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New Zealand Potter

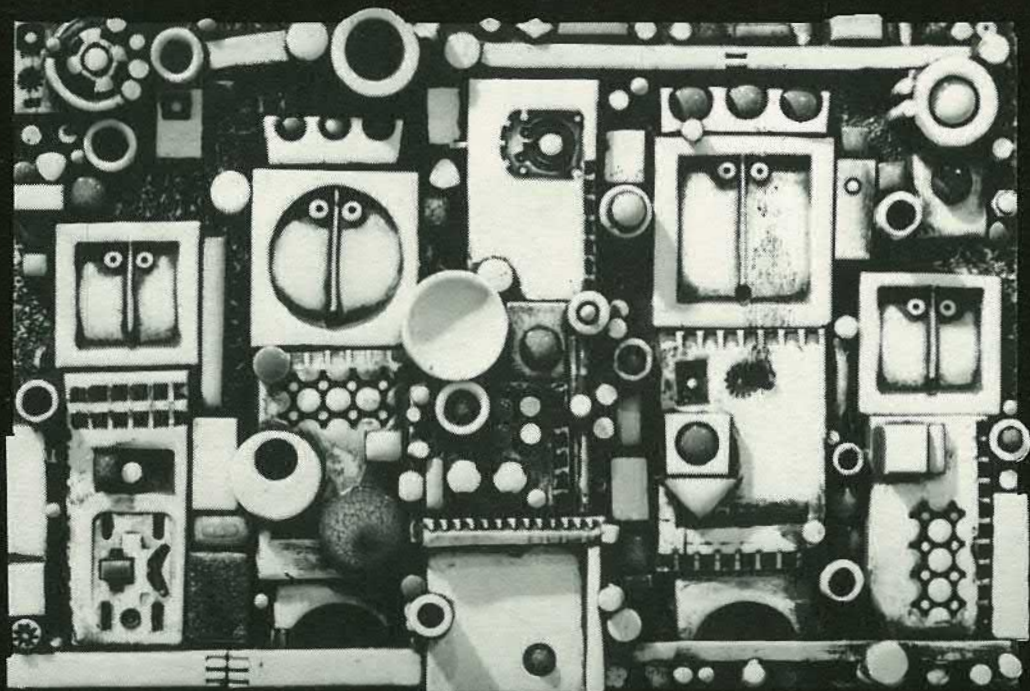
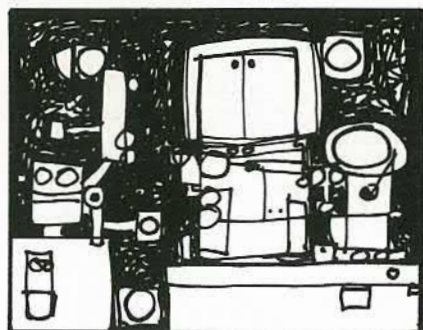
# Potter

Volume 26, Number 2, 1984



Porcelain Wall Piece by Ted Dutch, Auckland, photographed by Ces Thomas.

TED DUTCH



New Zealand Potter is grateful for a generous grant from Winstone (Wgtn) Ltd towards publication costs.

# Potter

New Zealand Potter  
Vol 26/2 1984

ISSN 0028-8608

Cover: Rhenish stoneware Bellarmine, 1599. Photo: Graeme Storm. See page 5.

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A DESLANDES publication, also publishers of the *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture and the New Zealand Gardener*.  
Managing Director: Alex Dunn  
Managing editor: Matthew Bird

Distribution: Direct from the publisher at Private Bag, Petone. Telephone 687-179.

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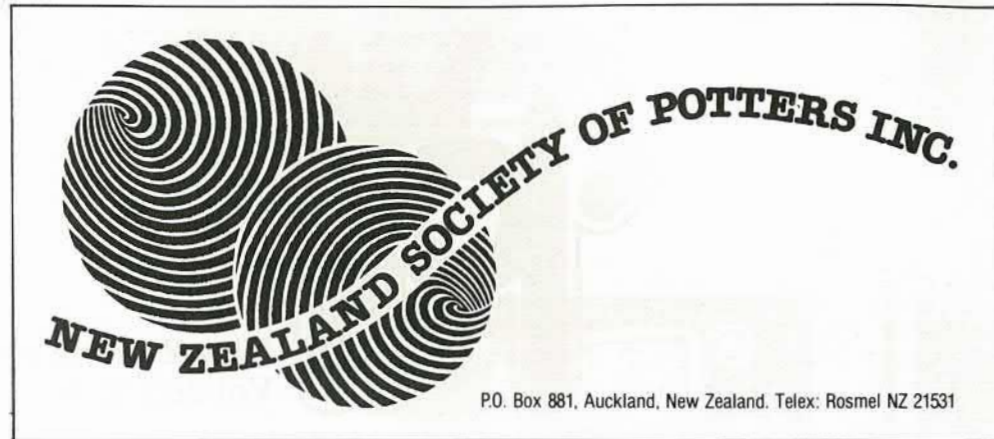
From 1985, the *New Zealand Potter* will be published three times a year, in April, August and December. The price will be \$5 per copy, or \$15 pa by subscription. Overseas subscriptions: Australia \$A20; Canada and the United States \$US24; United Kingdom £10; other \$US24.

Typeset and printed by Deslandes Ltd at Publication House, 22 Waione Street, Petone.  
Postal address for editorial, advertising and subscriptions: New Zealand Potter, Private Bag, Petone.  
Telephone 687-179.

## Note to subscribers and advertisers

From 1985, the *New Zealand Potter* will be published in April, August and December. Among changes to be introduced will be the inclusion of a section in full colour and new classifications for advertising. Advertisers, please write or phone John Deal and ask for the rate card.

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By Sally Vinson, President New Zealand Society of Potters

In line with the new editorial policy of the *New Zealand Potter* the New Zealand Society of Potters hopes to contribute regularly to this magazine. For this issue I would like to take the opportunity of bringing readers up to date with news of the Society's current activities.

**Potters and Pots '85.** Planning is well ahead for our next convention, a 3 day event to be held at Hastings, starting on January 18th. It will include our 27th National Exhibition, to be held at the Hawkes Bay Art Gallery, and our Society's AGM. Our special guests will be Alan Peascod, a potter from Australia who specialises in his own hand-made lustres. Alan's work was recently seen here in the Australian touring exhibition, 'Contemporary Australian Ceramics'. As usual with our conventions there will be many other exciting attractions for all sorts of pottery interests. For further information please write to Julie Mair, 803 Eaton Road, Hastings.

Further conventions are also in the pipeline. We are planning, however, to be more regular with our timing, and Christchurch as a venue in May 1986 will be the first of our strictly annual events!

**Domestica Exhibition.** This was a very exciting specialist exhibition held in May this year, planned and organised by us in conjunction with the NZ Crafts Council. The concept of one theme exhibitions is attractive, and we are planning to mount more of these types of shows, perhaps bi-annually, and perhaps as touring exhibitions.

**Expo 86, Vancouver, Canada.** We are at present negotiating with the Richmond Art Gallery in Vancouver to mount an exhibition of New Zealand pottery, weaving and prints. This will be on display during the 'Expo 86' extravaganza, and should be a very useful exposure of our work.

**Gas Kiln Book.** You will be aware that this book is now published and available. It is the outcome of the very successful Gas Kiln Seminar held at New Plymouth as part of our Convention in 1983. The need for such a publication became apparent and it will put to rest many myths and legends surrounding the techniques associated with gas kilns. It is a totally all-New Zealand reference book.

**Directory of Potters.** A new directory of potters and their work has long been needed, and our Society has set itself the task of publishing such a document. We are planning that its first edition will be a modest affair, costing little to produce or acquire. If successful, in its second printing it may become more substantial and up-market. We plan to make it nationally available, and in the long term, an attractive document.

**Pottery Leaflet.** Another publication in hand is a leaflet for the general public describing the various types of pottery available for sale in New Zealand galleries and craft shops. We aim to distribute these leaflets to all retailers as a service to them, and to potential customers. With the variety of types of pots now available to the public, it has become evident that confusion as to various pots' suitability for use has arisen. It is envisaged that this leaflet will answer the questions often asked by the public.

**Stamps.** The New Zealand Philatelic Bureau is seriously considering the publication of a series of stamps celebrating the crafts of our country. This will probably eventuate in 3 or 4 years' time. Our approach to them received an enthusiastic response.

**The Potters' Pack.** Our insurance scheme continues to grow in numbers of participating potters. It has recently been re-organised on a regional basis to respond to its growth. I'd like to take the opportunity to remind potters that this insurance scheme, at competitive rates, has been specially designed with our own unique problems taken into account. It is available to Society members, and a percentage of income thus generated is a useful contribution to our funds!

**Faenza '85.** We are once more organising a joint NZSP entry of pots for this prestigious exhibition in 1985. With the financial assistance of QEII Arts Council we are sending work from Katherine Sanderson, Barry Brickell and Gail Weissberg. This is always a worthwhile project as the International Exhibitions for Faenza are such a challenge.

**Our Newsletter.** This is still, I believe, the Society's most important function; the publication 6 times per year of our own modest newsletter. It aims to keep members in touch with topical news of pots and potting, and each other, and I believe succeeds in doing so. Our editor Cecilia Parkinson, continues to require your support for this venture and appreciates having your views. This will be the last time I will be addressing you as President of the Society. I would like to thank all our members for their support during the last 3 years. I have really enjoyed the challenges of this office.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,  
I was pleased to note the prominence given to the Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award 1984 in Volume 26, No. 1 of the *Potter*. May I however comment on an all too common confusion about the name of this museum. Auckland Museum began in 1852 but since 1868 when the Auckland Institute, the local branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand, was established the Institution has been the Auckland Institute and Museum.

In 1929 the Auckland Institute and Museum moved into the new building built as the Auckland Provincial War Memorial on its present site in the Auckland Domain. Thus the organisation which I direct is the Auckland Institute and Museum, which is housed in the Auckland War Memorial Museum building. It would therefore be correct to say that the Pottery Award was held in the Auckland War Memorial Museum, or in the premises of the Auckland Institute and Museum, but not the Auckland War Memorial Institute and Museum, which does not exist.

G.S. Park  
Director  
Auckland Institute and Museum

Sir,  
May I make a plea to aspiring author/potters. I frequently come across glaze formulas and technical articles in the *Potter* and other publications, which do not convey sufficient accuracy to be of any use.

For example, on page 25 of the *Potter* 1984/1 are listed 4 leadless earthenware glaze recipes. These all contain borax fritt. One can make an informed guess as to whether this would be soft, hard, medium soft etc, but this is not good enough.

I would also like to suggest that more precise terms be used when describing temperatures. As most potters would be aware, cone temperatures vary according to the type of cone used, i.e. Orton, Staffordshire, etc. I suggest an absolute term such as °C be used, then the potter can easily match this with the type of cone he has.

As a potter and scientist of some 20 years standing I also make a plea for more clarity in describing chemical compounds. For instance, iron can be added to glazes in many forms with different chemical formulas, so it is not sufficient to describe colouring oxides merely as cobalt or iron. If exact chemical details are not known then a catalogue number would go a long way to defining the material for later readers.

I hope my comments are of a constructive nature and that they may prompt people to think a little more detail into their pottery.

R.K. Panckhurst  
Christchurch

QE II ARTS COUNCIL

GRANTS

**Bronwynne Cornish.** \$1500 short term travel/study grant towards researching historic ceramics and earthwork sites in Britain in May.

**Christina Conrad.** \$1000 to enable the preparation of ceramic sculptural works for three exhibitions in Auckland, Wellington and New Plymouth.

**Otago Potters Society.** A guarantee-against-loss of up to \$1050 to offset any losses associated with National Ceramics '84 at Dunedin in April.

**New Council Members**  
Two new members have joined the council. Retiring members Andrew Sharp and Len Castle have been replaced by Eric Flegg and Jenny Patrick respectively. Eric Flegg, currently Head of the Art Department at Hamilton Teachers' College, was formerly an elected member of the Northern Regional Arts Council and has just been appointed chairman of that council for a three-year term, in which capacity he joins QE II. Jenny Patrick is a well-known silversmith and crafts teacher and was president of the New Zealand Crafts Council from 1979 to 1981.

EXHIBITION CALENDAR

**Canterbury Society of Arts, Art Gallery, Christchurch**

Four Potters 1-11 November  
Bishopdale Potters 14-25 November  
Canterbury Potters 18-31 March 1985  
Halswell Potters 8-21 April  
Wellington Potters 22 April-5 May

**Auckland Studio Potters 20th Annual Exhibition**

Auckland War Memorial Museum, 14-23 October, 10 am to 4 pm  
Guest Potter: Paul Fisher  
Selector: Campbell Hegan  
Designer: Julia Galbraith  
Exhibition Officer: Jill Hay

**Accent Gallery, Howick.**

Enormous planters by Kate and Matthew McLean 8-20 October  
Studio glass by Gary Nash 15-27 October  
"Basso Profundo", murals and sculpture by Jan and Jeff Bell 29 October-10 November

**Fisher Gallery, Reeves Road, Pakuranga, Auckland.**

October 22-November 18  
Invited Auckland weavers and Peter Collingwood.  
Peter Collingwood is one of England's best known weavers. This exhibition of his work is currently touring New Zealand.

The Auckland weavers are:

Marie Abbott  
Anita Berman  
Tandi Bloxam  
Adele Brandt  
Jeff Healy  
Adrienne Marten  
Yvonne Sloan  
Ian Spalding  
Judith Wilson  
Sponsored by "Walls and Floors"

**Pots of Ponsonby, Auckland.**

October 7-20. Terracotta by Leone Arnold.  
October 22-29. Window display by Sue Lorimer.  
November 9-17. Window display by Wendy Ronald.  
November 18-December 1. Exhibition by Peter Shearer.  
November 30-December 8. Window display by Joy Wheeler.  
December 9-31. A Christmas display.

## Physiotherapy for Potters

By Judy O'Hara and Grace Alp, Wanganui

The stress caused by occupational hazards is well known and potters often suffer from back ache, sore wrists, elbows etc. So it was with much interest we went to a Wanganui Potters' Society meeting to see and hear physiotherapist Graham Hill. He showed us exercises which may help to prevent pain before it starts.

**For wrists and finger joints:** Hold joint firmly, stretch gently, hold 30 seconds, release. Repeat 3 times. No pain should be involved in this exercise.

**For back:** Lie on stomach, raise head and shoulders and lean on arms, keeping elbows straight. Hold 30 seconds. Release.

Lie on back, arms out wide, swing legs over head and touch toes to floor. Hold for a time. Release.

Lie on back, arms wide, head facing left. Bend knees, lower them to left side, touch floor and back again in a rocking motion. Repeat to right, head facing right.

**For thighs:** Sitting position, knees drawn up, press outwards with arms on knees. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat.

**For ham string:** Sitting position, knees straight, stretch and hold toes. Hold 30 seconds, release, Repeat.

**For shoulders:** Stand and hold each side of a door frame for support. Lean forward. Hold this position for a short time.

**For hips:** Lie on floor. Raise one leg. Have someone pull your leg. (What does he mean? They've been doing that to me for years!) Change legs. Repeat.

Pain and injury can be caused by staying too long in one position, so stand up and stretch frequently. Also watch when stress occurs, and alter the height of your chair or your work to suit the amount of strength required.

Keep elbows bent when gripping something to avoid the strains known as 'tennis elbow'. Footware is important, running shoes or similar air-cushioned shoes are recommended. Bend your knees, not your back when lifting an object from the floor. Above all, if a process is painful, try to find a different way of doing that work.



### Breakdance?



### Flashdance?



### Glickdance

*John Glick demonstrates exercises for potters.*

*Photographs: Lynne Griffiths and Elizabeth Woodfield.*

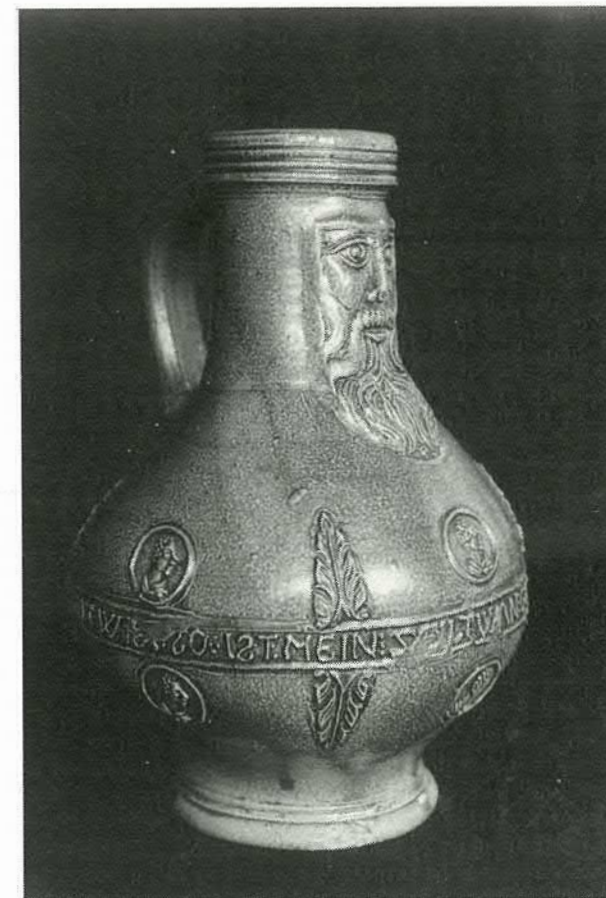
NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 2, 1984

## BEARDS, BOTTLES AND BELLIES

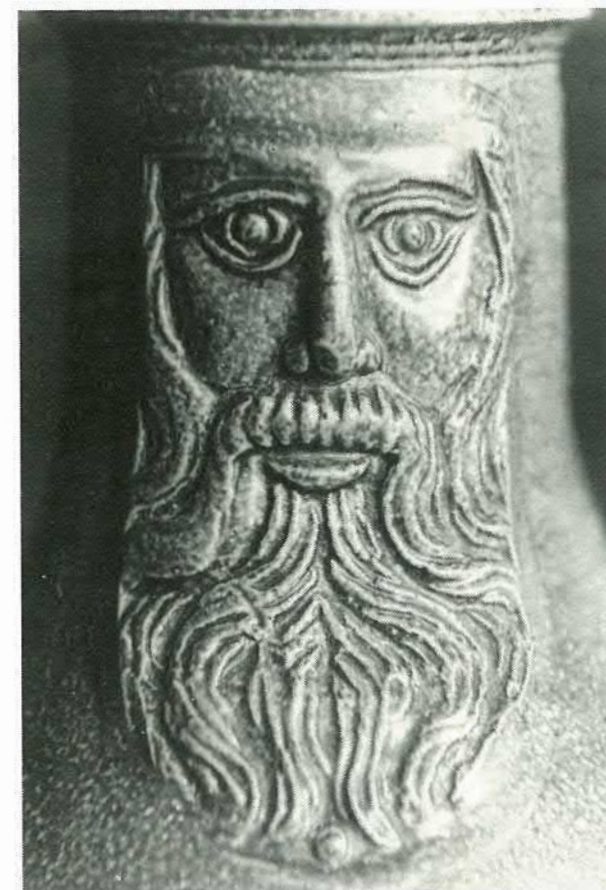
By Graeme Storm, Auckland.

*Photographs: Graeme Storm*

*Cover photo is of a 23 cm high, Rhenish stoneware Bellarmine, decorated with three similar panels, including the date 1599, and a coat of arms with fleur-de-lis, a so-called "hausmarke" and the letters H:D:D and B:B:T, all beneath a mask of the cardinal.*



*Bellarmino with script band is 16th century, 21 cm high. Others are all 17th century and vary in height from 19-31 cm.*



Kendi Jengot, Bartmannkrug, 'd' Alva Bottle, Greybeard, Bellarmine. Getting warmer? Yes — all names for the same thing. That rather jolly, fat bellied, saltglazed jug with the bearded face at the neck opposite the handle, which we know most commonly by the latter name — *Bellarmino*.

These casual stoneware pots, made in their thousands in a variety of sizes, originated in Germany around the year 1500. They were made primarily in the Rhineland areas in and near Cologne. Towns like Frechen, Raeren, Westerdorf and Seiburg, some of which still have potteries producing saltglazed wares today, albeit mainly in the brick, tile and pipe line.

The German name for the jug — originally made to contain beer, wine, sac or the like — is Bartmannkrug or Bearded-man jug. The other names, Greybeard (obviously English) and Kendi Jengot (Indonesian for Bearded Bottle) and 'd' Alva Bottle (named after Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva, who was active in persecuting Protestants in the Netherlands in the latter half of the 16th century), give

continued overleaf

Did you realise that in the recent Olympic Games at Los Angeles, all of the eight New Zealand gold medallists won their medals sitting down?

# BEARDS, BOTTLES AND BELLIES

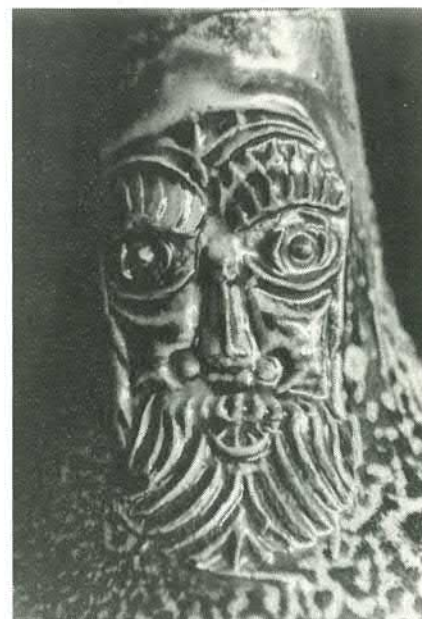
some clue as to the widespread nature of the export of these pieces from their place of manufacture.

From Germany and the Low Countries the wares found their way in quantity not only to England, but as far off as Batavia, on the vessels of the East India Company. The dredging of wrecks of East Indiamen which foundered along this route via the Cape of Good Hope and the northern coast of Australia, have inevitably produced examples of Bellarmine. Some such are to be seen in the Perth Museum.

Cologne Wares, as they were called at first — the later name Bellarmine being a reference to Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino, (1542-1621) much hated in Protestant countries for his counter reformation zeal — were very popular in England during the reign of Elizabeth I. In fact in the later 16th century they were esteemed enough to be mounted, like Isnik earthenware and Chinese porcelain, with elaborate silver gilt covers and feet. Pewter lids and footrings were also common and some pieces bear marks showing where these were formerly attached.

