



NEW ZEALAND  
**POTTER**

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NEW ZEALAND POTTER

This issue is published at Wellington  
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Second New Zealand Potters' Exhibition.

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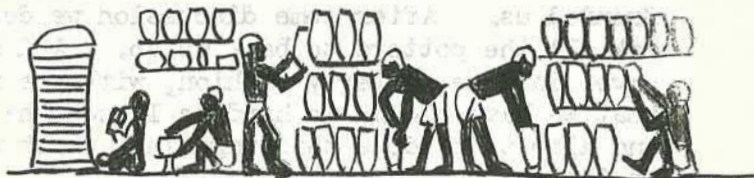
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During mopping-up operations at a recent pottery school a woman was heard to remark "It's so nice being with you all - you're all as batty as I am. At home I'm the odd man out". Whether we're "batty" or not is open to question, but there is no doubt about the fellowship that is engendered among potters.

When the proposal to hold the Second Exhibition of the work of New Zealand potters in Wellington was first made the question of finance immediately confronted us. After some discussion we decided to ask all the potters to back us up. And so you have, in true potterly fashion, with the result that we have enough in hand to launch the Exhibition, and also to produce this magazine, which we hope may be the start of something worthwhile.

We intend to produce the next issue of this magazine in November, and it will contain descriptions and criticisms of the October Exhibition, further articles we hope will interest everyone, and more news of what is going on in New Zealand. For this we depend on you, so please write to us. We also intend to have a column of enquiries, so send in your questions and some other potter may be able to help.

There is room for everyone in the pottery movement. Even though we may never learn to throw a pot, we may still learn to love the clay and to have an appreciation of hand-made pots we can use in our daily living. New Zealand has always felt the lack of a folk art on which to base a craft movement. Perhaps pottery, with its use of the materials all around us, and its production of something we can feel and use, is fulfilling this need. Our roots are in the English culture, but we live in the Pacific and cannot help but be influenced by the East from which some of the world's best pots have come. We have the burning enthusiasm and the urge to create. Perhaps one day when our skill catches up with our enthusiasm we may even produce some worthwhile pots.



## NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES

Barry Brickell

How would life be if we were not allowed to let off steam in the form of creation? Indeed, how many people there are now leading empty, uncreative, bored lives. Juveniles becoming delinquent, homes starkly unimaginative, the superficially blasé attitude, and our senses dulled by an age of commercialism, are factors that at least some cannot help noticing now in our population. So sterile are we becoming in a land so fertile.

But what is the answer? I don't mean that potting is any form of salvation for the masses. I mean that we should all have a guiding philosophy of our own; a less materialistic, possessive, artificial one, and a more natural, honest one. If we could work for the satisfaction of ourselves rather than be slaves to the "powers that be", we would at least be starting a firm and fertile tradition. Art is no more than the product of honest, good work, and our culture is plainly shown up in our art work. So do not regard art as something mysteriously limited to the few "strange characters" about the town, but look upon it as an inevitable result, well within the grasp of everyone who likes to enjoy using materials. For materials one should again go to nature in order to extract the very maximum from them. With prepared, commercial materials, machines and men come between you and your work. There is, therefore, a lesser sense of accomplishment, which is most important.

If you are reading this article, you must have some interest in pottery. Ah, then, you have probably handled clay. If you cannot love it then leave it. If you admire it and respect it and can scarcely leave it alone, your pots will have strength and

character. Truly, clay is a unique, abundant, highly variable natural substance, capable of being a most powerful means of expression. The character of the creator rarely fails to show up when he is using his materials.

There are many ways of using clay to get good results. It is not true that the potter's wheel is the ultimate and best method of making pots. It is a mechanism requiring definite skill to use well, and this takes hours of solid practice. But to buck up your spirits and enthusiasm during this long apprenticeship try some other methods too. The sculptural feel of coiling, that magnificent plasticity evident in press-moulding, or the strength and deftness of slab-building are vital contrasts to the quick sketch-like elegance of throwing. It can be said that each of these methods of pot making requires skill from practice, but it is more or less obvious in one or the other.

A few words on form may be very much in place here too. Do try to attain some definition, clean and distinct, of pot forms. One should have a clear idea of the general form of a pot before and during making. Also be freely self-critical, and next time try out slight variations until you have exactly what you want, not what you think you like. For some skeletal guidance try to base pot forms on the three simple standards: cylinder, cone and sphere. Use them single or in combinations, with modifications according to your own sensitivity. Another approach is to look to other forms for guidance and inspiration. But, particularly if the subjects are pots, digest and absorb their qualities and make your own interpretation rather than a copy.

Finally, kiln work is the least predictable of all. One could ramble on into techniques for hours on kilns and glazing. With less reading and more practice, you will find, not only the answers, but also the possibilities. Certain things, however, are important. Of these I would suggest the following: acquire the very best quality kiln shelves, be prepared to nurse your kiln, make sure by a quick rooftop survey that the neighbours have no clothes on their lines during firing days. Should they have, keep your home brew at hand, and reply with kindness, sympathy and a slight touch of the fanatic in your voice.

That desire to create should never be swamped, and particularly now, should be given full fire. This is more urgent than most people think.

#### THOUGHTS FROM A POTTER

Lee Thomson

The growing urge to throw a pot  
To feel it flow beneath the hands  
The swift upthrust of singing form  
As clay assumes its inner life.

Oh, Potter, at your age-old task  
With reverence handle clay and wheel  
The past is spinning in your hands  
To marry with the urgent flame.

Trial by fire consume the pot  
Transform! Exult, its skeletal feet  
The Potter there all naked stands  
Darkly held by its timeless beat.

