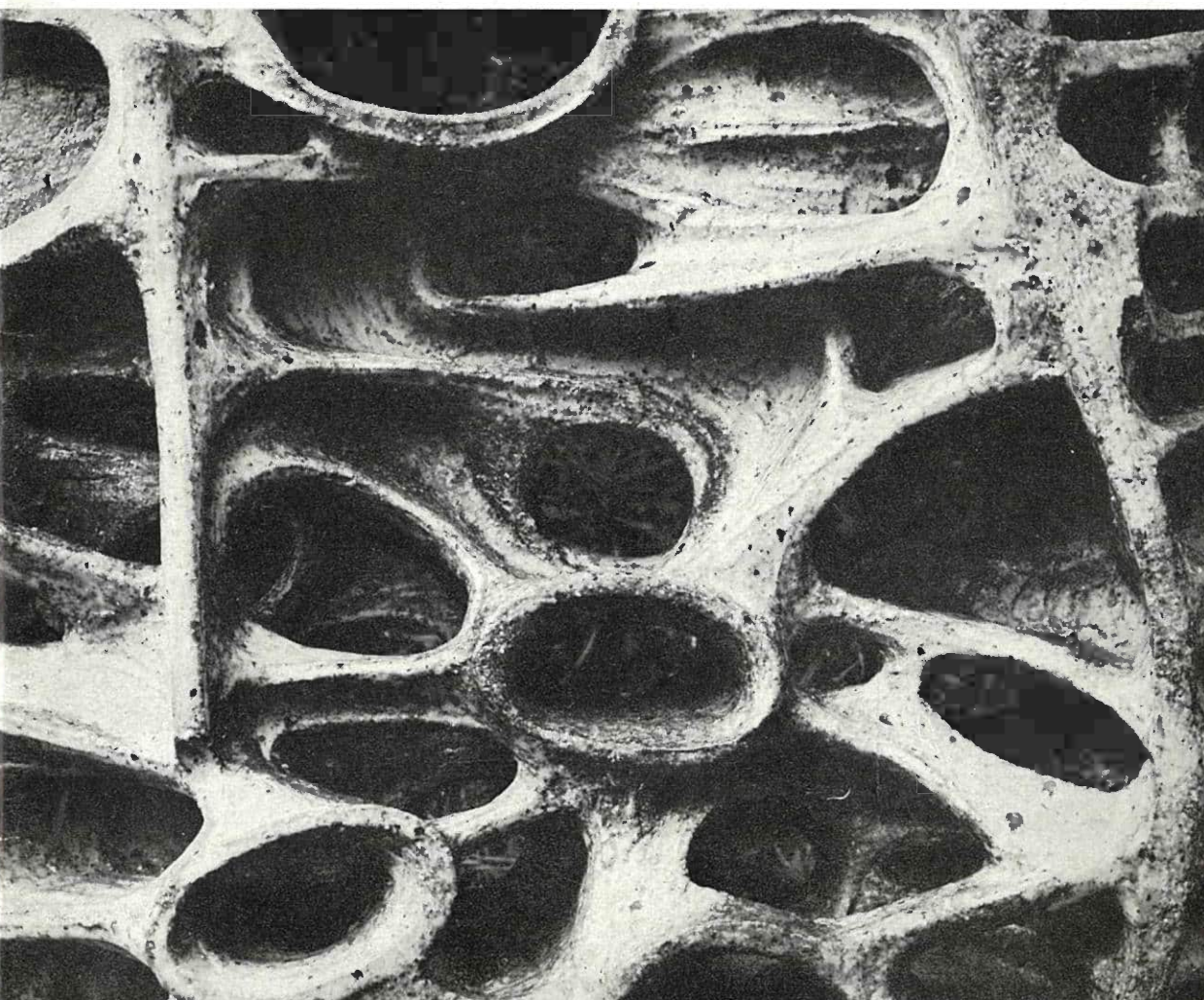


NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF POTTERS

Travelling Exhibition



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BY COURTESY OF ALFRED DUNHILL LTD., LONDON
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE ROTHMANS CULTURAL FOUNDATION.



The Society is proud to have this opportunity to present work currently being done by New Zealand Potters and we hope that this touring exhibition will stimulate your interest.

February 1968

Pottery in New Zealand

DAVID CARSON PARKER

It may be doubted whether there is any more popular or more thriving art in New Zealand than pottery. Any gallery will tell you that pottery exhibitions are sure-fire successes; more and more homes have pots on display; astonishing numbers of people seem to be practising potters or at least to have had some experience of working with clay. In the most unexpected situations you find yourself 'talking pots'. For example, the man who comes to fix your washing-machine or clean your chimney — only let him catch sight of your coffee pot and he may very well tell you that he is an experienced builder of kilns and manufacturer of wheels. Pottery has caught the New Zealand imagination.