John Dwight, the potter of Fulham, applied for and was granted a patent to make "the stone ware vulgarly called Cologne" in 1672. A patent which he vigorously defended in court on several occasions against other London potters. The only excavated stoneware kiln to pre-date John Dwight's patent, was probably constructed by immigrants from Germany or the Low Countries. This small oval kiln was discovered unexpectedly at Woolwich Ferry, and associated finds suggest that it was in operation for a short time about 1660, supplying stoneware bottles to Woolwich dockyard and to a lesser extent London. Although there seems little doubt that stoneware was made in several places in the London area before Dwight's patent, perhaps as early as the 1620s, their identification, due to lack of excavated material, remains conjectural. Bellarmine of debased form have been found in large numbers all over England and it may well be that some of them are not, as has been hitherto supposed, products of Frechen.

Whatever the scale of English stoneware production may have been,



it is clear both from the continuing imports and from the manufacture of lead glazed earthenware copies of bottles, surviving well into the 17th century, that the early experiments were able to offer little competition to the highly productive Rhineland potteries.

Generally speaking, the quality of modelling in the applied masks and seals on Bellarmine deteriorated with the later wares. Early examples from the 16th century show very detailed and sensitive relief work. Long flowing beards on the faces, sometimes with masses of intricate curls — finely modelled noses and mouths and even individual teeth showing, where the lips are parted. The seals applied to the belly of the pot can also be very intricate, with complicated escutcheons and armorial devices — in rare instances including a date.

The British Museum has a large, fat



Bellarmino bearing the royal seals of Elizabeth I. Sometimes there will be three seals on a Bellarmine — to the front and the sides of the belly — but these are less common than those with just the one seal to the front. Seals and mask may be splashed with cobalt beneath the salt glaze — these also are more rare. In later examples, the mask seems to degenerate to a very rough facsimile of a face — rather more of a death's head — often badly applied, set askew, or half wiped off.

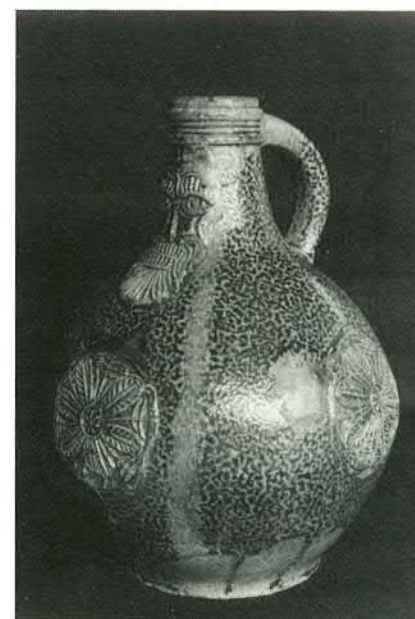
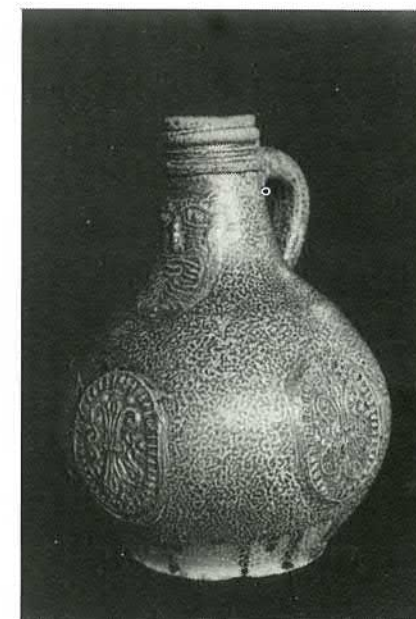
Early large examples were covered with sprigging and an all-over vine-like twining. Some 16th century pieces have a central band encircling the belly and containing a legend in old German script. Rarer still are those which have the semblance of a torso beneath the face. There is even a lovely small (11 cm high) example in Cologne bearing the image of a woman — without a beard of course! Some pieces were obviously made for a tap house, beer hall or some such establishment and carry the coat of arms or device indicating this. As the bearded face became more mask-like and symbolic, so did the seal, often degenerating to a simple rosette.

Handles vary considerably. From those which appear to have been pulled (or oozed) from exceedingly wet clay, usually round in section, to those pulled flat and more strap-like. Yet others are plaited or twisted with several individual coils intertwining. Common to most types is a rat's tail termination at the base of the handle. This sometimes carries finger indentations.

The salt glazing itself can vary greatly, depending on the clay body used. This can vary from dark brown through grey to almost white. Often a light wash of iron (or iron-bearing slip) has been applied over a pale body prior to firing to give a more living colour. Sometimes this results in strong so-called "tiger ware" markings. On other occasions a heavy salting can result in a clear glass-like surface, (particularly over a whitish body) with none of the orange peel texture normally associated with the typical saltglazed Bellarmine.

As with present day salt glazing, the variations of colour and texture are limitless, depending on the vagaries of packing, firing and salting the kiln. So are the blemishes where pots have fallen together during firing or been stacked in contact with one another.

The series of accompanying photographs will serve to illustrate variations in form and decoration. Close-ups show some of the detail in seals or "Hausmarke" as they are called, and the series of "mug shots" demonstrates how varied the mask itself can look — from realistic to stylised; from humorous to fiercely grotesque.



# A WALL IS BORN

by Doreen Blumhardt, CBE, FRSA, MIAC.



Photograph: Brian Brake

In March 1982 I was approached by the building committee of a new Christian Science church for Willis Street, Wellington, and asked if I would be willing to carry out a commission for a decorative panel to be incorporated in the building. Ian Athfield, the architect came to see me and suggested that rather than having something to decorate, possibly the foyer, he thought that a ceramic wall in the garden court would be more in keeping with his ideas. He showed me sketches of the building and I visited the site to gain some feeling for the environment.

The wall needed to be eight metres long by two metres high and I accepted the commission to be completed in one year. I produced a number of water colour sketches and sample tiles, and had further discussions with the building committee and the architect.

Just about this time Jenny Wrightson knocked on my studio door. She had some experience in working with clay and asked if she could come and learn from me in return for helping me in the pottery. Her approach was most timely and she agreed to help me with the wall.

I worked out a system for construction and set up one of the rooms in my studio, which is an old house entirely devoted to my pottery. Three hundred and ninety tiles had to be made each 200 mm square when finished. It was important that they should be completely flat on the back so that they could be cemented to a concrete block wall. Sculptural finish on the top of each tile, I decided, was to be achieved by modelling tiles separately and attaching them to a flat tile with slip.

For some time I had been experi-

menting with patterns taken from rocks which are so much part of Wellington's marine environment. I had made a number of wall panels using clay impressions taken directly from rocks on local beaches. These early panels had mostly been unglazed, using iron or manganese oxides for colouring. On the wall for the church was the new challenge of colour.

Behind the planned wall site, there is a car park backed by a row of tall lombardy poplar trees. As I stood and watched them move in the wind with their brown wavy stems and green leaves, I realised what the colours should be for the wall. I planned that the surrounding tiles would remain just iron washed, and the centre would be glazed. Also it seemed a good idea to have some small areas that would sparkle in the sun, so I decided to use

bright green bottle glass in some of the hollows in the textured surface.

The first step was one of reconnaissance at various beaches to find the rocks I would use. Rolling out 10 mm thick clay slabs on the slab roller we did thirty of them at a time, and stacked them on boards in the back of my station wagon with bricks between the boards to keep them apart. These slabs were then pressed on to a variety of rock surfaces. The clay, by penetrating the interstices of the rocks, made most interesting textures for me to work on.

Back in the studio I cut and shaped the impressed pieces, joining the tiles with slip to previously made square tiles, which were laid out in three rows of ten. When all had been modelled and matched, the first two rows were put away to dry while the third one was left on the table and kept moist. From then on two rows were added after each visit to the beach, and two taken away to dry. This system made sure that each new row could be properly matched to the preceding work, and the flow of the pattern through the wall maintained.



Photographs: Jenny Wrightson

continued overleaf



## A WALL IS BORN

In the drying process it was most important to keep the tiles completely flat, and weights were put on the four corners of each tile until completely dry. Before putting the tiles away to dry each one had a number scratched on the back of the top right hand corner. Work proceeded throughout the year, and as each row of tiles dried, they were bisque fired and packed in suitably numbered cartons.

The next task was to mix yellow ochre powder with sufficient water to give a good dark tone when applied to

the tiles. Some of the surfaces were sponged to give a range of tones within the terra cotta colour which would blend with floor tiles used in the building and in the garden court leading to the wall.

The colours for the glazes were the greens of the poplar trees and the blue of the sky behind, with dark brown areas to give contrast. All the glazes were brushed on to several rows laid out at a time, and fired in an LPG gas kiln in a reducing atmosphere. When they came out each row was again stored in a numbered carton ready for delivery.

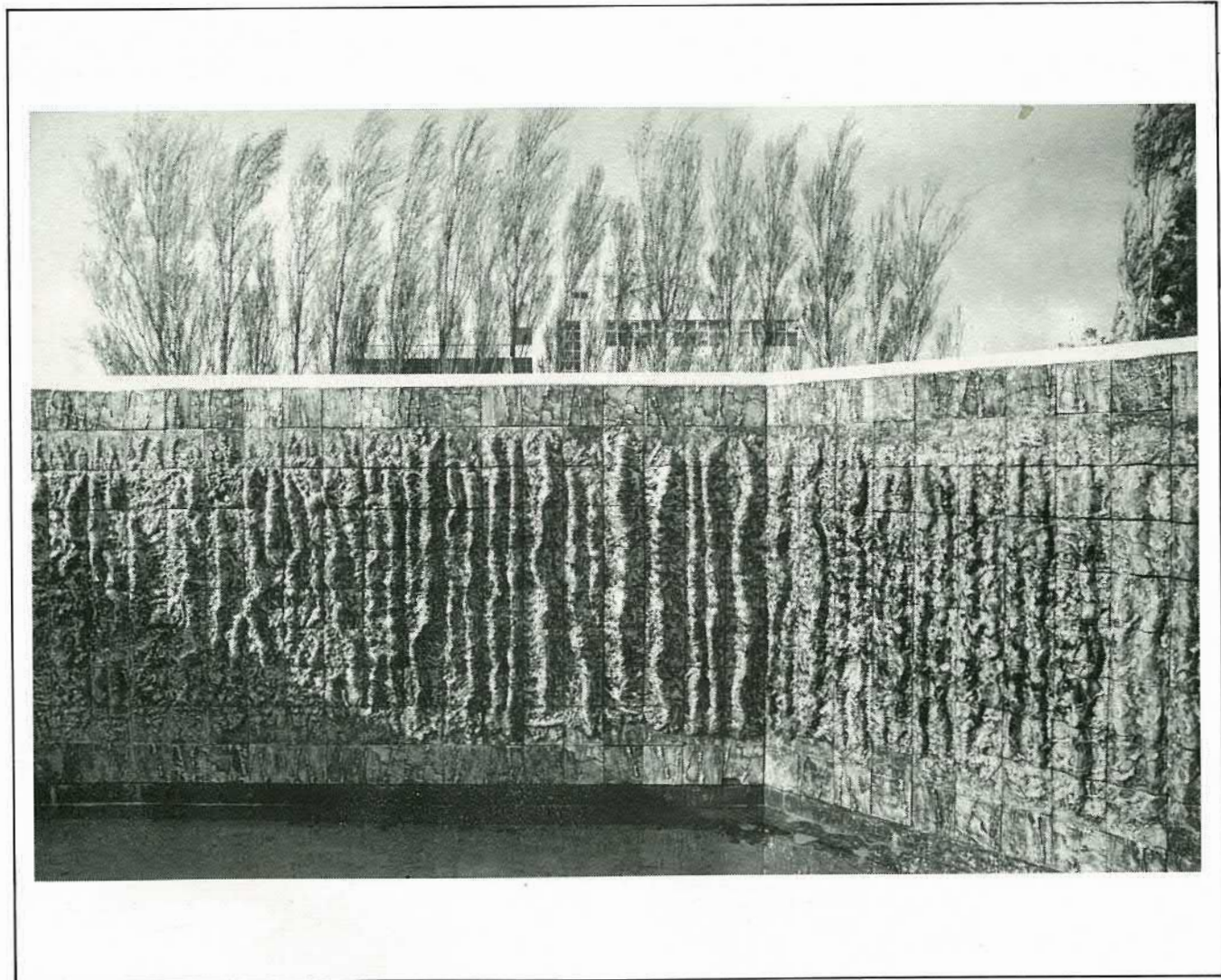
By March 1983, all tiles were completed and ready for the builder's tile layer to attach them to the completed concrete block wall. During three days,

I passed him the tiles one at a time and checked for accuracy and for the first time I saw the wall as a whole, on a vertical surface.

I suggested that the wall should have water trickling over it to keep the glazes fresh and sparkling. This water runs into a reflecting pool at the base and at night, spotlights shining from the sides give dramatic emphasis to the modelled surface. The now planted garden and the poplars behind give the wall a feeling of belonging. It can be seen through a glass wall when entering the front door and all along a glass walkway from the car park entrance. When standing in the garden the wall is reflected in the glass and gives one a feeling of being surrounded by a series of walls.

A closeup of Doreen's wall tiles was featured as the colour cover of *NZ Potter 1984/1* — Editor

Photograph: Brian Brake



## CRAFTS IN ARCHITECTURE

by David Clegg

Our mutual friend and noted glass-blower Tony Kuepfer has pointed out that clay is merely dirty glass. However, my interest in Paul Johnson's ceramics is not based exclusively on this tenuous premise. Unlike most New Zealand potters, his working methods more closely approximate those of people who, like myself, work in architectural stained glass. He relies on commissions.

In a recent exhibition at New Vision Ceramics in Auckland, Paul displayed the various facets that precede the installation of his sometimes monumental ceramic murals. They included competition advertisements, working drawings, site photographs, scale models (often two potential solutions to a problem) and colour photographs of the installed commissions.

What struck me most, and presumably other people not intimately involved in clay, was the diversity of ideas within the one context. In both figurative and abstract forms there were glossy, low-fired glazes, bright lustres, unglazed and oxidized white and terracotta clays, high-fired stoneware, pit-fired and raku-fired clays, low relief, high relief and small sculptures.

If one took the time to read the exhibition material, it became clear that this was the result of the artist's willingness to respond to the client. To quote from his publicity sheet: "Architectural ceramics creates artworks in fired clay that relate specifically to each site. Each piece makes reference to its visual environment, its particular architectural character, the colours and textures around it, as well as making reference to the nature of the business house or interests of the client. Each is a totally unique and personal art statement."

Architectural crafts does not mean simply an extra large pot or hanging but rather an artwork selected to relate on equal terms with all the other elements within a given space. It means involving artists in glass, ceramics, wood, wrought-iron and textiles in the building design process. These crafts are part of the building, not whimsical (or desperate) additions. Only these craftspeople know the proper lighting and spatial considerations their products require.



Construction of the mural "Craft and Architecture" 1982. Paul Johnson.

While a space can be decorated with artworks bought off the shelf, commissioned artwork tends to be more successful because it addresses the specific functions and character of that space — a factor that becomes increasingly important as scale increases.

New Zealand architecture in general has still to outgrow the catalogue-purchase ethic that evolved in the 60's and dominated the 70's. In contrast, Ian Athfield's Christian Scientist church in Wellington is a rare example of an integrated involvement of various arts, ceramic, fibre, glass and wood into an aesthetic unit.

It is, to my knowledge, the only architecture in New Zealand aligned to contemporary trends overseas, the pluralist approach that unashamedly refers to other ages and styles without copying any one of them, and which acknowledges the post-modern joy of decorativism.

As always, New Zealand will come to accept such radical shifts in direction with much kicking, screaming and persecution of its early proponents. But this direction, like minimal modernism before it, will be a fact of life in time. However, unlike modernism, this movement will certainly

*Architectural ceramics, like architecture itself, relates specifically to each site. David Clegg discussed the craft and its place in the ceramics field, viewed through the works of Paul Johnson.*

employ many artists and craftspeople in the process.

Many commissions for glass and ceramic artists are offered directly by architects, developers and interior designers, usually on the basis of previously successful projects. Domestic commissions such as Paul's "Breaker Bay", which must be the largest raku-fired mural in New Zealand, resulted from the client seeing an earlier mural in an art gallery. In this regard, the dealer gallery assumes significant responsibility as an agent for architectural artists working on commission.

Increasingly though, competition is a format for many civic and public commissions. In two examples illustrated in his New Vision Ceramics exhibition, Paul outlines his approach to competition. The architectural firm of de Lisle, Fraser, Smith and Pickering sought stained glass and a ceramic mural for their new facilities block for the Hamilton City Council.

The architects researched the field for a short list of significant artists in each area who were then invited to compete. Each submission returned \$200 as a token for the work involved. A selection panel involving the ar-

continued overleaf

chitectural firm, the city council, the Waikato Art Museum and a sponsoring civic group then made the decision. (Since the time of writing, Paul Johnson has been awarded this commission. — Editor)

With the glass competition, a short list of three artists were invited to make personal submissions to the panel. While this method has much to commend it, it does not guarantee a successful solution. The selection panel must be very well informed to assess the submissions properly as, in the short term, it states clearly the panel's perceptions and understanding and, in the long term, will help or hinder the growth of architectural arts throughout the entire country.

As is evident from his exhibition, Paul's research for such a project would include a study of the architect's plans, site visits and photography, discussions with all interested parties, drawings, working scale-models and finally a submission that included detailed information on materials, cost, delivery time, copyright and warranties.

The design submitted might include a scale model set in a mock-up of its architectural environment, with scale 'people' to provide realistic perspective. There is obviously months of work and a possibility of no reward. Artists are gamblers too!

The major difference between the studio potter and the commissioned artist is the involvement of the client before work proceeds. To identify preconceptions and attitudes is often extremely difficult and to present new possibilities can be impossible.

Just as often, however, the commissioner displays gratifying faith in the ability and integrity of the artist. Winstones (Wgtn) Ltd held such faith in Paul Johnson that they required no drawings or models; they merely set the spatial and cost limitations. The resulting graphic play in deep relief of brightly coloured sections of the Winstone logo, set against earthy images evoking the building industry, was a delight to everyone.

Paul says he is not a potter, he does not make pots. While that is true, he certainly knows how to. During his studies for an Art Education degree in

Canada (he already had a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Auckland University) he developed the traditional skills of wheel throwing which he subsequently passed on to his art students in a number of Canadian high schools.

It was there, in Nova Scotia, that he first worked the rich, red Lantz clay of the region—a predilection apparent in this large terracotta outdoor sculpture called "Broken Grid". Against the warm salmon and deep red tones is an intense leaf-green line of acrylic paint infilling a deeply scored organic line that weaves across the face of the grid.

It was also in Nova Scotia that he first realised the potential of adding brightly-coloured, low-temperature glazes to the traditional earthy tones of high-fired pottery.

The struggles to produce large-scale ceramics are many. There are the obvious logistical problems of handling a thousand pounds of wet clay at one time and the race to finish a piece (up to seven days with very little sleep) before its natural tendency to crack and warp destroys the intention. They are then cut into jigsaw puzzles, 150 pieces or more, and coded with oxides un-

derneath for reassembly.

Equally difficult is the task of fitting these enormous projects, which, from initial discussions to installation, take three to five months each, around a full-time job as exhibitions officer at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth. This particular gallery has an excellent reputation for its challenging programme of exhibitions and this, it seems, has as much to do with Paul's commitment to the job as it does with the gallery's policy. His wife, Ingrid, and their two young children are usually found helping during various phases of a big project. Paul admits somewhat reluctantly that these are the rare occasions when the family is all together.

In stained glass there seems to be a wider acceptance of contemporary abstract graphics than in ceramics. A struggle Paul often faces is handling a client's preference for realistic imagery in face of his own preference for abstract. Perhaps this is a legacy from historical murals whose purpose it was to tell a story. The owners of "Breaker Bay" wanted to see the seascape nearby in the work which was subsequently accommodated in the dark blue and black horizontal element.

But for Paul, the more exciting part was the vertical totemic abstract, derived from local rock formations, but through form and colour assuming its own identity in sculptural terms. It is probable that the abstract segment will retain the longest interest value.

Like myself and other architectural artists, Paul looks forward to a time when New Zealand adopts the healthier climate for arts enjoyed elsewhere in the world — tax incentives for corporate art purchases, better government subsidies for art and craft purchased for public collections, and a percent-for-art legislation administered by a suitably informed body. Maybe then he could survive full time on architectural ceramics.



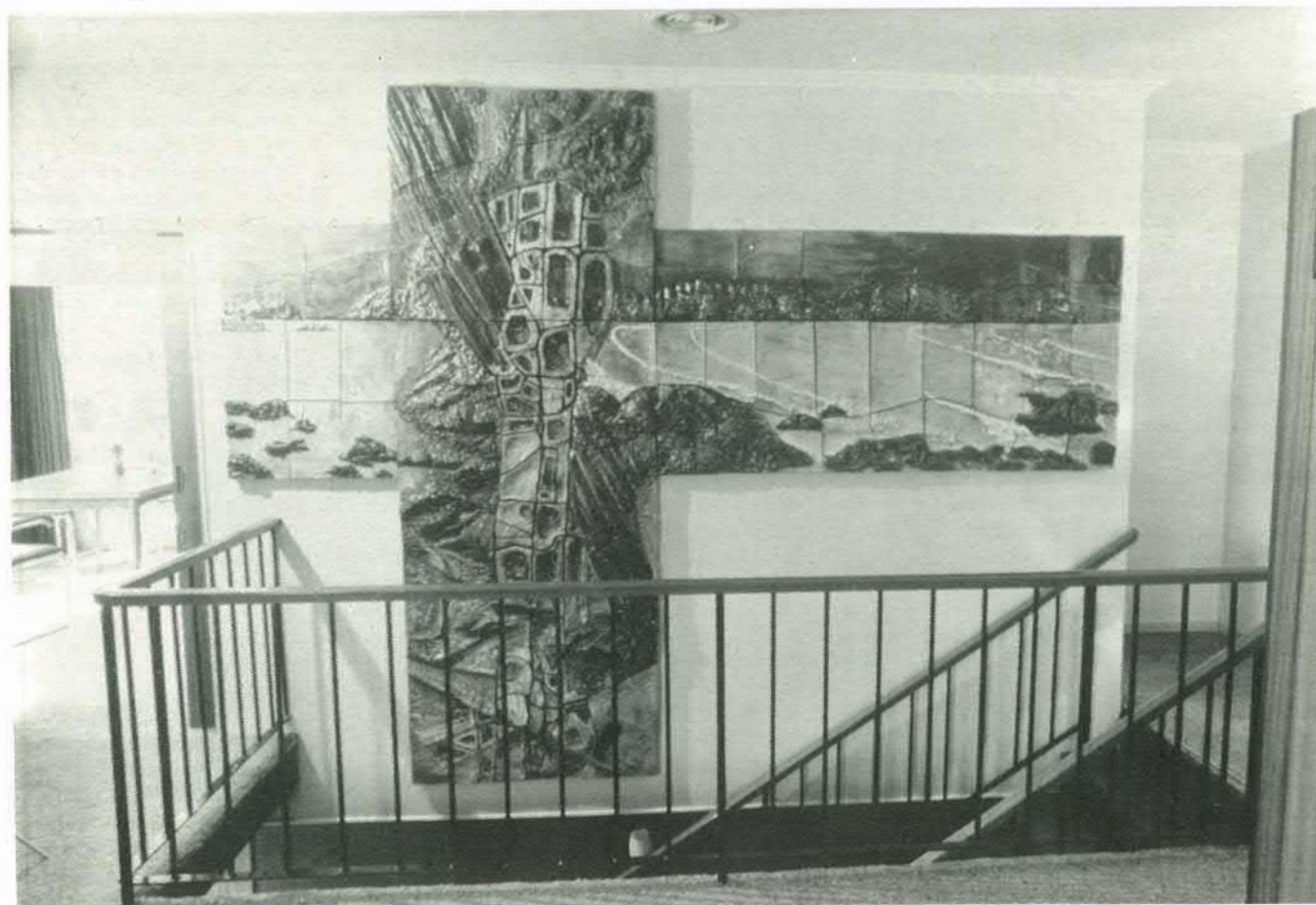
Paul quenching raku work.

