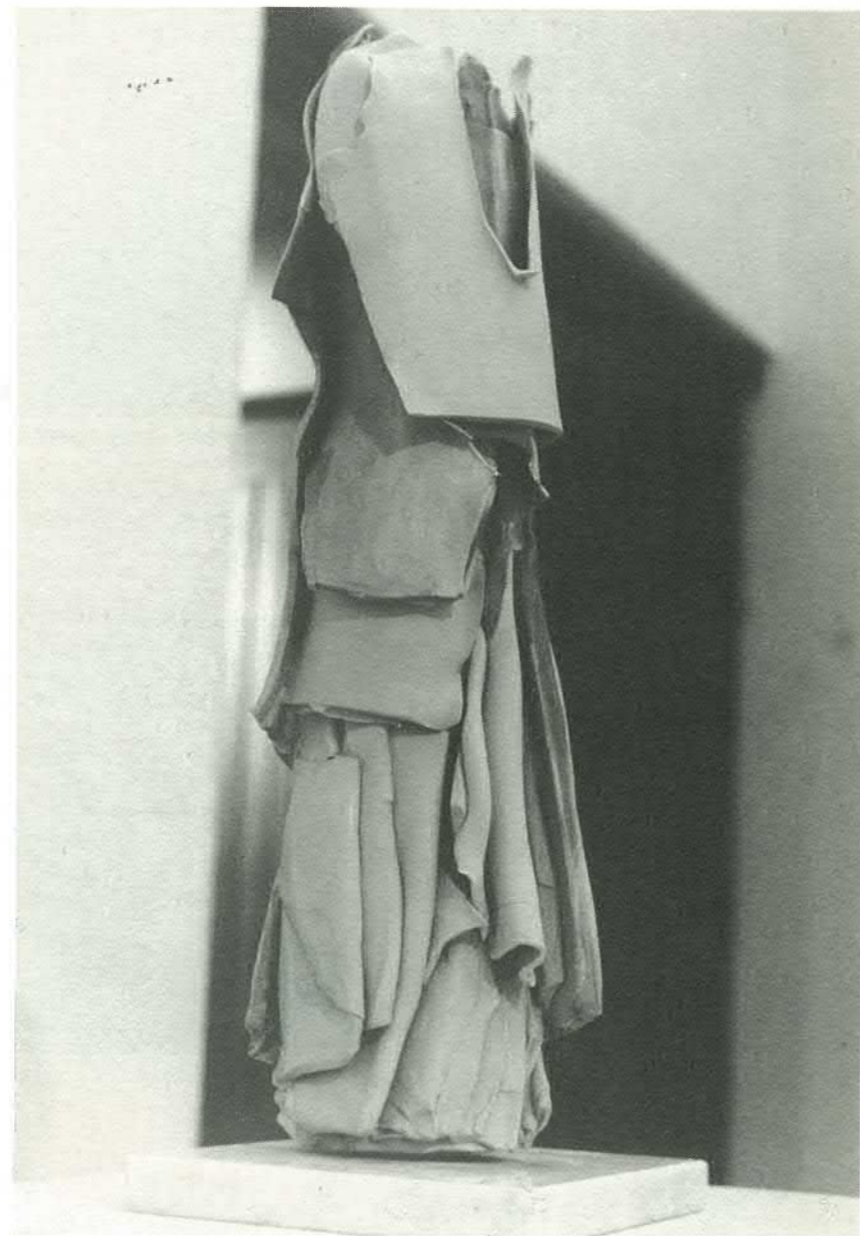
Alan Watt is Head of the Ceramics Department at the Canberra School of Art.

Sculpture has been defined as "the art of the conveyance of meaning through the organisation of form." Both of these artists are sculptors who have chosen to work in clay. Their work exhibits an evident delight in the manipulation of the material, but the choice of the medium has not limited their expression.

Maria works within the figurative "classical tradition" of Western Europe and her pieces have an empathy with Greek and Roman art. Indeed, her "Winged Figure" bears an uncomfortable resemblance to Nike of Samothrace, yet these heroic draped sculptures small in physical size, are large in scale and convey an accurate poignancy. Although without head, arms or feet, each piece has a pervasive, powerful presence. They have been constructed with folded slabs of porcelain or earthenware. Some of the pieces in porcelain are left unglazed—others are glazed and lightly lustred.

In contrast, Alan's sculpture seems to be influenced by landscape forms. Again the work is comparatively small in physical size yet immense in scale. Man, standing beside these "Pinnacles" could be looking at objects hundreds of metres high. There is an almost unbearable tension evident between each peak. The landform, "Escarpment", firescorched, frightens an island dweller with its portent of being surrounded by an almost infinite hostile land mass. These pieces are burnished, blackfired earthenware with lustre. This method of firing adds immeasurably to the intensity of the work.

Potters in New Zealand were fortunate indeed to be able to experience at first hand, the work of these international artists.



"Standing Figure" Maria Kuczynska. Unglazed porcelain, 40 cm high.



"Sitting Figure" Maria Kuczynska. Porcelain with lustre, 20 cm high.

Photos: David Brokenshire.

Fire while you sleep

Information is available on these units from:
The Marketing Manager
EMC Limited,
PO Box 31-145,
Milford, Auckland,
Phone: 444-9229.

A recent development for the pottery industry now means that you can sleep while your kiln commences and completes its firing. This has been made possible by the introduction of a programmable kiln controller which means that you can tell your kiln when to start firing, the rate of firing, the temperature it will fire to and the soak period.

By means of keys you can enter your programme into the controller with up to 3 ramps (from 1°C/hr to 1999°C/hr); 3 temperature points from (0°C to 1999°C) and 3 "soaks" from 1 min to 19 hours 59 mins. The clock which allows you to set the controller to start firing at a preset time may be set up to 11 hours 59 mins. Any stage or phase of the firing may be bypassed if not required.

The LED's on the face of the controllers indicate what stage the firing is at by illuminating the appropriate stage and phase of firing. The display always indicates temperature except when the unit is being programmed when it will indicate the parameter being programmed.

The controllers are EMC type 480 (left of photograph) which is suitable for electric kilns as it provides ON/OFF control with built in simmerstat to 200°C. The EMC 481 (right of photo-



graph) which is suitable for oil or gas fired kilns and is more sophisticated as it controls the fuel feed and has a high temperature cut out which can be configured to operate as a safety limit or to start a second burner.

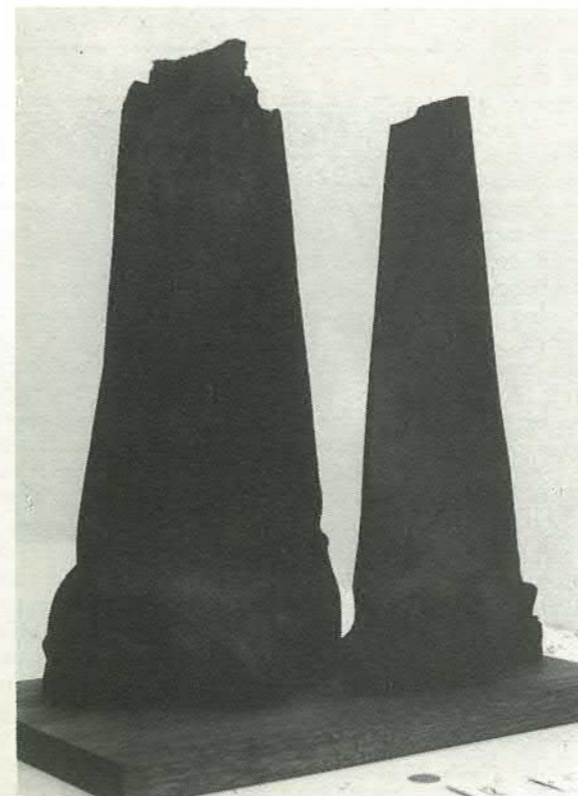
For potters who wish to fire with cones or want to alter their programmes during firing, this is simply achieved by reprogramming the controller during the firing.

The length of "Elapsed soak" may be viewed by simply pressing a key during the soak period.

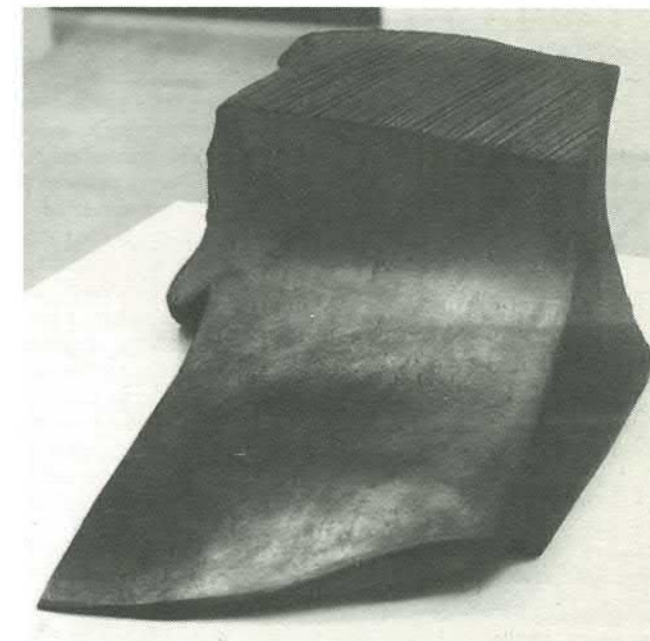
For safety the controller has thermocouple reverse connection and burnout protection. If required, the controller may be started manually, remotely or at a preset time. It can be wired to resume the firing or to cut off completely after a power failure.

Over one year of development has been invested in this controller which has been designed specifically for the pottery enthusiast. Its versatility means it can be used for most pottery applications including crystalline glazing. Already over 100 potters throughout New Zealand are receiving the benefit of these controllers.

Typical comments are "I don't have to wait up till 11.30 pm to start my firing,—the controller does it automatically", "It's far more accurate than anything I've used before", "It's nice to know how far the firing has gone just by looking at the front of the controller".



"Pair of Pinnacles" Alan Watt. 36 cm high.



"Escarpment" Alan Watt. 46 cm long.

Burnished blackfired earthenware with lustre,

A MAN AND A KILN

Professor of Art, Kansas State University

by Angelo C. Garzio

Photos: Alan Cole

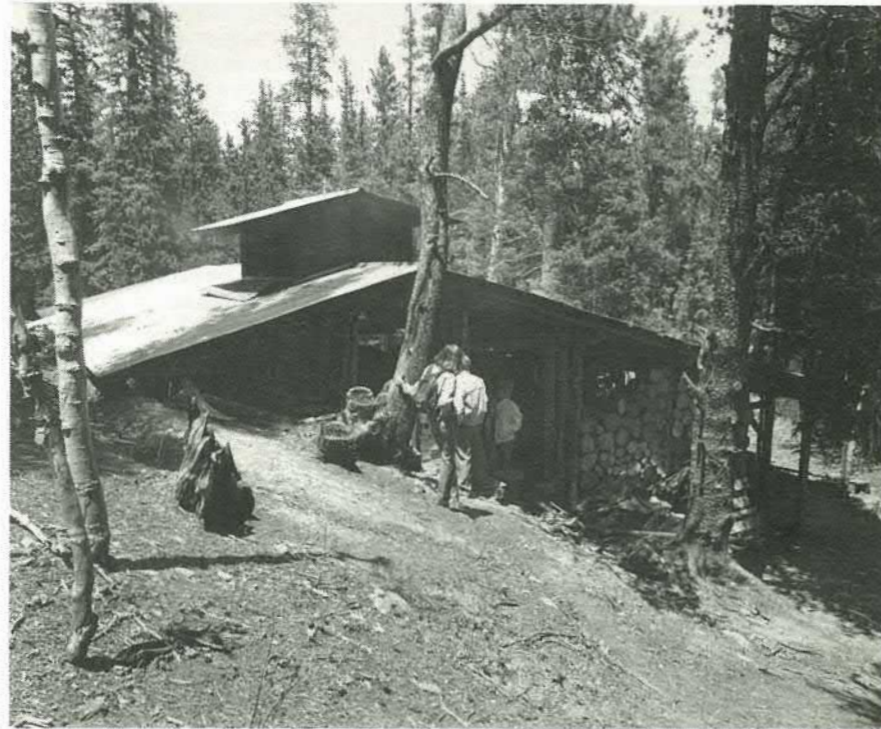
This is an account of an extraordinary man, Mark Zamantakis, potter and teacher by profession, and an ancient kiln. It deals with the influence and interaction, one with the other and the encompassing results of ideas, attitudes and philosophies toward pottery.

It is necessary to describe the setting first of all to establish the ambient for that which is to follow. We have to travel to the small community of Fairplay, Colorado about 85 miles from Denver. It is reached by driving up a winding mountain road until at 10,800 feet one suddenly reaches a densely wooded area of pine trees where a Japanese style large Noborigama, three-chambered wood-burning, hill-climbing kiln has been built by Mark. It has to be one of the highest located wood firing kilns found anywhere.

Huge indeed by American standards, it required 18 tons of firebricks and 6 tons of fireclay to bind them together for the construction. The behemoth lies on a clay surface at a 43° angle climb to assist in the passage of heat and waste gases from one chamber to the next. Fired twice a year to approximately 1320°C, the giant requires 40 hours to fire and devours from 1½ to 2½ cords of split wood.

What about the man who designed and built this kiln? What were his reasons in forsaking the use of the more contemporary gas fired apparatus, certainly requiring less time and considerably less effort to fire, and to get involved in an instrument he was not familiar with?

Zamantakis was born in Utah of parents who had come from the island of Crete in the Mediterranean and later settled in Colorado where Mark has lived ever since. After receiving an undergraduate and graduate ceramic degrees from the University of Denver, he spent several years as a practising potter before accepting a position in one of the more prestigious high schools in the country to teach ceramics. In this capacity, he has been instrumental in the training of a whole generation of young pottery devotees in not only Denver, but in surrounding areas as well. Mr Z as he is affectionately called, is synonymous with the highest standards and goals in pottery.



The setting at 10,800 ft altitude; the kiln requires a large protective shed as a dry wood store as well as to protect it from heavy snow in winter.

His great influence as a potter and teacher is due in no small part to his deep involvement and dedication with young people: passing on to them the deep sense of worth in knowing the past. "One cannot understand current trends without knowledge of historical background" is a favourite theme of his. This passion in studying past pottery cultures was fanned even further when a momentous opportunity arose in 1970 which enabled him to spend a year in Japan as an exchange teacher. This period of stay in the orient opened his eyes to a totally different point of view, to philosophic concepts often time differing greatly from western ideologies, certainly in the way both of these two worlds looked at and worked with clay.