One naturally wonders why? In a pithy radio talk, the art critic, writer and commentator, Peter Bland, suggested reasons: 'Pottery is a social activity. It cuts across the boredom and isolation of New Zealand suburban living. It offers — thank goodness! — a creative, communal sharing. . . . It's a small-scale social revolution that's grown out of a sensible resentment against the human and aesthetic sterility of the quarter acre.' To that, you can add that it is a healthy, physically demanding art which keeps one's hands in clay. It is popular for the same reasons that New

Zealanders are good gardeners: they like to be working the earth or the products of the earth — they like working with their hands. And their practical motto is 'Don't watch other people — do it yourself.' In such an environment, it is hardly surprising that the work of potters has gained confidence and authority.

Twelve years ago it was a very different story. New Zealand was not a country with any traditions to build on. Such potters as there were, were amateurs — enthusiasts who were working in isolation in various parts of the country, feeling their way by trial and error. They had much to learn: not only the skills and techniques of handling clay, but also technical knowledge relating to clay and kilns. The effort to develop clay bodies and glazes that fitted, kiln building and coming to terms with the methods of firing, were challenges quite as great — greater perhaps, than that of actually learning to pot. Creative enthusiasm could easily be dampened when potters had to dig, sieve, and prepare their own clays. And those who persevered were faced with endless experimentation in preparing clay mixes, using, for example, fire clay from a local gasworks with unfired broken pipes from a nearby brick and tile factory. The process still continues, although the avail-

ability of ready-pugged clay has dispensed with much of the toil.

Electric kilns, suitable primarily for earthenware potters, have always been available, but technical difficulties in building and firing oil kilns have confronted the increasing number of professional and semi-professional potters who, taking advantage of the abundance of natural resources available throughout the country, have turned towards stoneware. Many a headache has resulted from struggles to raise the temperature of a kiln, to achieve adequate reduction, and to eliminate cool spots. Anecdotes are legion. Let any group of potters relax together and the stories of early experiment and improvisation come tumbling out — some heartbreaking, others full of mirth. Vacuum cleaners, which were thought to have ended their working life, were resurrected and put into service blowing air into oil-fired kilns. On one occasion the hub-cap of a car was used as a bowl in developing a drip-fed kiln: in principle it worked, but had disintegrated before the

end of the firing. One potter, concerned at the dense clouds of black smoke caused during reduction, decided to fire at night rather than invoke the ire of his neighbours. Another recalls using a damp shelf in stacking a kiln. During the firing the shelf cracked and collapsed, so that when the kiln was opened there was only a sad heap of fused pots on the floor.

Today the number of professional or semi-professional potters in the country is growing rapidly, a striking number of them drawn from a younger age group. The number of amateurs is beyond all calculation, with new groups springing up all the time. Providing these amateurs can develop their standards of appreciation, it is they who generate the enthusiasm and create the demand which the full-time potters need in order to exist. And since we have no college or institute of ceramics in this country — since the amateurs depend on joining groups and learning from the full-time potters, generally at week-end schools or in Adult Education or Polytechnic classes — the

MURIEL MOODY: Ceramic Sculpture: height 19".



Photo: Pat Conneally

benefit is a mutual, two-way process.

Have New Zealand potters learned to think for themselves? One of our leading potters said some time ago that he thought we still had to evolve a style of our own. We have learned much from Japanese pottery and from the European tradition, but have not yet assimilated these influences and moved forward to an individual expression.

Insofar as we have not developed a style that is recognisably 'New Zealand', this is true. But then we have no national style of music or painting, either; and our literature is growing increasingly cosmopolitan. Internationalism, not nationalism, distinguishes this century. Perhaps pottery, since it tends to be a more local activity, tied to the places where the clays are found, stands a better chance of attaining a national style than most other arts. But even so, it is open to question whether potters can consciously set themselves such an aim. If it emerges, it is far more likely to do so unconsciously, as the necessary result of an increasingly sensitive use of natural mineral resources: iron sands, pumice, and so on.

