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**VOLUME 34: NUMBER 2: 1992**

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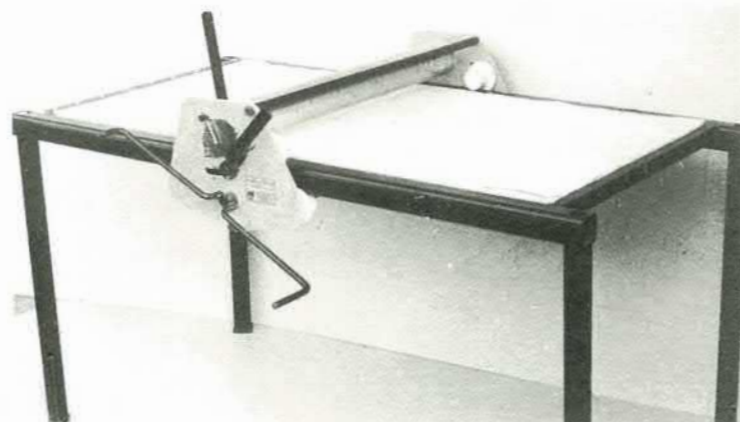
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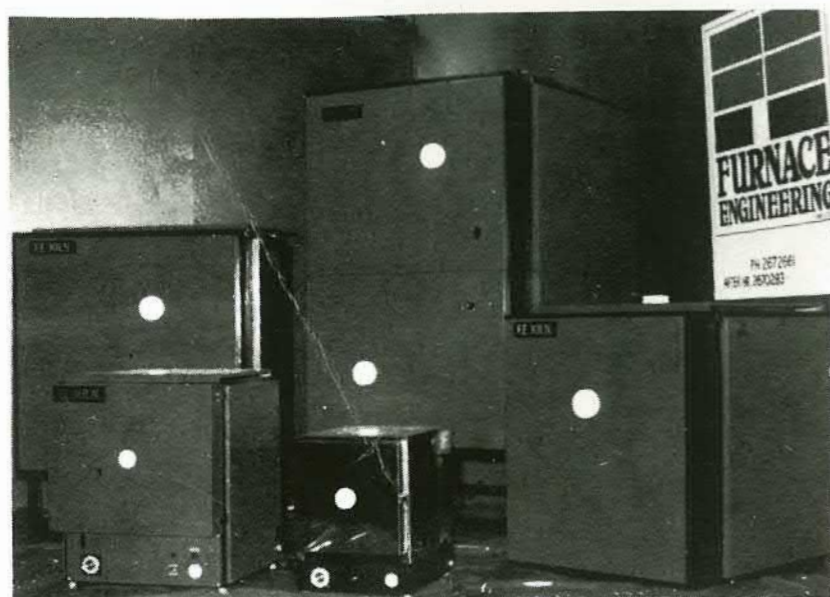
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VOLUME 34: NUMBER 2: 1992

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## COVER PHOTO The Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award

*Photograph by Haru Sameshima*

Winning entry, a  
handbuilt stoneware  
vessel by Lara Scobie  
of Scotland.



# THROUGH THE FILTER PRESS

## EDITORIAL

Howard S. Williams

Since 1987 the New Zealand Potter has been a non-profit making venture owned by 16 potters and friends. The magazine is entirely self-funding, relying on the support of those who advertise in it, the generosity of its contributors and much voluntary work. Not forgetting those who buy and read it.

With diligence, we have managed to hold our first price increase in three years, to only one dollar per issue.

In future we hope to increase the number of colour pages and we look forward to your continued support, and feedback.

## IMPORTANT

It is important, if you change your address, that you let us know promptly. Otherwise we are not able to keep our records up to date, and so cannot provide you with the service you deserve!

## YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

We welcome and appreciate photographs that contributors send in, but a persistent problem is the methods used to write captions on the backs.

Marker pen should NOT be used. It bleeds through, damaging the photograph. Ink and ball point ink often smudges, or transfers onto the face of an adjacent photograph if the prints are not separated by paper slips.