"Landsat Wellington" 1982. Low fired stoneware, 2460 by 2040. Paul Johnson.



## CRAFTS IN ARCHITECTURE

"Breaker Bay" 1983. Raku fired stoneware, 2675 by 3465. Paul Johnson.



## FIRE BIG

### Houses as kilns

Nader Khalili has built, fired and glazed whole houses, and even a 15-room school.

While touring the Iranian desert villages, Nader noticed that kilns were often the only structures that with-

stood the rain and snow and a force 7.7 earthquake. The vaulted adobe (sun-baked brick) roofs of the houses often softened and collapsed, sometimes killing the inhabitants—whereas the kiln vaults were rock hard.

So the first volunteered old house was fired to a bright orange glow, using kerosene burners for 24 hours. Steam escaped in clouds, roaches, mice and lizards scurried out as the heat rose. But for Nader this bisque firing was not the end. Glazing a few pots can be a laborious enough task—but a whole house?

Insecticide sprayers were used, with low firing glazes of ground glass and clay. The villagers were so impressed they 'souvenired' bits of the walls chipped off with pick axes! Then other houses were fired in the same way and also used during the firing as kilns for tiles and paving.

Nader then designed, fired, and glazed a 15-room school for one third the conventional building cost. It was very successful structurally and well insulated—an excellent habitat for that climate. And a new scale for the ceramics world.



# THE FLETCHER BROWNBUILT AWARD

By Tara Werner, Auckland

Photographs: Alan Cocker

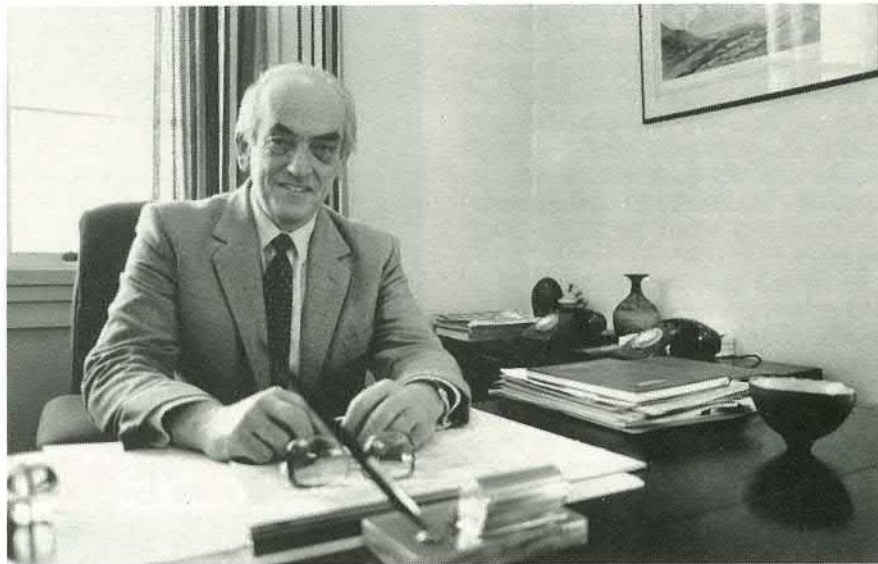
Love it or hate it, The Fletcher Brownbuilt Pottery Award is a well-established and important event in the New Zealand ceramics calendar. For eight years now around mid-May a flurry of activity ensues as pots arrive from all over the country and overseas at Fletcher Brownbuilt's headquarters at Penrose. They are carefully unpacked, numbered, and the invited overseas judge makes the selection.

In early June the chosen few are displayed at the Auckland War Memorial Museum; the winner and merit awards are announced. A glittering occasion indeed, with bubbly to boot. Two frenetic weeks later the exhibition is disbanded, and potters with unsold wares collect their pots. Those who have put in a great deal of work organising the event give a big sigh of relief. Another award over and Fletcher Brownbuilt gains another pot to put with its growing collection.

Cynics and sceptics may be wary of what they feel the award represents. It is, they say, an undisguised competition, and Art should be for Art's sake. Secondly, Big Business is obviously involved, with an eye on the commercial rewards as a direct spin-off from the sponsorship. Ironically, these viewpoints are not refuted by Trevor Hunt, managing director of Fletcher Brownbuilt. He acknowledges openly that his company has gained publicity through the award. But commercial rewards? He doubts it. More to the point, he feels, is that the award has helped with what he calls 'internal' company building.

"Fletcher Brownbuilt is one of many in the Fletcher group; a lot of little companies with individual identities. Within Brownbuilt itself, collecting pottery has struck a chord with everyone. It helps to build up the company image internally."

Since the award was instituted in 1977, seven New Zealanders and one Australian have won. Not bad going for an international exhibition and Trevor feels that Fletcher Brownbuilt has been privileged to own eight pots of a very high calibre. Certainly the



Trevor Hunt, Managing Director, Fletcher Brownbuilt.

impression gained from visiting the Fletcher Brownbuilt headquarters is that pottery is held in great esteem. A few of the award-winning pots are displayed there (all circulate within the Fletcher companies as a whole), but the company has also bought many others. They are everywhere, on counters, shelves, nooks and crannies. Large colour photos of all the winning pots take pride of place in the foyer. It's a somewhat surprising twist to a company initially more noted for its roofing products. Possibly the interest can still be attributed to the tastes of the managing director.

Trevor Hunt admits he is not a potter himself ("I've taken a few classes, but only really to appreciate the work it takes to make a pot successfully.") However, the idea for establishing the award came from his friendship with Auckland potter Ruth Court and family.

"Years ago both families were holidaying in Fiji and while we were sitting on the beach, Ruth was talking about her ideas and plans for the new Auckland Studio Potters' Centre. They hadn't much money at the time and were trying to shift an old house on to the site at Onehunga. Sponsorship came up in the conversation."

From these informal beginnings came the relationship between Fletcher Brownbuilt and the Auckland

Studio Potters' Centre, a relationship with mutual benefits. The ASP gains the commission on pots sold at the award, plus door and programme sales. It in turn helps with the organisation, unwrapping of pots, door attendances, and all those things which go to make the award a success. And both parties find the publicity the award attracts helpful.

Pam Robinson, the present director of the centre, is understandably enthusiastic about sponsorship. "We're a non-profit making organisation and the help we've got has enabled us to get the facilities we have, the kilns and equipment. Otherwise we just would not have been able to cover our costs."

A visit to the centre on a Saturday reveals a hive of activity. Potter Len Castle is giving a demonstration to a group of 20. The workshop attracted so many that it was over-subscribed and a repeat day was needed later. Especially on a sunny morning the centre's old but beautifully restored house seems a very warm and alive place. Not in the best of settings perhaps, opposite the ARA rubbish dump, but nevertheless a popular meeting point for professional and amateur potters alike.

During three terms various classes are held, from beginners' throwing to advanced refresher courses. Attendances do vary from term to term, Pam

points out, but recently up to 200 people have taken classes per term.

"We have a lot who have a go and then find that it's not for them. Others go further and buy a wheel and then a kiln. It's like any other interest. The centre plays the part of bringing people together who normally work individually."

Members of the ASP help directly with the Fletcher Brownbuilt Award, as mentioned. Pam elaborates, "They organise it but we're responsible for helping unpacking, numbering and exhibiting the pots. The judge sees them with numbers only so they can't identify potters by name. Anyway, we're so busy unpacking that sometimes we don't know who's exhibited ourselves!"

Fletcher Brownbuilt and the ASP also choose the judge, the former paying all the expenses of bringing that person from overseas. A costly business but one well worth it, Trevor Hunt feels. "Having an overseas judge has been one of the primary concepts of the award. It gives an impartial factor and also views are passed from overseas to New Zealand potters."

With judging being such a personal choice, each year's selection does reflect the judge's bias. But that is not necessarily a bad thing, says Pam. "I personally think it's good having one person. There's nothing to be ashamed about getting your pots rejected." In fact this year's judge, Don Reitz from USA, rejected for display pots from two previous winners.

Potters who have had works declined often joke about the select club to which they belong. But the judge's subjectivity is definitely one criticism levelled by Len Castle against the award. "The person who really wins does so on a basis of a lottery. It's interesting that previous winners can be rejected. It's not that their work has gone down in standard but it hasn't met the eye of the judge. It can fluctuate so much from year to year."

Whatever criticism the Fletcher Brownbuilt draws, it will continue to attract attention from both New Zealand and overseas potters. Now an international event, the substantial NZ\$3,000 for the winner makes it the largest prize in the southern hemisphere. Both local and overseas entries have steadily increased over the years, and for the first time pots from France and West Germany were submitted in this year's award. Some have been forwarded at great personal expense by the potter concerned.

Trevor Hunt sums up that in the Fletcher Brownbuilt, the losers sometimes gain as well. He points in his office to a large, beautifully glazed pot from Japan, for some reason rejected for final selection a few years ago. "We

sent a telegram to the potter asking whether he wanted his work returned, at his own expense, of course. He politely but sadly wrote back, 'I am only a poor potter. Please sell for what you can get for it.' Well, what could you do? The result you see in front of you."

(Editor's note: FBB don't do this as a matter of course, so don't try it on as a way of avoiding return freight charges on your rejected or unsold pot!)

## N.B.: FLETCHER BROWNBUILT AWARD 1985

This Exhibition will be opening on 1 June 1985 at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Entries must be in by 17 May 1985. Entry forms may be obtained by writing to:  
The Exhibition Officer  
Fletcher Brownbuilt  
Private Bag  
Auckland  
New Zealand.

Len Castle tutoring at Auckland Studio Potters Centre.



Auckland Studio Potters Centre, Onehunga.



# JAPAN POTTERY STUDY TOUR 1984

By Ann Matheson, Tour Leader

Even after living there for many years, each time I revisit Japan I feel again the thrill of experiencing a very different culture — the different language and lifestyle of a warm and friendly people — the Japanese.

I am most fortunate indeed in being able to escort special interest groups to Japan to show New Zealanders a little of the fascinating cultural heritage of the Japanese, whether it be woodblock printing, tie dyeing, traditional doll making, spinning of silk, bamboo craft, pottery or some of the many seasonal festivals.

Through the eyes of each new group I see anew the unexpected beauty of the lush spring green and brilliant azaleas, the kindness and hospitality of the people, the challenge of the underground trains which stop only a few seconds at stations — no waiting for stragglers — the maze of narrow streets and unintelligible neon signs of downtown Tokyo.

The second group of 20 New Zealand potters to visit Japan with me returned on "cloud ninety-nine" totally stimulated, with a new understanding of oriental shapes and glazes, of pots through the ages, of ancient kiln sites and shards, of modern kilns built by traditional methods. We met more than 25 potters, male and female, young and old, traditional and avant-garde, outgoing and friendly to business-like and busy. We were treated to spring water and strawberries, sweet cakes and tea ceremony tea, rice biscuits and green tea. Sometimes we even received souvenir pots as priceless reminders of our visit.

The warmth of the welcome into their homes, the trouble taken to show us family treasures — pots passed down through the generations — the beautiful countryside with grey tile roofed houses reflected in the water of newly planted rice paddies; bamboo groves and wild wisteria paint a memory picture never to be forgotten. Craggy west coast scenery, pink pots of Hagi, "snake" kilns of Tamba, skirt-eating deer at Miyajima, the pathos of Hiroshima's Peace Museum, the bliss of the Inn at Kinokuni Spa, cross-cultural swapping of information late into the night at Koishiwara and the extraordinary welcome we received in Fukui — us on TV news and in the newspaper and free beer at the beer garden!

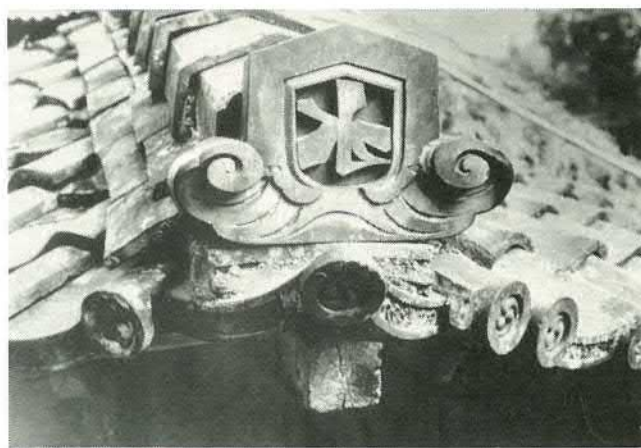
Everywhere we went the potters greeted us warmly and answered our many technical questions, even to the extent of giving away family secrets. In return, our group had a New Zealand gift for each potter we visited, received with surprise and appreciation. Several of the Japanese potters indicated that we are welcome to return for further study.

I feel that this group had a marvellous experience, not only in seeing many types of Japanese pottery and visiting kilns and remote areas, but also in meeting a cross section of the people and seeing how they live, how efficiently they manage to produce beautiful works, often in spite of cramped conditions. We were inspired by their dedication, their total honesty, and in the shops by their helpfulness and service. We realised that perhaps we New Zealanders have a lot to learn.

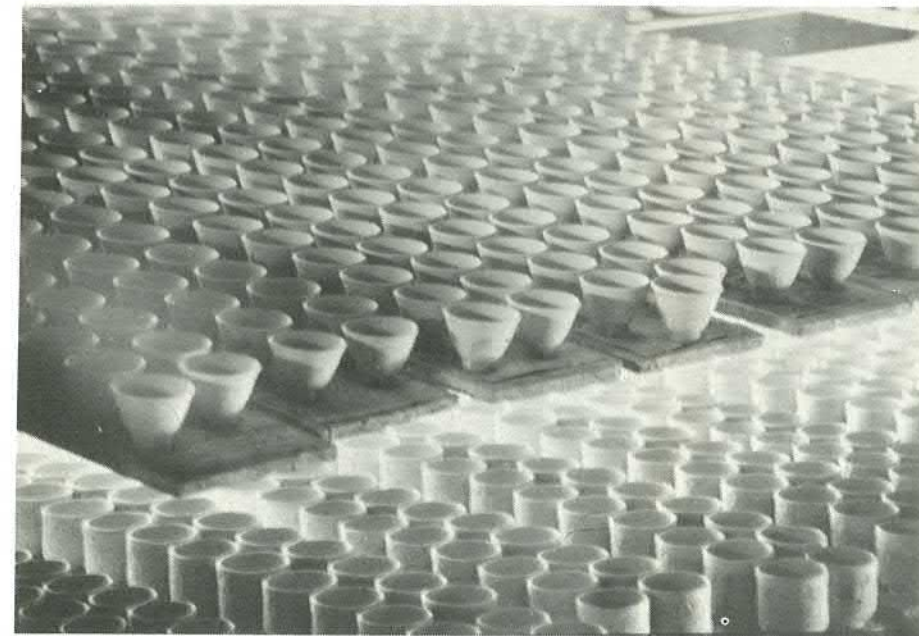
It truly is the experience of a lifetime to visit Japan. I am looking forward to putting together a new itinerary with an emphasis on spinning, weaving and general arts and crafts for 1985, possibly with another pottery tour in 1986.



Robyn Stewart at Seto with Kato Tosaburo and family. Robyn has just presented one of her pots suitably boxed, to Kato.



Roof of kiln shed at Akako Watanabe's pottery, Okazaki. Mrs Watanabe was the Fletcher Brownbuilt Award judge in 1983.



Photographs: Ann Matheson

Work by 76-year-old Toyo Tamamura ready for the electric kiln.

## JAPAN — LAND OF TRADITIONS

By Robyn Stewart, Auckland

**Japan — land of traditions.** One of which is ceramics. A tradition going back a thousand years.

Our travels took us to four of the six old kiln areas. Tokanama, Seto, Tamba and Echizen. However, let's start at the beginning, Tokyo. Here we visited the gallery and school of Mura Kawa, a young woman whose classes in ceramics cater for 150 part-time students each year. The first year's tuition is in hand building, the second wheel work. There are few professional women potters in Japan but many who work with husbands, or in family potteries. Asako Watanabe was the only other woman visited — she was the 1983 Fletcher Brownbuilt judge. In her country retreat, a 150-year-old farmhouse at Okazaki, were several pieces of New Zealand pottery.

Leaving the immense city of Tokyo, we travelled north through the spring countryside to Kasama. Edward Sellen, a young English potter who was delighted to speak his own language, took us around the government-sponsored Ibaragi Training School for Potters. (Where incidentally, kaolin imported from Matauri Bay, Northland, is used for its purity in translucent glazes.) Each year six promising young people from known pottery families are given special tuition. According to Edward, foreign students could work there and use the equipment free of charge.

We walked over country paths, alongside flooded rice paddies newly planted, to visit several potters working in contemporary styles and living in very pleasant surroundings. Two of note — Kosho and Chika Ito, a young couple, gave us a warm welcome, green tea and the cups it was served in. Their avant-garde work has been widely exhibited throughout Japan and overseas. Also, there was Motohika Ito whose *Nunome* (cloth-textured surfaces) decorated with flowers and grasses, are very beautiful and much in demand.

The following day was spent in the neighbouring village of Mashiko. Before the arrival of Shoji Hamada in 1924, Mashiko was in decline in both production and traditions. His influence over the following 50 years meant that ceramics have again become the mainstay of this community. The number of shops and potteries on the main street is rather overwhelming. Most are making and selling mass-produced work of indifferent quality. I personally discovered only three galleries with work of interest and a high standard, Mashiko is largely trading on the name of Hamada, I fear.

Tatsuo Shimaoka's *Nawame* (cord impressed) is world renowned and extremely expensive — a tea bowl, NZ\$1000. A young Indian woman student who had been working with him for a year, guided us around workshops, kiln and showroom.

Takeo Sudo works in folk art style using *kaki* and *tetsu* glazes typical of Mashiko. He had a young Australian apprentice who pays for his bread and butter (should I say fish and rice) by teaching English. For foreigners, quite a common way of supporting oneself in Japan.

We travelled rapidly by bullet train past glistening Mt Fuji, through hilly tea-growing country to Nagoya, a heavy industry city of two million people and smog! Tokoname is situated on the coast south of Nagoya. During the Kamakura era (1185-1333) its pottery was much sought after for tea ceremony use. Simple forms with random natural deposits of ash glaze were fired in long *anagama* kilns, cut into the soft hillsides. These fallen and abandoned kilns are everywhere, revealing much about the ancient style of potting and firing. Modern Tokoname is best known for the production of sewer pipes!

Ryoji Koie — a very colourful potter, personality and clothes-wise, gave up a working day to show us around. He comes from a very long line of Tokoname potters. His style of work is modern, and he fires in both an electric kiln and a traditional *anagama*.

continued overleaf

## JAPAN — LAND OF TRADITIONS

We visited Jyosan Yamada, top master of five master potters who live in this area. His *anagama* kiln had just been unloaded after eight days firing. One longed to see what was under all the ash — the two or three pots already cleaned had wonderful firing patterns.

Seto. Another of the old kiln areas, with many potteries and kilns. *Tenmoku*, *Oribe* and *Shino* glazes in all their various tones are produced here. An abundance of fine clay with appropriate percentages of kaolin and feldspar made Seto the centre of porcelain manufacture from 1600 on.

We visited two master potters; Katsumi Ito, whose workshop produces the finest blue and white translucent porcelain, hand thrown and painted, and Tozaburo Kato, who traces his lineage back through 30 generations of potters. His work is mainly traditional *Ki-Seto*, a light yellow ware, portions of which are highlighted with small overglaze patches of green or brown. Often with intricately carved patterns. Also from his gas-fired kiln comes *Ofuke* ware, a creamy clay body decorated with underglaze *gosu*. This strong blue can result in any shade from black to a light faded blue. Beautiful pots and beautiful people.

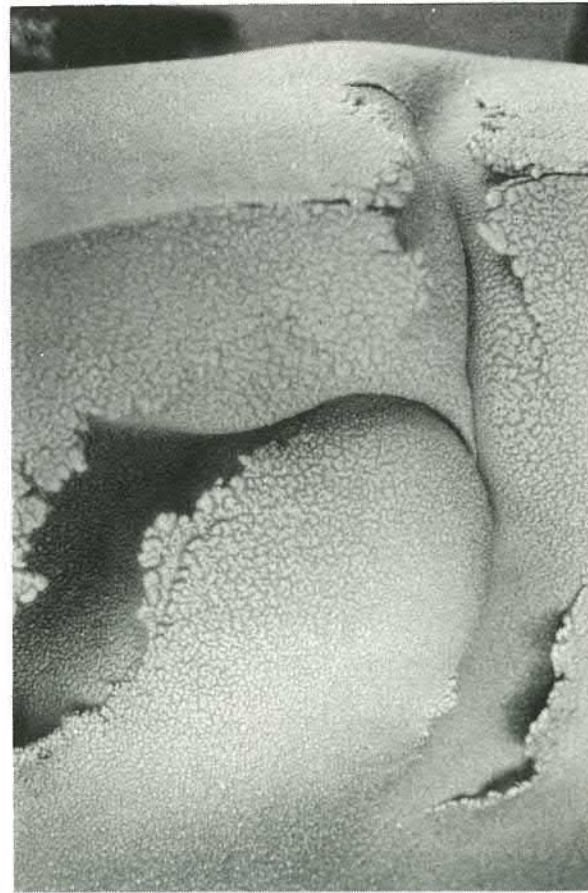
On to Fukui, ancient Echizen. Here we were given a warm welcome, and a bus with crystal chandeliers, brocade lining and blue velvet seats! The press and TV were out in full force, and we were all squeezed into the main room of the house of Zekan Hatakeyama where he talked of tea ceremony ceramics and we handled old Echizen pots and shards under the watchful eyes of the cameras. Five years ago the local government asked this master potter to set up *Tokei-mura*, a potters' community, including a ceramics museum, restaurants, independent studios for potters and several commercial ceramics workshops, all set in park-like surroundings.