In the work of *individual* potters, on the other hand, it *is* reasonable to expect to see the emergence of distinctive styles. And it is precisely because we *can* see this that New Zealand pottery at the present time is so exciting. Our potters have high standards—they are conscious artists, ready to acknowledge faults,

eager to progress. An editorial from their journal, *The New Zealand Potter*, in 1959, could be taken as their manifesto: 'Most of us have got to wherever we are by trial and error, not training. There are very few properly trained teachers of the craft, very few professional potters. The rest of us are amateurs who can afford to experiment, but who, according to our critics, have not yet learned to think for ourselves. On the credit side, we have unbounded enthusiasm and a camaraderie. . . . We have also a keen market for our pots — so much so that it can be a temptation to lower our standards. But the biggest asset of all is our country in which we can find everything we need; not only for raw materials, but for inspiration. . . . Culturally, New Zealand is beginning to grow up. Let us take our part in that developing culture by breaking up the safe little pots and making instead vigorous pots that more truly express the New Zealander as he is.'

The history of pottery in New Zealand has been a very human story of many trials and tribulations. But the essential point is that it has been a story of experience shared. Potters have helped each other in building and firing their kilns, and through the medium of *The New Zealand Potter* they have made freely available their knowledge and experience. They have arrived where they are today thanks to a pioneering spirit, determination and courage to persist.



COVER and title page:
Ceramic sculpture, height 30", by Roy Cowan.



These two photos from Jeff Scholes' workshop at Henderson, near Auckland, show hand wedging, and the tendency of New Zealand potters to work in groups. Shown above are Peamsook, a UNESCO student from Thailand, Jeff Scholes, and Helen Mason, a founder and former Editor of the 'New Zealand Potter'.

POTTERY BEGINS WITH CLAY



Photo: Dr. Michael Gill

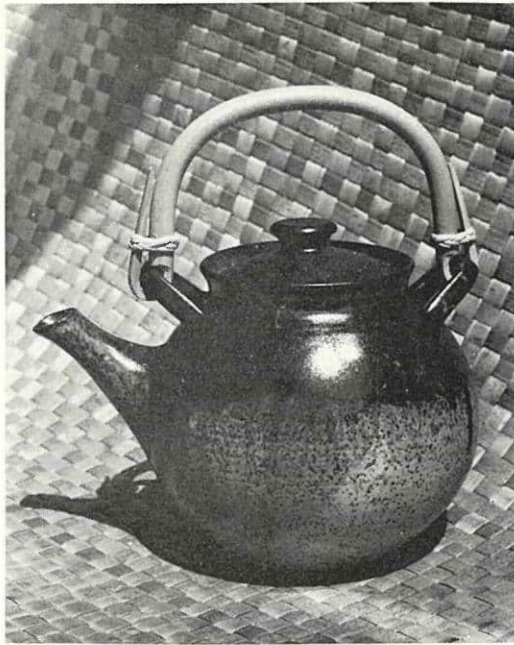
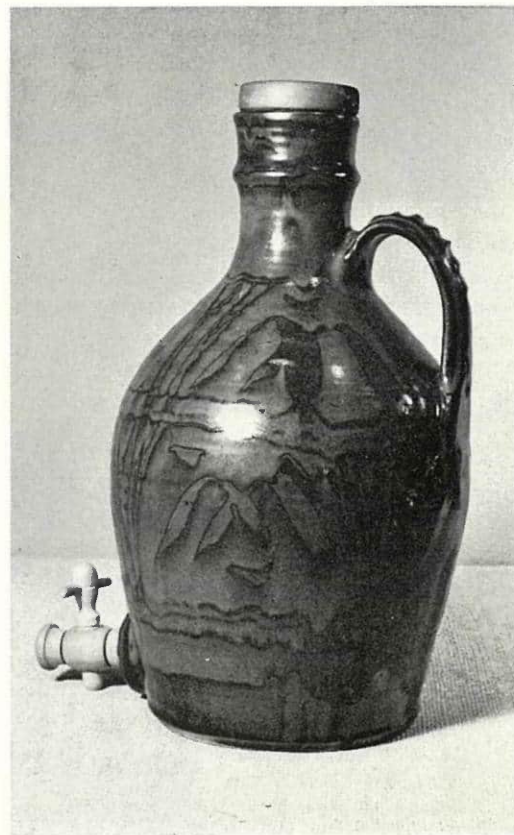


Photo: Harry Davis

DOREEN BLUMHARDT

A stoneware teapot by a potter who is strongly influenced by a working and study period in Japan. She was awarded a travel grant by the Japanese Government in 1962. As head of the Art Department of the Wellington Teachers' Training College, Doreen Blumhardt has less time than most to spend in her own studio. Nevertheless she has an impressive list of exhibitions behind her, and has work in many public and private collections within N.Z. and overseas.