Ball point and pencil can also indent the print leaving raised lines on the photograph's surface.

Solution? Write a short caption, in pencil, on a quick-stick label, before sticking it to the reverse side of the photograph. Use clearly printed letters, so we have no problem deciphering spelling and indicate the name of the photographer so we may give appropriate credit. Colour or black and white prints are preferable.

## NEXT ISSUE

Owing to the extra cover we have given exhibitions in this issue, we are holding John Parker's Part III of Middle Fire Oxidised Glazes, dealing with Cobalt Oxide until our December issue. We will also complete our coverage of the Seville Expo Ceramics.

## BRIAN GARTSIDE

We do not have our usual double page feature from Brian Gartside as he is on an extended teaching and learning trip to Europe and Canada. However, we look forward to continuing contributions from him in future issues, as no doubt he will return revitalised and full of new ideas.

## CONGRATULATIONS

To John Featonby of Whakatane who recently won \$1,000 with a sawdust-fired sphere, the first prize in the Regional Pottery Award sponsored by Trustbank, Bay of Plenty. Merit awards of \$100 each were won by Libby Boyd of Thames, Judy Brennan of Taupo, Ian Drury of Coromandel, Ian Webster, of Kuaotunu and John Roy of Tauranga.

Rick Rudd was the selector for this exhibition organised by the Bethlehem Pottery Club and held at Baycourt, Tauranga.

## HIGH PRICED CERAMICS

From the British Ceramic Review magazine comes the following item. What would you pay for ceramic tiles? \$60 a square metre, maybe \$90 if they were really special and you didn't have to buy too many. But how about \$6,000 or \$18,000 or even \$50,000?

A recent London auction saw such prices when a number of brush decorated stoneware tiles, all 10cm squares, by Bernard Leach came under the hammer. Individual tiles found keen competition and prices of \$330 up to \$510 each were paid.

A group of 19 of which only five were decorated and some had additions of old cement mortar on the backs, were a bargain at only \$1,150! A set of eight (you'd still need another 92 for your first square metre) in a wooden frame, more than doubled its estimated price selling at \$1,240. And — oh yes — don't forget the buyer's premium of another 10%.

## AUCKLAND MUSEUM

High prices are not seen only at overseas auctions. At the end of this June the Auckland Museum acquired a rare William Moorcroft vase decorated with a moonlit blue landscape. It was on auction at the Peter Webb Galleries. The 60cm high vase, one of about 12 made, was bought for the museum with a bid of \$18,250.

## FLETCHER CHALLENGE 1992:

The catalogue from this exhibition, all 48 pages of colour photos by Haru Sameshima is available at \$5 each (incl p&p&GST) from: Auckland Studio Potters P.O. Box 13-195 Onehunga

## 1993:

I know we're hardly over this year's yet, but it is already time to start work on the next one. Entry is again by slide — slides of the actual work to be submitted, or of a piece of work very representative of the actual work. If the work submitted is too far removed from that shown in the initial slides, it may be rejected.

Slides have to be in to the organisers by 1 December 1992. Successful ceramists will be notified and their actual work must arrive by 1 May 1993, or local entries may be delivered by 5 May 1993.

Entry forms will be mailed out as usual, will be included in the NZSP newsletter, and will be sent to local pottery societies. Or they can be obtained by writing to the organisers: Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award P.O. Box 33-1425 Takapuna Auckland New Zealand

For more information see the advertisement in this issue.

## NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF POTTERS

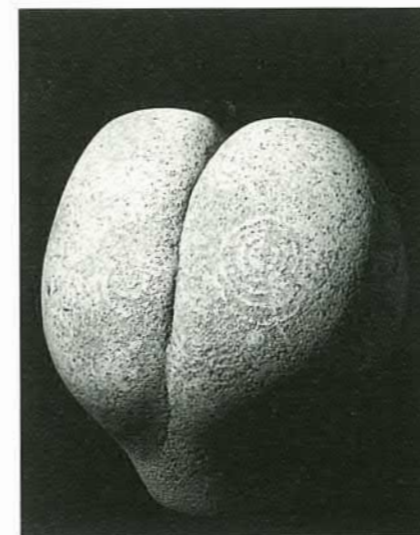
The NZSP has printed two booklets as part of the Cone City Clay convention. One; a 1993 Appointments Diary with 59 photos of pots seen in the NZSP Easter Show exhibition and two; the society's Yearbook 1992. This has a current list of the society's membership and its executive. It is also a catalogue of the society's 34th National Exhibition, held at Masterworks Gallery. Each of 50 pages has a photo of a potter, as supplied by themselves, their brief statement and a photo of one of their pieces selected for the exhibition.

Both booklets were designed by John Parker with photos by Howard Williams and both — the booklets that is — are available at an all-inclusive price of \$5.80 each from:

NZSP Robin Paul 145 Eskdale Road Birkenhead Auckland

## APOLOGIES

Heather McLeod won a merit in Compendium Gallery's Contemporary Crafts Competition. In our last issue we put her name to the photo of a vase by Peter Henderson. Heather's sculptural piece we show here.



## FULLBRIGHT GRANTS

The New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation is offering two Cultural Development Grants tenable in 1993. These grants are open to New Zealand citizens actively involved in artistic activities who would benefit from observing developments and activity in their field of interest within the United States.

The grants enable the successful applicants to undertake an intensive study tour of the United States, normally for 45 days, although shorter periods may be negotiated.

Each grant provides round trip air travel, internal travel within the United States and a daily maintenance allowance of US\$120.

Selection will be based on the Foundation's assessment of the candidate's performance and potential.

While there is no set application form, more detailed information about the method of application, criteria, etc., may be obtained by writing, before the closing date of 31 August 1992 to:

New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation P.O. Box 3465 Wellington or Phone/Fax 04-472 2065

Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

## ARTS COUNCIL GRANTS

QE II Arts Council grants picked up by potters earlier this year include:

## Short Term Study

Julie Warren, potter, tour co-ordinator, Nelson, \$10,000, to co-ordinate tours from national and international craft tutors and to develop communication networks between craft organisations and polytechnics.

## Short Term Study — Workshop Development

Kevin Kilsby, potter, Hamilton, \$10,000 to purchase kiln and build a new studio.

Graeme Storm, potter, Auckland, \$10,000 to purchase a gas fired kiln.

Jeannie van der Putten, potter, Auckland, \$10,000 to install an electric kiln, and work towards a major exhibition.

## Major Creative Development

Valeska Campion, ceramic, Waiheke Island, \$15,000 to develop constructing sculptures of ferro cement clad in mosaics.

Moyra Elliott, ceramic, Auckland, \$15,000 to prepare exhibition pieces for, and attend an international ceramic symposium in Poland.

Darryl Robertson, ceramic, Nelson, \$15,000 to research and develop new works to international exhibition quality.

Christine Thacker, ceramic, Auckland, \$15,000 to undertake tenure at the International Ceramic Work Centre in Holland.

## Studio Workshops

Peter Collis, ceramic, Auckland, \$10,000 to upgrade studio facilities in order to accommodate graduates.

## FAENZA

The 48th International Ceramic Art Competition will be held in Faenza, Italy from September to October 1993.

The application form must be received in Faenza no later than 28 November 1992. It must be accompanied by the artist's CV and three 35mm slides of the work submitted. The actual work must not be sent — only the slides.

Artists will be notified of admission to the competition by return of post. The works must be received no later than 30 April 1993.

The Premier Purchase Prize is worth 20 million lire and there are other Purchase Prizes of 5 and 2 million lire, the last exclusively for artists under the age of 35 at the 31st December 1992.