On the one hand, his forebears from the Minoan Civilization and later the Greeks, held that man was the measure of all things, therefore supreme to all other things. This dualistic philosophy was directly opposite in belief from that of the Buddhist approach in the

Orient. The Buddhist saw man as but one manifestation of the cosmic order or law; a total state of being or 'thusness'. The former concept of beauty stemmed from man, the latter as freedom from impediment, a liberation from one's self and others. Again, in the former, beauty and ugliness were separated. Soetsu Yanagi in his book *The Unknown Craftsman* said, "True beauty exists in the realm where there is no distinction between the beautiful and the ugly, a realm that is described as prior to unseparated! There can be no true beauty then, outside that realm where beauty and ugliness have not yet begun to conflict with each other."

In the year spent in Japan, he absorbed much of this attitude and learned a great deal from the contacts and numerous dialogues held with Japanese potters regarding pottery as a vehicle for human emotions and religious aspirations. Seeing and meeting as well as being able to observe local potters at work made a strong impression on Mark's revised belief

and attitude he had toward his own work.

The Tea Masters from 16th century Japan had inculcated the social and cultural fabric of the Japanese people with the belief that the simple, the unostentatious, the unpretentious common ordinary objects used to meet the daily needs of the common people were inherently the most beautiful manifestation of the Buddha spirit. All activities and materials involved in the making of these objects were just as important in meeting this criteria of



Firebox and ash pit of 1st chamber. After stoking, the round metal cover is dropped back into place over the stoke hole.



Mark Zamantakis during a firing beside the 2nd chamber.

beauty as the objects themselves.

A conviction developed within Mark that the focal point of the Japanese Buddhist beliefs contained in the meaning of such words as simplicity, roughness, non-pretentiousness, inwardness, restraint, humility, harmony, all focused on the Noborigama kiln. It was much more than a tool; it was an instrument, a manifestation of the means (and end!) in bringing to pass the conclusion and beginning of pots.

With this revelation, he could do only one thing and that was to bring about the presence of this instrument in America. He spoke and consulted and observed while participating in firings while in Japan, with many Japanese potters regarding the principles in construction and design, the size, etc for a kiln he could build. These dialogues and consultation periods continued even after his return to the States and after completion and firing of the three-chambered Noborigama kiln he now uses.

For Mark (and this is the quintessence of his philosophy) the Noborigama contains in itself and in the firing cycle, that all pervasive sense in the final act of creation and the "oneness" of the universe. The kiln is in a sense the symbol of the universal womb. Conception of the pots therein was brought about by the amalgamation of the potter and clay working in perfect harmony, realising intuitively in the continuance of tradition almost as old as man. The gestation period, that period of involvement from the idea transmitted to materials through process, was brought to a full circle in the kiln, the life giving source. After a period of labour and concerted effort by the potter, lo and behold with the opening of the kiln, there were those beautiful pots so clearly reflecting the inherent faith of the potter in the Noborigama.

In western mentality the kiln is merely a tool to be used and subjected to the will of the user. Mark, after 10 years in developing a relationship, a rapport, with his Noborigama, has made a very important discovery: namely a feeling and attitude has developed with this object which has become an extension of himself.

Fire to him, is the living heart of the Noborigama; it is a living energy force that produces the metamorphosis in the pottery. Western potters to Mark, merely consider fire as a functional force that must obey his will. This is contrary to the total philosophy of what the use of Noborigama is all about. As he enunciates it "the potter must be in complete harmony with both the kiln and the fire." Each must be in tune with the other. Patience,

humility and sensitivity coupled with an inner intuitive feel of what is needed or needs to be done at any given moment during the firing are of paramount importance. "You can't rush the stoking—Noborigama is the master and the potter must keep the pace it sets for itself." As the firing increases in tempo, one can sense the living entity breathing fire and smoke, not malevolent but a demanding and hungry creative being.

The late Shoji Hamada was once asked why he had gone to the great expense of building a very large kiln rather than one more modest in size. His reply was "... when I work at the large kiln, the power of my own self becomes so feeble that I cannot control it adequately. It means that for the large kiln, the power that is beyond me is necessary. Without the mercy of such invisible power, I cannot get good pieces. One of the reasons why I wanted to have a large kiln is because I want to be a potter if I may, who works more in grace than in his own power."

This startling but unpretentious and honest answer is a summation of Mark Zamantakis' beliefs. It only remains to be said of Mark that having arrived at his revelation of what the Noborigama kiln has meant and done for himself and his work, he has consistently spoken out for the dispersal to other potters, particularly those who are just entering the field, of the value of the discipline, the sobering but also joyous experience one can derive from contact with the Noborigama and its great spiritual force.



Upon reaching temperature in the 1st chamber, stoking with smaller wood splinters begins in the 3rd chamber.

STEVE FULLMER

White slip

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| China Clay | 25 |
| Ball Clay | 25 |
| Silica | 25 |
| Australian Potash | 25 |
| Borax | 5 |

Ash Glaze

| | |
|--|---|
| Applewood Ash | 4 |
| Australian Potash | 4 |
| China Clay | 1 |
| Ball Clay | 1 |
| Silica | 1 |
| Add different amounts of Moutere clay and salt for colour. | |

Photos: Cunook.

Right: Salted crock 40 cm high.

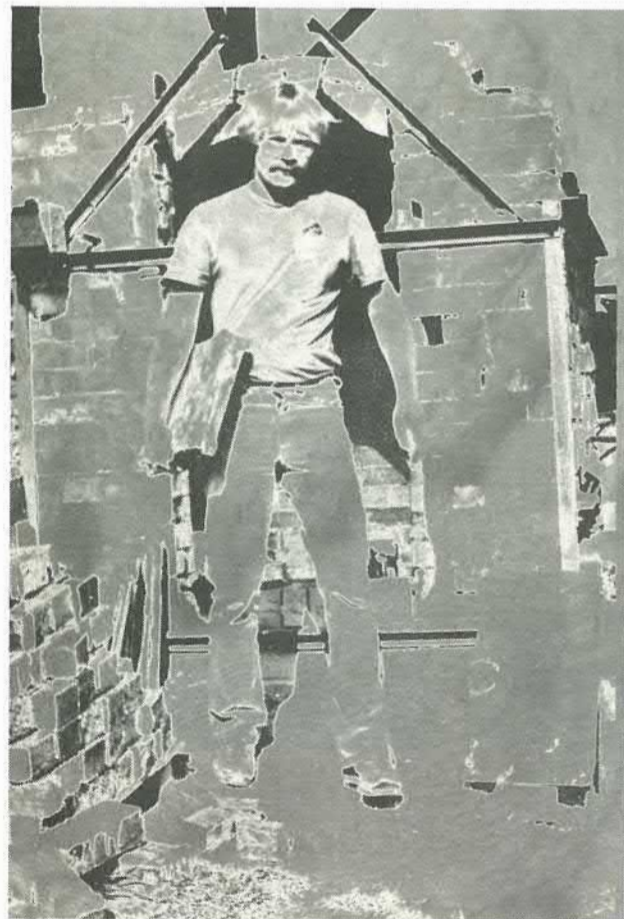
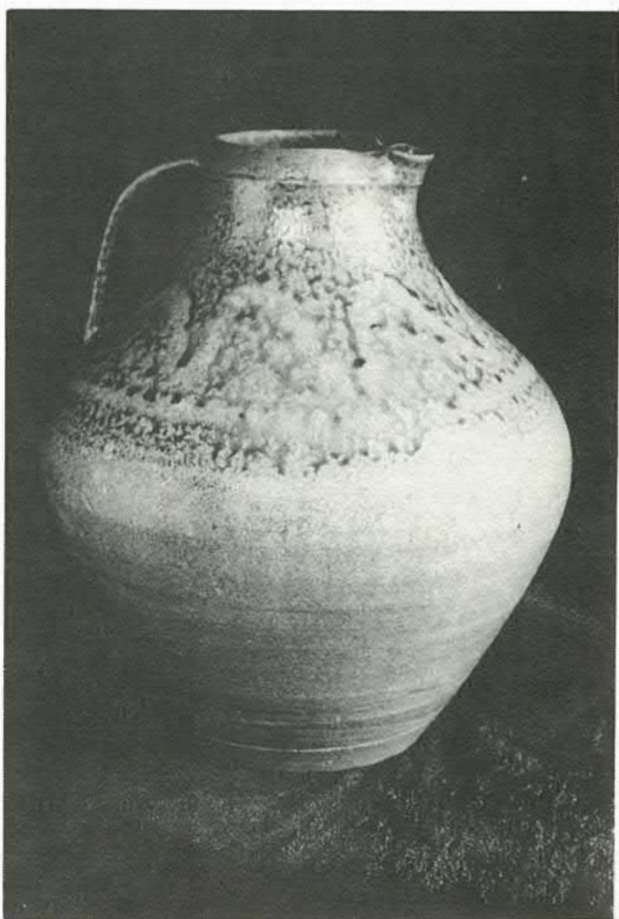
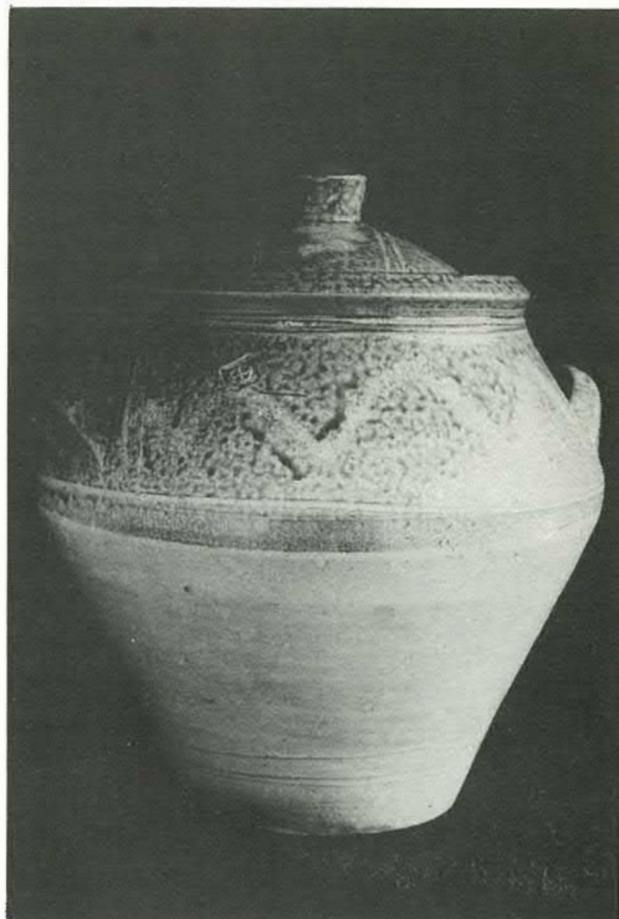
Lower right: Salted jug 31 cm high.

Lower left: Cleaning up kiln.

Opposite top: Steve throwing large planters at Peter Gibb's workshop.

Centre: Drying planters.

Lower: Unfired slip decorated pots.



Steve Fullmer first went to Nelson in 1974 to pick apples and look around the potteries. After the fruit season he moved to Auckland and found a job in a production pottery in Te Atatu South, working for the late Peter Beach at Beach Art Ware. Here he met and watched an expert thrower, "Dan the Man" Steenstra, from whom he learnt a tremendous amount about throwing.

Australia was his next stop where he took a job at the Courtland Pottery in Perth, "An invaluable experience which gave me an insight into what it must have been like working as a production potter many years ago."

Back in New Zealand, Steve worked again at Beach Art Ware, but not for long — he would not be satisfied until he had his own kiln and could make his own pots. Nelson seemed the best place for this, so in 1976 he and his wife Robin moved there and built, with Reg Matthews, his first kiln; a dutch oven, 100 cu ft single chamber, which he has been using ever since.

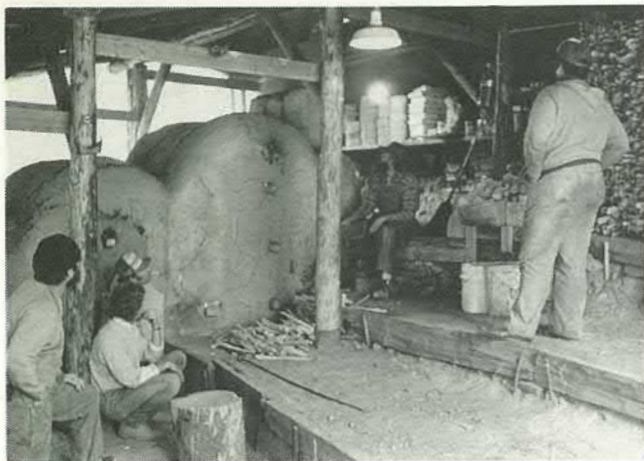
1979 saw Steve and Robin return to the States to visit family, work in potteries and attend as many workshops as possible. Steve's brother, also a potter, lives in Carlsbad, California, and together they sold their pots around the steet fairs and wine festivals — "Great fun, but awfully hard on the potter".

The couple returned to New Zealand in 1981, 'set on fire' by the pots they had seen, the galleries they had visited and the workshops they had attended. Since then they have developed their pottery in Upper Moutere, Nelson, and have built up some kind of rhythm making ash-glazed planters and a limited range of domestic ware. Steve feels they have only just begun what promises to be a very exciting period.

"For my domestic ware I use a white slip, thinly overlaid with ash glaze. Planters are put in the bottom and middle areas of the kiln, domestic ware in the top. I fire for 13 hours, add 6 pounds of salt over a period of half an hour, then soak for another half hour before a slow cool. Future plans include a move to Tasman to build a long, low, cross-draught kiln to high fire with salt and charcoal glazing — and take ten steps forward."

"I have had so many influences in pottery that I just can't pinpoint one particular reason why I make pots the way I do, but I feel that medieval pottery has had the biggest affect on me — so simple and free."





The last hours of the firing; checking the colour of the flames exhausting into the stack from the 3rd chamber. Mark's son and students assist him during the firing.

Unpacking the kiln.

BOOKS

Reviewed by Howard S. Williams

STUDIO CERAMICS

By Peter Lane (Collins \$45).