Photo: Doreen Blumhardt



CREWENNA POTTERY

A cider bottle of twelve pints capacity. Harry and May Davis left their Crowan Pottery in Cornwall, England, and came to N.Z. to found Crewenna in 1963. Their work is internationally known, and is keenly sought by collectors and by those who like good pottery for domestic use. The making of this type of pottery is the first aim of Crewenna, and the tradition of Crowan.

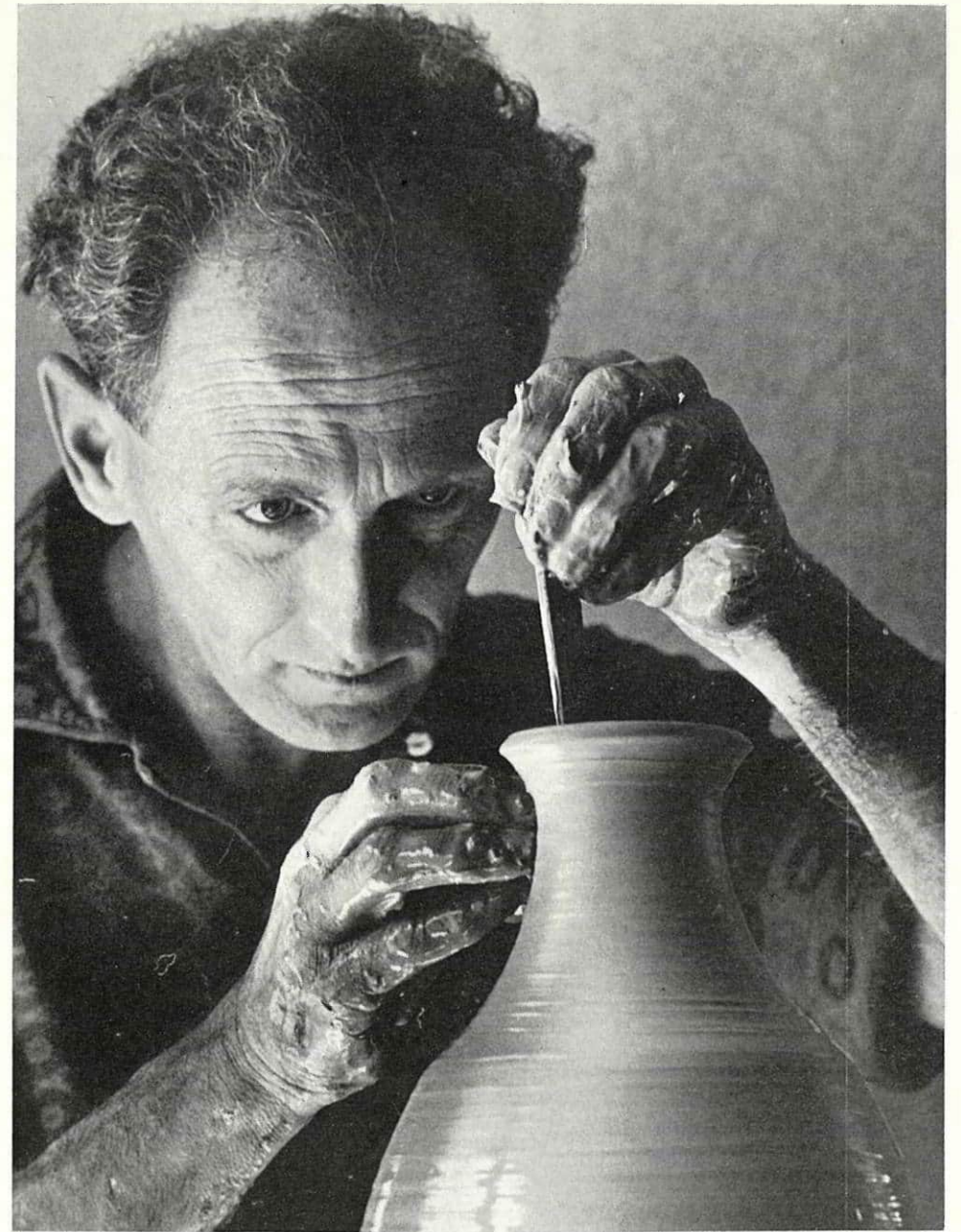


Photo: Marti Friedlander
for New Vision Potters' Calendar 1967

PETER STICHBURY

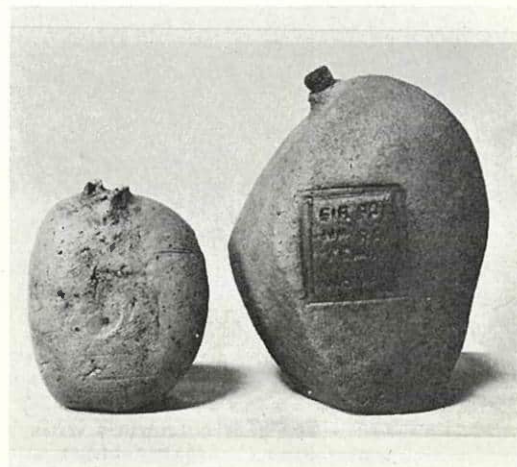
Peter received a two-year study grant from the Association of Art Societies, which enabled him to work with Bernard Leach at St. Ives and with Michael Cardew at Abuja, in Nigeria. He lectures in Arts and Crafts at Ardmore College, Auckland. In his pottery he specialises in fine domestic ware. He exhibits in New Zealand and abroad, and is represented in the International Museum of Ceramics, Faenza, Italy.



PATRICIA PERRIN
among her pots

Photo: Marti Friedlander

Photo: Roy Cowan



PATRICIA PERRIN

She has in good measure that rare quality, originality. Her individual and very personal pots are sculptural in conception, and glazing, although carefully considered, is of secondary importance to form. Patricia Perrin has exhibited widely in N.Z. and overseas, is represented in the International Museum of Ceramics, Faenza, and in many other collections.

DAVID BROKENSIRE with pots and kiln

David Brokenshire is an architect with definite ideas on the relationship of ceramics to architecture and his work has strong sculptural feeling. He has a leading part in the development of modern oil-fired kilns in his home city of Christchurch.