Pollution control laws prohibit traditional kiln firing in most populated areas but by forming a community like this, potters can continue to fire as they wish. The public enjoy visiting *Tokei-mura* and do so in large numbers. Later this day those feeling energetic dug for shards at an old kiln site under the amused eye of Hatakeyama san, a delightful man who hopes one day to sail his yacht to New Zealand. Our gift to him was a woolly hat to wear on his journey!

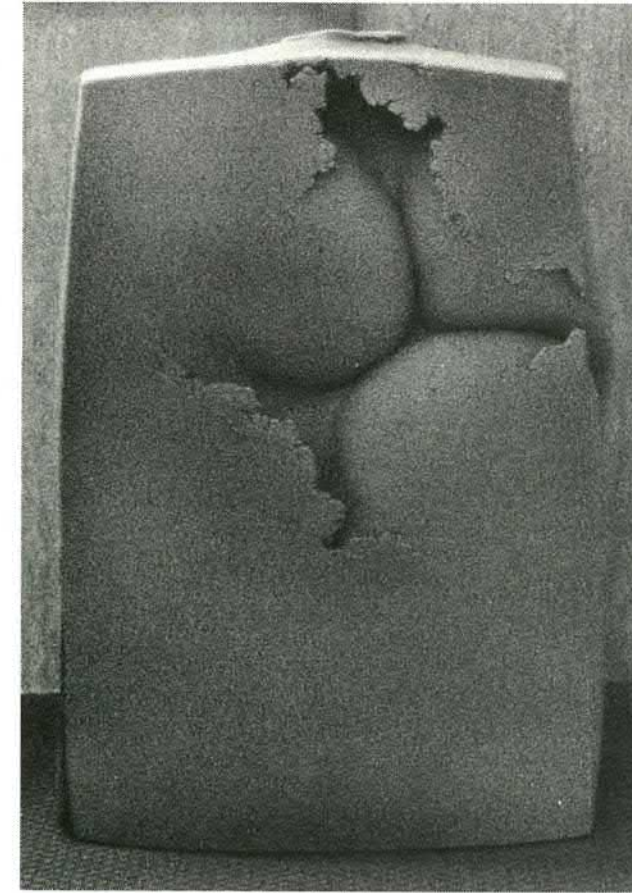
In the old city of Kyoto, in between wandering around wonderful temples and gardens, we saw the home of Kanjiro Kawai, full of his handmade furniture and fittings, wood sculptures, calligraphy and ceramics. A definite feeling that a remarkable man lived and worked here. Takeichi Kawai, his nephew, lives around the corner and had his pots displayed for us around his garden as his home was too small to contain us all. He will be remembered by many potters for his visit to New Zealand some years ago.

While in Kyoto we spent an interesting hour at the commercial ceramics studio of Tadisha Kawai. A designer of large murals, his work can be seen at Narita airport, Tokyo, and in public spaces throughout Japan.

Daniel Rhodes has written a good book, *Tamba Pottery, the Timeless Art of a Japanese Village*. I shall just add — I enjoyed this little village of Tachikui where in 1960 there were 12 families involved in ceramics and today there are 60. I enjoyed too, our guide for this day, Chiyoichi Shimuzu and his serene, elegant pots. His modern adaptations of traditional forms in the deep red-brown Tamba clay, with natural ash and flame patterns, are fired for 100 hours in a 500-metre-long *hebi-gama*. All the pottery areas have a ceramics museum and we once again spent an interesting hour looking at ancient and modern pots.



NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 2, 1984



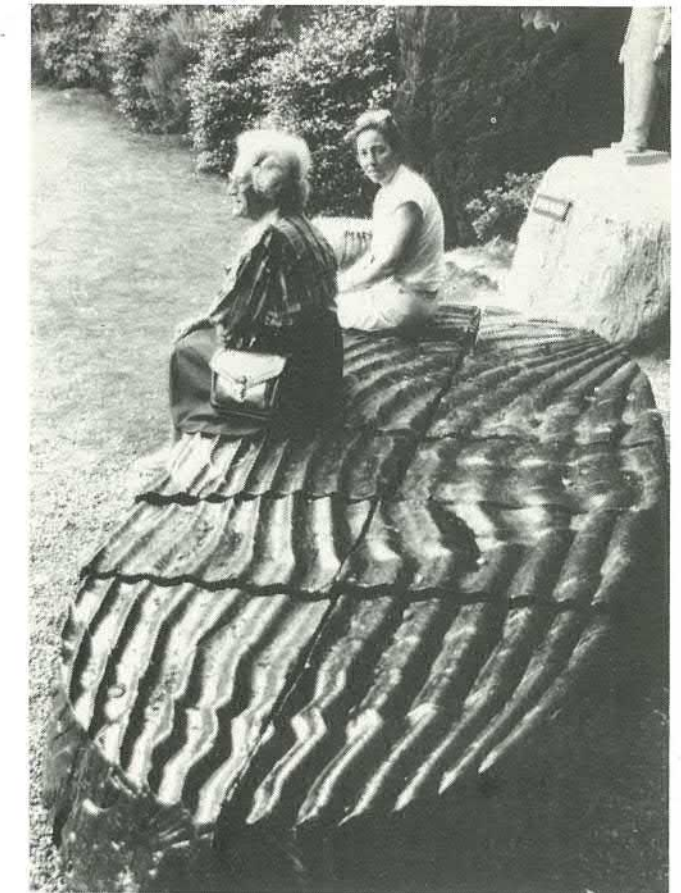
Pots by Nobuhiko Taneko at the Hagi Art Museum.

Down the Japan sea coast to Hagi, a large port city where one may catch a ferry to Korea. Ceramic production here dates from 1592 when Korean potters were brought back as hostages and prisoners after the Japanese invasion of their country. In Hagi one is overwhelmed by pastel pots, but after a day or so, when they had been looked at individually, I found some of their glazes very pleasing. Pinky apricot, grey on a cream stony body and grey and white on a red clay body. There were several ceremonial tea bowls here that I really coveted.

We travelled by train through an undersea tunnel to our last pot stop, Koishiwara, on the island of Kyushu. This area and the neighbouring one of Onda are known for the production of true folk pottery, *mingei*. Two unique methods of decoration widely used here: *Hakeme* — where thick coatings of white slip are applied to the surface of pots with a wide flat brush called a *Hake*, leaving a grainy pattern; and *Kasuri-mon* or chatter decoration, a technique borrowed from the Chinese where a slip is applied to a leather-hard piece and literally chipped away with a vibrating knife. Wheel speed determines spacing of the chatter marks. A demonstration of both these techniques was given to us by very spry 76-year-old Kumao Onta.

There is certainly a wide variety of ceramic styles in Japan. I saw a few superb pots, some good, some bad, the vast majority indifferent. I came back with the definite feeling that professional potters in New Zealand are producing some very good work, comparable to that seen in Japan.

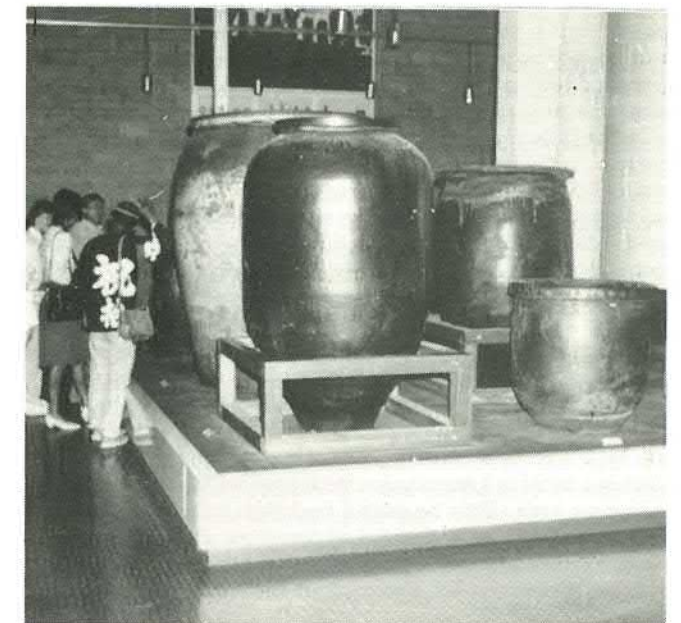
NEW ZEALAND POTTER No. 2, 1984



Outdoor sculpture by Ryoji Koie at the Tokoname Art Museum. Tour members are Barbara Vigor-Brown and Judy Wood.

Photographs: Keith Blight.

Old storage jars. Aichi Prefectural Museum, Tokoname.



# JAPAN — A PERSONAL GLIMPSE

By Ann Ambler, Wayby.

Pottery from the kilns of Japan is diverse and distinctive. It takes a while for the traveller to realise that what he sees in one region will not be repeated anywhere else in the country. Local clay and glaze resources have traditionally determined the style of ware made, and while one can be overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of pots, in any given area they are all quite similar.

Visiting another town or village one sees a different kind of ware, which makes it very exciting. It also handicaps the collector, who has to buy yet another bag to accommodate an ever increasing load of fragile parcels, because he knows if this chance is lost, it will not come again.

Each pottery area visited presents a challenge to one's aesthetic ideas, and one is constantly re-evaluating these ideas in the light of new perceptions and experiences.

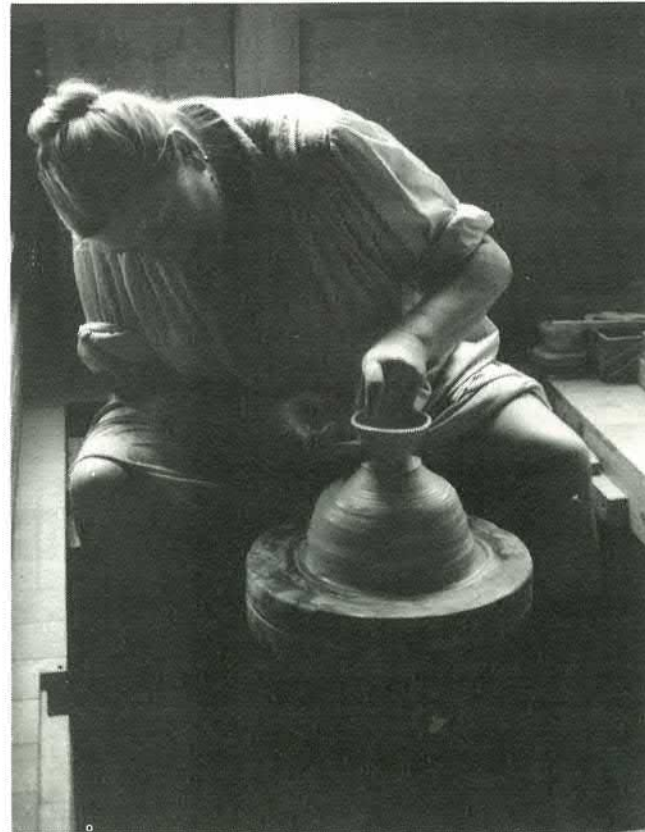
On the island of Kyushu, the most southern and mountainous of Japan's four main islands, lies the city of Karatsu. Situated on the Japan sea coast facing Korea, Karatsu Bay is dotted with small steep islands. During my visit in May the sea was calm, and a soft spring mist blew in from the sea, covering the land with a grey-green haze. Because it is close to Korea this coast has many fortresses and castles along its hilly length. In the middle of Karatsu city there is a large reconstructed castle, floodlit at night and quite magical, seeming to float in the darkened sky.

This proximity to Korea has influenced the style of pottery and makes its impression with *Hakeme Karatsu*, a thick white slip, swiftly brushed over the turning pot; *Mishima Karatsu*, impressed designs inlaid with similar slip, and *E Karatsu*, which with its pictorial designs is reminiscent of *Oribe* and *Shino*. Transparent glaze, or thick white overglaze makes these the most appealing pots to me.

The production of all varieties of Karatsu ware is best seen in the work of the Nakazato family who have been potting for almost four centuries. The present head of this family, Muan Nakazato is one of Japan's "Living Cultural Treasures" and he has three sons who are equally well known and highly regarded potters. I was fortunate to obtain an introduction to the youngest, Takashi Nakazato who invited me to visit his kilns.

In the hills 15 minutes from the centre of the city and up a narrow, rutted, pot-holed road (left that way to discourage visitors and ensure some privacy), is "Mirukashi", his workshop — a steeply sloping site with the buildings pressed into a fold in the wooded hills. The house lies to the right up a wide paved pathway; to the left, the large climbing kiln, tunnel kiln, showroom and workshop are sited beside a sloping driveway. It was very quiet, apart from the steady purr of a ball mill coming from one of the smaller buildings.

The workshop is earthen floored, lofty and light, with small panes of glass in *shoji* screens which reach the eaves on the end wall and slide open in hot weather. Above the stacking racks is a mezzanine bedroom which overlooks the throwing area. This beautiful bedroom, also with sliding screens, is used by one of the apprentices, in this case Janis Heston, an Australian who had been there 6 months. All the pots are thrown on *Kei-rokuro*, foot-turned wheels of which there are four.



Ann Ambler tries out the wheel

Photograph: Barbara Hockenhull

When Nigel and I arrived, Janis made tea and took us to the showroom where the different kinds of pots from the kilns were displayed. There was a range of tableware made using a shiny transparent glaze, with either white slip or brushed iron decoration underneath; bowls in the *Hakeme* and *Mishima* style and the *Yakishime*, which are unglazed wood-fired pots, mainly tea bowls, water containers, flower vases and large bowls. These are fired in either the climbing or tunnel kilns.

The forms of these pots are very beautiful. Gently altered rims predominate, following in some cases the shape of the persimmon flower. They catch the ash, and the fire on the clay gives magenta and seagreen hues. Having admired the pots of *Bizen* and *Tamba*, I was still not prepared for the depth of colour and jewel-like quality of these pots by Takashi Nakazato.

From the showroom we were invited to the house to meet Nakazato san and have tea. The house is only 6 years old and although of traditional architecture, is also modern. Adobe plaster between wooden exterior wall panels is stained a faded russet/rose and the whole house gently glows against the surrounding greenery. Inside, the floor boards are 2 feet wide — great planks of softly waxed wood.

We were seated at a long refectory table and served *Habu-cha*, a delicious nutty Japanese tea. Conversation was a mixture of English and Japanese with Janis translating.

Nakazato san speaks good English, but only when he chooses, so it was all very lively. He is tense, slight, fine-boned and restless with a pent-up energy which I imagine is very productive when unleashed into work. He invited us to return the next day and Janis drove us back to our hotel.

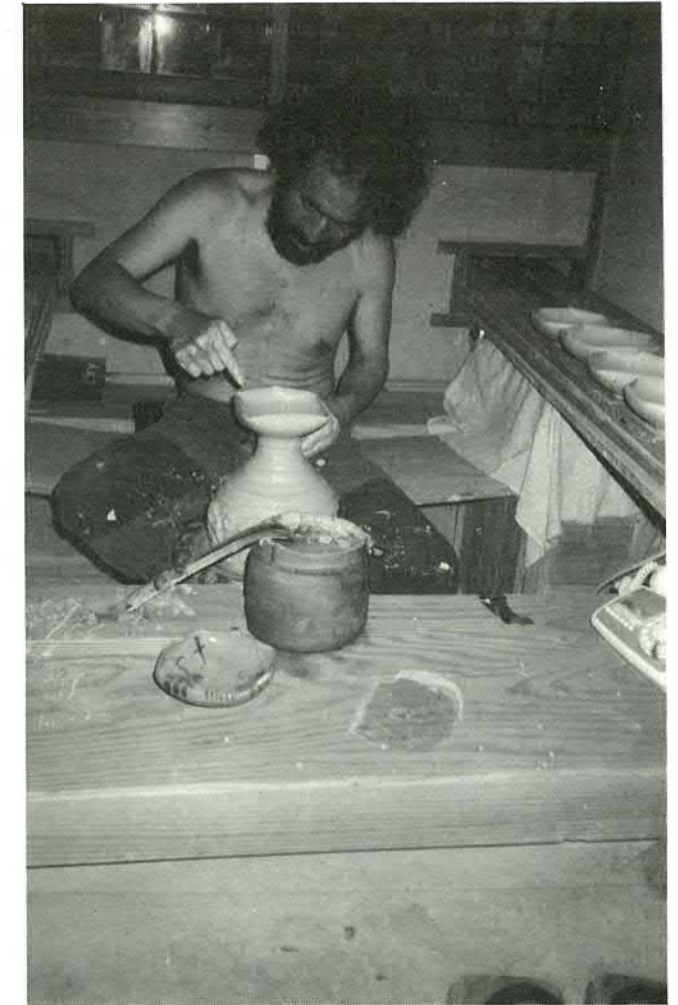
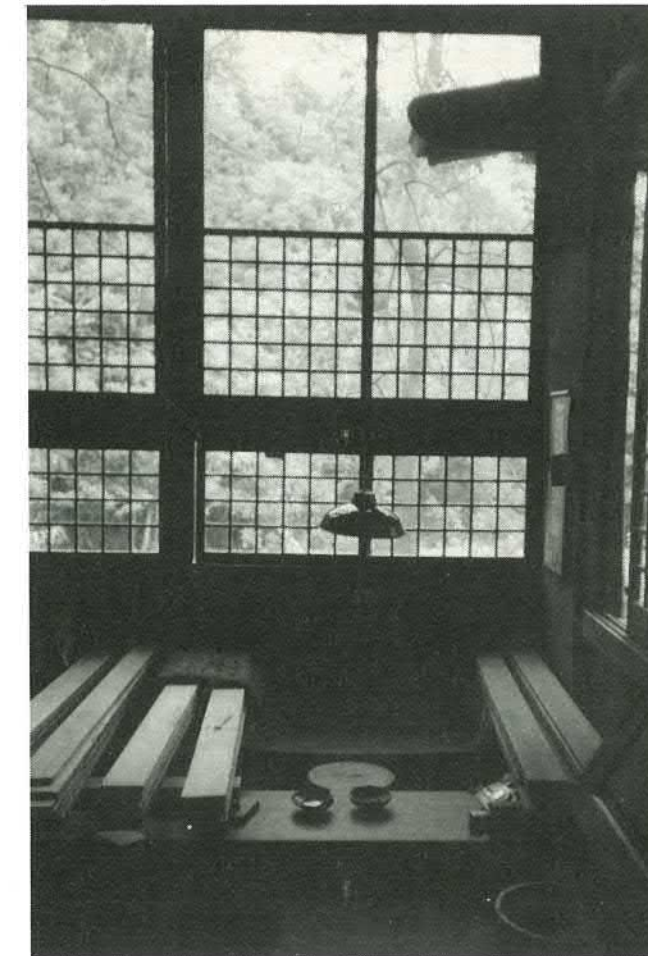
We arrived around 10.30 am to find Janis throwing and Nakazato san practising his golf on the small flat lawn outside the workshop. Janis jokingly said that Sensei was 'working'. After tea he started throwing as I watched quietly and tried not to ask too many questions. The pots are thrown from the hump, and he uses a *hera*, traditionally carved from a solid piece of wood, as a type of rib to form and alter the bowls, which swell out from the inside pressure with fluidity and grace. The clay is quite soft.

Quickly the long boards were filled and I carried them, with trepidation, to the damp-room where they dry slowly until ready for turning. Nakazato san suggested I might like to throw on the wheel beside him and I agreed that it was a great idea, while inwardly quailing at the thought.

Fortunately it was lunch time and we all went up to the house where he prepared a meal of beer, fish of his own preserving, noodles, pickles, rice and green tea. As guests, we were given long chopsticks, which he joked about, saying it was to stop us eating too much as they are more difficult to use. It was hot and the windows were slid open onto the trees outside.

There was solo flute music playing on the stereo and I noticed a spinnet to one side of the big room. Nakazato san bought it as he has a friend who comes to play it several times a year at musical gatherings. He is very fond of western classical music and professes (I wonder) not to know about the *Koto* and *Samisen*.

Kei-rokuro (wheel) at the Nakazato Takashi workshop.



Nakazato Takashi.

Back to work — my hour had come. I wedged about 10 lbs of clay and proceeded to centre it on the kick wheel. I had never used this kind of kick wheel before and found myself absolutely hopeless. It stopped the instant I put my hands on the clay. Takashi and Janis explained the technique of kicking with the right foot to gain momentum, and then with the left to maintain it while throwing. Difficult. My respect for what he was doing increased one hundredfold as I struggled on.

The gap between the intellectual understanding and appreciation of what is happening and the actual doing of it, is so wide. I made a mental note to remember this painful lesson, when I superficially comment or make judgement on pots in the future.

I produced two small bowls and gave up. Around me the work flowed effortlessly. Nakazato then suggested we might like to stay to dinner. I was overwhelmed. He had given so much of his time and of himself, I wondered if we should accept, but he insisted and said he would cook something special. His wife was away for the day, but even so, it is most unusual to be hosted this way by a Japanese Gentleman. Janis took us off to visit the brother's kiln before dinner.

Nakazato san is very interested in the food that was served in earlier times with the Tea Ceremony, and was very much the preserve of men. He said that today, women have involvement with Tea, but that they really only play at it. I could see that he has controversial opinions on many things Japanese, including music, pottery and Tea.

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Arakawa san and Janis Heston.

## JAPAN — A PERSONAL GLIMPSE

I helped a little in the kitchen telling him it was like being at home in New Zealand — loosing some of my nervousness although still very much feeling my way. Arakawa san (the other *deshi*, apprentice) set individual trays for dinner with instructions from Takashi as to the placing of the bowls and positioning of the *sake* cups. I saw this was to be a very formal occasion, in spite of our apparent informality. I noticed my bowl and cup were different from the others and I was seated first, served first and the chopsticks had grown even longer! We were offered glasses of iced water and balloons of cognac. The food was superb, especially the raw fish.

I was complimented on the way I held my *sake* cup and felt relaxed and confident until I made a fatal mistake. I refused Arakawa san when he offered more *sake*. Janis told me I couldn't do that. I replied I had already had too much to drink. Then Nakazato san explained the ritual of offering and receiving *sake*. Arakawa san, in offering me *sake* was also offering himself and his acceptance of me as a person. In refusing, I had offended and rejected him. Horrors! Covered with confusion I held up my cup for another serving.

Takashi was highly amused and explained that one just cannot refuse *sake* unless in Kyoto — there people offer all manner of things expecting to be refused.

Evening closed in with more music; soft lights and deep shadows accentuated the size and beauty of this house. We all washed dishes and cleaned up, then Nakazato san drove us to Karatsu where we had beer in a small restaurant beside our hotel. We said goodbye with gratitude for his generosity and hospitality. A truly wonderful visit.