This review was first published in the NZ Listener, May 19, 1984.

Peter Lane, the author of *Studio Porcelain*, a book well received and widely read in New Zealand pottery circles, has now produced this admirable successor, *Studio Ceramics*. It could be a valuable addition to every potter's library. It should be a standard reference work in all pottery night schools and other "clay classes" — more, it should be required reading for any person teaching ceramics at whatever level. Collectors of contemporary ceramics, too, will find it an excellent manual expanding their appreciation and understanding of the ceramic artist and his or her works from all points of view — technical, aesthetic and philosophical.

Thinking back to the sales tax furore of 1979, when the Customs Department attempted to push New Zealand's potters into a most inappropriate box labelled "manufacturing wholesalers/retailers", one feels that this book should be required reading for any administrators or bureaucrats whose fingers touch the lives of our country's craftspeople. That list includes gallery directors, exhibition selectors, award sponsors, critics, officers of national and local arts councils, and government persons up to and including future Ministers for the Arts.

Studio Ceramics is designed to fulfil several roles. As a coffee table glossy it is visually exciting, with over 100 colour plates. Many are full page and all are impeccably reproduced, as are the 300-plus black and white photographs.

As a technical manual, its every photo is provided with a concise description of what the artist wanted to achieve aesthetically, and the technical details as to how this was done. The book is excellent as a teaching resource in that a particular photo may inspire a creative spark in the potter/reader.

The details given of clay body, method of fabrication, oxides, glazes and their application, firing procedures and the combined manipulation of all these, will give him or her a springboard from which to experiment to achieve similar effects — without providing step-by-step instructions whereby the potter is tempted into the still-too-common pitfall of plagiarism. As Lane puts it: "Merely copying forms from another time, place or culture is certain to be a sterile occupation."

Another section of the book deals with the growth of galleries, craft centres, societies, exhibitions and craft councils, and their effects on the studio pottery movement:

A number of discernible factors have fuelled the current crafts revival and boosted ceramics in particular. The most important of these is associated with what might be called the search for human identity in a world where machines and

technological developments distance the individual from creative thought and action; the maker has become overshadowed by the consumer, a situation foreseen by John Ruskin, William Morris and others over a century ago.

In the preface the author, having indicated that, "possibly due to my role as a teacher of ceramics, I have always been intrigued to discover the motivation, thought processes and technology behind the artifact", discussed the whys of studio ceramics as distinct from pottery, bringing up the age-old question of whether clay-work is a craft or fine art.

Even now, by some corporate ruling, in Auckland pottery is considered a craft and the major exhibitions are held in the War Memorial Museum — the City Art Gallery being exclusively for fine art. By contrast, the Dowse Art Gallery in Lower Hutt has a policy allowing it to show contemporary ceramics as the fine art objects some undoubtedly are. Lane deals with this Art/craft "schizofrantic" problem very succinctly.

The book also has sections dealing with the individual approaches of selected artists to design sources, ceramic form, decoration, colour, kiln techniques and future prospects, all aspects being illustrated, annotated and described very comprehensively.

The 188 artists whose work is featured are mainly from the author's home ground, England, with others from 11 European countries, Canada, the United States and Australia, as well

as 12 from New Zealand: Rosemarie Brittain, David Brokenshire, Len Castle, Roy Cowan, Ian Firth, Leo King, Jack Laird, John Parker, Debbie Poin-ton, Rick Rudd, Mirek Smisek and Peter Stichbury. I have had no indication as to how these people were selected, but I would congratulate them on their inclusion as representatives of New Zealand ceramics in such a fine international publication.

In its overall production and layout, the book looks good and works well, as befits its high-quality subject material. Sizes of objects are given in inches as well as centimetres and photos relate to the text on the same page, thus eliminating the irritation of having to flick pages to correlate illustration and discussion.

Only the following errors, annoying to local readers, were apparent. In an international list of museums the New Zealand section gives, under Auckland, *National Museum*, and under Christchurch, *Wellington and McDougal Gallery*. Under Galleries, "Where to see Studio Ceramics", 11 New Zealand public galleries appear, including Auckland City Art Gallery where you cannot see ceramics, but none of our fine private galleries or pottery co-operatives is listed, as they are for other countries.

Perhaps this list should have been referred to the New Zealand Society of Potters for checking before publication. Otherwise the book is excellent value and its author should be considered by the society as a practitioner and teacher well worth inviting to tour and lecture in this country.

TECHNIQUES OF TERRACOTTA

By Quentin Bell (Chatto and Windus \$16.75)

This is a book written for students who wish to make sculptures in terracotta clay. As a technical manual I would not recommend it — my potter's hackles rose when I read "oven" instead of kiln and as for clay, "when cooked it becomes quite hard." . . .

On reading further I found: "Wedging is the process of preparing clay for use by making it more elastic . . ." Let me inform Mr Bell that elasticity is the *last* quality required in clay — wedging makes it more plastic. "Elastic" refers to a material which, when stretched or deformed, will return to its original shape. "Plastic" denotes a malleable material which, when deformed, will hold its newly given shape. Wedging helps clay by strengthening its desirable quality of *plasticity*.

Has the author never used vinegar as a local deflocculant when joining two pieces of modelled clay? Two small quotes make me question why this book was written: "I have rarely found this method satisfactory, but other people tell me that it works very well." And, "I have seldom used this method and therefore write without great knowledge." This last quote was referring to slip casting and as a slip caster I agree, very little knowledge is apparent and for students the chapter could generate more problems than it solves.

The author's description of making plaster moulds is similarly unhelpful as his method is awkward and unnecessary — a good mould maker would use a method less messy and more accurate. In the bibliography, Daniel Rhodes is twice written as Daniel Rock. The whole book is written in an almost Victorian style with a quaint turn of phrase sometimes detrimental to its technical clarity — surely an important quality in a teaching situation. Also, as a teacher myself, I was not impressed by the author's outdated attitudes to teaching, to original creative thinking, to contemporary aesthetics in modelling or sculpture. Not a book I would recommend to students interested in learning about the techniques of terracotta.

To be reviewed in the next issue: *Imaginative Pottery* by David Harvey and *The Potter's Manual* by Kenneth Clark.

QE II ARTS COUNCIL GRANTS 1984

Grants this year were awarded to potters Melanie Cooper, Wellington; Gail Weissberg, Wellington; Leo King, Auckland; Dennis O'Connor, Auckland; Trish Dibble, Palmerston North; Ross Mitchell-Anyon, Wanganui; Rick Rudd, Auckland.

A grant was also approved for Harold Barton, Paul Christian, Lynda Kerr, Adrienne Patterson, Victoria Smith and Brett Smoutt to enable them to construct a salt-glazed, woodfired kiln.

ELSA RADY PORCELAIN

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| POTASH FELDSPAR | 25 |
| KAOLIN | 25 |
| BALL CLAY | 25 |
| SILICA | 25 |

Any ball clay can be used as Elsa is not concerned with translucency. Two gallons of vinegar are added to every ton of clay to age it and it can be used within two weeks. This mix shrinks about 20%. Elsa fires this body to Orton cone 11 in an updraught gas reduction kiln.

LEADLESS EARTHENWARE GLAZES

Otago Potters' Newsletter

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Transparent 1020°C—1150°C | |
| Borax fritt | 90 |
| China clay | 10 |
| Add Tin oxide 7 to make white opaque. | |
| Matt White 1020°C—1150°C | |
| Borax fritt | 90 |
| China clay | 10 |
| Zinc oxide | 18 |
| Tin oxide | 7 |
| Titanium dioxide | 4 |
| Transparent 1080°C—1100°C | |
| Borax fritt | 50 |
| Soda feldspar | 35 |
| Whiting | 7 |
| China clay | 4 |
| Flint | 4 |
| Matt 1080°C—1100°C | |
| Borax fritt | 47 |
| Soda feldspar | 35 |
| Whiting | 7 |
| China clay | 4 |
| Flint | 7 |

NATIONAL CERAMICS 84

Gay Webb, Dunedin

The Annual Convention of the New Zealand Society of Potters held during Easter started warming up (it was cool outside) at Larnach Castle on Good Friday. While Alan Fox of Dunedin sculpted a little monster, Jenny Miller from Oamaru delighted onlookers with the construction of her dragon. Joy Gawn (Wanaka) and Mike Searle (Whare Flat) both demonstrated throwing techniques while television cameras were set up to record the events.

Peter Johnson from Invercargill applied glaze to raw pots using a small spray and foam cutouts. A very soft effect is achieved using Peter's technique. Paul Fisher (Orari) using a kick wheel and three large lumps of clay threw with ease a large fish bowl — artist John Brown saw to that as he took a selection of brushes and quickly displayed his talents. A corner of the ballroom was used for decorating and brush technique lessons for those willing to try, while the local Waitati Militia welcomed potters from all over the country and gave their blessing to National Ceramics '84. Rob Wood from Roxburgh threw a series of bowls until the bar opened, and we all gathered for a smorgasbord meal in the stables.

John Glick our guest potter from Farmington, Michigan, joined us at the Castle after working two days at the Otago Polytechnic preparing for his weekend demonstration. Neil Grant, head of the Ceramic Department, assisted John during this time and throughout the convention, in the preparation and organisation of materials and equipment required to make the programme a success.

Buses transported those accommodated at the castle down to the Teachers' College auditorium, and alongside Easter Egg and Hot Cross Bun munchers we settled into an imagery John Glick work cycle, which began with small functional pieces. He likes variation in his work and mixes his own clay with a dough mixer and pug mill. Being a tool lover and having a great love of decoration, amidst jokes and laughter he set to, throwing cup and saucer, bowls and cauldron. The cutting and folding of the edges created a soft attractive petal effect, and ribs of different shapes and sizes were used to provide decoration. A variety of brushes applied coloured slips thickly and thinly, while a series of sponges, with images made in them

from hot metal, stamped patterns on to the surface. John also used bisqued stamps with incised motifs to imprint designs on to a series of pitchers. He quickly assembled two teapots with looped-wire cut handles and press moulded spouts. A cheese cutter was used to sculpt shapes and trim. John makes up his moulds by experimenting with cardboard templates.

In the evening, the 26th National Exhibition at the Dunedin Art Gallery was opened, preceded by drinks and smorgasbord. John's comments next morning were "I am confident that we are doing very serious and involved works and that it shows feeling. I am sure there is a great deal of growth and maturity and expansion happening." John was pleased and honoured at the way we responded to his pots on display.

Slabs and extrusions were the theme for Sunday's demonstration. John proceeded to assemble a soap dish and fabricated box with bridging dies made from aluminium, and slot extruders developed from perspex and plywood. A mitred former for cutting angles was also demonstrated.

President Sally Vinson, looking glamorous, became Head Auctioneer alongside George Kojis and David Barr. Pots donated by Colleen Sullivan, Beverley Luxton, John Crawford, Vic Evans, Jan Bell, Chris Cockell, Sally Connolly, Margaret Milne, Brian Sullivan, Cecilia Parkinson, Rosemarie and Roger Brittain, Anne Powell, Sally Vinson, Cliff Smith, Mike Hawthorn and John Glick raised \$730 for the Southland Flood Relief Fund.

On stage again, or should I say, on the floor, to an audience approaching 200, John proceeded to do physical jerks; demonstrating a variety of body and lifting exercises that his wife Suzy had learned from her physical therapist after an accident. These are all beneficial in giving strength and zest to any hardworking potter.

All pot designs made by John have a name connected with family, friends or places. His dog "Duster" is the title of one soap dish, and "Eddie Decade" was a soap dish dedicated to a friend 10 years previously, before he made another.

With a dinner to end an enjoyable and entertaining convention, President Sally Vinson presented a box of chocolates each to the convention convenor Gillian Pope and her husband

Chris, along with the committee members from Dunedin, and thanked them all personally for their excellent planning and organising in creating an enjoyable and successful weekend.

The new Polytechnic Ceramic Department was open during the convention and visitors were able to appreciate the new facilities now available for student use. Glorious weather enabled everyone to enjoy visits to places of interest in and around Dunedin, ensuring yet another worthwhile convention.

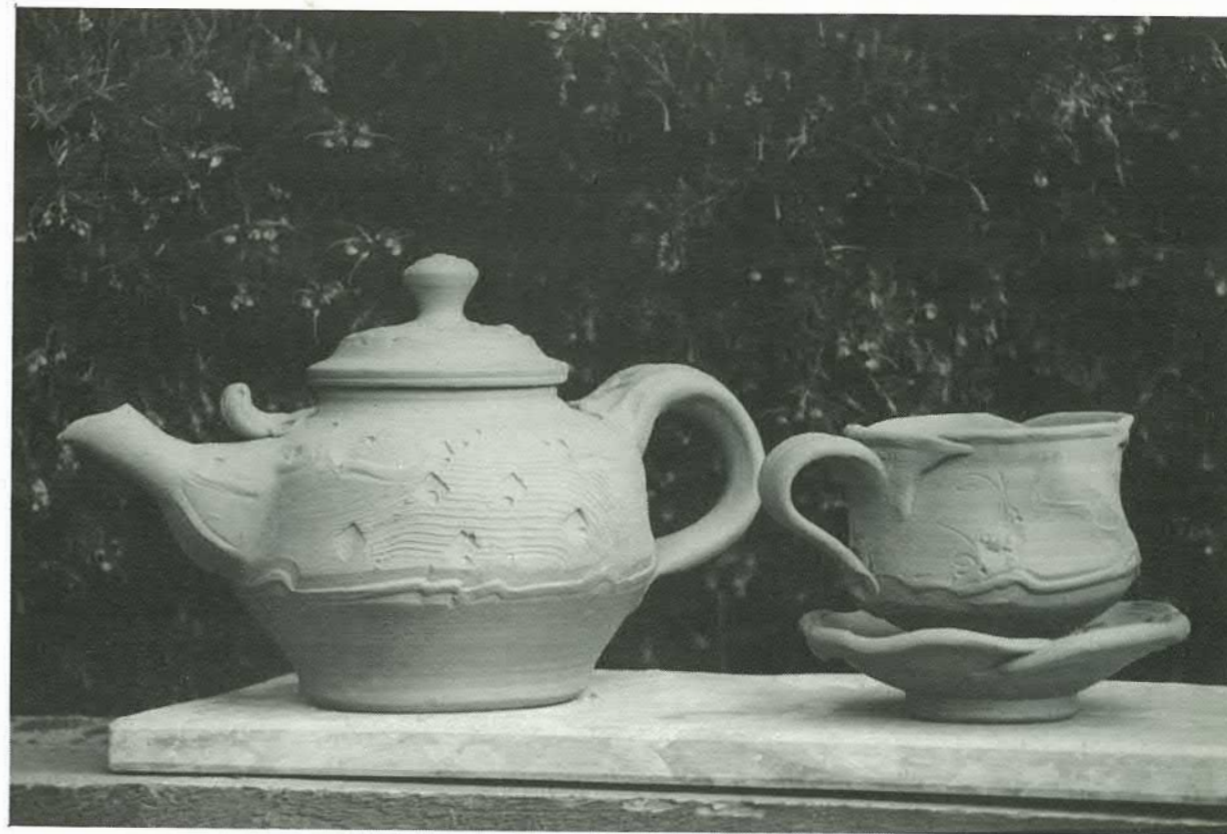
Plum Tree
Pottery
mark.