Rejected, spurned, return to dust  
 The Potter learns humility  
 To stumble on, and try again  
 The Holy Grail that he can see.

## SLICE FROM A POTTER'S DIARY

Professor C. I. Bailey

In Singapore we had seen in every market, and outside almost every Malay and Chinese house, a variety of great pots, some of them standing as high as three feet. Some were red clay, some stoneware; some were glazed over a simple incised decoration round the shoulder; some were more elaborate with a traditional cut-away design of dragons, the whole covered with what looked like a galena glaze but wasn't. They are jars that the locals averred came from China and were the normal containers for a variety of food stuffs. They were being used as food storage jars - for rice, tapioca, etc., - and as water jars to catch and hold rainwater, and to keep it cool as in the Middle East. (Having a supply of water fit for drinking is a major problem in these immensely hot climates where people must drink all the time.)

Today in Bangkok I have found where these superb pots are made, and I have actually seen some of them being thrown! In fact, we have seen at work the woman who is held as the best thrower in Thailand; they want her to teach throwing in the School of Arts and Crafts here, but she is a simple village woman and will not accept. We went about 20 miles by car

out into the country, through flat rice country (now dry before the rains, due any moment,) and ultimately came to the river. There we caught a river launch and ran down to a landing where we went ashore and straight into a small pottery. The house was just one of an endless line of riverbank houses, cheek by jowl the whole length of the river on either side. Each is on stilts, for in season the river rises and provision must be made for it. Sometimes from the house a rickety landing leads down to the river; more commonly they have a great bundle of giant bamboo lashed together and have it sloping down from the house to form what looks like a most precarious landing. For miles and miles along the river there are such houses, stilted, and with grass or palm roofs. And beneath every house there were great piles of pots, sometimes whole and stacked ready for marketing, sometimes sherds. Indeed the river bank for miles seemed literally lined with the broken pots of centuries. From the launch you can see into little palm leaf potting sheds, and beside them crude brick kilns like broken down sarcophagi, standing about 6 feet high and rounded on the top to form a rectangle about 15 feet long.

The one we visited in the flesh (the primeval clay) was typical of them all; and all produced the same wares - red-clay, once-fired and unglazed pots for plants, and water storage; and stoneware jars rising to a great shoulder and coming in to a wide neck across which an inverted pot could be placed for the sake of the contents, or else a wooden board. The potter's shed had in one corner a huge pile of rough clay, grey and extremely plastic in quality,

just as it came from the nearby field back from the river. In some of the potteries they get it from the river bottom itself and pile it up outside their huts as a stockpot.

In another corner of the shed a young girl was treading out a flat mat of the clay, to work it ready for the wheel. At that stage she worked some sand into it, no doubt to give some backbone to the overplastic clay. In another corner was the potter sitting before a most extraordinary wheel. It was simply a cartwheel complete with tire, and up from the hub was built a Barry Brickell affair in wood to hold a steel wheelhead about 14 inches across. A young man acted as traction agent; he stood beside a thrower and applied his foot from time to time - doing this all day in a heat that can hardly be imagined. The woman worked with what I would judge to be about 10 pear-shaped cones of clay (worked in the Japanese manner by the clayworking girl), and she completed a pot in about 2 minutes, working almost entirely without water, but using a wet cloth and a wooden shaper. We noticed that a popular form was like the old-fashioned aspidistra pot, but with waving edge. We saw her put this edge on by just patting under the overhanging lip as the pot slowly revolved.

We did not see a kiln packing nor an opening up, but we saw one kiln sealed up and soaking. The heat loss must be tremendous as the outside brickwork was almost too hot to touch. Data on the firing cycle was not got because of translation difficulties. I would judge it to be short, with ceiling temperature quickly got. The enormous outside air temperature must act as a pre-heating system and may explain why the eastern potter seems to get a high temperature stoneware or porcelain relatively easily. The source of heat is indeed indigenous. Coconut husks, in a land abounding in coconuts, is one fuel used. Another

is the long central stem or stalk of the palm tree. The fronds are cut off and the long curved spear makes an admirable tinder for quick, fierce heat. Short lengths of the local wood are also used. It may be teak, as teak abounds in this country, being the main furniture wood. All along the river there were great rafts of teak tied to the side of the river and out of the way of traffic. I thought at first it was designed for milling, but I soon realised that it is the stock-in-trade of one of the many satellite trades that grows on another. Here and there along this fascinating stretch of potters' river there were cut log piles, split up into short kiln lengths. The river seems to provide everything - the clay, the wood, the transport. What delight to the lover of pots to see great sampans packed to the gunnels with great pots. Every type of craft would carry them, down to the delightful little scallops carrying one vast pot. And in their thousands other pots stood in rows or stacks waiting for their journey by river to somewhere in South-east Asia - to Singapore for example, which thinks they come from China. It occurred to me to enquire their price and I record it soberly. The biggest sell at 8 ticals, that is 2/8d in New Zealand money. Even in Singapore I could have got one in any fruit market, where there seem to be many of them discarded, for 40 cents - say one shilling and twopence for a "second hand" one. It will be appreciated that study-leave in this part of the world brings a certain amount of psychic (ceramic) frustration.

(Sent from Princes Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand, on Wednesday, 15th May, 1958.)

## POTTERY

H. A. W.

Pottery is a lovely art  
 And in this potter's room,  
 Is a heart felt art expression  
 That destroys a blind man's gloom.

Pottery is a chance to part  
 From self when in this room  
 And go into a piece of clay  
 And be absent from your gloom.

Pottery is the kind of art  
 That can right your peace of mind,  
 By shaping in a piece of clay  
 Your thoughts of old mankind.

Pottery is a spiritual art  
 And in this spirit you may  
 Make a lovely shapely rosebowl  
 Or a Noah's Ark display.