Before the train left next day for Fukuoka, Janis arrived with a parcel for us. Two of her own pots and two *hera* from Nakazato Takashi san.



Tunnel kiln at the Nakazato Takashi workshop.

Photographs: Ann Ambler.

Late spring in Japan saw the last of the yellow irises blooming. Rice fields were flooded and planted — a pale green watery expanse reflecting blue-grey skies. Small compounds of thatched-roofed country houses, like islands, floating . . .

# CLAY — WATER — FIRE — ANAGAMA



By Estelle and Bruce Martin  
Kamaka Pottery, Hastings

The Japanese characters read, 'Clay — Water — Fire — Anagama'

*I can see something in your pots that I feel the Tea Masters would enjoy!*

This remark, made to us during our visit to Japan in 1982, started a chain of events that led to our having an exhibition with Master Potter Mr Sanyo Fujii at the Mitsukoshi Gallery of Fine Art, Osaka, Japan from May 29 to June 3 1984.

Mr Fujii came to New Zealand late in 1982 and stayed with us for seven months. During this time we concentrated on making traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony wares so that our work would be appropriate when shown with Mr Fujii's. Many of the utensils used in the Tea Ceremony can be made of pottery — the water jar, the powdered green tea container, the incense box, the dish for the sweets, the tea bowl and various vases for flower arrangements. The people who practise "Tea" enjoy the feelings evoked by natural things and, therefore, appreciated our anagama fired pots with their natural ash colours and effects.

Previously we had thought we understood many aspects of traditional Japanese pottery. When faced with the reality of producing truly traditional pots we found that we were "paddling" somewhere between Japan and New Zealand. As yet, we still have to resolve just where we wish to go with our "style" in pots. We have learned much about directness and simplicity in potting, which we now wish to bring into our anagama fired work. Mr Fujii's expertise demonstrated the value of having a full apprenticeship training. As in Japan, the method of our learning from him was by observation, and it took some time to learn this skill.

For this firing, over a 10-day period, each piece was carefully loaded into the anagama to gain maximum effect from the build-up of ash and the flame markings (see *NZ Potter Vol 25/1*). Following a similar time for cooling, we opened the kiln to find some very successful results. This was especially so in the front stack where the front of the pots had received most heat and ash, giving a matt white surface overlaid with a soft green running glaze, the back of the pots being fumed a rich red/purple. Temperatures at this

part of the kiln were about 1340°C for three days. Three hundred of our pots from this firing were chosen to go to Japan.

Mr Fujii made all the arrangements for the exhibition, including having wooden boxes made to fit each pot. Also, brocade bags and ivory lids were handmade for the *chairs*, the small jars for the powdered green tea.

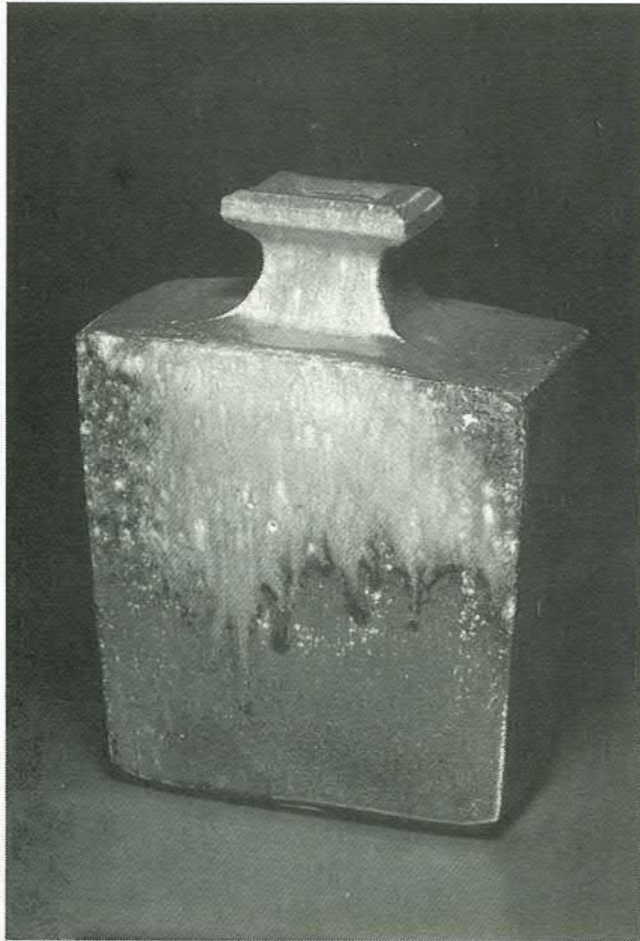
To help ensure the success of the exhibition, it is the custom in Japan to arrange for people of high standing to act as sponsors. Three thousand invitations were distributed, each containing a message from the sponsors, and six photographic postcards of our work. Mr Fujii and ourselves visited many important people to be introduced and to distribute invitations. This aspect of the exhibition was intriguing as it was so different from any concept we have in New Zealand for promotion. Two newspaper interviews were given also.

The opening of the exhibition also differed; a "tape cutting" ceremony marked the occasion, followed by a party. Performing the tape cut was Dr T. Kawase, from the Kobe Japan-New Zealand Society representing New Zealand, and Mr Shimizu Kosho, Superior of the Todaiji Temple, Nara.

The pots were shown very simply with careful attention to placement and lighting. Some pots were arranged with flowers appropriate to the Tea Ceremony. Guests at the opening included many notable people, including Mr Fujii's former teacher, Mr Kosei Tanimoto of Iga, now one of Japan's Living National Treasures.

Over the six days of the exhibition we were required to meet and talk with the people who came. The Japanese people responded very warmly to our pots and expressed surprise that they had been made in New Zealand with New Zealand clays. A connoisseur said that our pots were "of a very high standard technically, but more important, had captured the spirit of ancient Japanese pottery." (Perhaps we did get closer to Japan's shores with our "paddling" than we had realised.)

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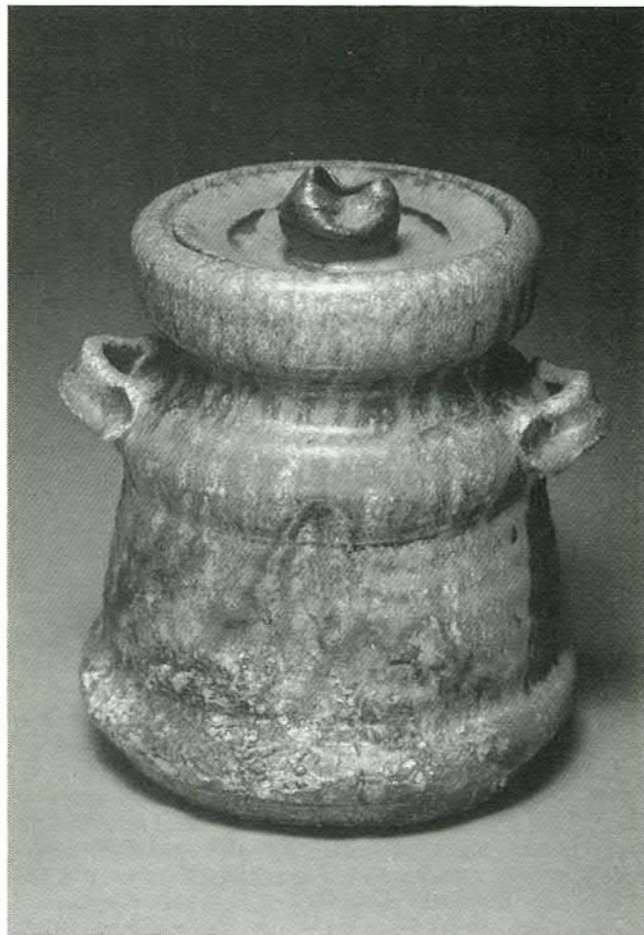


Slab bottle by Bruce Martin

Vase by Estelle Martin



Water jar by Sanyo Fujii



Photographs are from colour postcards printed to accompany the exhibition invitations.

Many people attended the exhibition and 500 booklets about New Zealand, supplied by the New Zealand Embassy, had been given away by the end of the second day. We were disappointed that we saw only five Europeans at our exhibition. Of interest was one Japanese gentleman whose wish was to import New Zealand clays into Japan. Even with the support of many of our Japanese friends, we found this time at the exhibition quite difficult, mainly because of our lack of Japanese language skills.

At the end of the exhibition the gallery expressed their pleasure at having had such a successful showing. Seventy percent of the work shown was sold, which is considered high in Japan. The gallery asked whether they could keep about 15 of our pots on permanent display, and invited us to have further exhibitions with them every 12 to 18 months.

In Japan, for a New Zealander to be able to exhibit in a public gallery such as a department store gallery, we think it would be necessary to exhibit with established artists. The costs of mounting such an exhibition are extremely high, the point appearing to be to have work shown, rather than for monetary gain. Without the support of Mr Fujii and his high standing as an artist potter, and without the assistance of his many friends, it would not have been possible for us to have exhibited successfully at the prestigious Mitsukoshi Gallery of Fine Art in Osaka.

## ANAGAMA COMES TO WANGANUI

By Grace Alp, Wanganui

For the official opening week of the Wanganui Regional Community College, George Kojis persuaded Chester Nealie to run a workshop on wheelwork for an anagama firing and then to build, stack and fire a miniature anagama kiln—an absorbing and exhilarating experience for potters who came from all over the region and from Wellington.

On the Saturday and Sunday Chester, an inspired and inspiring teacher, showed how a successful anagama firing is a total approach, involving a new awareness of the subtle, sensuous rhythms and play of shadows which make good pots 'work'. First one must completely visualise the piece to be made; the size and placing of the handle or other detail, the spaces and negative shapes, a rim and bottom that make a unified whole. Then the flames will flow creatively, enhancing the form with subtle gradations of colour and unpredictable flashing.

With the pot thus clearly visualised, throwing is very spontaneous and lucky, seemingly casual, yet disciplined by the maker's sureness of purpose and craftsmanship.

When it is firm enough to handle, the pot is carefully observed, touched, picked up, gently altered by hands or paddled till it looks and feels right—but know when to stop! It is fondled, rubbed, perhaps polished. Surface decoration tends to fight with the unpredictable flame effects.

Since the kiln is fired to cone 10, and the pots 'soaked' at this heat for as long as the wood supply and the potters' stamina holds out, glazing is not always necessary. If desired it is done while the pots are still damp. Unglazed rims make pots easier to stack. We used a celadon glaze inside and a white clay slip glaze outside over our commercial iron-bearing clays, (as these do not give as good results as a white clay) or Walkers white clay. Porcelain is best of all.

Meanwhile, Chester was building his kiln. On Monday he adapted the eight-centuries-old Japanese anagama plan to our landscaped site, producing a beautiful tiny replica which works perfectly, yet at the same time is a fine modern sculpture—the first of many such pieces, Principal John Scott hopes.

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1. Gloria Young and Chester Nealie contemplate the arch.

Chester and helpers build the body of the kiln.



# ANAGAMA COMES TO WANGANUI

Photographs: George Kojis

The kiln is 8 feet long with a 3 foot entrance arch narrowing and stepped up towards the 4 foot high, round chimney. Just wide enough for a slim potter to load. It is only the fifth anagama kiln in this country—and probably the smallest in the world. (See *Potter* Vol 24/2 for details of Chester's own kiln) yet it fires a goodly number of pots, as the photographs show. The carefully chosen fire bricks were part of the old brickworks kiln. The arches were plastered with a cement-pumice mixture and buttressed with landscape boulders. Brave white polyanthus, planted on either side—clear of the two stoke holes—survived the firing, testifying to good insulation and the sobriety of the stokers.

Two days' steady downpour meant building a temporary shelter—like something out of Footrot Flats—over the kiln. We had trouble drying out our pots and keeping the firewood dry. However on Thursday the stacking began—a very slow, intriguing process—with loving care given to the placing of every pot. Juxtaposition influences flame effects. Big storage jars can serve as saggars, but these big pots must be staggered; a straight line would create a barrier to the rolling, swirling flames, which also pass under the pots as they sit on kiln shelf chips. Little pots were placed in or on the big ones, separated from one another or their lids by small silicon carbide chips. These were placed with the same exact care because the uncoloured spots they leave will be an integral part of the flame design.

It took all day to load and finally the heating of the kiln began at 6.30 pm Thursday. Time was pressing. On Saturday the Minister of Education was to arrive and Chester was due to leave, so two natural gas burners were used until midnight when stoking began in the firebox. Nothing larger than kindling wood can be used in this miniature kiln—treated or painted wood or nails are undesirable.



Day-time front stoking.



Night-time side stoking. Cone 10 down.

By about 9.30 am Friday the temperature was approaching 900°C, and later when cones 9 and 10 were down, side-stoking began—three or four bits of very thin wood both sides, every two or three minutes, the stoke-hole bricks being replaced immediately each time. This side stoking alternated with stoking at the entrance and gave Chester quite a measure of control over the swirling of the flames through the kiln.

By mid-afternoon cone 10 was down in the front, and as it grew dark the metal chimney pot placed on the brick chimney glowed a glorious red. Rich white-hot flames could be seen rolling over and around the pots whenever we stoked. (One must not focus on this white heat as it is liable to damage the eyes.) There were two easy signs of loss of heat: a lessening of the chimney glow, and white-hot pots becoming visible. These cannot be seen if the temperature is high enough.

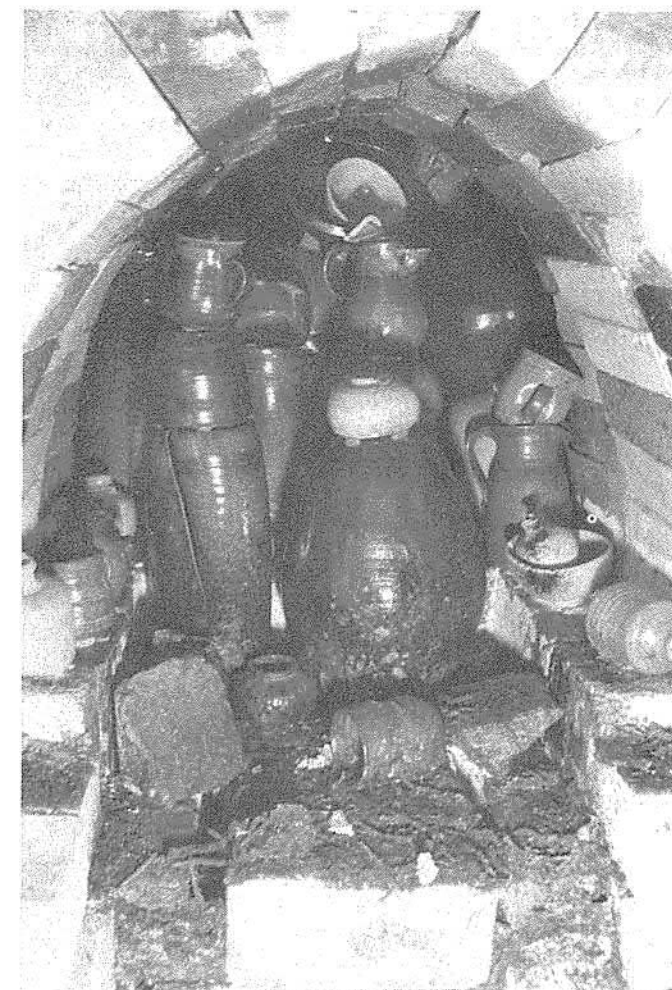
The waiting, the mixture of control and unpredictability, were all part of the steadily mounting excitement. Soon the front was sealed off while side stoking continued. At this stage it is possible to put in salt or charcoal, or to fume the pots. But we were purists; no additives or 'treatment'. We shut down about 7.00 pm—earlier than wished, but the kiln had to cool in time for Chester's departure. The next firing will last three days and take as long to cool.

When the kiln was opened at 10.00 am on Saturday it was still uncomfortably hot for the unloaders. A few really beautiful pots emerged, many good ones like Bizen ware, two small pots were write-offs and two became interesting sculptural pieces. An overwhelming success. Chester told us a longer firing with non-demolition timber should produce more blues and greens, more ash glaze, more flashing.

Working as a team, sharing the responsibilities of the firing was an unforgettable experience, a heightening of awareness. We could sense what the tension and excitement of a full-scale, seven-day anagama firing, of half a year's potting work must be.

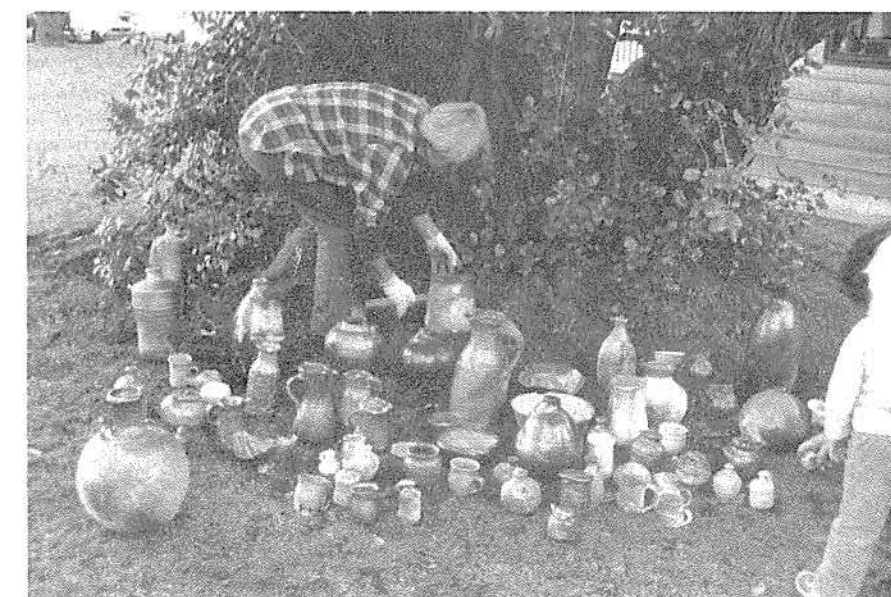
During the week a thousand or more adults and school children poured through the spacious pottery department, watching the hands-on throwing and hand building classes, seeing the high-tech kilns—and our little beauty which works so well. One or two asked plaintively, "But do you do ceramics?"—most were captivated, especially when the kiln was firing.

It was an exhausting week for Chester, who shared so generously and enthusiastically his vision, skill, experience and sense of fun, and for the Department Head, George Kojis, who has a gift for making these workshops



Opening the kiln.

with NZ's master potters relaxed and happy, full of laughter and good fellowship and packed with learning opportunities. Exciting things are happening at Wanganui Regional Community College!



# A VISIT TO THE FUJIWARA FAMILY

Photos: James Greig.

Yu Fujiwara at Honami.

By James Greig, Carterton.

Light of the September full moon bathed the landscaped garden by the Kei Fujiwara Museum. Lamplight, music, food and drink, conversation of the mingling guests — friends, artists, provincial and local dignitaries — created a friendly echoing glow. My arrival at the Fujiwara home and pottery on its hill above the Inland Sea at Honami in Bizen happily coincided with this birthday party for Yu Fujiwara's daughter.

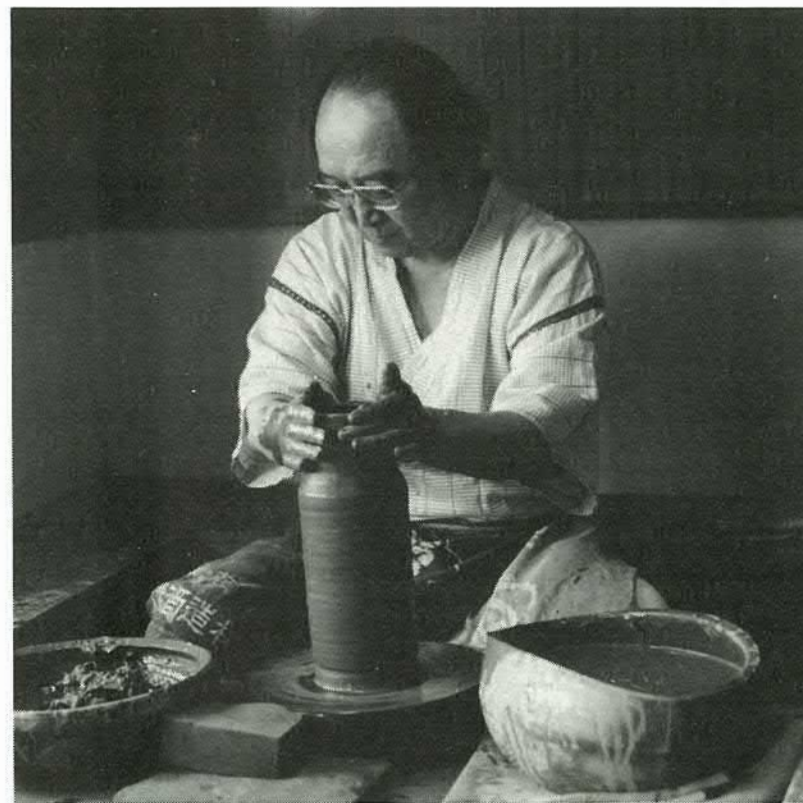
Yu Fujiwara and Mrs Kumiko Fujiwara are gracious hosts, and there is an atmosphere of bonhomie, but it is tinged with sadness, as the loved and venerated Kei Fujiwara, National Living Treasure, lies ill in hospital. I remember him for his gentleness, sensitivity, and concern for quality. Guests are introduced. We each give a small speech.

Yu san remembers his visit to Christchurch in 1980 with his son Kazu (he gives each worker, in turn, an overseas trip) for the opening presentation of the mainly Bizen ware Kurozumi collection there. Holding exhibitions in many countries, Yu has done much to make Bizen ware better known worldwide.

The Fujiwara Pottery was established by Kei Fujiwara in 1938 when he returned to his home district at Bizen, after eye problems curtailed his career in publishing. He had great difficulties with economic survival, but maintained his integrity as an artist — the affluence of top potters in Japan is only a recent event. His work gained profound depth, leading to his recognition as National Living Treasure.

Yu Fujiwara, Kei's son, also returned to Bizen and pottery because of eye problems, after university study and literary work in Tokyo. So both generations have brought a depth of learning and culture to life as potters. Yu san is a warm-hearted man, lively and jolly, but with earnestness of purpose, restless and energetic, impulsively generous. With Kumiko's vivacity, the Fujiwaras enjoy life.

My stay is enjoyable too. The days begin with breakfast where all the 'extended family' of the pottery meet around the large table — Yu and Kumiko, their son and daughter, the secretary, several assistants, the cook, a student potter from Hawaii. The food is delicious with baked salmon and



other fish from local waters. Splendid pottery bowls give added enjoyment and wooden chopsticks allow unglazed bowls to be used at table. Work schedules for the day are allocated to the staff. In the traditional way there is a sort of benevolent paternalism — all workers share in the life of the household and identify with its mana. Instead of wages, their needs are taken care of.