John Glick. Guest Potter at National Ceramics Convention '84 and the 26th National Exhibition of the New Zealand Society of Potters, Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

John Glick reduction fires his bisque stoneware to cone 09 and his glost to cone 11 in a natural gas kiln. Surface treatment is complex. Two or three slips are applied while the pots are still green, then the forms are imprinted and textured. Deep impressions result when the clay is still soft; later imprints in the hardening clay record only the most shallow and subtle indentations. After the bisque firing another two to four slips are applied. Glazes are selected from twelve formulae, varied with five to six colour graduations. John mainly makes his pots on the wheel, but an extruder with various dies is used for boxes, and wood and plaster moulds for soap dishes.

"If I were searching for a perfect counterpart to the pleasures making the ware give me, it would certainly have to be hearing from people who find special pleasure in their daily use and who seem to clearly sense the enjoyment the making of it provided me."



John Glick Workshop at "Ceramics '84", Dunedin.



The New Zealand Society of Potters' 26th National Exhibition at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery was dominated by sculptural and non-functional pieces, with colour and variety prevalent among the 250 pieces displayed.

Raku, anagama, saggar and pit firings used to gain effects created an interesting contrast to glazes and lustres and there were few decorated pieces. Design techniques adopted from overseas indicated an awareness of change and adaptability in working with clay. However, a large number appeared "manufactured", relying on the technique and lacking the creativity one expects from the potter.

The Detroit potter John Glick was guest potter for the exhibition and exhibited 18 pieces. His distinctive style, with some lively glazes applied in a lively manner, attracted keen interest.

The exhibition was rewarded by an enthusiastic response from the public and it is to be hoped that Dunedin won't have to wait over a decade to have the opportunity to appreciate some of the changes occurring in New Zealand!

"We see human thought and feeling best and clearest by seeing it through something solid that our hands have made". — Eudora Welt 1909.

Gay Webb,
Editor Otago Potters' Group



Soap Dish, John Glick, Detroit.

Teapot, John Glick, Detroit.

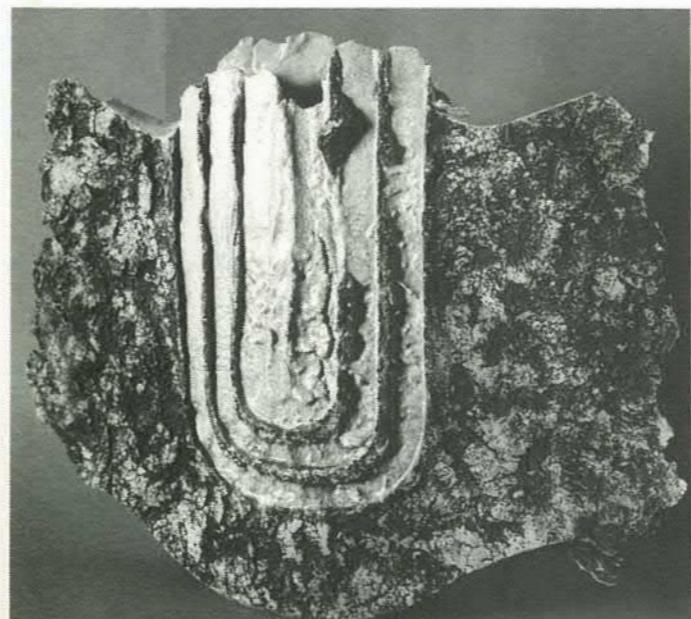


Saggared fired Bowl, porcelain, Jean McKinnon, Wellington.



Saggared fired Bottle and Bowl, Steve Fullmer, Nelson.

Landscape Pot 1, Charles Holmes, Coromandel.



NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 1, 1984

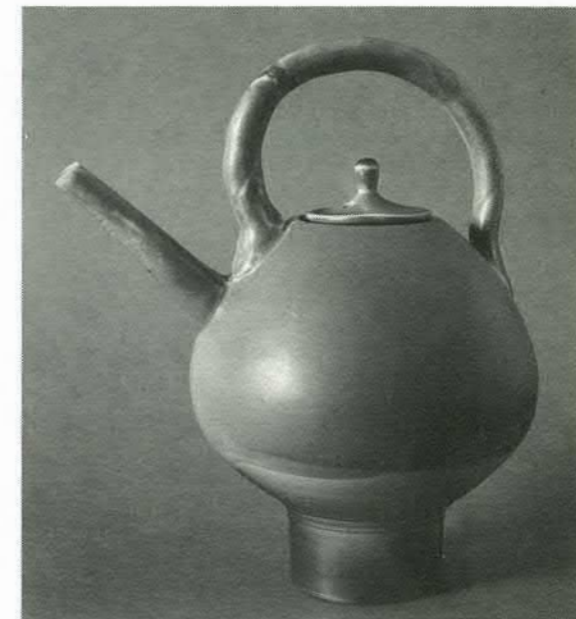


Erosion Form, stoneware, Gita Berzins, Christchurch.

NZSP 26th National Exhibition, Dunedin Art Gallery.

Photos: Lynne Griffith

Teapot, porcelain, Royce McGlashen, Nelson.



JAMES GREIG IN JAPAN

By Sally Witten

JAMES GREIG, who was awarded a Japan Foundation long-term professional fellowship for 1982-83, has recently returned from 14 months in Japan where he completed research for a book on the work of Kawai Kanjiro.

In Exhibitions of his own work in Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka, his strong sculptural forms with their characteristic intersecting planes, flowing curves and underlying philosophy, attracted high critical recognition and appraisal in many art magazines. He has received further invitations to exhibit there.

This is a new development in Japan, where foreign potters are more usually treated as apprentices rather than as mature artists with something to offer to Japan through their own work. Greig's solo exhibition at Green Gallery in Tokyo, a nationally important venue highly sought after by potters, was the first time a foreigner had been invited to exhibit there.

He also had the honour of being invited to show three works in an exclusive annual exhibition selected from the best pottery in Japan, alongside great masters like National Living Treasure Kei Fujiwara (whose son, Yu Fujiwara visited New Zealand in 1980). His works were greatly admired and he has been asked to participate again in 1985.

One of his pieces was placed in Hamada's Reference Museum in Mashiko. The Asahi newspaper called him "a potter of the first rank; he has a genius for creating forms which reveal universal truths. . ." The Mainichi newspaper said his forms were "unique" and Satoshi Itoh of Tachikichi said, "This work gives me wonderful visions of the deep earth and the great sky. It shows a deep poetic philosophy".

Greig was gratified that his work gained acceptance through the Japanese response to these deeper values, rather than superficial decorative effects.

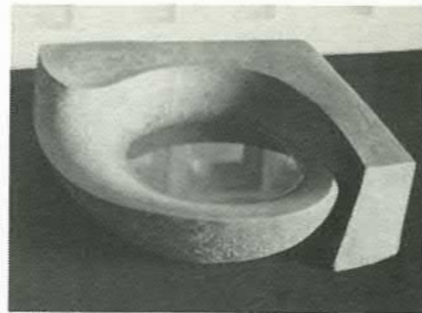
Competition in Japan is fierce, with thousands of potters vying for recognition. In the Bizen area alone there are some 800 — and overall, probably 98 percent sell their work for less-than-average New Zealand prices.

For foreigners, resistance at the higher level is based partly on a lack of status and partly because the Japanese people experience and enjoy pots as Japanese cultural objects.

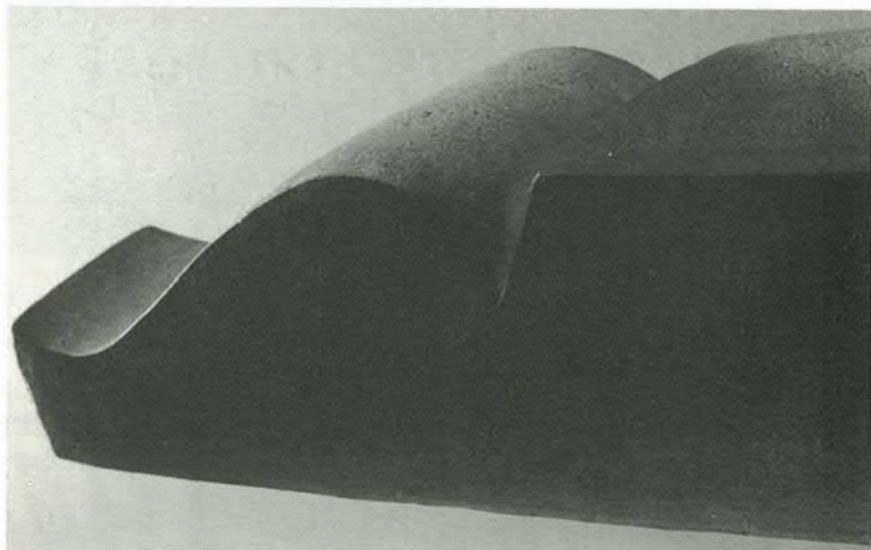
Greig's interest in Kawai Kanjiro began when, during a visit to Kawai's house in 1974, he recognised images of

metamorphosis in the pots which had links with his own work. As he deepened his studies of Kawai's pottery, writings, poetry, wood carving and calligraphy, he felt more profundity was revealed.

Through friendship with the Kawai family and others, he was able to study a lot of pieces rarely seen even by Japanese, some of them of astounding originality and freshness. After finishing his research in Kyoto, Greig was a guest of the Fujiwara family in Bizen for a month where he made some pots to be fired in their famous kiln which is fired twice a year. Sadly, National Treasure Kei Fujiwara has recently died.

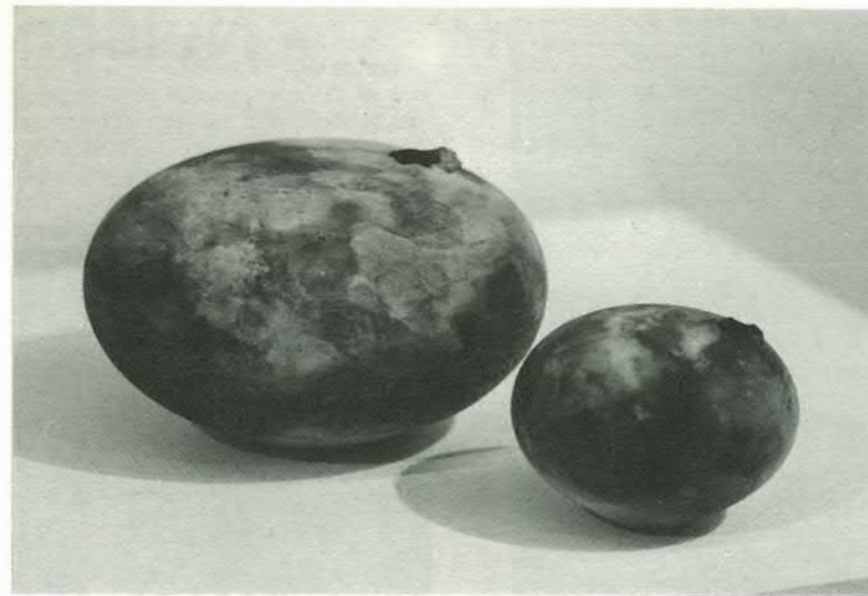
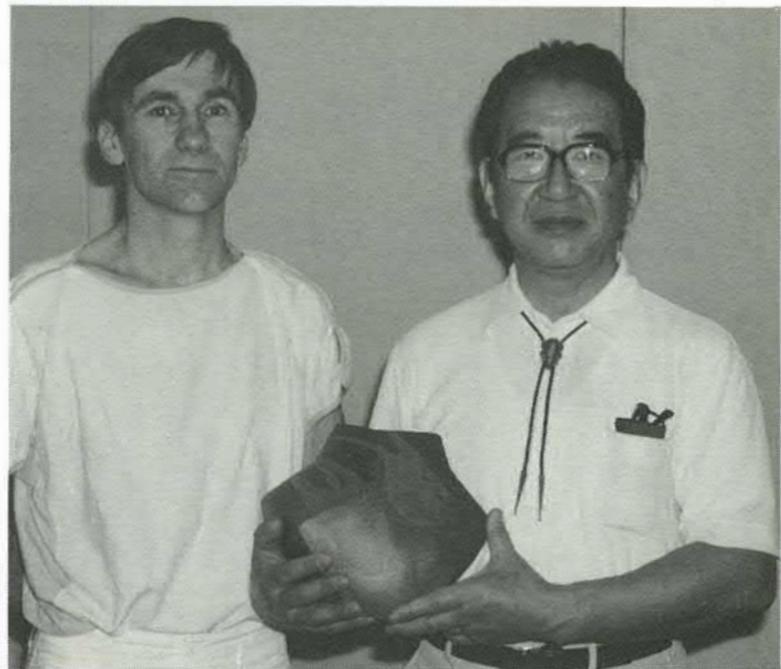


Back in New Zealand, James Greig feels he is able to bring new strength and assurance to his work and is planning to mount an exhibition in Wellington later this year before returning to Japan. He is also writing an illustrated article of New Zealand pottery for Ho No Ho Geijutsu Art Magazine.