Pottery is the work of art  
 That mends your heart and soul,  
 And shapes the pattern of your life,  
 In every lovely bowl.

Pottery is God's own art  
 And He has given us this day,  
 A chance to leave ourselves behind  
 And walk His godly way.

Pottery has shown us this art  
 Of getting peace of mind,  
 By living in this spirit each day  
 And leaving self behind.

(Written by a man who is attending a Pottery Class  
 for the Blind at Hutt Valley Memorial Technical College)

## ELECTRIC KIILNS

The Craft Centre, Christchurch, will make for a cost of approximately £20 plus freight a test kiln with a chamber 12" x 6" x 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Refractories by Morgan Crucible Company, controlled by a simmerstat and on full will reach a temperature of 1300°C (Maximum safe temperature) in approximately 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours, or less. Working from an ordinary electric light socket, the kiln does not consume more than 2 units per hour and each firing no more than 3d.

They are also working on a kiln with a chamber 16" x 16" x 16".

The kilns are marketed at a very small margin of profit to cover expenses and any surplus will go to Craft Centre funds.

Inquiries to: Mr. Jim Nelson, Flat 9,  
 20 Hereford St., CHRISTCHURCH.

## KIILN FURNITURE

Mirek Smisek is making telescopic shelf props. Each prop is about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high and with each additional one you gain another inch. They can be safely used up to about 1400°C and possibly more. He also plans to sell grey stoneware clay maturing at 1250°C.

Inquiries to: Mirek Smisek, 121 The Ridgway,  
 Stoke, NELSON.

## NEWS

Last November the First New Zealand Potters' Exhibition, organised by Mr. O. C. Stephens and the Visual Arts

Society of Dunedin, was held in the Otago Museum. Fifteen Potters were invited to take part in a show which made potting history in New Zealand.

Since his return from England and fourteen months working at the Leach Pottery, Len Castle has been most generous in handing on the knowledge he gained there. He and Barry Brickell were Tutors at the Auckland Summer School. Thanks to a happy combination of an ideal situation (an Army hut and a large section with trees in the heart of Auckland), a good Brickell-built oil-drip stoneware kiln, and the two enthusiastic Tutors, the School was a most valuable one. From this has grown an Auckland Potters' Group, sponsored by the Adult Education authorities and chaired by Dr. Hanna.

Wellington, too, has been inspired by the Castle-Brickell combination. In May, despite the longest, wettest Southerly weather yet, five days were spent furiously potting at Wellington Teachers' Training College. There is no doubting the enthusiasm of New Zealand potters - these schools do a great deal to help the skill to catch up with the enthusiasm, and we owe a great deal to the Adult Education people who run these Schools for us.

Len Castle is now settled down again at his pottery in Westmere, Auckland and back at his old job as Science master at Auckland Grammar School. After much research into bodies and some major alterations to his oil-fired kiln he is now turning out work of a quality never before produced in New Zealand. It will be most interesting to see how he develops.

Mirek Smisek of Nelson is taking the big step of setting up on his own as a potter. He intends to

make mostly jugs, vases, fruit bowls and other bowls, beer mugs, beakers and kitchenware. He will use mainly salt glaze and will try combinations with other stoneware glazes. He is now taking five classes in pottery at the Technical School and the new Waimea College and these classes have been doing some useful clay prospecting in that ideal potters' country.

The Wellington Potters' Group, which has been in existence four years, has now expanded into the Wellington Potters' Association (Inc.) Originally formed so that several potters working on their own with their own equipment would have somewhere to meet and discuss common problems, it will now provide a focal point for all those interested in pottery in the capital city. It was decided to take this step after The First Wellington Potters' Exhibition held at the Lambton Galleries during the month of April, proved so successful. A most valuable exhibit was arranged by Dr. T. Barrow of the Dominion Museum of pots from contemporary potters which he had collected during his recent stay in England. Attendance figures for the Show were 4,400, and sales were good.

Michael Gill, the bearded English potter who gave us so much technical help during his short stay in New Zealand, is now married and living in Uganda. By next Christmas he hopes to have a pottery built with 7 wheels and space to match. "It won't be exactly finished," he says, "but it will have walls and roof and I will be going on from there." He is to teach the Africans pottery under the sponsorship of the Uganda Development Corporation. He adds "I am glad that New Zealand potters seem to be flourishing so well in general and I hope that most of them



will in future be able to make Uganda a stopping place either to or from the U.K."

New Plymouth is seething with enthusiasm. Mr. Tett of New Plymouth Boys' High School is getting classes under way and the long-awaited kiln has just arrived from England. Rae Renaud and Mr. Tett have both been to Auckland Summer Schools and returned to spread the word. [Old kilns are like old soldiers. Elizabeth Matheson, mother of pottery in Wellington, sold her old oil-burning kiln to Helen Mason. This was rebuilt, and after some years as a muffle-kiln was torn apart by Barry Brickell and the chamber converted to take open-fired stoneware, using part of the muffle as the floor of the kiln which has to withstand intense heat. Now Barry has built stoneware drip-feed oil-burning kilns for Terry Barrow and Doreen Blumhardt, and pieces of the old muffle are still doing duty in the hottest places of these kilns until more suitable kiln furniture can be obtained.

Napier potters continue to flourish despite many setbacks. The room lent to them by the Museum for some years had to be vacated, but they have managed to find another room to work in. Without any outside tuition save an occasional school arranged by themselves, this Group has made remarkable progress. Recently they held an exhibition of their work at the Napier Museum. (A wonderful Group for a potter to visit - they send her home laden with fruits from the Bay!) Greymouth, too, has its potters, Mr. Hartill was so determined to get some temperature inside his kiln that he fired it until the bricks began to melt. Verna Corbett, who has gone from Christchurch to Nelson to Greymouth, seems to carry the gospel of potting with her wherever she goes.