Photo: Marti Friedlander
for New Vision Potters' Calendar 1968

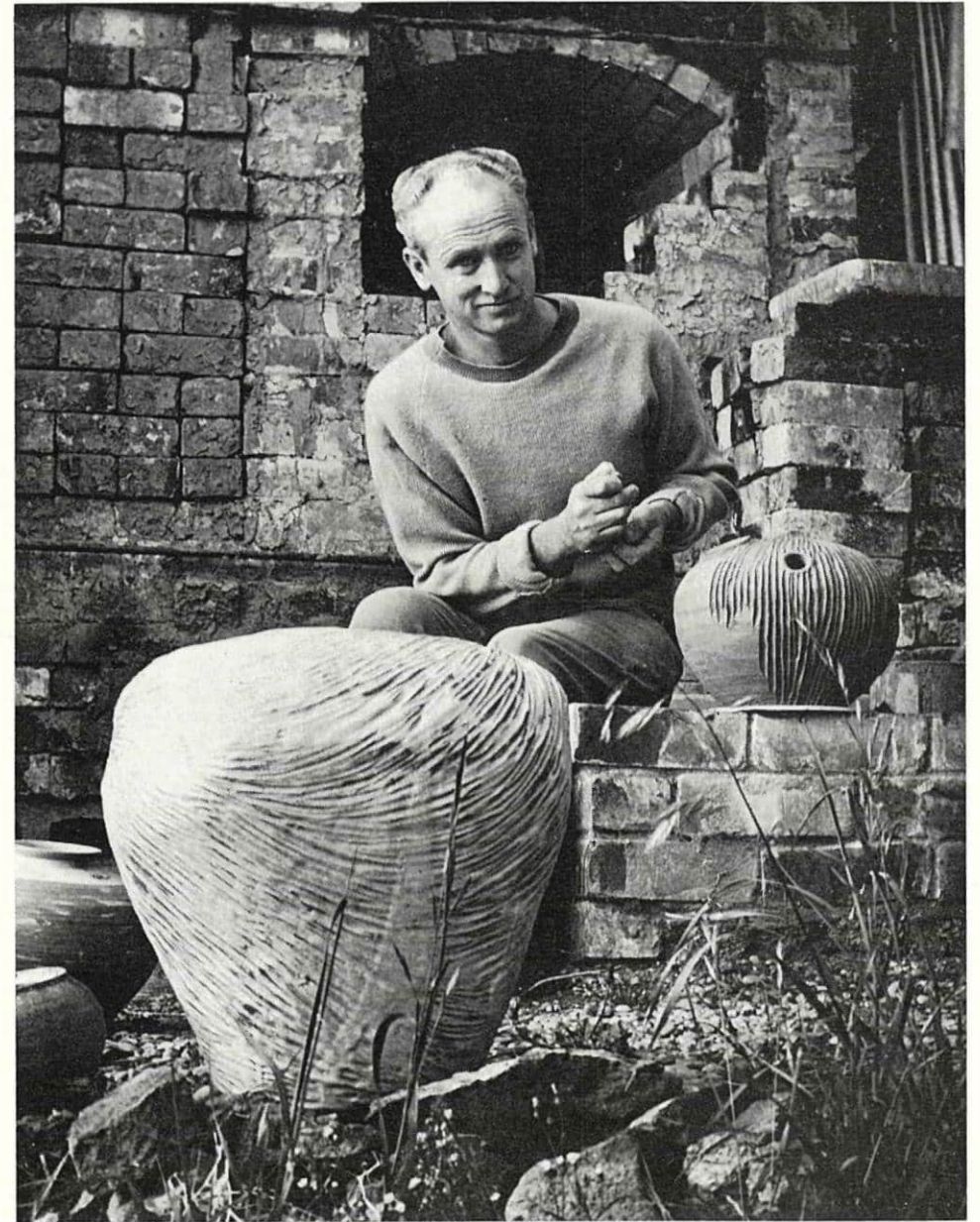




Photo: Marti Friedlander

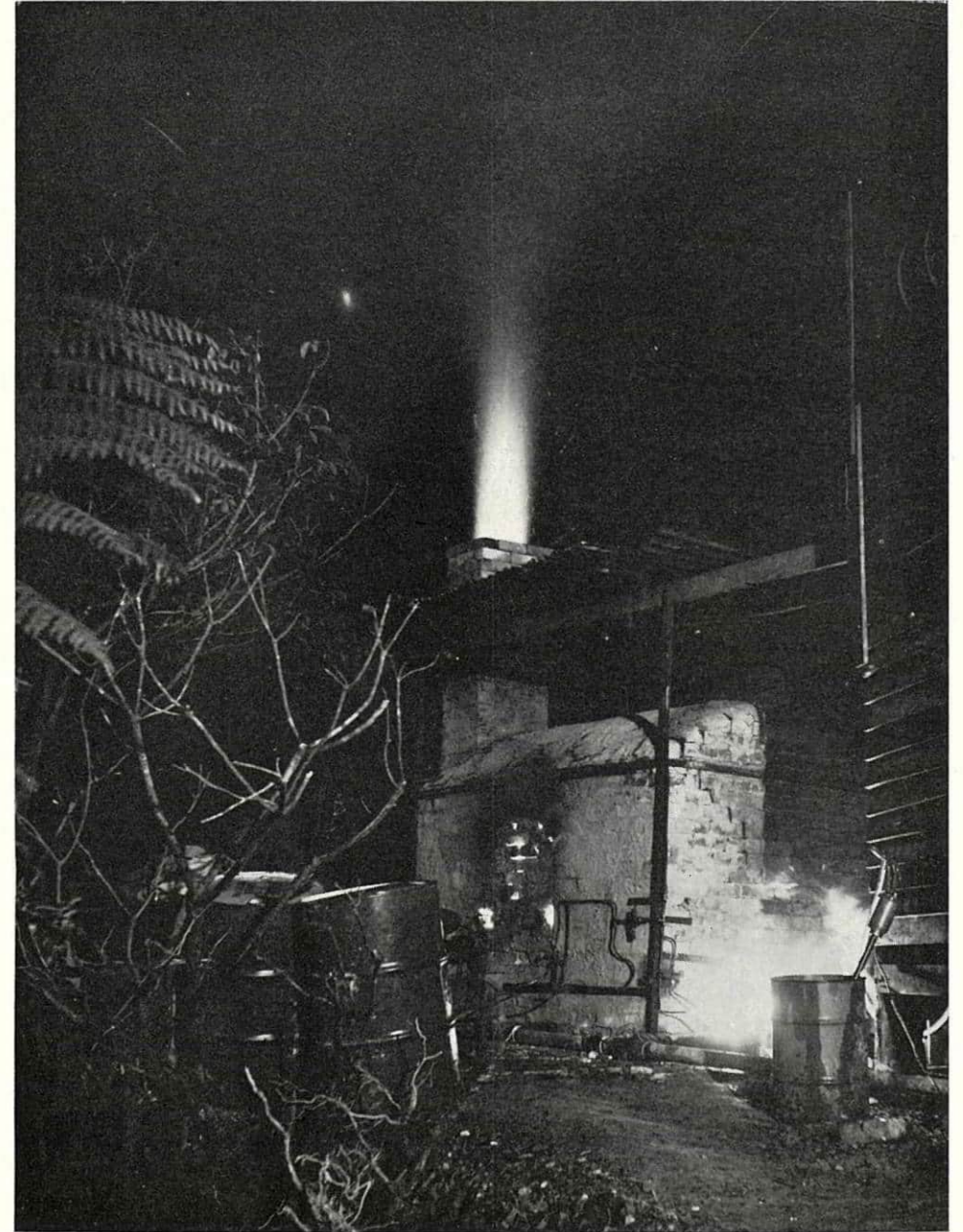
WILFRED WRIGHT

As he adjusts the burners which are sending out a flame of from 1400 to 1500 C. temperature, we sense something of the drama and excitement of the conclusion of a firing. Wilf Wright is a full time potter, who, with the help of his wife, Janet, operates two kilns at his Reikorangi Pottery at Waikanae, near Wellington.

AT FULL TEMPERATURE