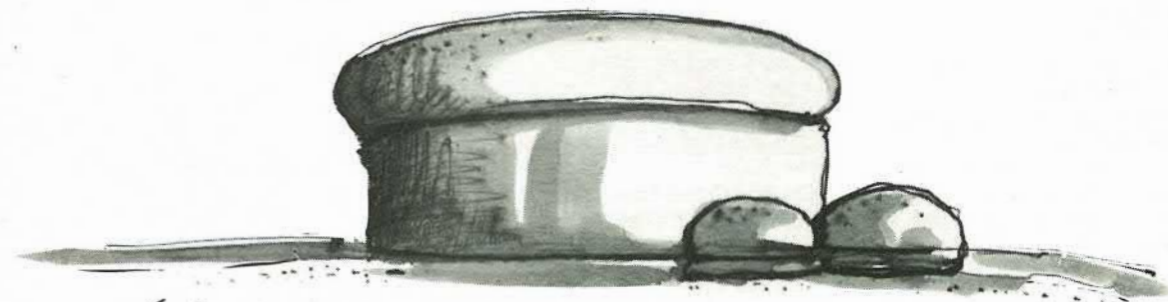


Photos from James Greig's exhibition at Tokyo's Green Gallery, October 1983.

James Greig with pottery critic Kozo Yoshida and the pot he bought.



Pit fired pots by Alan Gordon, (left 15 cm high) and Erica Gordon, (right 9 cm high) at the Gisborne Museum and Arts Centre.



Wholemeal Bread; from Aileen Grant,

*3½ lbs. (1600 gms or about 12 cups) (Champion Wholemeal flour.
2 tablespoons dried yeast. 1 tablespoon salt.*

Mix these dry ingredients in a large bowl. Make a well in the centre. Dissolve 2 tablespoons of honey, golden syrup or molasses in 1200 mls warm water. (2 milk bottles).

Mix liquids into dry ingredients — this is a fairly moist mix. Oil 3-4 loaf pans, spoon mixture into pans and set to rise in a warm place for about 1 hour. (Top of kiln or hot water cupboard).

Place in oven at 150°C to 180°C and bake ¾ hr to 1 hour. Allow to cool a few minutes upside down and loaves will release from the pans.

*Written and Illustrated by
Ben Woolhouse.*

JACK TROY WORKSHOP 1983

by Peter Gibbs, Nelson

The workshop had its origins in 1981 when Nelson potter Steve Fullmer was at a pottery school in Idyllwild, California, conducted by Jack Troy. At the time, Jack expressed an interest in coming to New Zealand and eventually the whole thing came to fruition with an invitation from the NZSP to Jack to be guest potter at Taranaki '83. He was also to be available to conduct workshops in other parts of the country, so we conceived the idea of a ten day workshop involving all aspects of Jack's work from clay preparation through to firing, and also the participation of fifteen other potters from other parts of the country.

Winstones became involved, with the donation of 80 bags of clay, and the workshop began with the arrival of the fifteen potters from as far as Wellsford in the north and Westport in the south on Saturday, October 8. As potters at other workshops were to find, Jack's approach was surprisingly low key — not at all the flamboyant American we had expected. As the first five days of making pots progressed, the reactions to Jack's approach varied considerably.

For some, the sober, quiet approach was quite appropriate to their own serious relationship with their craft, while others became impatient to get more and more information and action as time went on. The throwing was broken daily by slide shows or group discussion on aspects of a potter's life. One slide show, on early and contemporary wood fired pots from America, Europe and Japan, caused a re-evaluation of the firing plans, while group discussions had the effect of making people look again at their approach to their own work.

One particularly fiery discussion followed the almost hackneyed debate of art vs craft with opinions varying between "clay as art — no compromise" to "clay as making a living — compromise if you have to". As in all such discussions, the attitude of each person probably wasn't changed much. For me it was another reminder that potters are a varied group in their motivation, and that there will always be as many approaches as there are potters. The most important thing is to accept the differences.

Prior to the school a long, low cross draught kiln of about 2.8 m³ (100 cu.ft) had been built. This kiln had a main firebox inside it at one end, and a

secondary stoke hole just over half way along. Following the inspirational slides a few days earlier, it had been decided to fire this kiln for about 40 hours, getting the maximum effects from fly ash. In the secondary stoke area, we aimed to stack pots below the stoke hole and to make use of the charcoal from the stoking. The rear part of the kiln was to be lightly salted. The kiln had been previously fired only four times, and the results of each firing had varied between very good to staggeringly bad, but it had never been fired for much over 24 hours.

As well as this kiln, we also decided to salt fire the old 1.6 m³ (60 cu.ft) Bourry Box down draught kiln which had survived a good number of hard firings and was almost ready for demolition. (This kiln featured in *NZ Potter* 23/2).

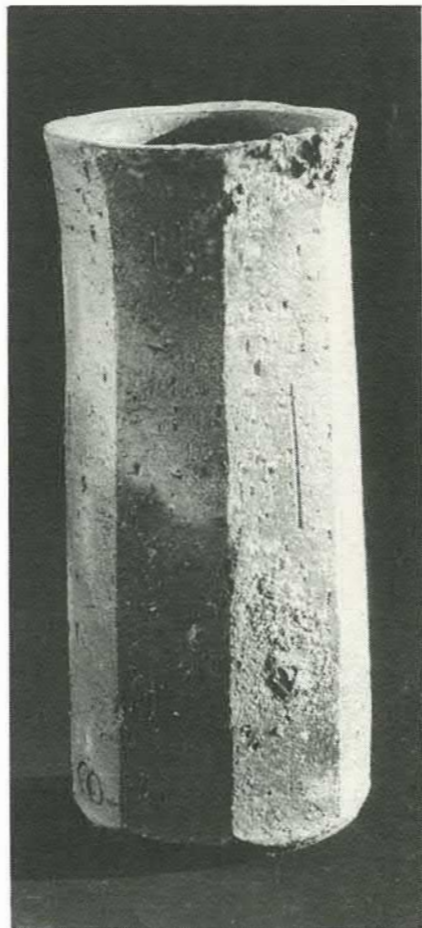
On Friday the cross draught kiln was stacked and left with a low gas burner over night. On Saturday stoking began, while the salt kiln was stacked ready for commencing firing late Saturday. By mid-afternoon Saturday, energy was running high but most of the work was over. Sixteen potters can't fire two kilns, so a small group started work on a beehive kiln with the aim of firing all the leftover pots on Sunday. By midnight the kiln was finished but unfortunately was not to

Jack Troy



Nelson

Photos: Lynne Griffith



Peter Gibbs

be fired because of flagging resources of bricks, wood, energy and time.

Breakfast time Sunday saw the cross draught kiln hitting cone 11 at the front, while the salt kiln plodded inexorably past cone 6. Teams of two had worked on both kilns all night. The excitement of flame and action around the side stoking cross draught tended to over-shadow the low key rumble of the bourry boxes, but by 11 am we had cone 11 evenly throughout that kiln and began to salt.

In the cross draught kiln, sachets of sieved ash were thrown into the firebox which was stirred and prodded violently to stimulate ash deposits. Attention then moved to the second stoke hole where Jack's flame throwers — thick bundles of small wood — were slowly pushed in. At the conclusion of the firing, bags of fine charcoal were dumped into the firebox, completely burying the pots stacked beneath. A light salting right at the back finished off the firing.

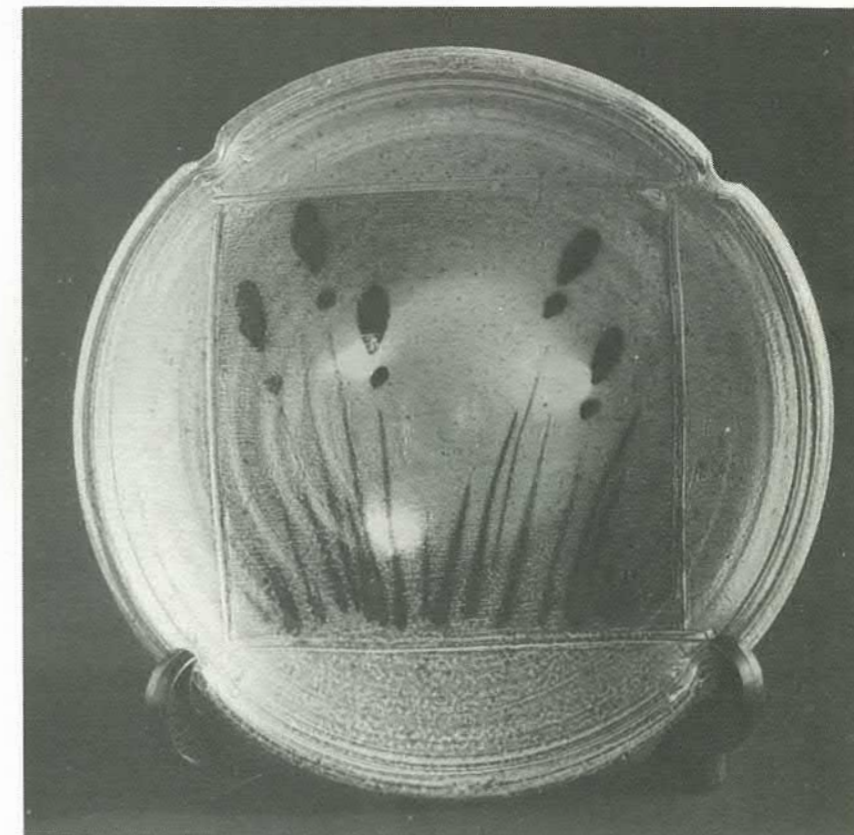
After a rest day Monday, the kilns were unstacked. In order to let everyone have a good feel of the pots, a chain was formed from the kiln out through the shed to a grassy patch outside. The pots were handed down the chain, then stacked on the grass in an

continued overleaf

Steve Fullmer, Darryl Robertson



NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 1, 1984

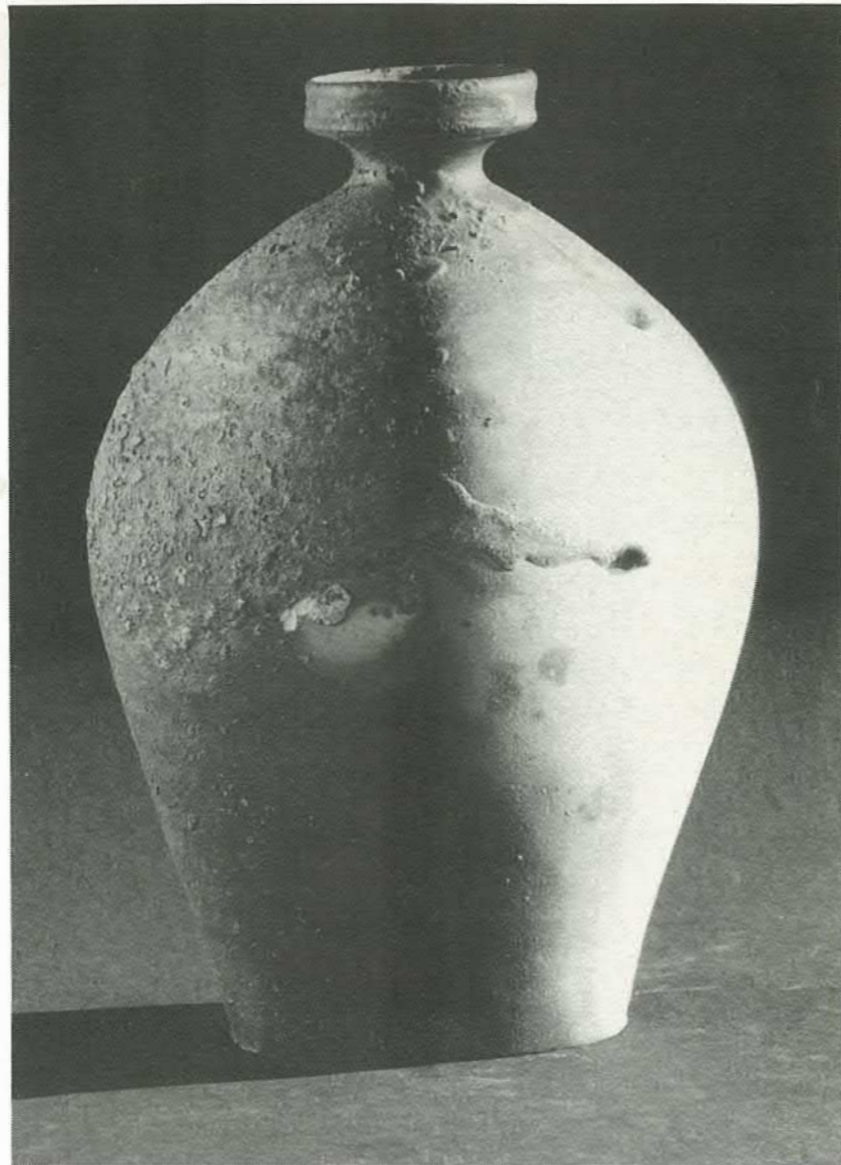


Ann Ambler

approximation of the position they had occupied in the firing. The results confirmed the impressions from firing it — the kiln was a pig — but a sometimes benevolent one. Some really good pots — some rotten awful ones. Later we unloaded the salt kiln. Again the chain formed and pots were handed down the line. This kiln was kinder. The salting was lighter than any of us were used to, but the effects on white clays were very beautiful. Iron bearing clays which are OK if given a bath of salt were muddy and brown with such a light salting. For me the firing answered many questions which had lingered from reading Jack's book 5 years before.

That night we had a small exhibition of the best pots — which were later to go on to New Plymouth to be on show at Taranaki '83. 60 Nelson potters turned up to see the pots, Jack's slides, and to drink wine and talk about how it had gone.

Looking back now with the benefit of six months hindsight, the concept of an intensive ten day school with committed potters worked well. As hoped, we got almost as much from each other as we did from Jack. My ideas of the direction I wanted to move in changed, and as a result the cross draught kiln has been pulled down and rebuilt as a four borry box down draught kiln with trolley and cross draught second chamber similar in concept to the initial kiln, but with some modifications.