Peter Stichbury, present holder of the Fellowship Award of the Association of New Zealand Art Societies,

and his wife, Diane, are making the most of their time overseas. After nine worthwhile months at the Leach Pottery they have been touring Europe by car, visiting Museums and potters as they go. Their collection of colour slides is growing daily, and the Stichburys being true potters, we will all benefit from these on their return. From Europe they go to Africa, to spend nine months working with Michael Cardew - a most valuable experience.

Our old stalwart, Doug Sellman, keeps the interest going in Gisborne.

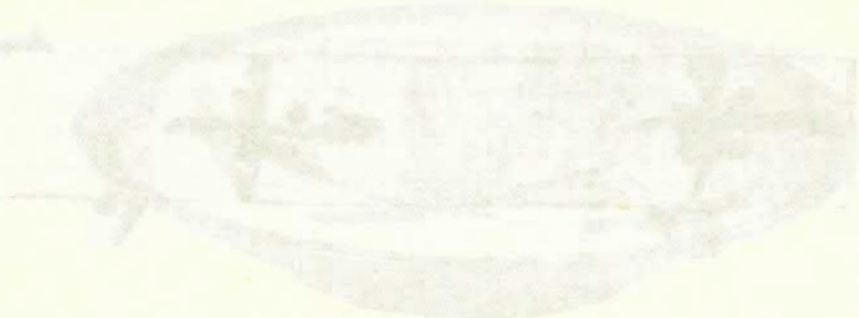
The Auckland Arts Society has organised classes in pottery under the able tutorship of Olive Jones. Last October they organised a most successful Craft Show with demonstrations of the various crafts. Patricia Ferrin, who has just had a one-man show at the New Vision Arts and Crafts, Takapuna, was one of the demonstrators.

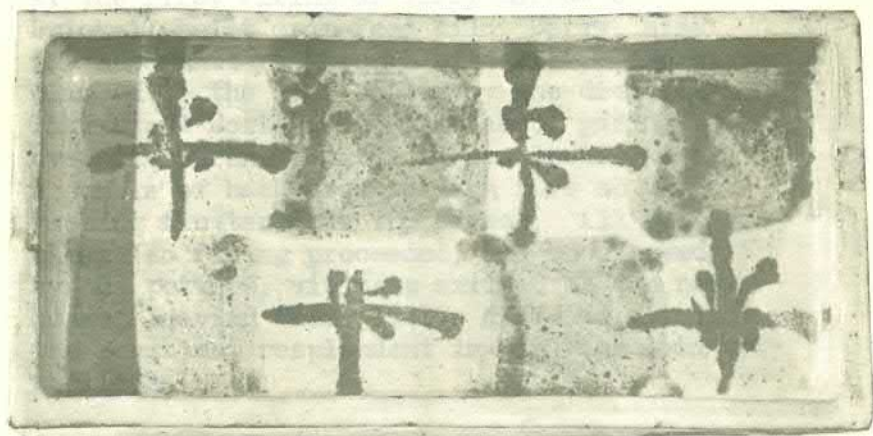
Christchurch has had pottery classes at Risingholme Community Centre for some years, under the guidance of Doris Holland, and there has been a group of enthusiasts with their own workshop at Hillsborough. Last year, in May, Miss Yvonne Rust organised a Pottery School for Adult Education. Over fifty potters attended from all over New Zealand, and the enthusiasm engendered was so great that it is still being talked about in pottery circles. Now Jim Nelson and his Craft Centre are going from strength to strength, and this is such an interesting new development in New Zealand potting that we feel it warrants an article to itself.

At the first firing of Terry Barrow's Brickell-built drip-feed kiln, Barry, wise in these matters through bitter experience, climbed to the roof to survey the district like stout Cortez, but instead of gazing over the serene Pacific he was looking over a jumble of backyards to make sure no white washing fluttered in the breeze. All was clear, so firing proceeded, but unobserved by the potters, visitors arrived at the next house, leaving their little Alfie to air in the sunshine, resplendent in his Rinso-white woollies.

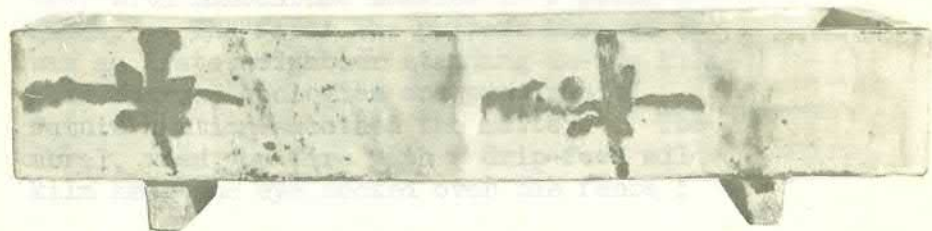
Soon great clouds of smoke were rising to heaven and oil smuts drizzled to earth, floating as if by fate's hand in the direction of little Alfie, who in no time looked less like an advertisement for Rinso, and more like a baby with monochrome measles in a polka-dot smock. The first the potters knew of it was an irate neighbour standing in the kilnshed door. Apologies and promises of future caution smoothed the matter. The moral, when you fire with a drip-feed oil kiln keep one eye cocked over the fence!

Mrs. Bondy, who has been experimenting for some years with glazes made from New Zealand rocks, has produced a blue-green celadon of real beauty. It has not come the easy way, either, but shows what can be done with constant experiment and persistence.