Work in the pottery is quiet and orderly. Clay is laboriously prepared by assistants in the old way, impurities being removed with the fingers. Now dug from 5 metres below the lowland rice paddies, love and respect for it is fostered. I make some pots which will be fired later. Kazu prepares clay and weighs out lumps for his father to throw that day. His days are to assist his father; after dinner he can practise on the wheel.

One evening Yu san shows me his storeroom of Japanese pottery treasures. There are pieces by the late Fujio Koyama, an early teacher of Yu san's. Later we visit a memorial exhibition of his work in Okayama and I learn about a stream of Japanese pottery little known in the West — Koyama and other aesthetes such as Munemaro Ishiguro, seeking spiritual rejuvenation through poetic naivety and simplicity.

Later, former apprentice Okada san takes me to his kiln around the Bay, for first hand experience of stacking and firing a Bizen kiln, which takes 8 days. On my first visit in 1978, Okada san had been excited that after 8 years of service he had just been given the opportunity to make pots for his own local exhibition debut as a potter. Since then his independent career has been shepherded by Yu san, and the close relationship with his teacher will always remain.

I have to miss the end of the firing, and make my farewells, grateful for the friendship of the Fujiwaras. My belief in art as a means of peaceful international communication and a universal language, is strengthened. Not only can one fully develop and meet one's own inner self through art, but through it one also communicates with one's fellow human beings.

I leave for Osaka to see a Tachikichi exhibition in which I am participating, then go to Kyoto to see the Peter Voukos show prior to a short stay at his workshop in Oakland, California on my way home to New Zealand. Voukos' exploration of the expressive qualities of clay through pushing it past its limits, epitomises the yearnings of a generation of Western potters who sought new emotional links to nature.

Bizen pottery, I think, seems to witness that those intuitive links have not been entirely lost in Japan, but are different — there they seek the eternal outside the self, not the corporeality within. But there too, they have had to be renewed, as materialistic concepts invade modern Japan. To the Japanese artist, pots reflect nature's processes, not its substantiality.

A central concept of Japanese Buddhism is that 'reality' exists in the 'present moment', and many arts reflect this. This is one aspect of why pottery is so valued — with its asymmetry, melting glazes beginning to flow, thrown forms in arrested movement, its transmutation of substance by fire and in Bizen ware, the flash marks of the licking flames made visible in colour. Through such attributes it captures an image of that elusive 'present moment'.

Traditional crafts, such as Bizen ware which goes back a thousand years, are important in Japan also as a means of experiencing cultural identity and inner stability in these times of dynamic change.

In following tradition there is a danger of falling into formalism and indeed in Bizen, as elsewhere in Japan, and everywhere else too, we find masses of mediocre genre works of little depth. Hundreds of Bizen district shops bulge with such pots by the thousand.

But paradoxically, in sensitive hands these styles can still be the basis of real strengths and the real heart of Japanese pottery. For neither conformity nor originality of concept is valued in itself by discerning people, but rather the quality of the experience. At the highest level the traditional form is only a 'given', through which the inner development and sensitivity of the potter can speak. This accounts for the widely differing values in Japan of works which are superficially similar — one is full, the others, empty vessels.

The pot is expected to embody a philosophy which creates a unifying purpose over and above the staging of fortuitous effects, however appealing these may be.

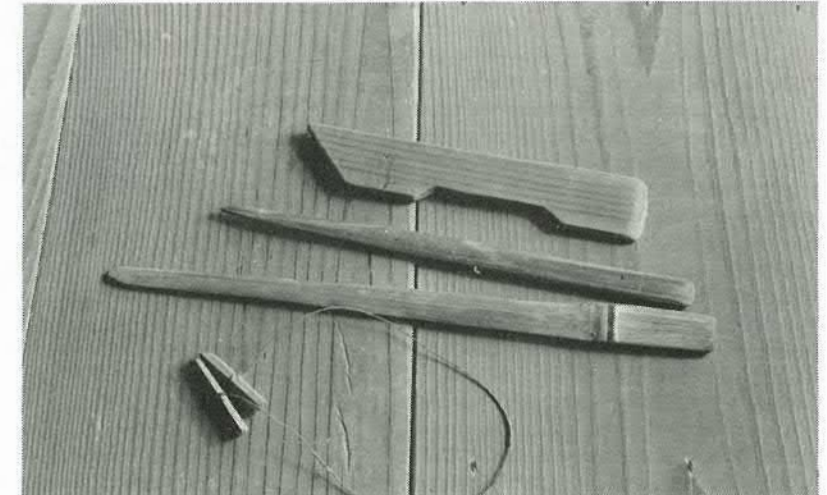
This is why the great reputation of the Fujiwara name established by Kei Fujiwara (who has died since this visit) does not automatically continue with the generations. It has to be earned anew. To follow such an eminent master could be a handicap, but Yu san has used it as an opportunity and he has developed as a potter of high stature. He is asserting his special character while maintaining traditional Bizen forms, rather than in innovation. He has become famous as a 'Man of Tsubos' (large jars) through his '100 Tsubo Exhibitions'. These jars have power — their swelling forms,

weighty, have a slightly 'held back' feeling which creates a more sturdy monumentality than more obvious swelling curves would.

And, of all Bizen pots, by some subtle alchemy the richest range of flame reds, orange flashes, purple to blue sintering, is coaxed from the Fujiwara

kiln.

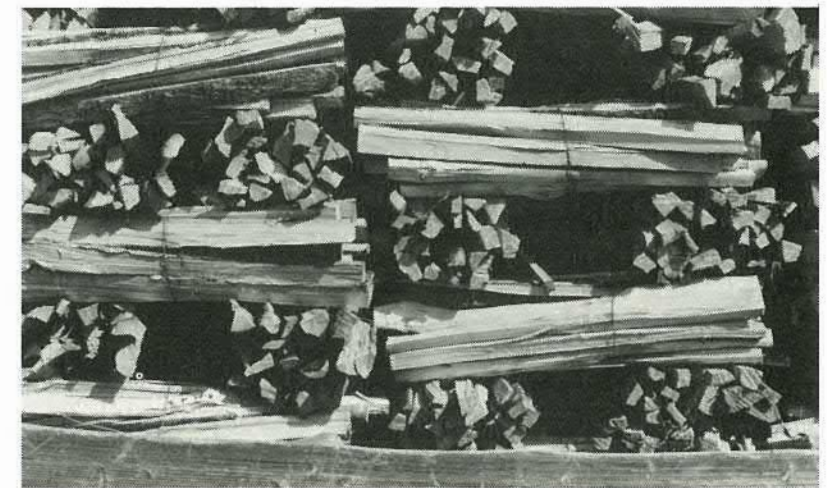
Yu Fujiwara believes that "my work should be a transfiguration of myself; my joy, my sorrow, my tenderness or harshness. My helpless wistfulness should be felt in it. Only then should it become an object with a life of its own".



Throwing tools.



Pots ready for signature.



Firewood stack.



## THOUGHTS ON CONTRASTING MATERIALS AS USED BY POTTERS

By Owen Mapp,  
Paraparaumu

Some thoughts since Anneke (potter) and I (carver) started to combine ceramic containers with wood, ivory and bone lids. Reactions from the NZ public have been positive—and negative!

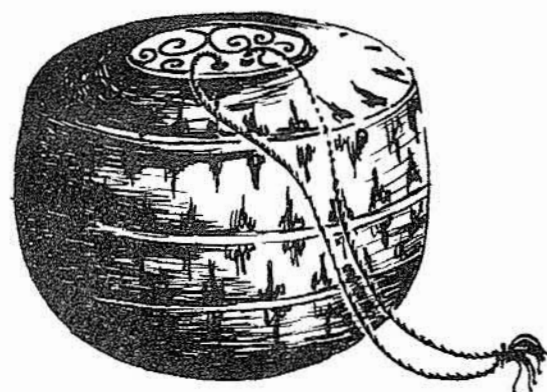
My research shows that most of the main museums in New Zealand have examples of the Japanese *cha-ire* (tea caddies) in ceramic with ivory lids. For example, Auckland War Memorial Museum has 5, and a tiny water pourer with its ivory lid, to go with an ink stone. The glazes are black *satuma* (dark oil spot) and the glaze types of the Naeshirogawa, Nagato and Taketori areas—all dark, contrasting with the light ivory.

Other contrasting materials through the ages have been gold, silver or pewter mountings, rims, handles, lids or feet of ceramic containers and drinking vessels. These are found in many cultures from the West right through to the East. Examples of contrast in reverse are: the large carved 17th century ivory vessel with a silver lid, in the Kunsthistorisches Vienna Museum, and the 1651 vessel of ivory with gold fittings, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Both these museums have in their collections 16th to 18th century ceramic tankards with pale and dark glazes, and lids of contrasting pewter or silver.

The Japanese combine red or black highly polished lacquer lids with some of their ceramic caddies and *mizusashi* (water jars). Another contrast found on the ivory lid of the caddy, is the gold leaf covering the underside, just thick enough to make the lid fit snugly.

The combination of wood, straw and fibre is common, being found in Europe, Asia and Africa, in the form of stoppers, lids or bases. I find these an interesting contrast in texture and colour to the ceramic vessel.

My conclusion is that through the ages man has combined many materials with ceramics, for many reasons. The contrast of rough to smooth, dark to light, ceramic to metal, ceramic to ivory, appeals to eye and hand. It produces a surprise, a point of primary, or secondary attraction, or it constructs a vessel more practical in use.



Anneke Borren pot, high fired, black glaze and carved ivory pendant-lid by Owen Mapp.

Drawings by Owen Mapp



Tea caddy (cha-ire) high fired, dark glaze and ivory lid. Auckland War Memorial Museum.

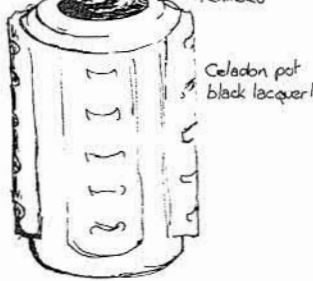
Comments from Linden Cowell, technician with the Otago Museum, and recognised expert in things Japanese, Asian and ceramic.

"As far as I can find, ivory lids have been used at least since the Ming Dynasty in Japan and China. The Chinese have a long tradition of using metal rims on ceramic bowls and cups, plus the use of cane and bamboo handles. Ordinary Japanese teacups have either lacquer or wooden *chataku* (saucers). These should be carefully matched to the cups. The advantages are that there is no harshness of ceramic against ceramic, and the contrast in texture applies equally to ivory lids on tea caddies—the harmonising of materials is a Tea Ceremony ideal of course, indeed a ceramic lid would transgress this ideal."

Drawings by Linden Cowell



Various tea caddies with ivory lids



These combinations are excellent

## BOOKS

Reviewed by Howard S. Williams

## IMAGINATIVE POTTERY

By David Harvey (A & C Black, \$23.25)

This is the second edition of an excellent basic "how to make pottery" book already in use as a teaching aid in this country. Clearly written, especially for beginners, each section is accompanied by a case history describing how the author took a group of students through the particular process under discussion.

With good photos and diagrams he shows how to build and fire kilns such as the pit, clamp, sawdust, Roman type updraught, downdraught raku and catenary arch. Also an electric kiln for earthenware, and a downdraught stoneware kiln for firing with oil, gas or wood. Other sections deal with burners and ceramic fibre insulation, and the clay and glazes suitable for different types of pottery, including those utilising ash, salt and raw glazes.

It is a pity that references to the use of asbestos boards are not deleted. The dangers of using this material are well documented and clay can be just as successfully wedged or dried on bats made of plaster of paris, slate or even unsealed particle board. Any use of asbestos is potentially dangerous to health and it should be actively discouraged, especially in the classroom situation. Otherwise this is a good teaching book and the author as well as documenting technical processes, displays an excitement for making pottery, "... once you get involved with pottery you will find it very compelling and difficult to curtail your enthusiasm; your question 'how do I start?' will become 'how do I stop?'"

## THE POTTER'S MANUAL

By Kenneth Clark (Macdonald \$39.95)

Kenneth Clark is a New Zealander who has spent most of his working life in England as a practising potter, industrial designer, mural maker and teacher of ceramics at London's Central School of Art. He is currently chairman of the Society of Designer Craftsmen in UK, and an author with two previous books to his credit, *Pottery for Beginners* and *Practical Pottery and Ceramics*. He is also known in this country from his lecture/demonstration tours and the attendant exhibitions of his own pottery and that of his wife Ann.

Kenneth's third book, *The Potter's Manual*, is a comprehensive work which fills in many of the gaps, and updates the technical information he has previously offered. It makes an excellent reference book for potters at all levels of competence, being clearly and concisely written and illustrated; simple enough in its basic approach to the subject to be invaluable to beginners, yet full of detailed technical information to please the most experienced full-time potter. An exceedingly good book for anyone involved in the teaching of pottery.

The format of the book starts with clay, covering all the basic varieties, explaining their properties and how they can best be used, how to test clays and prepare bodies from them. This is logically followed by sections on types of ceramic ware, techniques of making, shape and form. Fully illustrated step-by-step chapters follow giving details of how to make pots by hand-building; pinching, coiling, rolling (by rolling pin — no mention of the use of the slab roller illustrated on another page), slabbing and weaving. Then to throwing and turning, making and using moulds for pressing and slip casting, jigger and jolleying and tile making.

The next chapter deals with raw materials in common use, pigments, stains and glazes, their preparation and their use. On to techniques of decorating, a very comprehensive section indeed which leads into the final chapters on kilns, biscuit and glaze firing, reduction and oxidising and salt glaze, tools and equipment, health and safety and materials suppliers.

The book is profusely illustrated with excellent colour and black and white photos, though in order to keep the physical size of it manageable, many of the working sequence photos have been reduced to a size where they are not as clear to read as might be desired. Many pots by known potters are illustrated by way of examples, including some from NZ — Estelle and Bruce Martin, David Brokenshire, Brian Gartside, John Sweden, Roy Cowan, Cecilia Parkinson, Una Sharpley (called Sharples, as in Coronation Street), Margaret Milne who is not attributed to any country, and Julia Colman who we now know as Julia Galbraith, and who should have been listed as NZ, not UK.

These small printing errors are among too many similar for a book otherwise so well written, designed and produced. Not only are there many spelling mistakes, i.e. potash *filspart* for *felspar*, but in several cases whole sentences do not make sense as incorrect words or extra words have been included. Final proof reading could obviously have been better, but in spite of these minor irritations it is overall a book well worth buying.

You know it's going to be a bad day when:

- You wake up face down on the footpath.
- You call lifeline and they put you on hold.
- You go to put on the clothes you wore home from last night's party — then realise there aren't any.
- You see a *Fair Go* TV crew waiting at your studio door.
- Your identical twin forgets your birthday.
- You wake up to discover your waterbed is leaking — then remember you don't have a waterbed.
- Your car horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a gang of Hells Angels along the Desert Road.

From Nelson Potters in consultation with Dr Dolomite:

- **Agrathrowbia:** Fear of starting work after lunch. Sometimes diagnosed as fear of clay under the fingernails.
- **Pyrophobia:** Fear of getting up in the morning to light the kiln.
- **Antihandleapillia:** Reluctance to name pots on exhibition forms.
- **Mugginsphobia:** Reluctance to face financial facts.
- **Fluxiphobia:** Fear of cone 10 not bending.
- **Anagamaphobia:** Fear of firings extending beyond 12 hours.

"A closed mouth gathers no feet." Anon.

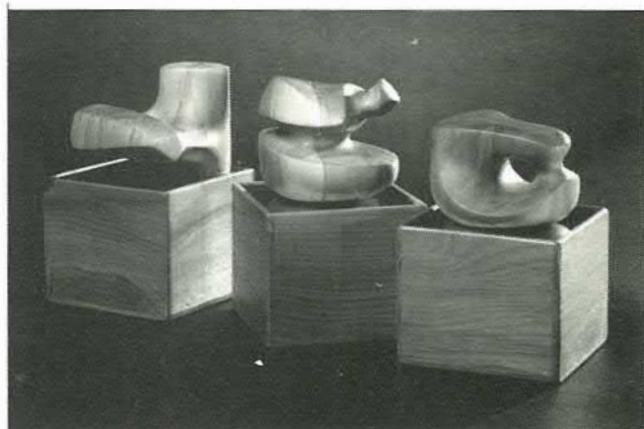
# KAHURANGI

## TREASURES FROM NEW ZEALAND

An exhibition of contemporary New Zealand craft from 22 artists, at the Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena, California, as part of the 23rd Olympic Games Cultural Festival, June 7 to December 30, 1984.

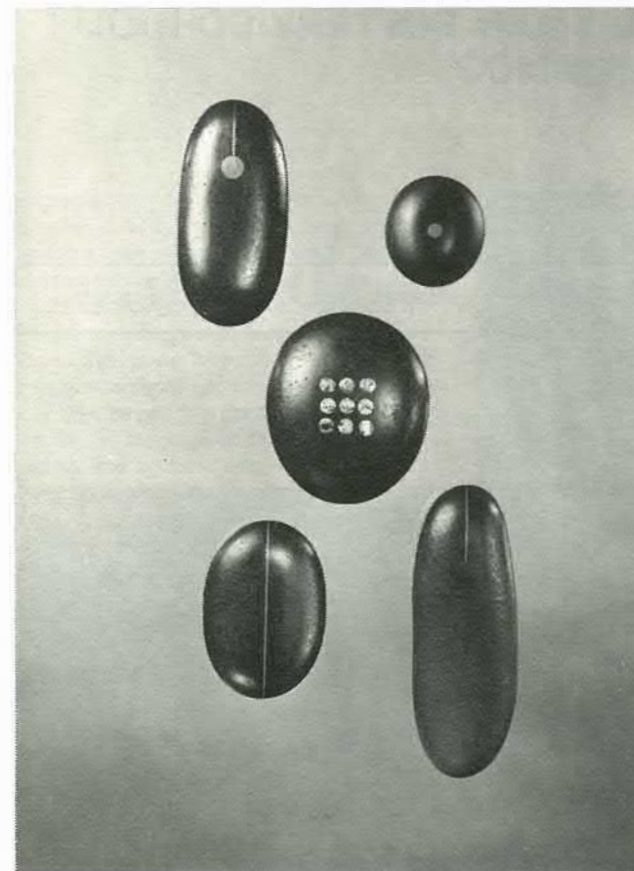
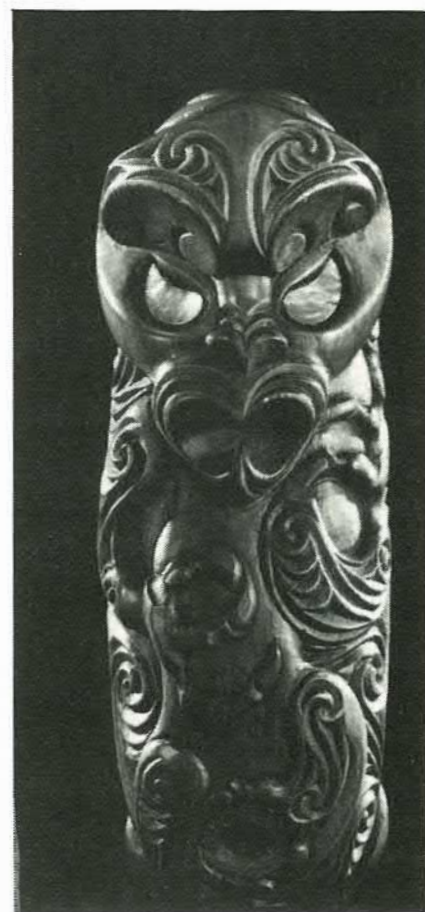
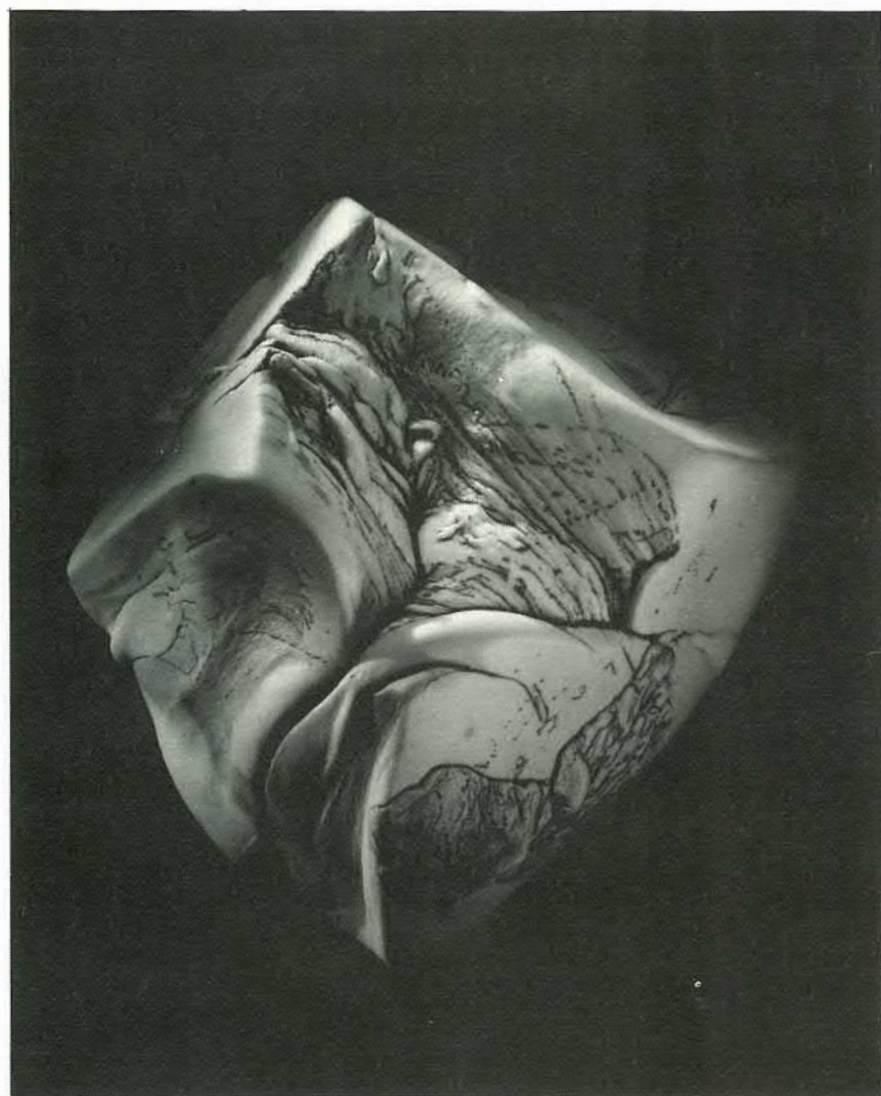
Supported by the Los Angeles Olympic Organising Committee, the Times Mirror Company, official sponsors of the Olympic Arts Festival, the New Zealand Government, Air New Zealand, the New Zealand-United States Arts Foundation, Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council.