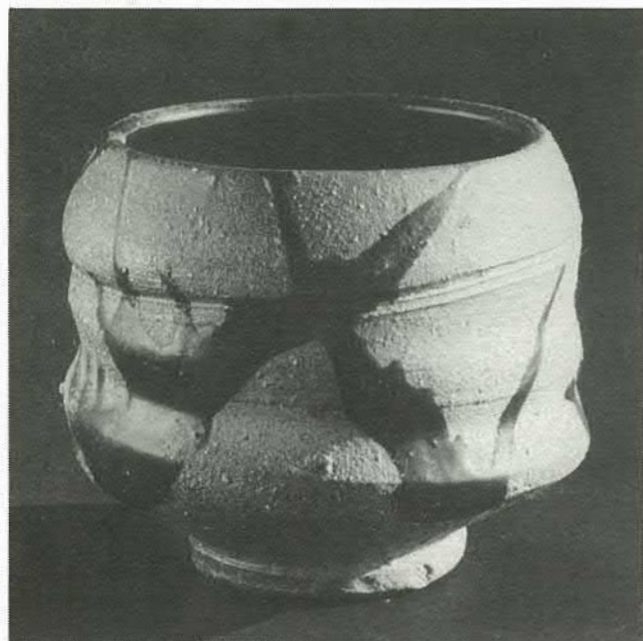


Pots made at Jack Troy Workshop, Nelson.

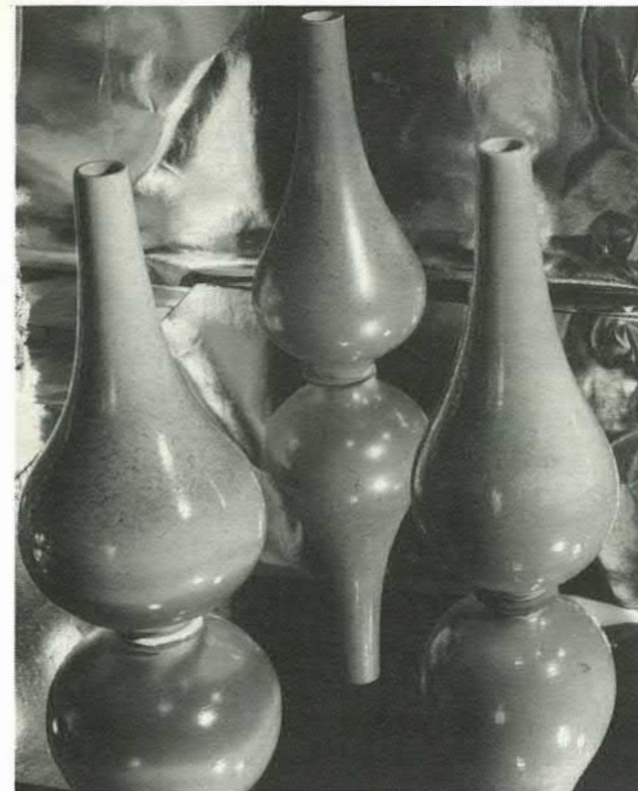
Photos: Lynne Griffith

Jack Troy

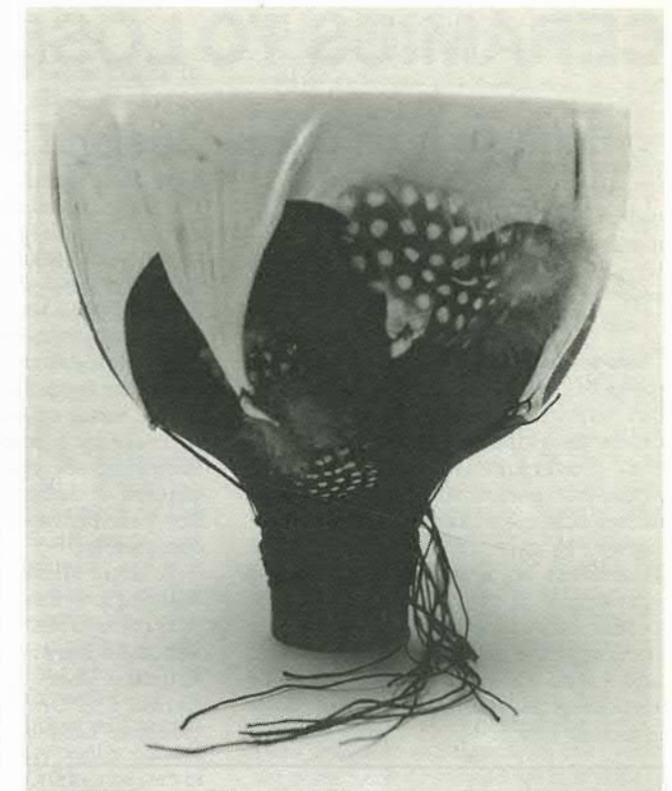
John Madden



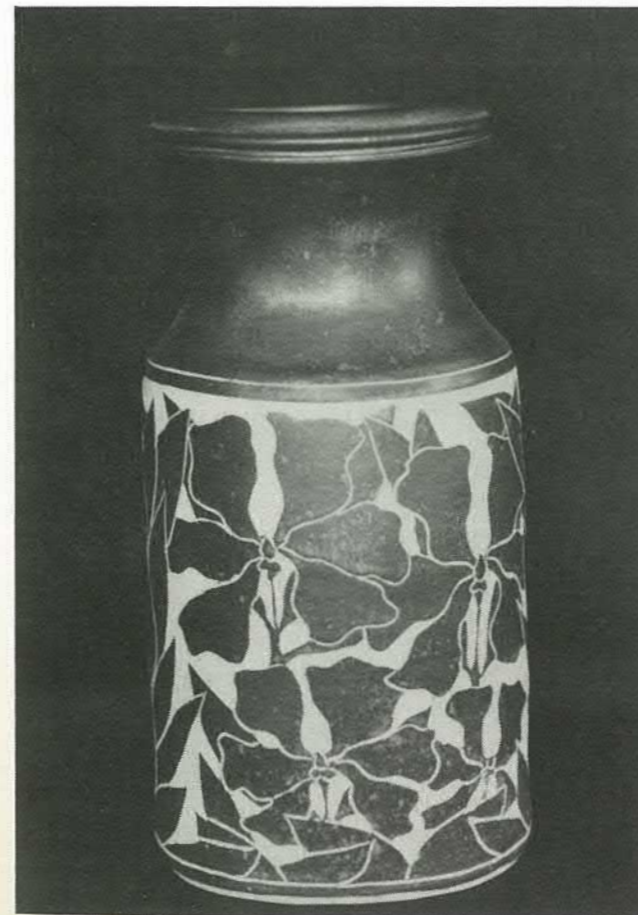
David Griffith



Steve Yeoman, Woodfired porcelain at Alicat Gallery.
Photo: Howard Williams.



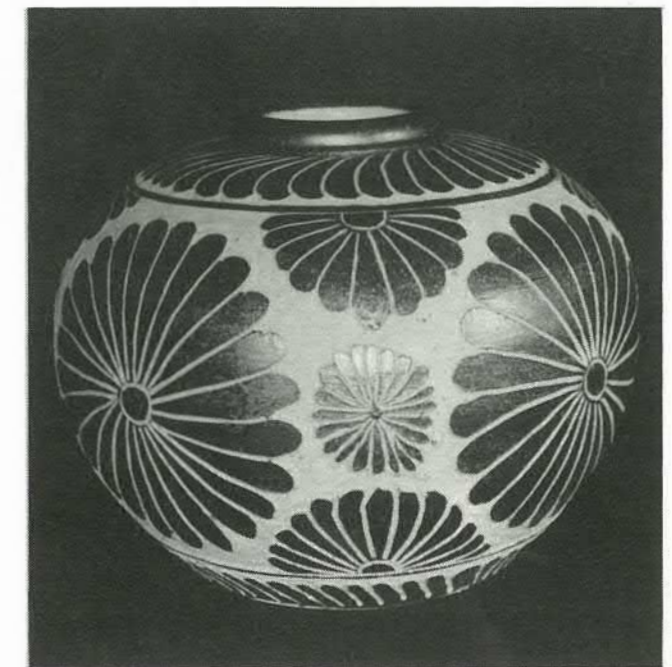
Drum by Debbie Pointon. Fired in a charcoal filled saggar, in an LPG kiln. Skin, guinea fowl feathers and black waxed thread.
Media Gallery, Wellington. Photo: Ans Westra.



Porcelain with incised slip, 27 cm high, by Graeme Storm, at The Villas, Wellington.

photos: Graeme Storm

White stoneware with incised slip, 26 cm high, by Graeme Storm, at The Villas, Wellington.



CERAMICS TO LOSE STATE PROTECTION

Extracts from a New Zealand Herald Wellington Bureau Report

"Import licence protection for a wide range of ceramic goods is to be phased out within eight years under an industry development plan published by the Government . . . During the phase-out period for licences, a tendering scheme will be available for importers to gain access to the market equivalent to a steadily increasing proportion of the value of domestic production. Licences protecting one section of the ceramic industry—floor and wall mosaic tiles—will be abolished as soon as the plan takes effect on July 1.

For tableware, import licensing will be phased out over seven years from July 1, 1985. Licences will be available for tender to a value equivalent to 4 percent of domestic production in the first year from the date.

The value of available licences will increase by 4 percent over each of the following six years, to a value of 30 percent of domestic production in the last year before licensing is abolished completely.

A larger share of the market will be allowed low-value imports of porcelain and china tableware and cooking utensils and other kinds of pottery from the fourth year of the phase-out period . . . Ornaments, pots, jars, troughs, tubs and other articles will

have licensing phased out over six years. New long-term tariffs will be set at the end of the third year.

Mr Templeton (Minister of Trade and Industry) said tariffs for most items would be reviewed at the end of the period for import licence tendering . . . The plan would allow "a gradual and predictable liberalisation of import licensing," he said. It was part of a move towards a tariff-based protective environment. The Government would play its part in supporting an industry of such importance to New Zealand, Mr Templeton said. The relaxation of import licensing would help to determine what levels of tariff protection and other supports the industry might need in the future."

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

Extracts from a letter from the Minister of Trade and Industry, Hugh Templeton, to the NZ Society of Potters, December 1983.

"I am very conscious of the cultural and aesthetic contribution craft potters make to the community. I have been an admirer of the product of the craft potter for many years. Undoubtedly the craft potter has a special place in the market for ceramic tableware items. I agree that the craft potter has established a niche in the marketplace for his or her product which is distinguishable from the product of the larger commercial producers. It was I understand, in recognition of this special place and of the vast difference in the business operations of the two types of producers that a sales tax exemption was granted craft potters in 1979.

"However, whereas it is possible to make a distinction between the two types of operation at the production level it is very difficult to make that same distinction at the industry import protection level. While craft potters may be supplying a niche in the ceramic tableware market they are in name supplying the same overall tableware market as the commercial operators.

"Such a time-frame (see above article on period of import licence phase-out) would surely assist the craft potter to make whatever adjustment was necessary to adapt to a new import protection environment . . . The quality of the New Zealand craft industry is

world-renowned and the relatively low weight to value ratio of many tableware items, and hence the high incidence of freight costs to the landed cost of imported items will provide the local craft industry with a natural degree of import protection. I also believe that many craft potter items in New Zealand are sold, not so much on the basis of price competitiveness, but on the basis of their intrinsic merit . . . this should provide a sound basis for the continual growth of the craft potter industry in this country.

"I assure you that your views (of NZSP) will be given the fullest consideration by the Government."

COMMENT FROM SALLY VINSON, PRESIDENT NZ SOCIETY OF POTTERS

Way back in 1973, the Government of the day instigated a Review of the Ceramic Industry. It was in fact the first such review of any industry in New Zealand. Since that time, other industries have also been reviewed, for instance the car assembly, rubber, glass and plastics industries, in order that they should become more effi-

cient. I had only just arrived in New Zealand during the Review of the Ceramics Industry and remember Doreen Blumhardt, Pauline Stevens, Jack Laird and Roy Cowan putting the case for continued protection by means of import tariffs. They attracted wide media coverage. The protection continued.

In their search for even more efficiency, the Trade and Industry Department began an update of this Review in 1982. The NZ Society of Potters was notified by the Crafts Council that information was being sought on craft potters, and we endeavoured to supply this information by means of a submission on behalf of our members. We

had taken advice from Mervyn Watts of the Ceramco group, who was in the thick of this Review, updating from his own position in the Industry. He warned us that Trade and Industry were out to prove that the studio potters were a group of manufacturers directly in competition with the Industry, and that the whole updated Review was to glean information for the proposed links with Australia through CER and the phasing out of import licensing. We could see at that stage, that the import tariffs and licensing had in fact been protecting craft potters and the Industry alike, and we sought to demonstrate to Government, two things.

The first related to our 'status' in the market place. We pointed out that studio potters have not ever been and will never be, in competition with industry. We make individual pots, or short runs of pots, by time consuming methods which we market in different ways and outlets from the Industry.

The second point is that there are in fact very few studio potters working full-time in this country, who rely solely on potting for their income, and that these few cannot supply the quantities of pots needed for such institutions as hospitals, hotels, schools,

restaurants, etc.

The NZ Society of Potters failed to have these points accepted by Trade and Industry and therefore in their final report we are regarded and treated alongside all other industrial ceramics enterprises. Despite the fact that none of us to my knowledge makes drains, refractories or sanitary ware, Hugh Templeton tells us that "whereas it is possible to make a distinction between the two types of operation at the production level, it is very difficult to make that same distinction at the import protection level."

What all this means to the studio potter who relies mainly on making tableware for a living, is that as the import licensing and tariff protection is phased out in this country, we will be faced with a similar situation to that which has been in operation in Australia for many years. Beginning in July this year and happening gently over the next six years our protection will be removed, and open slather will result. There will be beautifully designed and made porcelain mugs on the shelves of shops, made in maybe Taiwan and retailing at 99c each. We cannot compete with prices like that, but competition is the desired effect of the Govern-

ment's policy for the Ceramics Industry.

The Australian experience is well known to us here, and has been evident for some time. There are fewer potters in Australia, and good quality studio domestic tableware is not readily available. Potters and other craftspeople have, however, a great deal of financial support through various arts councils who seem to have bags of money to give away. Carl Andrews, Deputy Director of the Museum of Applied Art and Sciences in Sydney, on a recent tour here, showed slides of contemporary Australian craft work and explained that much of the work purchased by institutions and government departments is heavily subsidised by arts councils' funding. A potter may sell a piece for \$1,000; the buyer pays \$300 and the arts council then picks up the tab for the difference. A good scheme? Could we expect such financial support here in NZ? Many people viewing the slides felt that much of the work appears to be whimsical and self-indulgent. Is that what we want here, or should we continue to endeavour to seek some other means to look after our own destinies as self-motivated, self-employed craftspeople?

"POTS DOMESTICA" Exhibition at Antipodes Gallery, Wellington

Dinner Set by Paul Winspear, Wellington

photo: Jenny Hames



DOMESTIC WARE LIVES!