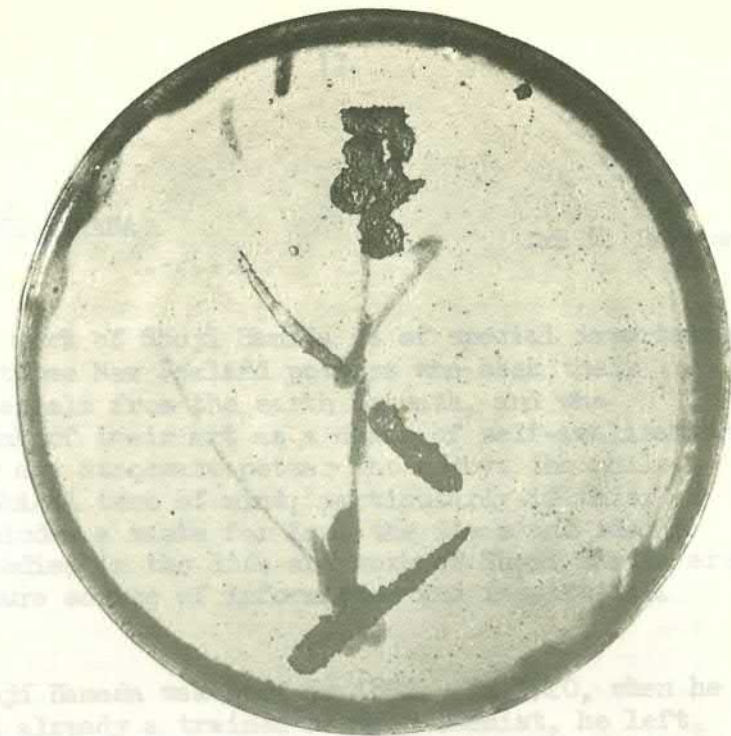


Mrs. Fandy, who has been experimenting for some years with glasses made from New Zealand rocks, has produced a blue-green variety of glass.

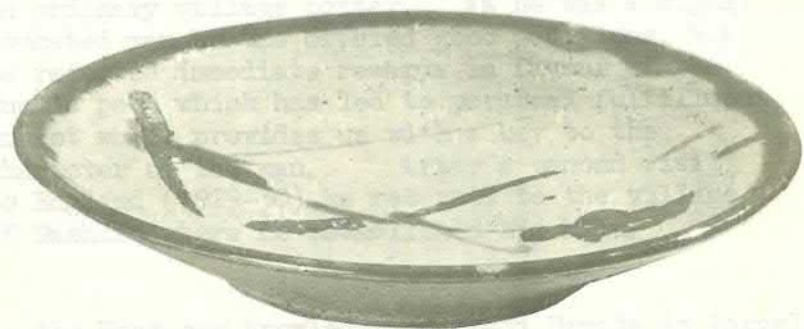


Mrs. Fandy, who has been experimenting for some years with glasses made from New Zealand rocks, has produced a blue-green variety of glass.

STONEWARE TROUGH BY SHOJI HAMADA  
 IN THE COLLECTION OF RAY CHAPMAN-TAYLOR  
 PHOTO. DOMINION MUSEUM.



Shoji Hamada was born in 1890, when he was already a trained potter, he left Japan with Mr. Bernard Leach, with whom he worked for several years at St. Ives, Cornwall. He returned to Japan in 1913 determined to work as a potter and to introduce the best of the Western pottery to his native land.



In the West our knowledge of pottery is based on the writings and teaching of the potters of the past.

STONEWARE PLATE BY SHOJI HAMADA  
 IN THE COLLECTION OF RAY CHAPMAN-TAYLOR  
 PHOTO. DOMINION MUSEUM.

SHOJI HAMADA

Dr. T. Barrow

The work of Shoji Hamada is of special importance to those New Zealand potters who seek their materials from the earth beneath, and who think of their art as a means of self-realisation. For any stoneware potter who enjoys the philosophical turn of mind, particularly if this includes a taste for Zen, the ideas and ideals embodied in the life and work of Shoji Hamada are a sure source of information and inspiration.

Shoji Hamada was born in 1892. In 1920, when he was already a trained ceramic chemist, he left Japan with Mr. Bernard Leach, with whom he worked as helper and pupil at St. Ives, Cornwall. He returned to Japan in 1923 determined to work as an ordinary village potter. As he was a highly educated man he was offered good positions, but he rejected immediate rewards in favour of the humble path which has led to personal fulfillment, an act which provides us with a key to the character of the man. After a second visit to England (1929-30) he returned to the village of Mashiko where he established his kiln.

In the West our knowledge of Shoji Hamada is largely due to the writing and teaching of Mr. Bernard Leach. The friendship of these master potters has had a far-reaching influence in England, Japan, and, (one might add), New Zealand. Both Leach and

Hamada have been associated with the "Mingei" or folk craft movement, which includes in its supporters the other two of the great Japanese trio, Kanjiro Kawai and Kenkichi Tomimoto. Under the spiritual prophetship of Soyetsu Yanagi, Founder and Director of the Folk Art Museum of Tokyo, the "Mingei" movement has set a standard, the ideal of a return to that impersonal beauty found in craft objects of everyday use, which in themselves are a positive reaction against ugliness in a world where the machine dominates intuitional and human values. The ideals of this Movement are inspired by the spirit of Buddhism (especially Zen) and Taoism. The beauty advocated is of the type we see in Hamada's work, which although virile, is restrained and humble, akin to the teachings of Lao Tze, St. Francis, and the Masters of Cha-no-yu.