Curator: Peter Rule, MBE. QE II Arts Council.  
Photographs: Brian Brake, OBE.  
Director: David Kamansky, Pacific Asia Museum.



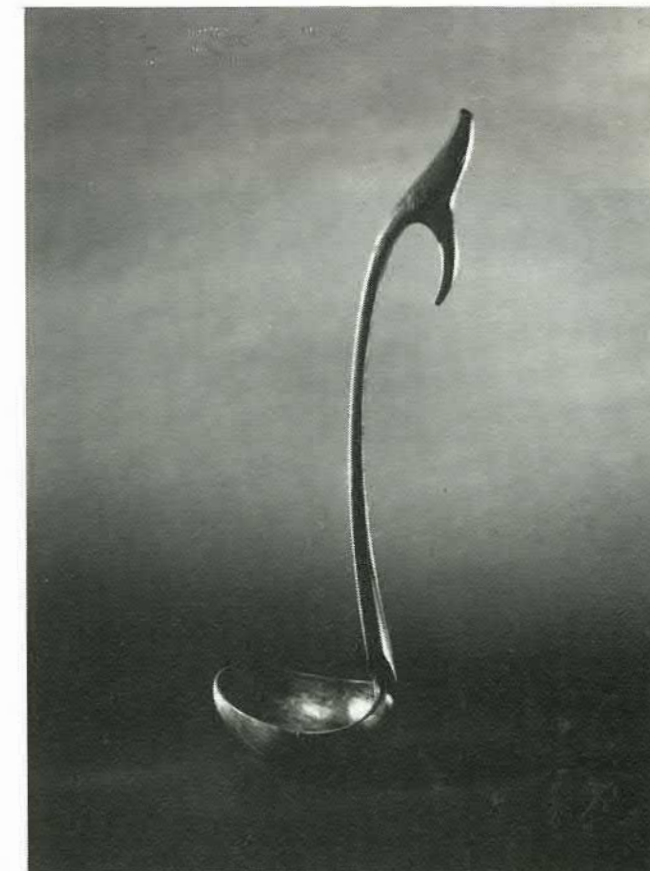
*"Anchor Stones", kahikatea, Guy Ngan, Stokes Valley.*

*"Reflector", porcelain. Julia van Helden, Eastbourne.*



*"Oracle Counters", kawa kawa stones inlaid with copper, jasper and paua shell. John Edgar, Auckland.*

*Basket, dyed rattan core cane. Ruth Castle, Titirangi.*



*"Lapp Ladle", pohutukawa. Levi Borgstrom, Titirangi.*

*"Whales Tails", beef bone. Stephen Myhre, Pukerua Bay.*



**PETER COLLIS : PIT FIRING : TALISMAN POTTERY SCHOOL  
AUCKLAND**

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge." Einstein.*

*Every picture tells only part of the story. Pit firing day for the Talisman pottery school run by Peter Collis.*



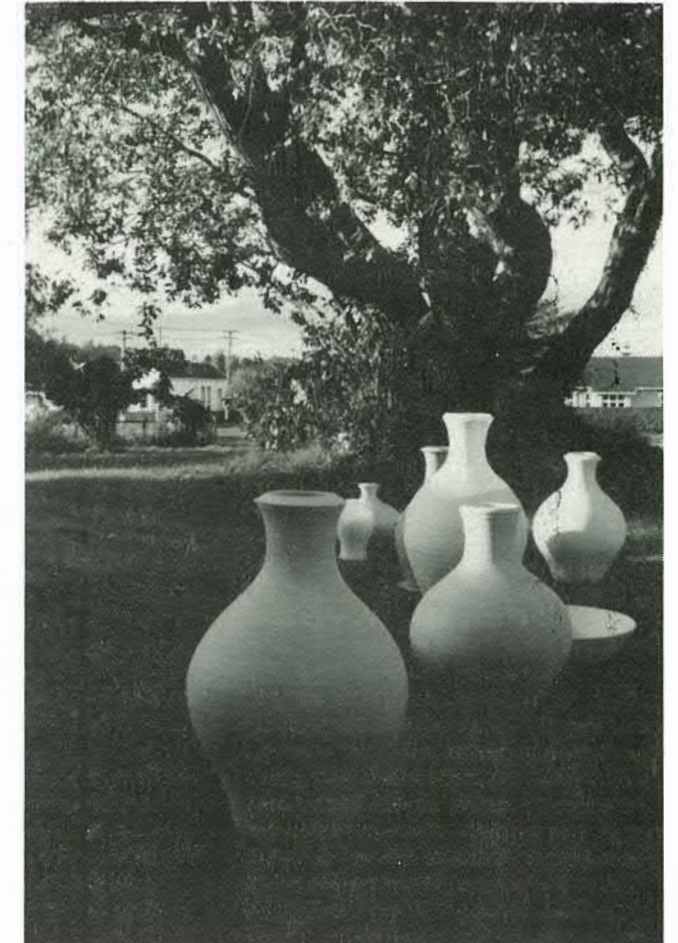
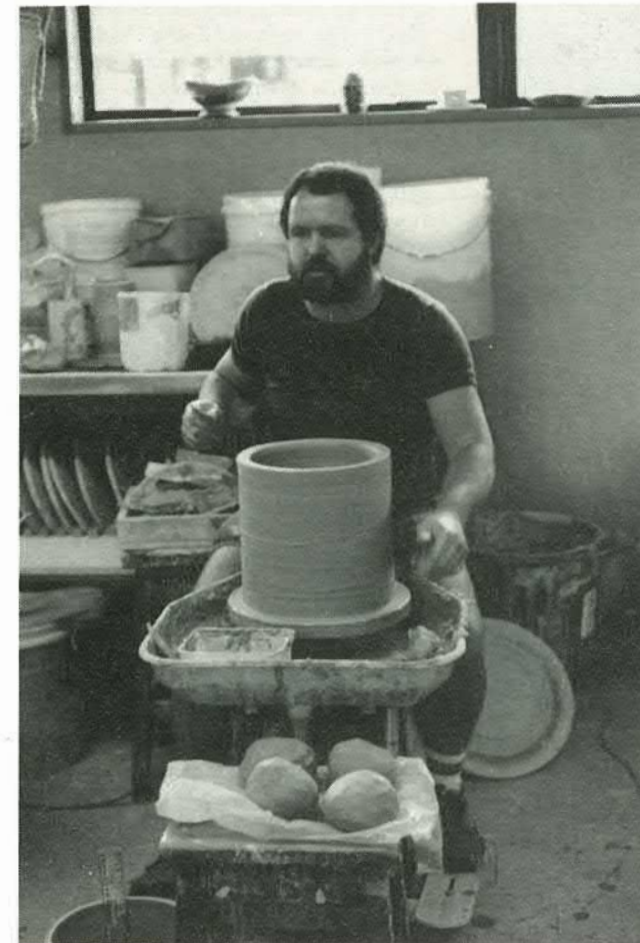
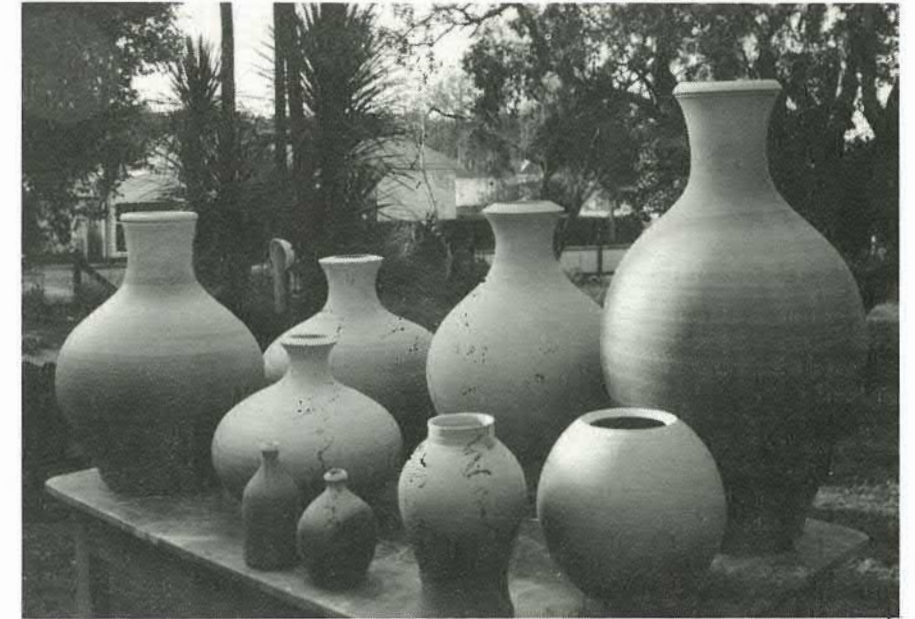
**PETER COLLIS : BIG POT WORKSHOP : WANGANUI REGIONAL  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Expectations were high for this weekend. Peter's big pots were spread around the workroom and outside drying in the sun, and had caused a lot of comment during the week at the Wanganui Regional Community College. Everyone hoped to emulate the graceful shapes (of the pots).

Peter began by demonstrating how to throw large pots in 2 or 3 pieces, using the techniques on small pots. Everyone threw the components for their pots; centring, pulling up, and joining the components, shaping and finishing. Then they threw the sections for their big pots using the same processes as for the small pots. These larger amounts of clay (10-20 kg), were joined and strengthened using a gas burner—the hot pot was pulled up some more, bellied, shaped and finished on the second day.

An hilarious, exhilarating and very satisfying workshop with a man willing to help people achieve.

*Wanganui Potters' Newsletter*



# POTTERY AS A BUSINESS

By Steve Yeoman, Auckland.

Do you know what a cash flow forecast is? Can you prepare a balance sheet? Who would want to anyway? What is Discretionary Spending and who does it? Is it a nice thing to do? Do we need all this?

The answers to these and many other boring questions were made fascinating and relevant by Wanganui Regional Community College recently when 14 potters were gently led through accounting and marketing for 3 days by Graham Westwood and Ron Rowe.

The statement "You are in business when you sell your first pot" is bound to raise the temperature a cone or two at any meeting of potters, but the fact remains that these people have skills that are relevant to us and our approach to our craft. Accounting and marketing will never be as much fun as throwing or firing, but neither is wedging; like all skills, some are enjoyable, others merely necessary.

This was the first business course set up with potters as the main target. Recommended at all times was the purchase and use of *Crafts as a Livelihood*, a folder produced by the Crafts Council of New Zealand. It is an excellent presentation, giving most of the hard facts that we need for accounting, legal structures, co-operatives, exporting etc. Perhaps the Crafts Council should read it itself, as when I went in there recently to buy one they were out of stock, didn't know when there would be any more and my name was recorded on a scrap of paper. I have absolutely no doubt that I will receive my copy, but I'd like to think that my commercial buffer-zone (the retailer) was a bit more businesslike.

The immediate hurdle for some potters facing business skills for the first time at Wanganui was the jargon, the technical terms that are used to describe the processes that take place when money starts moving into, and out of, our pockets. Translations were necessary: a "Balance Sheet" became "What we Owe and What we Own"; a "Cash Flow Forecast" — predicting the future reasonably accurately; "Dis-

cretionary Spending Power" — spare money for all the non-essentials like car wax, shrubs, paintings, a bach at Pauanui and pots; "Competitors" — everybody who is trying to attract other people's Discretionary Spending Power.

These and other funny words are used by accountants, bank managers and lawyers — we need to know what they mean to us, so that we can help the professionals to help us.

When the bank manager looks stern and asks "What is going to happen in 3 months time?", he will change to 'amazed and delighted' if a Cash Flow Forecast and Balance Sheet are dropped on the desk. We should at least know what to ask our accountants to prepare for us, so we can appear more impressive than we feel. There is also the possibility we may come to believe our own image, then dealing with the finances will become merely odious instead of impossible.

Marketing is a frequently misunderstood and misapplied word. It is not hard sell, wearing a suit, or TV advertising with lots of lovely ladies and handsome horsemen putting pieces of chalk into ink. It is the whole process that ensures we produce pots well, understand their value, find the right customer (the one who will pay the right price) and ensure they come back for more. Many of the skills developed by these marketing types are not only relevant, but essential for us to survive and thrive in our chosen craft.

Take a mug for example. We can do our costings and find that we need to retail it for say, \$7. You can buy a bargain basement model for 99c, or pay a small fortune for something with *Fitz & Floyd* on its bottom. All of them will enable us to convey a hot liquid to our mouths, so why all the price differences? The answer is *Perceived Value*. A sale will take place when the customer believes that the value to him/her is equal to the price. It is our job, together with our retailers, to help the customer see this value.

If you are wanting or needing to use retailers as a shield from the hard world of selling to the public, then help

them to help you. Give them more than the pot to talk about. Photos of your work in a comfortable setting help the customer feel at home with it. Your name should be prominent on the pot or displayed tastefully nearby. Explain to him or her about your glazes or special firing techniques — anything and everything that will help your customer see the value you have placed on your pot.

This is called our *Unique Marketing Advantage*, and we need to see our products from the customer's point of view, if we are to sell at all effectively. Ask all the time "Why should she choose this one?" — the basic shape, the glaze, your name, her neighbours' opinion when she displays this piece etc. etc., and find ways of showing her how your mug will enhance her life to the tune of \$7, or she will go down to the supermarket, spend 99c on el cheapo, \$6 on floorwax and you will be at home drinking from 400 mugs you can't sell.

Organisation is another skill which is relatively easy to obtain. By using some Accounting and Marketing you can budget for the year, work out how much you need to sell to cover that, where your customers are and how to contact them. It is not foolproof, but it does help buy the groceries all year — you might even be able to sleep at night in August when Christmas is an overdraft away. How about a diary in which you record all the things you think of doing the next day, and then do them. It is simple, which is why it works.

Having created a vast income by applying your talents to marketing, you will have to keep track of it. This is no more complicated than anything we have learnt about pottery — if you can understand what happens when you add 10% more nephylene syenite to a glaze then you can understand balance sheets and cash flow forecasts. (If accountants really were as intelligent as us they would be making pots.)

All the knowledge you need is in *Crafts as a Livelihood*, and if you do not want to become your own accountant, at least reduce his bill by presenting your figures to him in the most efficient way. You will probably find it will save you time and reduce the stress of having to cope with the uncopeable.

Do we need all this? Quite simply, but strongly, yes. These skills should be presented to anyone who wants to produce and sell a pot. How we make use of them is, as always, up to the individual and just as there will always be bad throwers, glazers and firers, so will there also be bad accountants and marketers, but if we recognise these skills as necessary for our craft we can attempt to improve them.

# WATER : CLAY EXHIBITION

## Wellington City Art Gallery

Photographs: Wellington City Art Gallery.

Neville Porteous, potter, with Shona McFarlane, watercolourist.



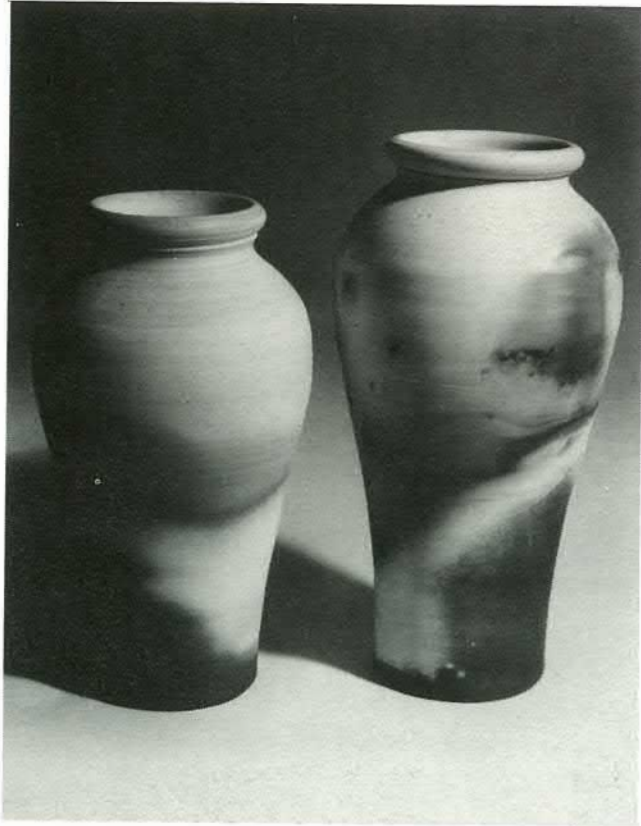
Wellington potters and watercolour painters join forces in a unique exhibition entitled *WATER : CLAY*, showing at the Wellington City Art Gallery from 22 September to 21 October.

Vivian Manthel, watercolourist, and Patti Meads, potter, prepare work together.



Twenty-eight artists, all members of the Wellington Potters Association and Wellington Society of Watercolour Artists have been working in pairs, sharing their ideas and skills, and influencing each other to create combined works beyond their normal individual creative bounds. This has resulted in a fresh and exciting new approach to these long established art forms. Subject matter covers a wide spectrum from landscape through personal and social comments to the purely abstract, dealing with colour and form.

With the support of Odlins Ltd as their business partner, the gallery has produced an informing and entertaining catalogue. Working drawings and notes by the participating artists will help explain the creative process of these joint ventures.

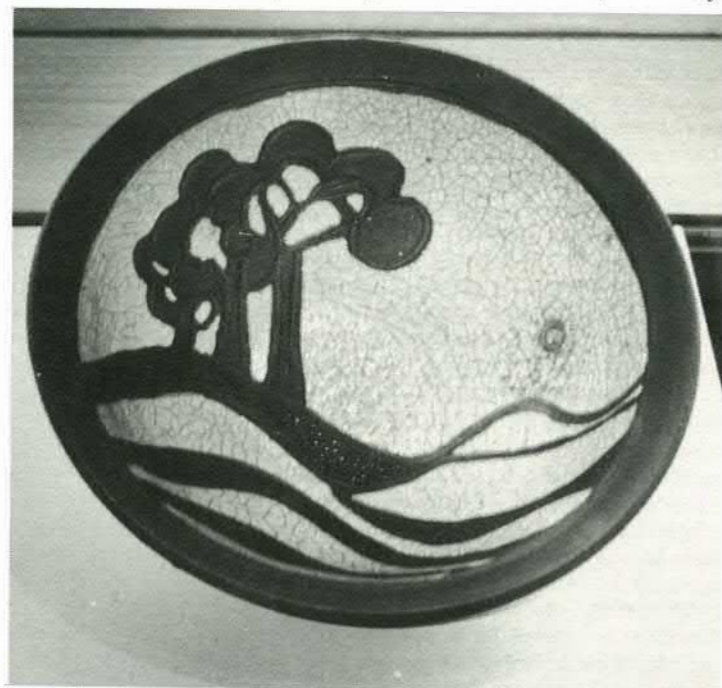
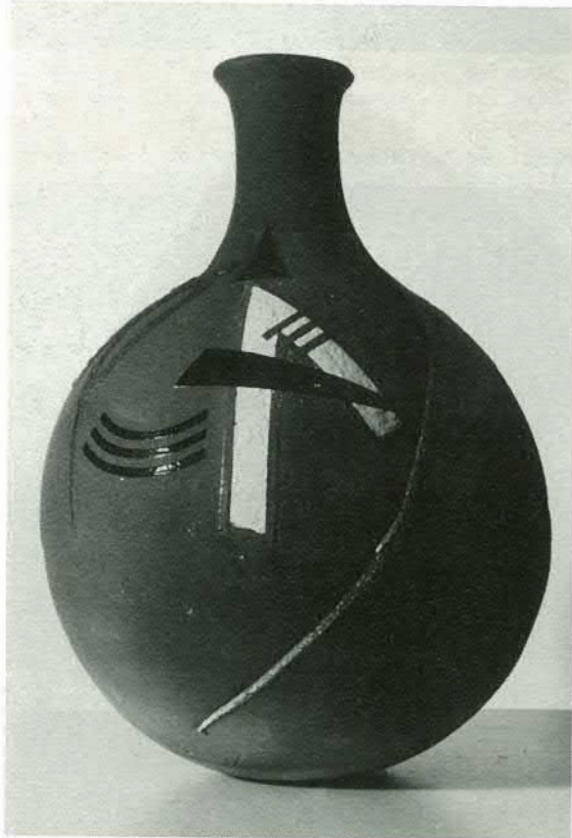


Saggar-smoked porcelain by Heather Skeates at Albany Village Gallery. Photograph: Howard S. Williams.

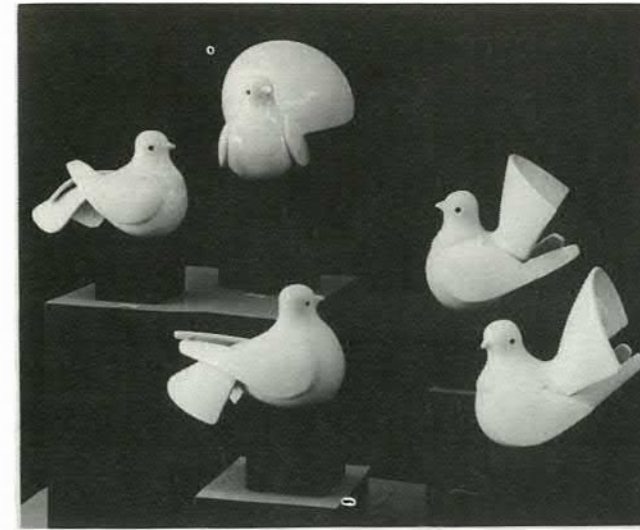


Winged foot by Gillian Pragert at Pots of Ponsonby. Photograph courtesy NZ Herald.

Brian Gartside at New Vision Ceramics gallery.



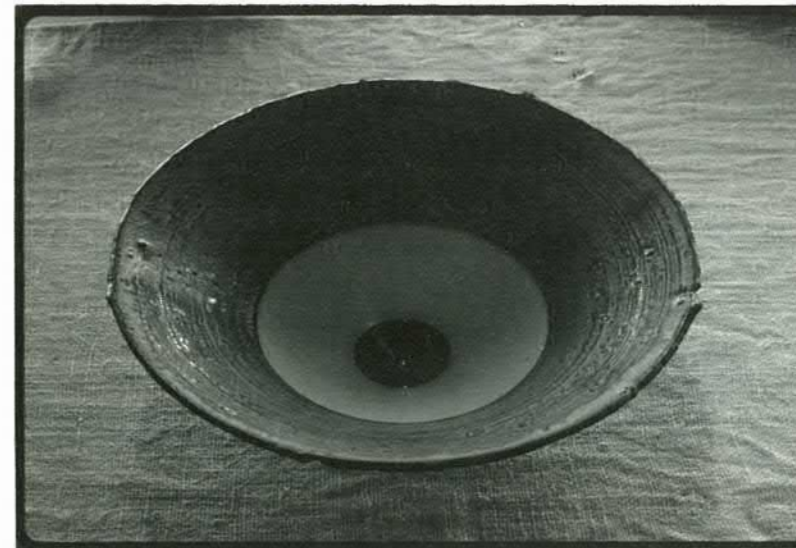
Landscape bowl by Sue Lorimer at Pots of Ponsonby.