Competition entry forms may be obtained from:

Faenza Ceramic Competition Office Via Risorgimento 3 48018 Faenza (Ra) Italy Ph: 0546-621111 Fax: 0546-621554

## VALLAURIS

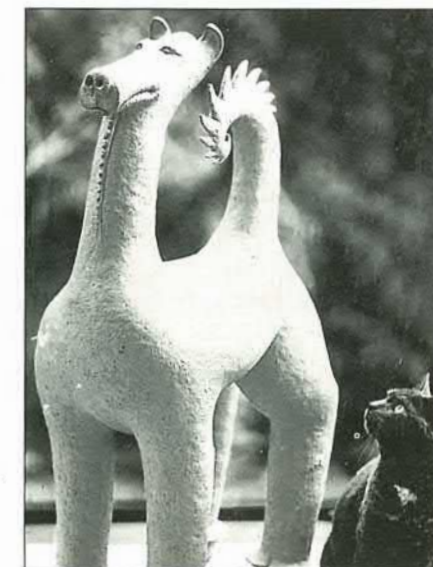
Since 1968 the Biennale Internationale de Céramique d'Art has been held in

Vallauris, a beautiful town in the South of France famous for its Museum of Ceramics.

Work may be entered in four categories; architectural pieces, thrown pots, enamel and creative. Ceramists from any country may submit slides of their work to a panel of judges, who then select a shortlist of those who are requested to present finished pieces for final judging.

From the winners of the sections a grand prize winner is selected with a prize of 40,000 francs. This year the grand prize was shared between Werna Nowka of Germany and Andrea Hylands, a lecturer in ceramic design at Monash University, Australia.

The exhibition is on at Vallauris from 1 July to 31 October 1992.



Coiled terracotta dog by Barry Brickell. On looking through a hole between the ears, one sees the view through the dog's nostrils. Barry explains, "This is the Coromandel Watchdog of Antimining, fitted with the latest binostrophilic monovisual telescope apparatus for the detection of minilegitimate activity on the Coromandel Peninsula."

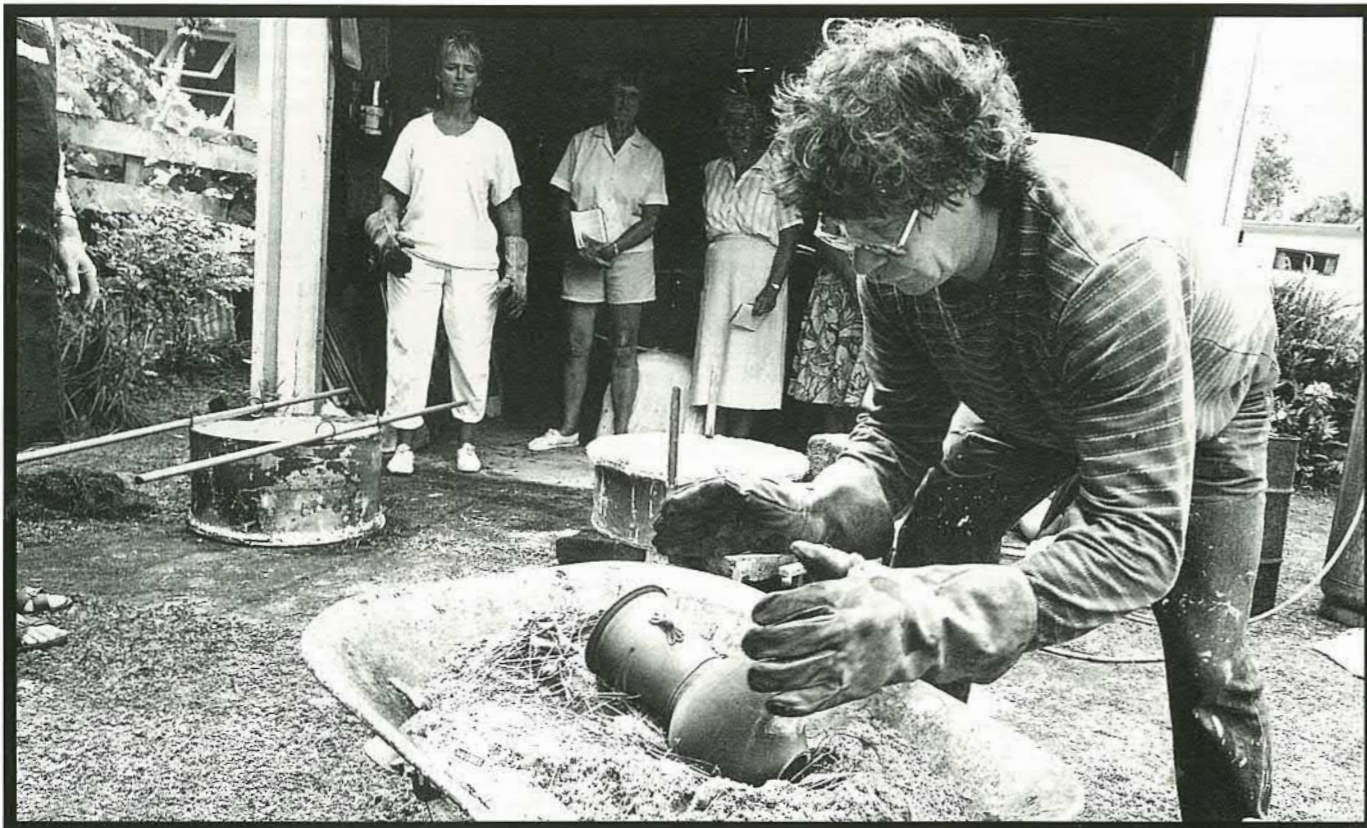
An inspecting Bureaucat (sic) is supervising the efficacy of this particular piece of equipment."