I first became aware of Hamada through "A Potter's Book." When Mr. Ray Chapman-Taylor returned to New Zealand from Japan about 1947 he made available for the first time in this country, a collection of Hamada pots. I shall never forget those first meetings, although, since that time, I have handled hundreds more in private and museum collections overseas. In England I had the pleasure of seeing the collection of the Dean of York (The Very Rev. E. Milner-White), Mr. Wingfield Digby, Bernard and Janet Leach, and those at the studios of potters, among whom I should mention Katherine Playdell-Bouverie and Lucie Rie. I am yet to find the owner of a Hamada who does not feel warmly to it. By good fortune, when I stayed with the Leaches at St. Ives in 1957, Atsuya Hamada, (son of Shoji) was a member of the household, so it was an unusual opportunity to ask many points of technique, and get some firsthand information on Mashiko. Sitting long evenings by the fireside with Bernard and Janet Leach and Atsuya, surrounded

by fine pots, was a rare experience. Closely grouped in a corner of the room was a collection brought from Mashiko, since exhibited at the Craft Centre of London (see "Pottery Quarterly" No.17 - 1958, p.35.)

What is the reason for the power and ever-new quality of Shoji Hamada's work? It is obvious his technique is masterly, but technique does not make an artist. Furthermore he uses the same local rocks, clays and ashes used by the traditional potteries of Mashiko. Surely it is the man that counts, the pot being merely the sum total of all he thinks and does, plus the inherent character of his materials and national culture. Hamada has, of course, the advantage of being part of a living tradition, and working within a culture which is highly favourable. Trying to be a stoneware potter in any western country has many disadvantages, everything must be done with one's own hand, there is not a public who appreciates the variation of controlled and uncontrolled accidents. In Japan ceramic art is understood. More people have an innate feeling for the beauties of fired clay and melted rock.

Thirdly there is Hamada's right use of tradition. He has the rare gift, the rare power, to select and synthesise ideas from East and West, from cultures both ancient and modern. His work, which remains unsealed, always bears the imprint of his character, combining the best Japanese qualities of simplicity, abstraction,



restraint, and utility. It is evident that the great epochs of ceramic art which most influence him are the austere Korean wares (especially those of the Yi dynasty), the quietly magnificent Sung of China, and the earthy earthen-wares of Medieval Europe. We may contrast this world-view with his contemporary Kitaoji Rosanjin (born 1881), who makes excellent copies from Japanese models of the Momoyama period (i.e., Oribe and Karatsu), but who rejects all non-Japanese influences.

Mr. Yanagi recognised certain basic principles in the work of Hamada in his introduction to "Pottery by Shoji Hamada" Tokyo, 1935. Because they would serve well in New Zealand I am quoting them with a brief commentary. They are as follows :

1. The beauty of pottery is almost wholly dependent on good materials.

This does not mean that good materials make a good potter, but it does mean good materials are necessary, and that when they are used there is no need for technical acrobatics, secret formulae, startling effects, or related humbuggery ! One should merely put to appropriate use the common materials of the earth, relying for beauty on their inherent nature and good craftsmanship. Thus Hamada went where materials were suitable, first to the Loo Shu Islands, then to Mashiko, where he proceeded to use the local rocks, clays and ashes in a direct and honest way.

2. The beauty of pottery finds fullest expression when joined to utility.

The best pots displayed in museums are those which are related to use. Healthiness of beauty is always present if the pot has or had some

function related to life, whether this is or was used for tea-drinking or for the offering of flowers before an image of the Buddha. An abstract beauty of the most exquisite kind is frequently found in pots which have a very humble origin. The tea-masters of Japan had a special taste for Korean rice bowls, others find a similar beauty in the slipware dishes of early England or in salted stoneware from Germany. Frequently people who judge pots say "I like this," or "I do not like that", (black/white) when they know nothing of the use they were made for ! I advise, be careful.

3. Hamada's endeavour is to restore the making of pottery to its former position as an open craft in which any may share.

This idea grows out of principles one and two. The finest pots of the past were made by anonymous craftsmen who had neither the time nor inclination to discuss aesthetics. Their power was in their inherited culture. Today potters who work as individuals cannot escape being self-conscious. Hamada is not a peasant-potter unaware of what he is doing, or the significance of his work, for he is a conscious artist. His work can, however stand without shame alongside fine pots from the past, giving ample proof that he has subordinated individuality and self-assertion to something larger than himself.

#### Bibliography

For potters who wish to read more about Shoji Hamada I have added this list of works in English which are more or less available. Bernard Leach is the primary source of information used by most writers. Janet

Leach has written in an original way of her impressions of Mashiko and Hamada. Her article should certainly be read.

George Wingfield Digby:

THE WORK OF THE MODERN POTTER IN ENGLAND

London, 1952. pp. 69-70.

(a standard work written with clear insight)

JAPANESE POTTERY OLD AND NEW

Detroit Institute of Arts,

Detroit, 1950.

(a well illustrated catalogue with a good introduction by J.M. Plumer)

Janet Leach

WITH HAMADA IN MASHIKO

Pottery Quarterly, vol. 3, No.11 (1956)

(an excellent first-hand account with information on techniques and spirit of work at the Hamada pottery)

Bernard Leach

A POTTER'S BOOK

London, 1940.

A POTTER'S PORTFOLIO

London, 1951.

THE CONTEMPORARY STUDIO-POTTER

Journal of the Royal Society of Arts

No.4769, vol. XCVI (1948) pp. 356-372.

POTTERY BY SHOJI HAMADA

Kosei-kai Publishing Office,

Tokyo, Japan, 1935.

(good illustrations and a separate booklet with valuable introductions by Leach and Yanagi)

Muriel Rose

ARTIST - POTTERS IN ENGLAND

London, 1955, pp. 15-16, plates B, 28a to 39.