"Domestica"—an exhibition of studio potters' table and kitchen ware was held at Antipodes Gallery in Wellington recently. It was organised jointly by the New Zealand Society of Potters and the New Zealand Crafts Council. Some 30 potters had been invited to participate, ranging from the nationally well-known to those unknown outside their own home areas. The exhibition was staged because lately the emphasis at exhibitions has been on "one-off" pots, and the NZSP has become concerned that potters producing a range of quality domestic ware are being left out.

Sally Vinson, president of NZSP: "It has recently come to the notice of the society that the Government is changing some importing procedures, which could allow masses of cheap dinnerware into New Zealand. We would like to impress on the public that good, well-designed dinnerware does exist in this country and that people can be encouraged to support their local potters."

One criteria, when asking potters to exhibit, was that pots shown should be part of their regular range and, if breakages occurred, the likelihood of replacement pieces would be high. The organisers hoped to demonstrate to Government as well as the general public the high standard and range of work available, and that there is no need to import more domestic pottery.

To this end a side display was also set up in the Beehive. Invitations were sent to Members of Parliament, business houses and restaurant and coffee bar owners. Doreen Blumhardt opened the exhibition and Sally Vinson had an excellent session with Sharon Crosbie on national radio.

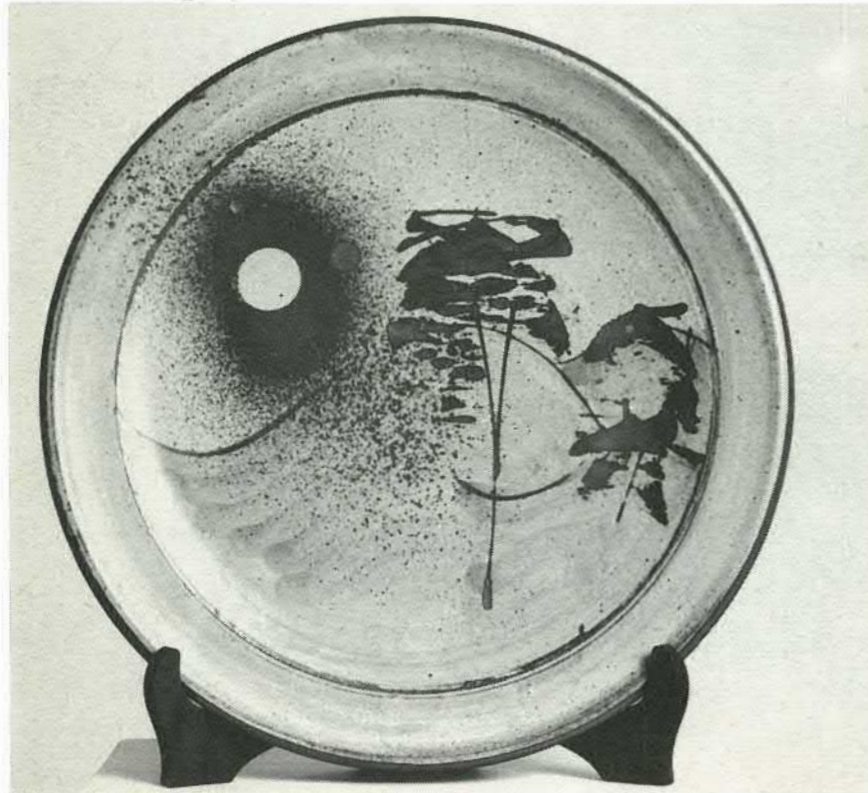


Chloe King, Havelock North

Antipodes Gallery Wellington

photos: Jenny Hames

Mike Searle, Dunedin



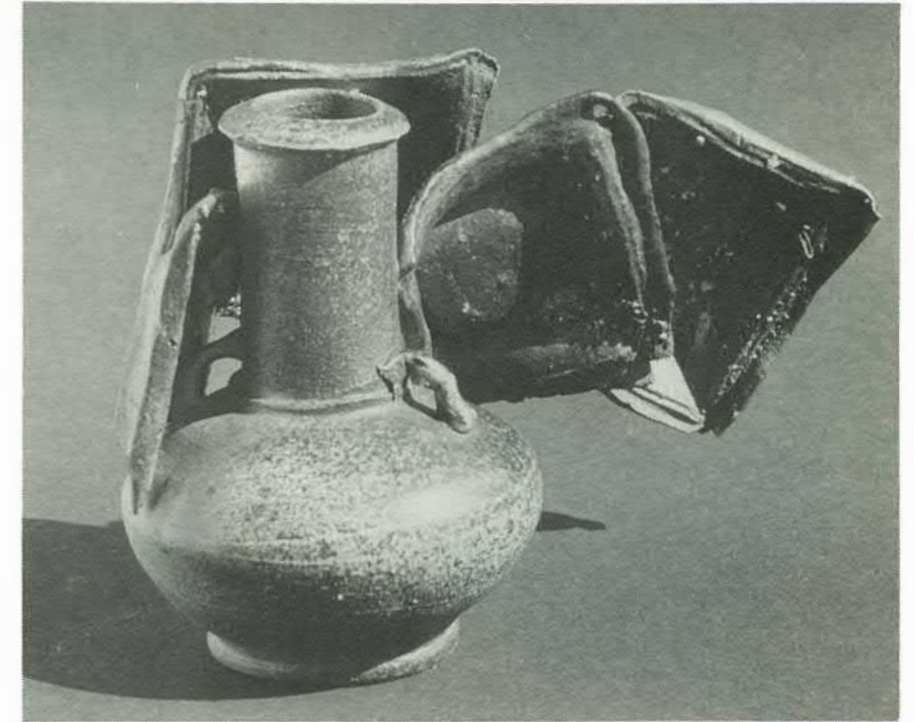
Christine Bell-Pearson, Nelson



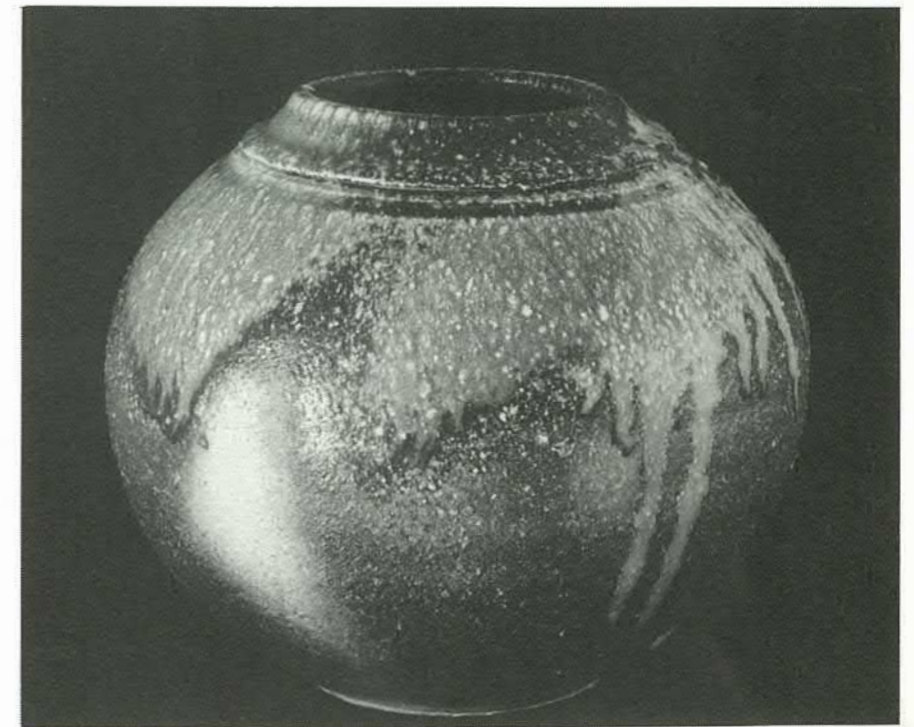
NELSON POTTERS ASSOCIATION SUMMER EXHIBITION SUTER GALLERY

Photos: Lynne Griffith

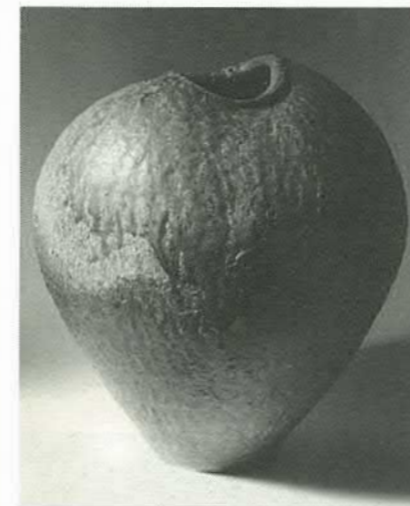
Richard Parker, Northland, Guest Exhibitor



Estelle Martin, Hawkes Bay, Guest Exhibitor



Vic Evans



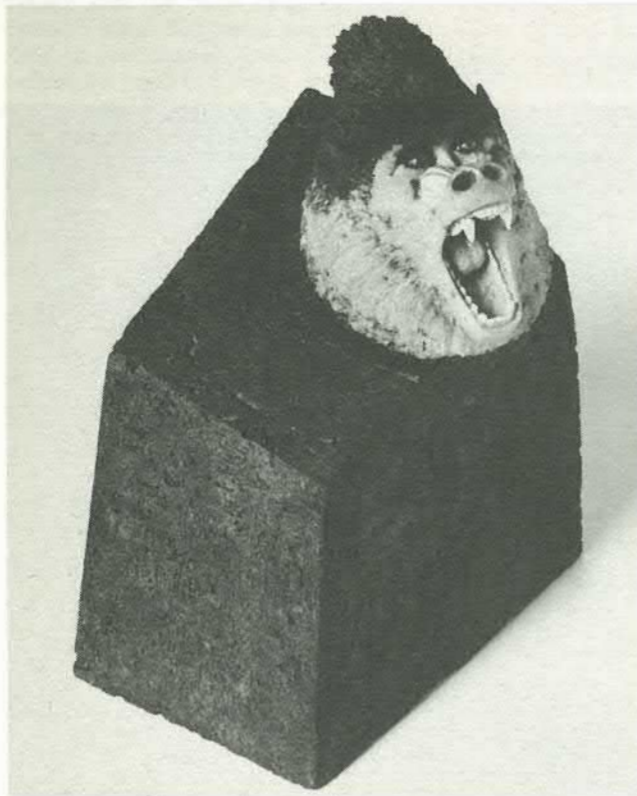
Lynne Griffith

Ross Richards

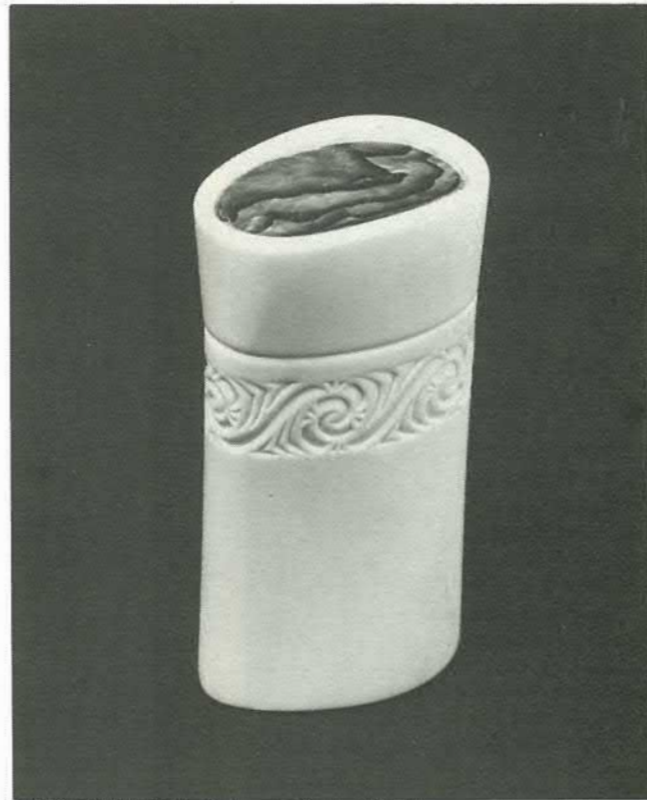


THE GREAT NEW ZEALAND BOX SHOW

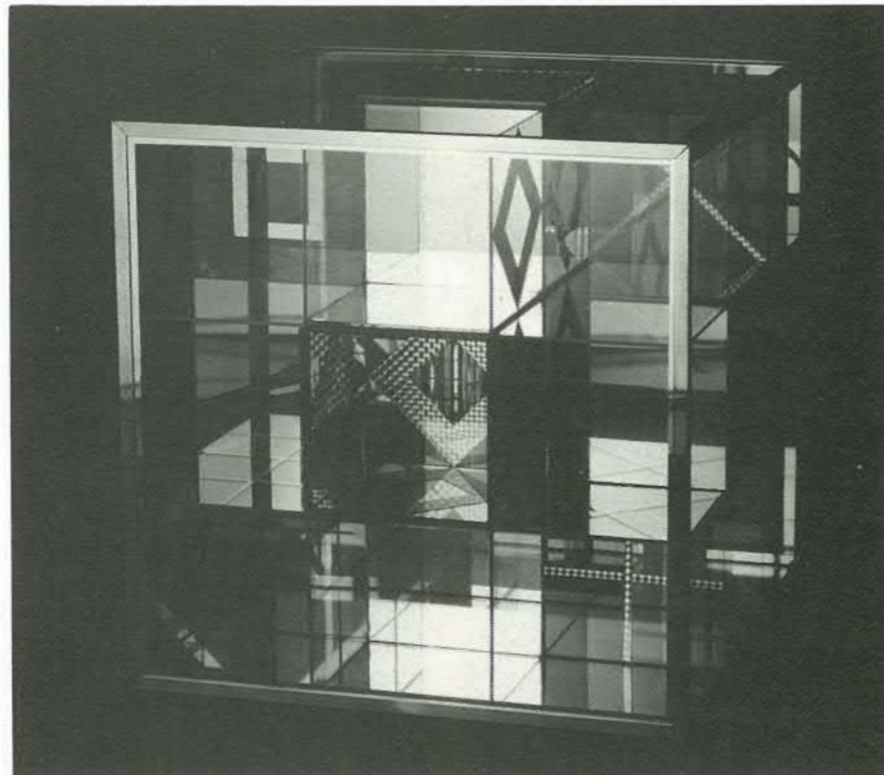
By the Crafts Council: at the Wellington City Art Gallery



RICK RUDD, Auckland. "Raku No. 723". Clay. ht: 19 cms.