## OBITUARY

Pat Wilson died after a long illness, on Saturday 27 June. She was a long-standing member of the NZSP and a former active member of the New Plymouth Potters. She and her husband shifted to Russell in Northland several years ago, where she continued her potting as well as running a craft outlet, the Cottage Shop. We extend sympathy from all Pat's pottery friends to her husband and daughter who will continue running the gallery and shop.

# CHRIS COCKELL 1947 — 1992

Sally Vinson, Coromandel



It was with sorrow that we heard of the death of **Chris Cockell** on June 24th, 1992.

In life he was a large and vital character with a big heart, but alas it was this big heart which finally let him down at the age of 45.

**Chris** was born in London where **Jan** met him when she was on a working holiday. In 1971 they married and returned to settle in New Zealand, Jan's birthplace. He traded his carpet-laying skills for a vocation in studio pottery, initially learning his craft from Jan. He became smitten with the potter's love of clay and the firing process, experimenting and learning the vagaries of gas and wood as fuels. He worked relentlessly to make his firing more effective, through trial and error, and also from other potters.

Chris' enthusiasm for gas as a fuel made him realise there was little information for potters wishing to use it in New Zealand conditions, and there were many who did as a result of the oil crisis at the end of the 1970s.

He became vice-president of the *New Zealand Society of Potters* from 1980 to 1983, during which time he fulfilled an ambition to publish information about firing with gas, NZ style.

*The Gas Firing* book epitomises Chris' generosity to his colleague potters — he was always available to others to help, support and solve problems.

As president of the *New Zealand Society of Potters*, I was very privileged to experience these attributes. He was a tower of strength and a good friend to me, and brought to the society's executive his own brand of no-nonsense common sense.

He was a devoted family man. His sometimes rough exterior covered a very soft inside. "My Jan" and the children **Joanne** and **Steven** will miss the husband and father who was so loyal to them. I know that the neighbouring potters at Oratia, in Auckland's Waitakere Ranges, will do their best to help the family through the difficult times ahead.

Chris used to enjoy the housework with Jan, especially when it was his turn to do the dusting! He loved handling the pots in their collection and thinking of the people who had made them. Which is all we can do now — enjoy the work that Chris left behind, and remember him.

## Editor's note:

The photo of Chris Cockell, reproduced courtesy of the *Bay of Plenty Times*, shows Chris as so many of us will remember him — hard at work, gloved-up and raku firing, teaching other potters. Both he and Jan worked tirelessly as demonstrators at the recent *Cone City Clay* convention, sharing their skill in throwing, their knowledge of clay, glazes and firing.