(Excellent illustrations of Hamada's work chosen by Miss Rose with the impeccable good taste which pervades this book)

## CRAFT CENTRE INCORPORATED

A most interesting development in Christchurch is the establishment of the Craft Centre, due to the drive and sheer hard work of Jim Nelson and his willing helpers. The Craft Centre was first talked about after the Pottery School held in Christchurch in May of last year. Some of the potters kept together as a group, meeting together at weekends in a small hut behind the Adult Education Office. As the numbers grew they needed more space, and found a large upstairs hall in Papanui.

The aim of the Craft Centre is to establish a permanent institution where research can be carried out and where craftsmen can meet and work. So far no help has been given the Centre by any organisation except the Wellington Potters' Group, which gave both money and encouragement. Craft Centre members have themselves raised some £700 towards equipping the pottery section.

Soon the hall in Papanui was outgrown, and the Centre (now Craft Centre Incorporated) has recently purchased an old house at 116 Springfield Road, where they are very busy getting established. Indeed it is almost fatal to come near the Centre, for you are either given a job to do, someone is extracting money from you for something, or else they are stripping you naked for something to sell in a Jumble Sale! But if you are brave enough to withstand all this enthusiasm

potters passing through Christchurch will find a warm welcome and a helping hand with their problems. Work and research in the Centre is shared by all members, and any knowledge acquired will be gladly passed on to visiting potters.

The Children's Class at the Centre is building its own kiln at the moment, and one fine day they hope to have their first firing of raku ware.

The hours of the Centre are officially 9.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. during the week, Saturdays 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays are reserved for purely Centre needs like clay preparation, gardening, kiln building and such activities. Membership of the Centre to date is over sixty, and each pays a membership fee of 10/- per annum and 2/6d per session of 2 - 3 hours duration. This fee includes the use of all chemicals except lead glaze, and this is provided with firing at cost. Student fees are a maximum of 4/-d per week, and children's fees are 5/-d annually and 1/-d per session of two hours. Clay is 6d per pound for clay which is prepared in the Centre.

We feel that the whole idea and set-up of the Craft Centre marks a step forward in the history of New Zealand crafts, and we wish it a future as promising as its beginning.



## EXHIBITIONS

One Man Show of Pottery held at "New Vision" Takapuna, by Miss Patricia Perrin, 6th - 20th June, 1958.

Miss Perrin's display showed a variety of clay and glaze techniques designed to create a show of both utility and decorative pottery with a wide appeal. Body materials - she uses both local and imported clays - showed interesting texture and colour effects, including terra cotta, and bodies with oxide colourings added before throwing. Finishes to pots included vitrified slips in earthy tones, an interesting crackle on a highly glazed bowl and bottle, and unglazed terra cotta. Coiling was used for lamp bases.

An individual approach by the potter is employed in those pieces which are thrown on the wheel, then cut and handformed into free form shapes. Shallow bowls, tall bottles and planters were made by this method. Another feature was the number of tall bottles with a satisfying simplicity of line and proportion.

Firing is done in a Grafton kiln.

- N.B.

Stoneware by Helen Mason at the Architectural Centre, Wellington, 23rd June to 4th July. Jointly exhibited with paintings by Joan Macarthur, Bonsai, and potted plants by Keith Lowe.



The work of Helen Mason seen in this exhibition stood on its own feet. It showed technical ability coupled with sensitivity to form, and appropriate relationship of body and glaze, plus that individual touch that ensures that work is creative and not merely derived. There is nothing copyist about this work, but as one would expect the influence of Bernard Leach and Shoji Hamada is clearly marked.

Helen Mason accepts the fact that she is a New Zealander, which means she realises that our society is rooted in English life and custom. The strength of the New Zealand potter will depend on this stability, the added strength of colonial ruggedness, and the softening influence of the Polynesian culture which is part of our inheritance. Unlike most European countries and America, we can look to the Far East for inspiration without danger of suffocation. Our geographical position makes such resource reasonable and indeed natural. The Polynesian islands of New Zealand are merely part of the great Island World called Oceania, which reaches out from South East Asia.

I should not comment on Joan Macarthur's paintings as my task is to review the stoneware. I might say, however, that the paintings combined well with the pots. The bonsai and potted plants prepared by Keith Lowe gave an extra meaning to some of the pots as we then viewed them more in relation to use. - T.B.

## SECOND NEW ZEALAND POTTERS' EXHIBITION

Wellington, 1958.

This will be held at the Architectural Centre Gallery, 288 Lambton Quay, Wellington. The Official Opening will be held on Sunday, 19th October, at 5 p.m., and all potters are invited. The Exhibition will be open to the public from the 20th to 31st October. Hours: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Thursday, 8 p.m. on Fridays. For the benefit of potters coming from out of town we can arrange to have the Gallery open during Labour Weekend.

All subscribers to the Newsletter are entitled to submit 8 pots to the Selection Committee. Each pot MUST be labelled on the bottom with a sticker giving the name of the potter, the price, and the number listed on the Entry Form. Please put the completed Entry Form INSIDE one of the pots you are sending.

All pots MUST be in Wellington by Friday, 19th September. There can be no extension as the Selection Committee meets on 20th September in order that the Catalogue may be printed in time.

Send pots to: N.Z. POTTERS' EXHIBITION,  
c/- Adult Education,  
192 Tinakori Road, WELLINGTON.

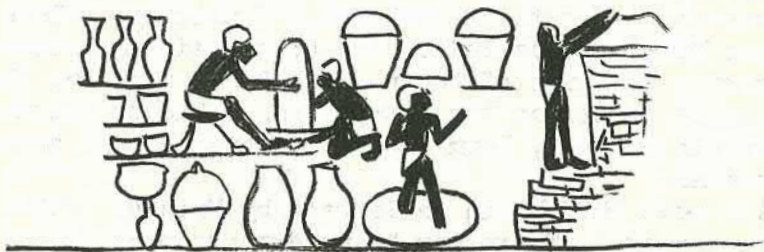
Local potters may deliver pots to this address.