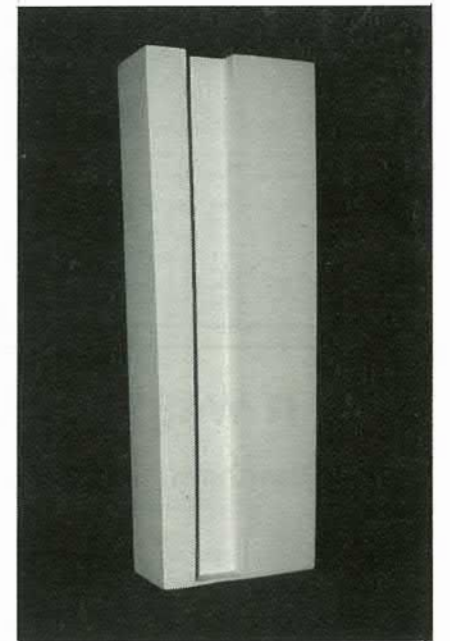
Pigeons by Wendy Masters, at 12 Potters Gallery Photograph: Ces Thomas.



Pigs by Rosemarie Brittain, at 12 Potters Gallery Photograph: Ces Thomas.



Bowl by Melanie Cooper at Media Gallery



"Divergence" 52 cm high slip cast form by Leo King. Antipodes Gallery. Photograph: Ces Thomas.



Brian Gartside at New Vision Ceramics gallery.

**Blue bowl in cast glass by Ann Robinson, Auckland.  
Winner of the \$1500 Philips Studio Glass Award.**



## WHAT IT WAS LIKE FIFTY YEARS AGO

### Mirabel Hawthorn from Northland Reminisces

At Teachers' College we learned to make coiled pottery as a technique for the smallest primary school children. In Christchurch, the little Luke Adams Pottery was willing to fire our coil pots—the founder, Luke himself had laid down the policy that students were always to be given space in the kilns for their work to be fired. We could also buy from them two grades of modelling clay.

With wonder we received our bisquit-fired pots—most of us had never come across the miracle that changes clay into pottery. "Now you can decorate them with oil paints," we were told. Not knowing any better, we did so. Proud, or indulgent, mums put them on mantelpieces.

I was sufficiently fascinated to keep on making pots, carrying them across the city on my bicycle for firing.

Adams's were willing to glaze them for me with their simple glazes, blue, green, brown or cane, but wisely would not allow my own attempts at glazing.

Later, my father, with a foreman from the brickworks at Beckenham, built a backyard kiln for me. Endless excitement, loads of bisquit, but never a successful glaze. The glaze materials had to be imported from Sydney, with all sorts of forms to be made out in triplicate to send the money. The pile of glaze failures built up steadily. By then I had a wheel with two speeds, very fast and stop, but I was most grateful for it.

A charity bazaar organiser asked for the glaze failures. Anything other than commercial ware was so unusual, she thought, they could be sold. A year later I stopped to look with horror at a

pile of pots in the window of a little back-street shop. Covered with frog-green oil paint, gilded with gold glitter-wax—I thought the shapes weren't anything like as frightful as the colours—I went inside to check my suspicion, and they were indeed my failures, tarted up.

Later, teaching standard 3 in Petone, the children made coiled pots with delight. We persuaded Metters Ltd to fire them for us. Metters made not pottery but enamelled bathtubs. I didn't know that they didn't know that clay has to be bone dry and fired slowly at first. Almost every pot exploded, fortunately with no damage to the kiln, but sad indeed for the children. Wonder sometimes if any of them ever became potters.

## A note from the editor

This issue, the second for 1984, completes the first volume since the ownership of the *New Zealand Potter* changed at the end of last year. Therefore, the publishers and I sat down to assess the magazine's direction and to plan for its future. As a consequence, I have drafted a letter which will shortly be posted to all subscribers, detailing the changes we are proposing for 1985.

Personally, I welcome the increase in frequency to three issues each year. In the past, I have often lamented the fact that the main events in the potters' calendar did not coincide with the appearance of the *Potter*, although this year we did manage to cover the Fletcher Brownbuilt Awards immediately after the announcement. The three issues will enable us to be more up to date and also to be more precise in our publishing dates.

Naturally, I also welcome the addition of a section in full colour, and I am sure our readers will also. As good as our reproduction in black and white has been, we cannot do justice to some of the beautiful and delicate glazes that cry out for colour treatment.

The colour pages will also, we hope, help the *Potter* to fulfil its "public" role of assisting the appreciation of pottery by the people who are interested in and purchase pots rather than pot themselves.

A magazine with colour reproduction immediately becomes more attractive in the bookshops, so naturally we are hoping that more browsers will pick it up and become subscribers. I have always seen the potential of the *Potter* to carry out the dual role of being the channel of communication among potters as well as helping people to become knowledgeable about the pots they buy, about what constitutes good pottery and about the history of style and form.

Next year the *Potter* reaches 27 years of age. There is nothing special about this age except that it presupposes a certain degree of maturity and sophistication. We are seeing that this expectation is achieved and I am sure none of you will be disappointed.

Howard Williams  
Editor

## COMING UP IN 1985 The Potters' Market in the NEW ZEALAND POTTER

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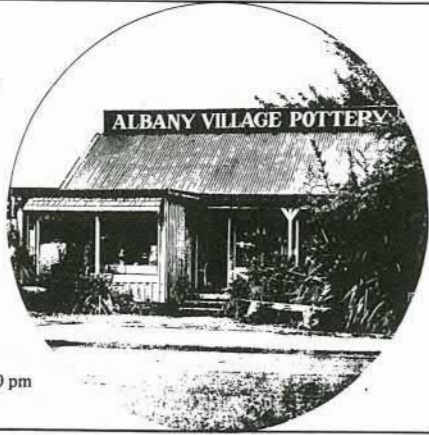
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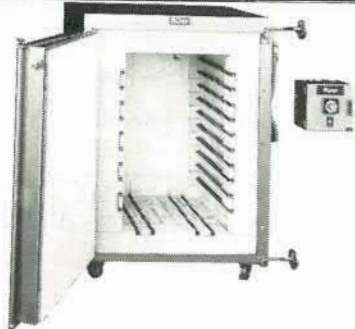
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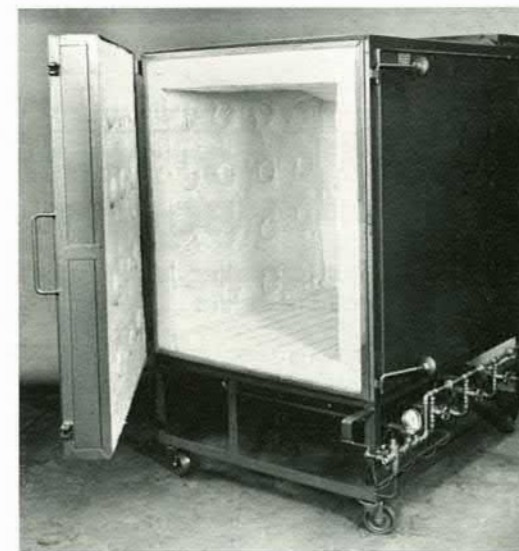
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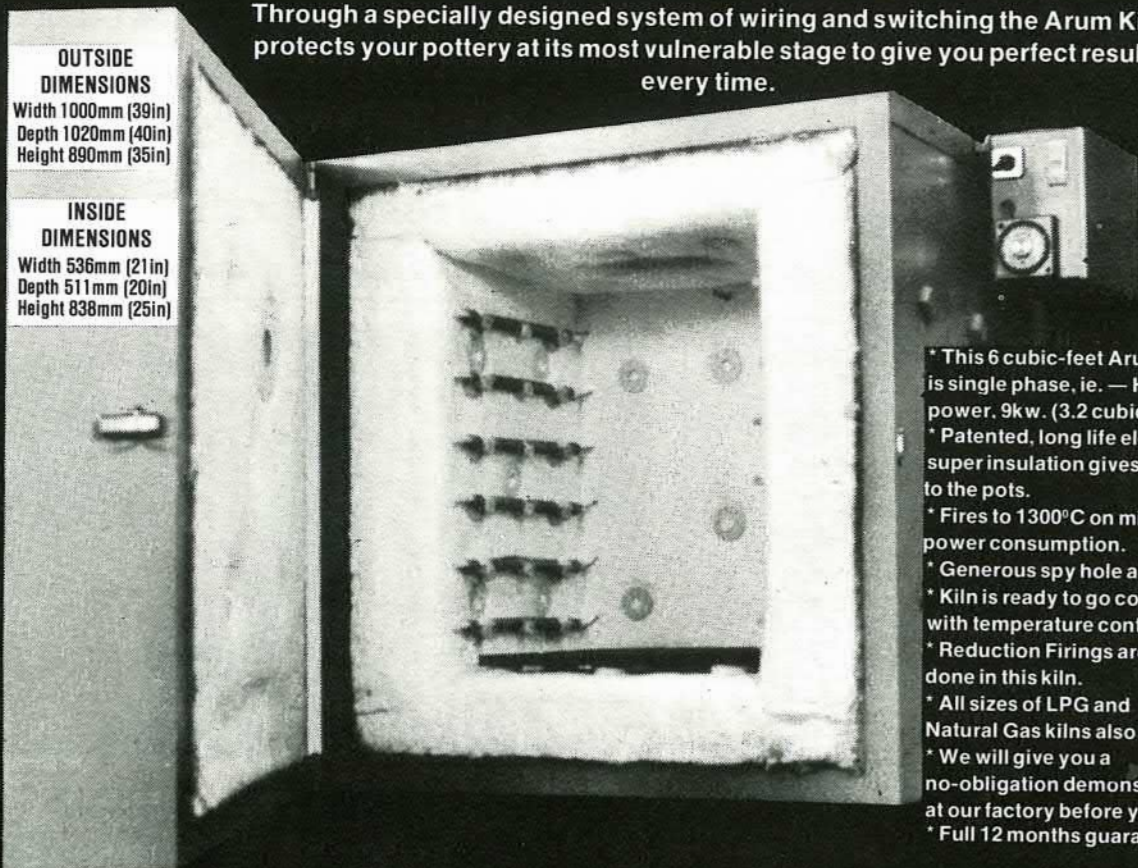


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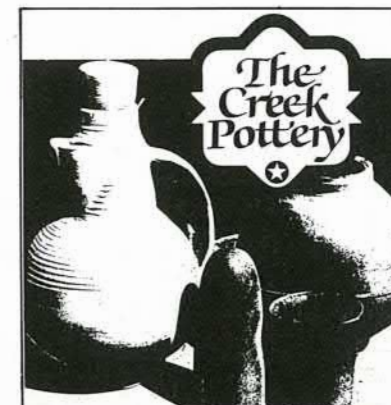
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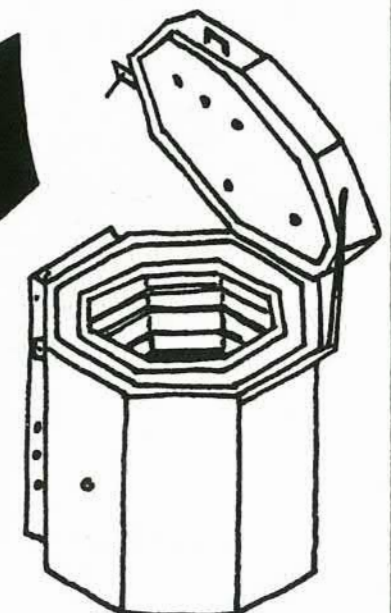
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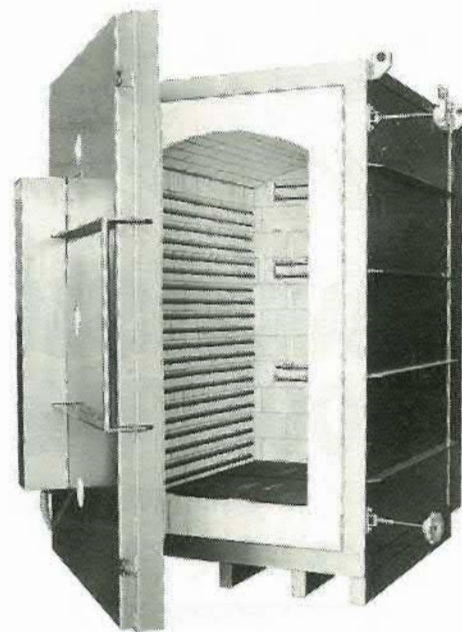
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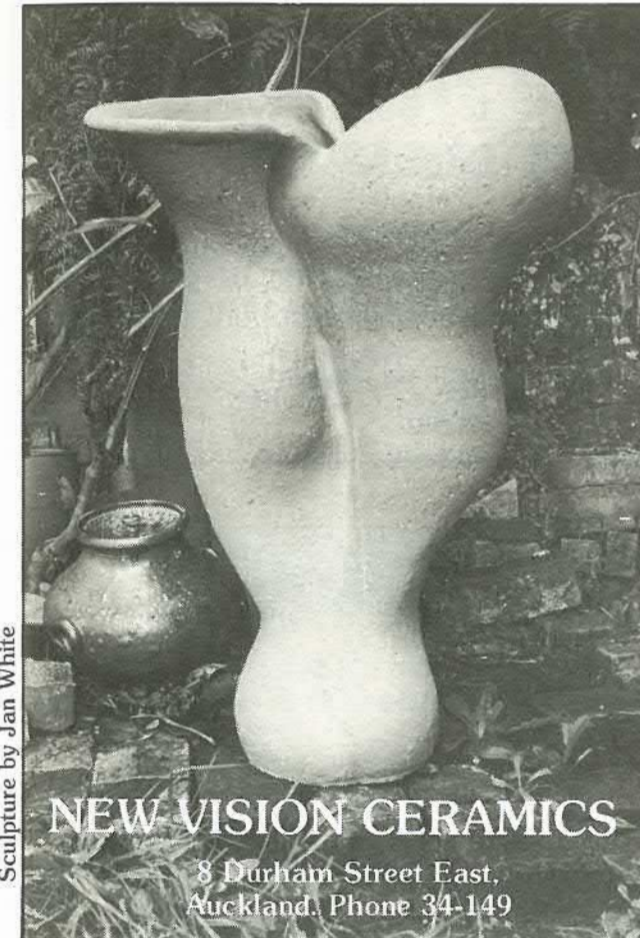


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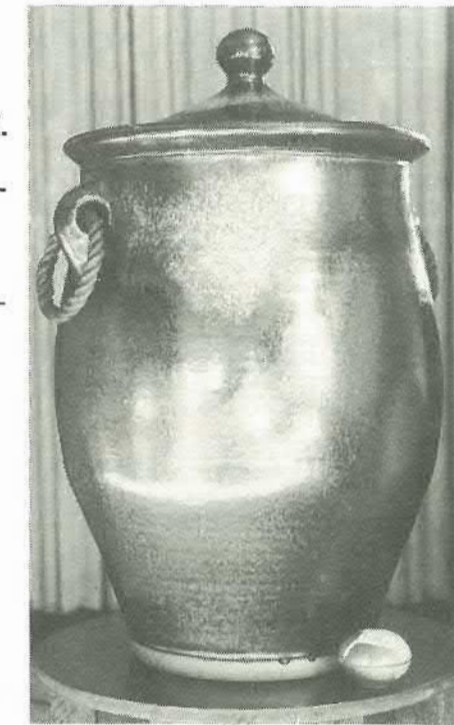
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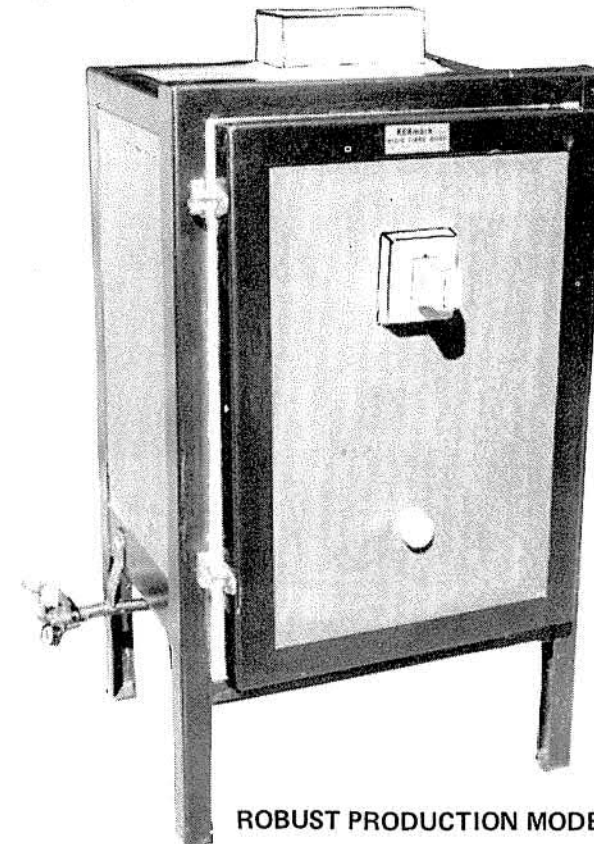
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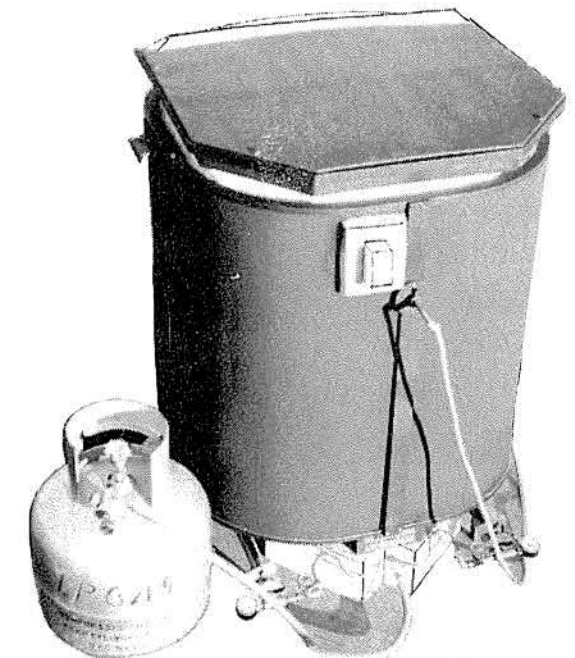
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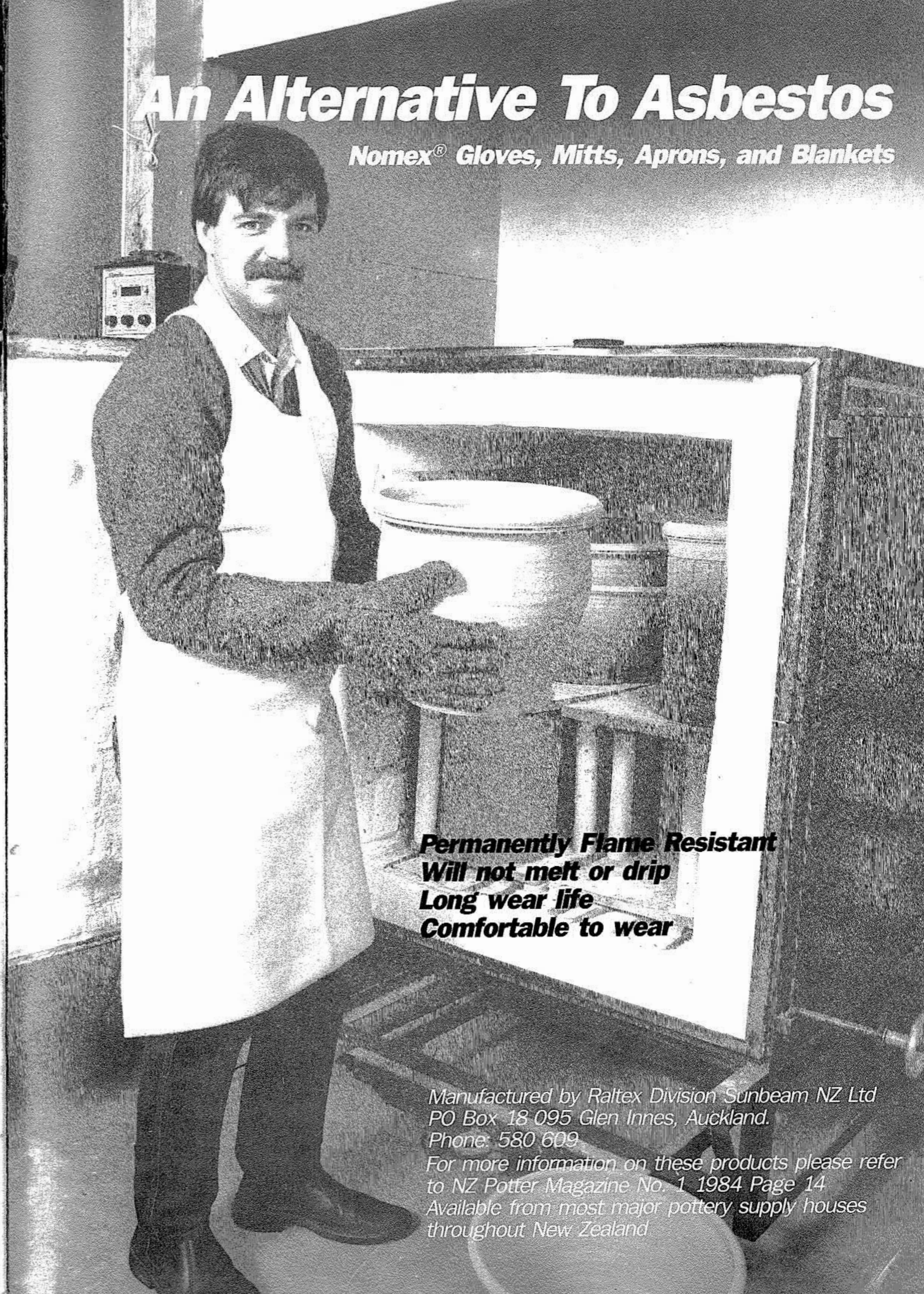
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