A 120 cubic foot oil fired kiln firing salt-glazed stoneware at 1300-1350 C. It was built and operated by a young N.Z. potter, Paul Melser, and his friends, and produced much fine work.

Photo: Roy Cowan



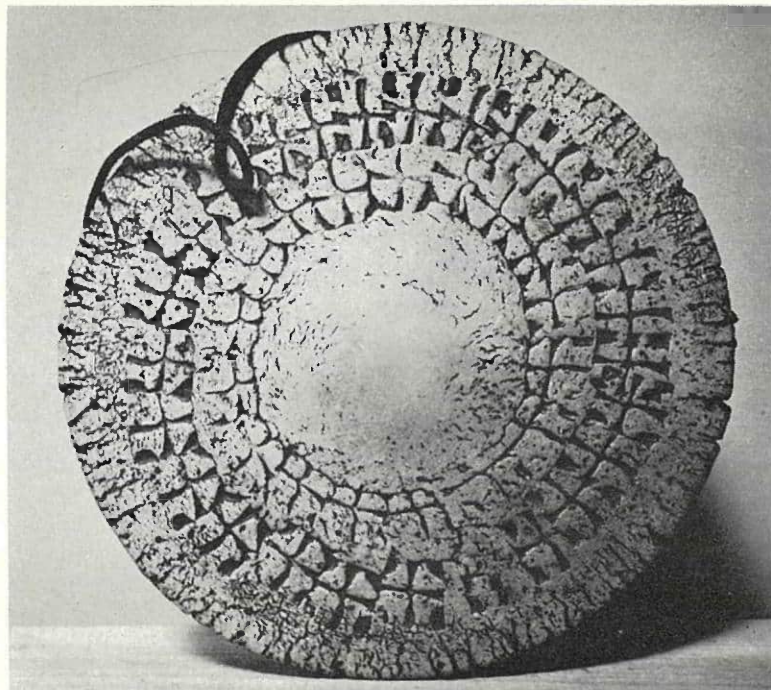


Photo: Roy Cowan

LEN CASTLE

A Discoid Vase by Len Castle, perhaps N.Z.'s best-known potter, and certainly one with a formidable background of experience and achievement. He has received two grants for study overseas, the first taking him to work with Bernard Leach, and the second to Japan and other Pacific countries. His work appears in all major N.Z. public and private collections, and in the International Museum of ceramics at Faenza.

Characteristic pieces, before firing. A highly accomplished potter. His style, which stands quite aside from that of other N.Z. potters, possibly as a result of a period of study and teaching in Scandinavia, combines simple, monumental forms, impressed decoration and glazes of rich colour and deep tone. He has travelled widely and has recently worked and studied in Canada. He is represented in many collections in N.Z. and overseas and in the International Museum of Ceramics at Faenza.