Jan Cockell has asked, could she please have copies of photos or video tapes taken of Chris at *Cone City Clay* as she has very little of this sort of material to remember Chris by. If any readers have such material could they kindly send it to Jan at **6 Raroa Terrace, Oratia, Auckland 8**.

His superb shino jugs were shown in the NZSP Easter Show exhibition and the trio of peach-bloom wood-fired stoneware bottles exhibited in the NZSP Annual Exhibition at *Masterworks*, Parnell. Photos of these appear on pages 24 and 25.

*The Gas Kiln Book*, compiled by Chris is still available from some ceramic supply houses or can be bought by sending a cheque marked NZSP for \$11 (includes post and packing and GST) to **Peter Collis, 31 Tizzard Rd, Birkenhead, Auckland.** ■

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Colin Montfort	Stained Glass
Peter Alger	Pottery
& John Greene	Puppet Making
Ann Forbes	

Enrolments close 15th December. Discount for early enrolments. For information brochure, write to or ring:  
P. Lupi, Co-ordinator:

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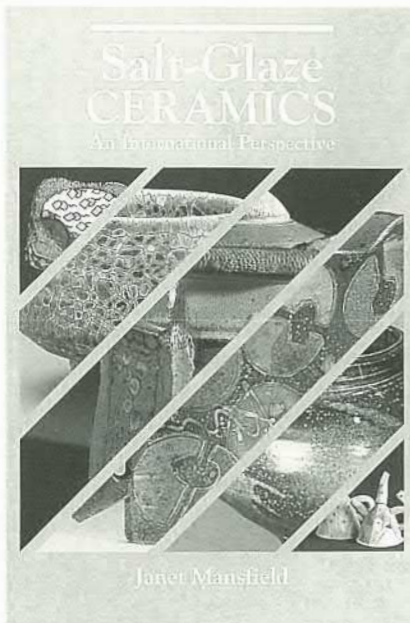
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# BOOK REVIEW

Howard S. Williams

## SALT-GLAZE CERAMICS An International Perspective By Janet Mansfield



With all the good natured chaffing that goes on between Aussies and Kiwis, particularly on sports fields and in pubs (I daren't mention shearing-sheds) we have to agree that mostly the pegging is pretty level. (Though I still like, was it Sir Robert Muldoon's assertion that exporting our worst brains to Sydney would raise the average IQ level of both countries.)

However, in the literary field concerned with the development of studio pottery and ceramics we have to concede that Australia has one of the world's very best in Janet Mansfield.

An internationally respected author of several books on ceramics, Janet was for many years the editor and a writer for *Pottery in Australia*. She is now the editor of *Ceramics, Art and Perception*, one of the world's best ceramic magazines, and certainly the

first to cover the subject from a truly international viewpoint.

Janet Mansfield belies the cynicism that a failed practitioner becomes the teacher, critic or writer. She is internationally known and shown as an expert potter. Here we remember her successful appearance as the guest potter and lecturer for the NZSP conference at Christchurch in 1986.

Her speciality is salt glazing, a technique at once ancient and contemporary; basically simple yet complex enough to hold the fascinated attention of pottery makers from many countries and cultures for over 500 years. It is in a practical sense one of the strongest and most impermeable coverings for clay products — hence its use in heavy-wear ware, like kitchen containers, acid store jars, sewer and soil pipes. At the other extreme it offers ceramic artists an incredibly subtle palette of colour and nuance of texture with which to explore their aesthetic and philosophical journeys.

So it comes as no surprise that Janet's latest book is devoted entirely to salt-glaze, her own speciality. It starts with an introduction containing a brief explanation of the subject's technical aspects, later expanded on by ceramic artists as they describe their own work. A short history of salt-glaze follows, placing these contemporary artists in context with the development of salt-glazing through time, in differing countries and cultures and for differing philosophical or aesthetic rationales.

Following chapters discuss the work of 60 ceramic artists currently working with salt-glaze, often quoting them directly, sometimes adding comments from others such as art critics, always expanded on by the author. In examining these artists, their techniques, materials, recipes and procedures are recorded as well as the influences on their work and their motivation for it. They are drawn from all over the world, the common factor being they specialise in salt-glaze to a degree that affords them recognition

internationally as leading exponents of ceramic art.