STEVE MYHRE, Pukerua Bay. "Box". Bone and shell. ht: 82 mms.

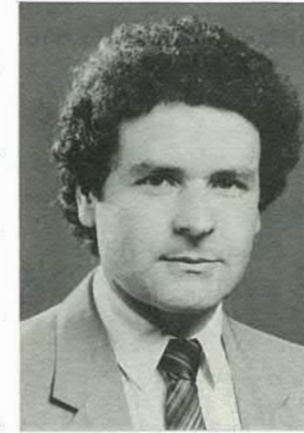


DUGALD PAGE, Auckland. "Cube Narcissus II". ht: 47 cms. Acrylic, glass, mirror, aluminium, polycarbonate rods.

"Rejection from a show is not the Word of God to Moses. You must trust your own judgement, but if criticism makes you sensitive and your pots are so precious that you can't take another opinion, you are far better to take your pot and put it under your pillow." Jack Troy.

New director for Crafts Council

Mr John Schiff has been appointed executive director of the Crafts Council of New Zealand, taking up the position at the beginning of June. Mr Schiff comes to the post from the Ministry of Energy which he joined in 1975 after majoring in mathematics and economics at Victoria University of Wellington. For two years he was private secretary to the Minister of Energy and became assistant director of the ministry's Energy Conservation Division before taking up a post with the International Energy Agency in Paris in 1981. Returning to New



John Schiff

Zealand late last year, he worked in the Ministry of Energy's Oil and Gas Division until his new appointment.

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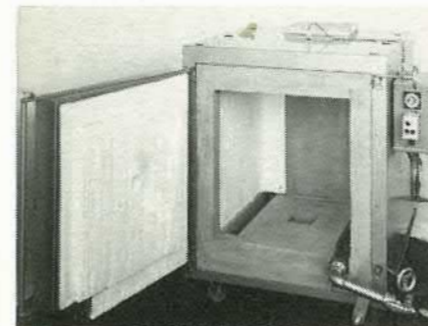


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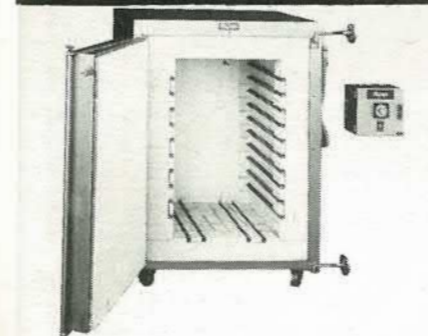
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- ★ Metal flue extensions



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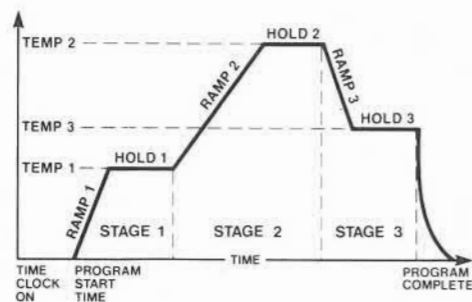
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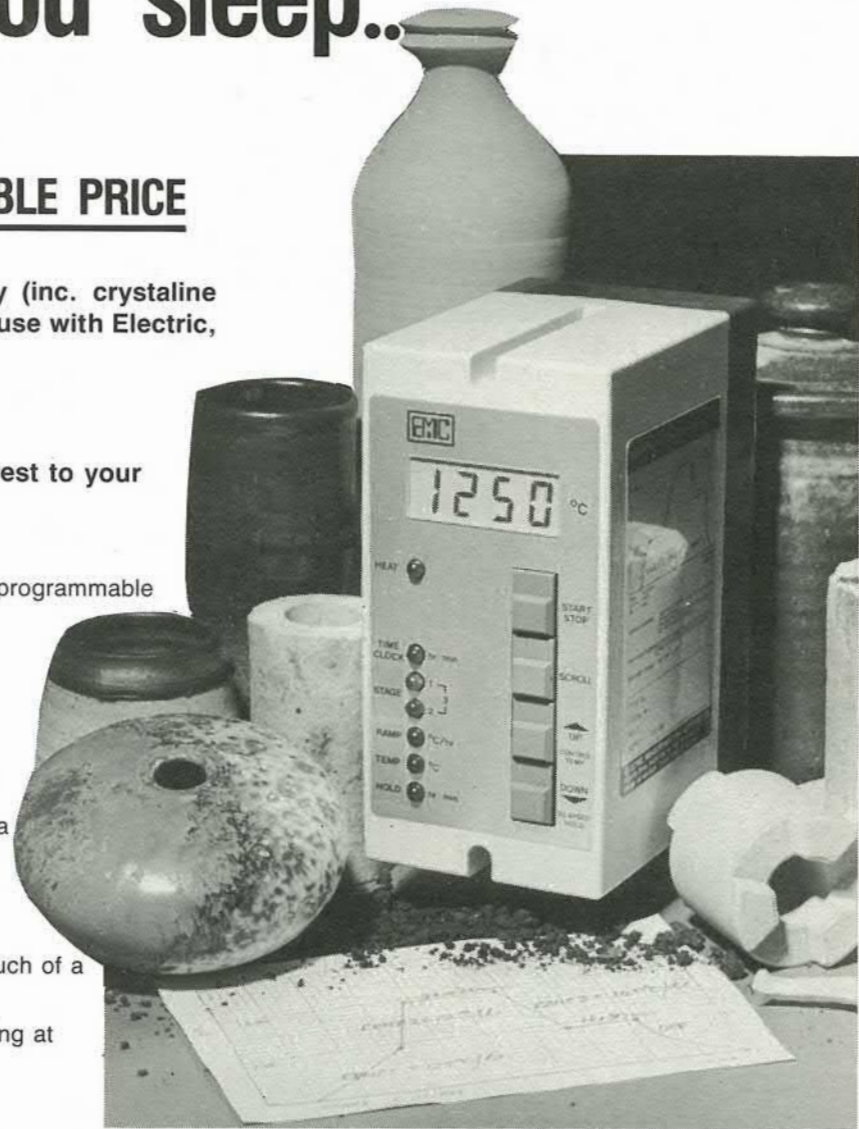


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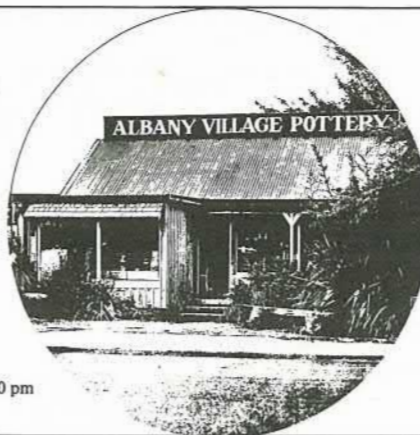
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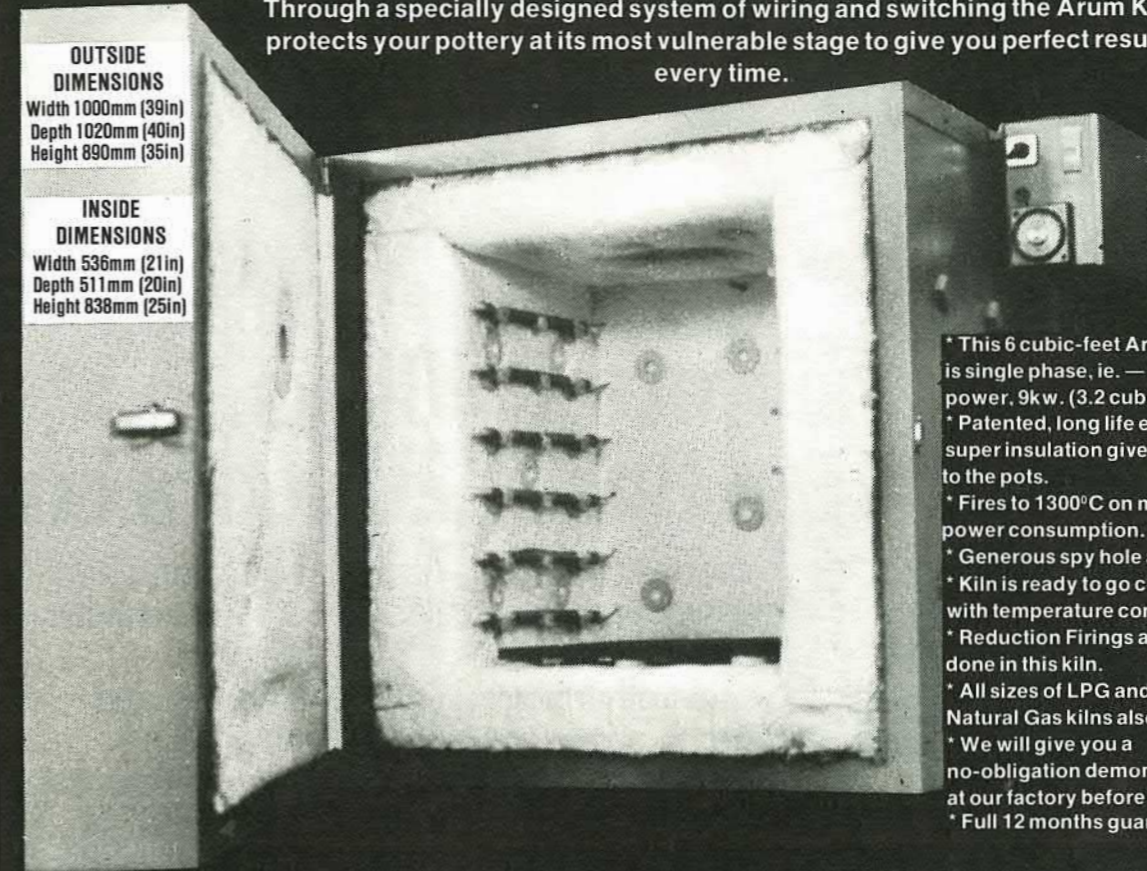
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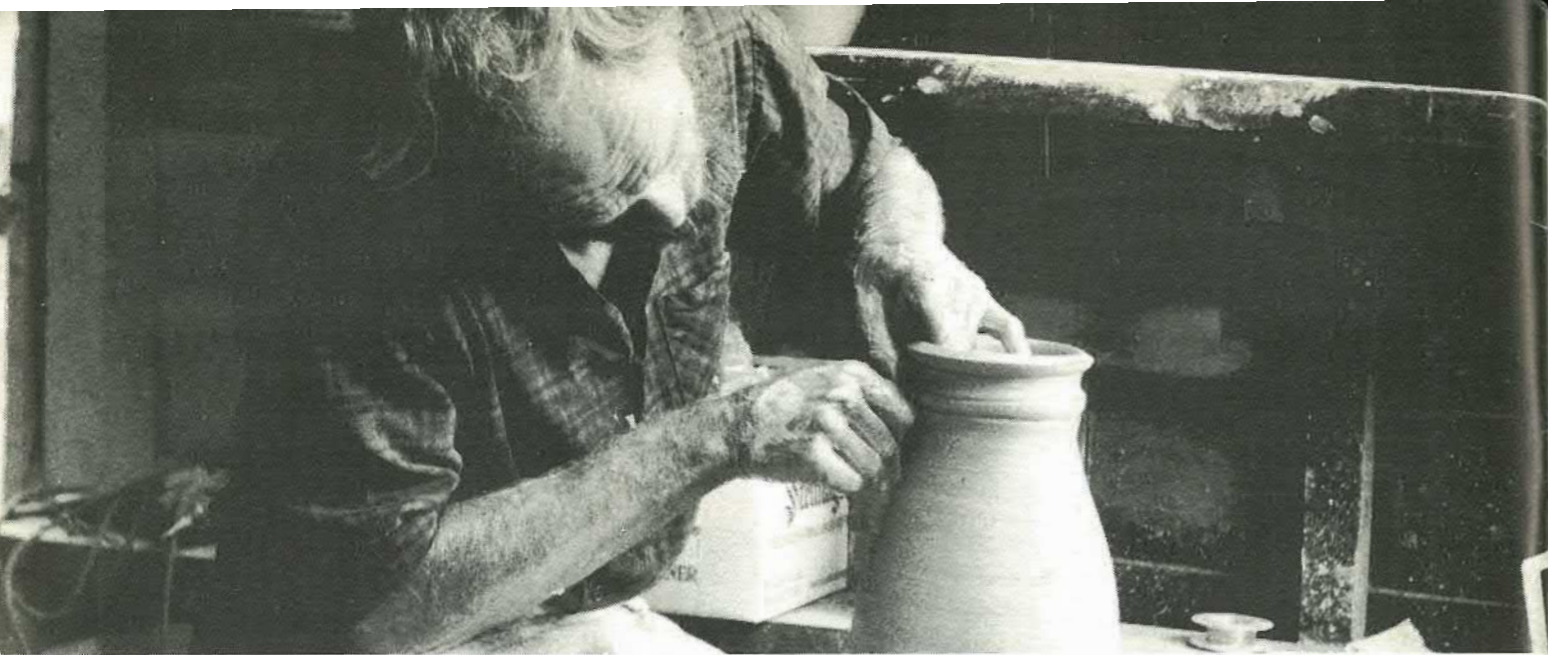
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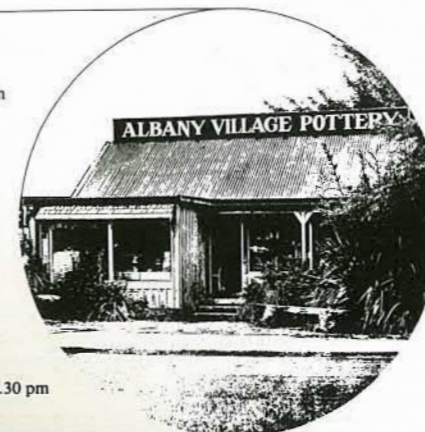
*Trees and Leaves and
Bags of Clay
Cups of Coffee
And Unfamiliar Faces
Acting Artistic
Or just appreciating
The fine line that is
creativity.
We see them all
In the City Mall
As they wedge their
feelings
Permanently
Into the souls of the work
That graces our shelves
Happy or sad
Tall or small
We enjoy the conversation
Their eyes have with
our pots.*

Wayne Tasker

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