GRAEME STORM

Photo: Graeme Storm

Travelling Exhibition

ACE, GWYN NAPIER

1 Dish

Earthenware

ALLPRESS, SUSAN PAPATOETOE

2 Storage jar

Stoneware

3 Cylinder bottle, impressed decoration

BARRON, NOLA CHRISTCHURCH

4 Pot No. 1, dolomite glaze

Stoneware

5 Pot No. 2, ditto

6 Pot No. 3, ditto

BLUMHARDT, DOREEN WELLINGTON

7 Covered jar

Stoneware

8 Teapot

9 Platter

10 Bowl

11 Faceted jar

BROKESHIRE, DAVID CHRISTCHURCH

12 Pot 1, rock glazes

Stoneware

13 Pot 2, ditto

BROWN, BETTY AUCKLAND

14 Lidded Box

Stoneware

BRYNILDSEN, MERLE AUCKLAND

15 Wine jar

Stoneware

BUNBY, CLAIRE AUCKLAND

16 Bottle, iron decoration

Stoneware

CADNESS, RICHARD AUCKLAND

17 Wine bottle

Stoneware

18 Nine pint wine bottle

CARSON PARKER, DAVID WELLINGTON

19 Bowl

Stoneware

CASTLE, LEN AUCKLAND

20 Holder for dry arrangement

Stoneware

21 Bowl

22	Hanging planter		
CHRISTELLER, FLORA WELLINGTON			
23	Vase		
24	Plate		
25	Condiment set		
CONNOLLY, SALLY CHRISTCHURCH			
26	Sculptured pot, fireclay decoration		
27	Sculptured pot, pumice encrusted		
COWAN, ROY WELLINGTON			
28	Slab bowl		
CREWENNA POTTERY NELSON			
29	Platter		
30	Jug		
31	Casserole		
32	Plate		
33	Cider jar		
DUTCH, DORIS AUCKLAND			
34	Triple headed vase		
35	Bud vase		
FREDRIC, F. M. INVERCARGILL			
36	Six bowls		
GRANT, NEIL AUCKLAND			
37	Two bowls, wax resist decoration, clear glaze over tessha		
38	Bowl, white glaze, iron decoration		
39	Wine pourer & six cups, wax resist decoration		
GREIG, JAMES PALMERSTON NORTH			
40	Large bowl		
41	Jar		
42	Slab vase		
HANNA, DENIS AUCKLAND			
43	Teapot, tenmoku glaze		
HARDWICK SMITH, MARY AUCKLAND			
44	Bowl, papa ash glaze		
45	Pair of plates		
HILL, MAISIE CHRISTCHURCH			
46	Butter & jam dishes, limestone glaze		
HOLLAND, DORIS CHRISTCHURCH			
47	Sauce bottle, iron glaze		
48	Platter, wax resist decoration		
49	Casserole, stanniferous glaze		
50	Boulder pot		
JACK, MAVIS WELLINGTON			
51	Turquoise bottle		
KRAL, ERNA CHRISTCHURCH			
52	Bottle		
LAIRD, JACK NELSON			
53	Jar		
McCAUGHERN, HAZEL CHRISTCHURCH			
54	Bowl		
MARTIN, BRUCE HASTINGS			
55	Stud box		
56	Slab vase		
MARTIN, ESTELLE HASTINGS			
57	Honey pot		
58	Honey pot		
59	Casserole		
MILNE, MARGARET AUCKLAND			
60	Bowl		
61	Bowl		
62	Bottle		
MOODY, MURIEL WELLINGTON			
63	Plaque "Ox"		
MOUNTAIN, GUY KATI KATI			
64	Six soup bowls		
65	Narrow necked vase		
NAIRN, GAYNOR FEILDING			
66	Fruit bowl		
PERRIN, PAT AUCKLAND			
67	Wine jar		
PERRY, ROSEMARY CHRISTCHURCH			
68	Discoid wine bottle, dolomite glaze		
69	Pickled onion jar with fork		

REED, WYN CHRISTCHURCH

- 70 Honey pot *Stoneware*
71 Casserole

ROUT, JOAN NAPIER

- 72 "Igneous", sculptured pot *Stoneware*

SHARPLEY, UNA PAPAKURA

- 73 Six spice pots, Manaia motif *Stoneware*

SPILLER, IRENE CHRISTCHURCH

- 74 Hand built cylinder, oxide wash *Stoneware*
75 Bowl, ash glaze with cobalt & manganese
76 Six goblets, ash & iron glazes

STICHBURY, PETER AUCKLAND

- 77 Pair of oil bottles, rock glaze *Stoneware*
78 Casserole, rock glaze, iron sand decoration
79 Stew pot

STORM, GRAEME AUCKLAND

- 80 Peacock bowl *Stoneware*
81 Vase

TAYLOR, PADDY CHRISTCHURCH

- 82 Five necked form, manganese & cobalt wash *Stoneware*
83 Bottle

THORPE, ROIE CHRISTCHURCH

- 84 Hanging planter *Stoneware*

TIPPETT WARREN COROMANDEL

- 85 Jug *Stoneware*
86 Plate

WILDE, PETER PALMERSTON NORTH

- 87 Teapot *Stoneware*
88 Storage jar

WRIGHT, WILF WELLINGTON

- 89 Storage jar *Stoneware*
90 Wine jug and six goblets

Enquiries:

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