The chapter headings reveal the extensive coverage given the subject — *A Celebration of Pottery; The Dignity of Domestic Ware; The Importance of Tradition; Control over Unpredictability; A Love of Form and Surface; A Lifetime of Experiments; The Salt Factor in Clay Sculpture; The Full Flavour of Salt; A Genuine Contemporary Sensibility.*

Whether the artists specialise in domestic ware, architectural works or sculpture, they show this ancient technique as offering a means of creative expression both satisfying and challenging. Through all the difficulties encountered the rewards gained keep them experimenting and developing their own personal style, the idiom which best enables them to satisfy their own expressive needs. The book is as interesting an insight to these people, as it is an exposition on their work.

The photography (124 plates in colour and some black and white) is just superb, as is its reproduction. The lushness of colour and texture well describes the richness of salt-glaze in all its glory, showing why it has its eternal fascination.

This book shows why ceramists become seduced by salt-glaze to the point of almost an addiction, and may in fact turn others on to experiment in this field. If it does, there is plenty of technical information in it as well as the aesthetic and philosophical to get them going. A magnificent book.

*Salt-glaze Ceramics* can be obtained from A. & C. Black, 35 Bedford Row, London, WC1R 4JH, England at 25 pounds sterling, or from *Craftsman House*, P.O. Box 480, Roseville, NSW 2069, Australia for A\$65, both plus post and packing. It will be brought into New Zealand this September, in limited numbers by *Random Century* for retail sale through normal outlets at an estimated \$129.95.

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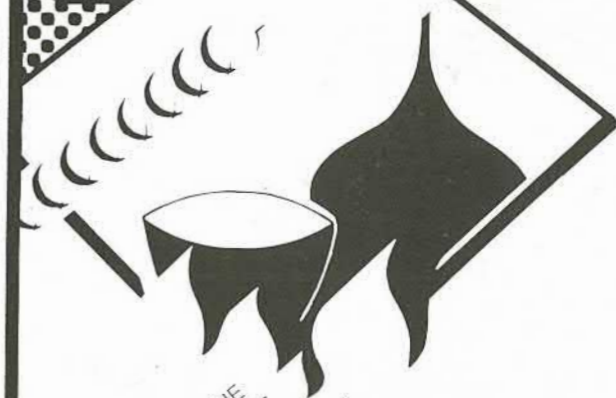
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# WELLINGTON POTTERS 34th ANNUAL EXHIBITION