The Selection Committee is: Mrs. Joan Macarthur, Mr. David Driver and Mr. Keith Lowe. Their decision will be final.

Four types of pottery may be submitted: earthenware, stoneware, porcelain, ceramic sculpture. Each piece will be judged solely on its merits.

As soon as the Catalogue is printed, each person submitting pots will be sent a copy so that you will know whether or not your pots have been accepted.

We ask you to pay freight to Wellington, but we will pay the return freight. The Gallery takes 10% commission on sales, and we propose to take a further 5% to help pay costs. The pots will be covered by insurance during the Exhibition. We would like all pots to be for sale if possible.



#### POTTERY QUARTERLY

May we draw your attention to this excellent publication of interest to all potters. Subscription for One Year is now One Pound. (You can buy a British Postal Note for this amount at most Post Offices.) Address: Pottery Quarterly, Pendley Manor, Tring, Herts, England.

#### INVITATION

Potters who intend visiting Wellington to see the Potters' Exhibition are invited to foregather from 11 a.m., Saturday, 25th October, 1958. Buffet Lunch will be provided by the Wellington Potters.

The address: 51 Heke Street, Ngaio. (A few minutes walk from the Ngaio Railway Station.) If you wish to see the Show first the Gallery will be open from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on that day, and transport to Ngaio will be arranged for you.

Free exchange of ideas and potting talk, problems to be aired, and a general get-together.

We do hope as many as possible will converge on Wellington for the Show.

Potters in Wellington are happy to offer beds to those who wish a billet.

We can also arrange to open the Gallery at other times to suit you, so please let us know your plans and how we can help you.

Write to: Mrs. Lee Thomson,  
51 Heke Street,  
Ngaio, Wellington.

## POTTERS WHEEL

## EASYCRAFT

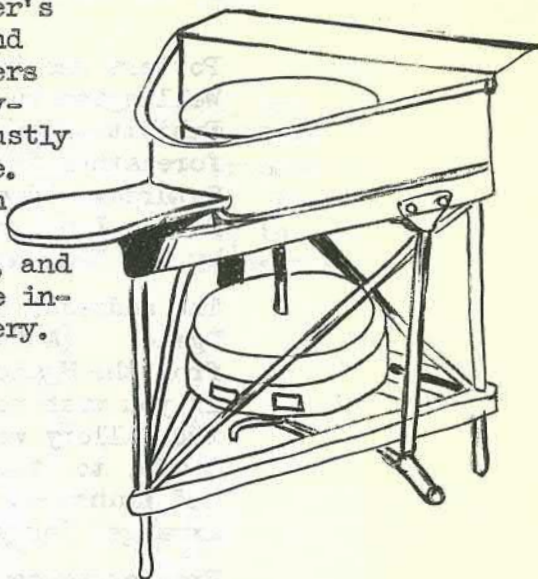
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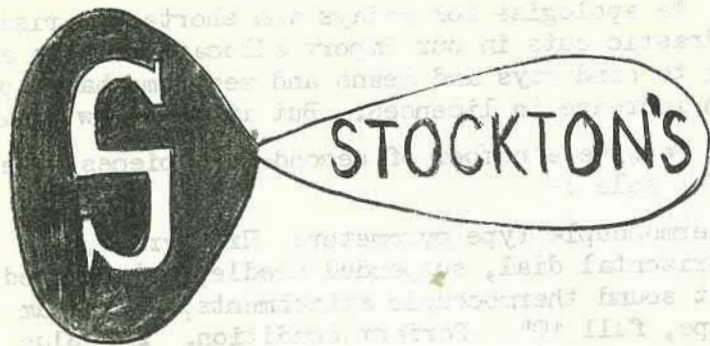
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CLAY, GLAZES, COLOURS, POTTERY EQUIPMENT

We apologise for delays and shortages arising from drastic cuts in our import allocations. We are trying to find ways and means and meantime have applied for an increase in licences. But it's a slow business.

We have a number of second-hand pieces of equipment for sale :-

1. Thermocouple type pyrometer: High grade, horizontal dial, suspended needle; simplified but sound thermocouple attachments; platinum type, full 10". Perfect condition. £18 plus packing and freight.
2. McGregor K1 kiln - for disposal in Auckland only in "as is" condition: Operating satisfactorily, but neglected. Door poor, switch poor. 2-phase. New cost £178. Best offer over £40.
3. Optical pyrometer, Elliott. Little used. This model often gives switch trouble, otherwise O.K. New price approx. £55. Best offer over £25.
4. Banda duplicator, small model. Completely as new, little used. Best offer over £40.
5. Fisher portable CO<sub>2</sub> Recorder. £8
6. Marconi portable pH meter, with spare glass electrode assembly. £45 or offer.

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We have a number of second-hand pieces of equipment for sale:

1. Thermocouple type pyrometer. High grade horizontal dial, suspended scale, stainless steel but some thermocouple attachments, platinum type, full set. Perfect condition. At price packing and freight.
2. Redregor D kiln - for disposal in Auckland only in "as is" conditions. Operating satisfactorily, but neglected. Door poor, switch poor, 2-phase. New cost \$110. Best offer over C.O.
3. Optical goniometer, Elliott. Little used. This model often gives switch trouble, otherwise O.K. New price approx. £75. Best offer over £25.
4. Bands duplicator, small model. Completely as new, little used. Best offer over £10.
5. Fisher portable CO<sub>2</sub> recorder. As is.
6. Marshall portable pH meter, with spare glass electrode assembly. £15 or offer.

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