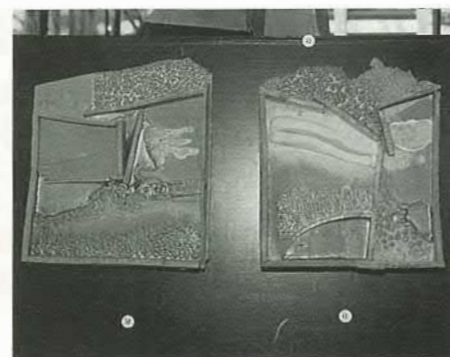
Bank of New Zealand, Wellington



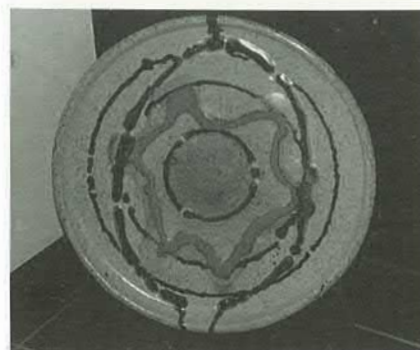
The BNZ Foyer



Brian Gartside, guest potter



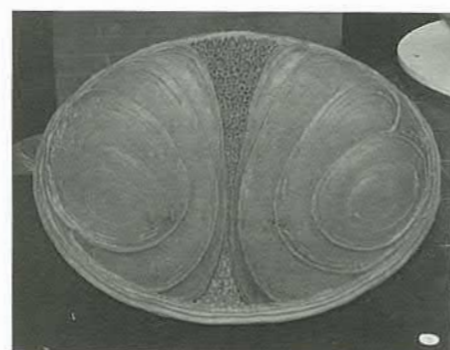
Brian Gartside, guest potter



Doreen Blumhardt, stoneware platter



Juliet Peter, Trojan Horse; pots by Murray Clayton



Maureen Hunter, Raku



Paul Winspear, stoneware bowl



Sheila Brown, Pacifica Series, terracotta



Gloria Young, fruit bowls; Rosemary O'Hara, breakfast set  
Rosemary Ryan, children's plates

The Wellington Potters Association held its 34th Annual Exhibition during the International Arts Festival in March. The venue, donated by the Bank of New Zealand, was the foyer of their Head Office in Willis Street. Slate tiles on the floor and walls of glass giving wonderful natural light, gave first class exposure of the pottery to the public, right in the centre of the city's main commercial area.

Money saved on hiring a venue was put into professionally designed signs,

adding to the up-market image of the exhibition. These signs are re-useable, an investment for the club's future shows.

Guest exhibitor was **Brian Gartside** from Drury, who also gave a brilliant workshop.

Excellent free media coverage was supplied by **Radio ZM/FM**, in a full breakfast session with **Nick Tansley** who promoted the association and its exhibition from **Murray Clayton's** pottery studio, starting at 7.15am!

The exhibition was opened by Wellington's Mayor, **Sir James Belich** alongside entertainment with live music by **The Plasma**. Over 200 people attended.

The association put a lot of effort into this year's exhibition, to raise the profile of pottery in the public arena. Success was shown, not only in the numbers of people who visited, but also by the sales figures — the highest yet achieved at one of the association's annual exhibitions.

## A NEW TEMPERATURE CONTROLLER

### From Furnace Engineering

#### Henk de Jong, Manurewa

There are many temperature controllers available and that is just what they are — temperature controllers.

**Furnace Engineering**, manufacturers of kilns for many different applications needed something more, so together with a bright electronics designer, they developed their own — a real kiln controller.

The **FE MULTI PROFILE CONTROLLER** is specially designed for use with gas or electric kilns. Knowing potters use many different firing cycles from crystalline glazing to reduction atmospheres they designed this controller to cope with them all. It can be connected to any kiln, but **FE** kilns are specially built and equipped to use all the features of this new controller.

**Lyndsey Handy**, a well known glass artist, **Des Howard**, full time potter and **Victoria University of Wellington** are all using the **FE Multi Profile Controller**.

your firings, for example; 1: bisque. 2: low gloss. 3: high gloss. 4: lustre. 5: crystalline glaze... etc. Up to 10 can be made (or more if they are smaller — using fewer stages) and stored in the memory. When you fire, simply select 1 if you want to bisque, 3 for a high gloss, and so on. No more mistakes in re-programming each time!

- Programme a delay time for your electric kiln to switch on. If cheap power rates come on at say 10.30pm you can make the kiln start automatically at this time.

- Operate a vent, if fitted, to open by itself from say 20°C to 600°C so fumes or moisture can escape, then close from 600°C to 1280°C to conserve heat, then open again to allow the kiln to cool. This output can be switched eight times during one firing cycle.

- Display or change the setting at any time during a firing. If you wish to know how much soak time is left to go, just push the soak button and the current temperature readout changes to show the soak time.

The controller has its own 12 volt output so solid state relays can be used if required. A solid state relay is a switch with no physical contacts (which can burn away) so it makes no clicking sounds while the kiln is firing.

A gas kiln can be made to fire automatically. One gas solenoid is used for the lower temperatures and a second opened at any given higher temperature, to achieve a more even temperature increase. If for any reason the gas flame is extinguished, the controller will automatically turn off the gas supply to the kiln, and sound a beeper to indicate that something is wrong.

#### What the Controller can do for you:

- It will display during the firing: The current kiln temperature, or the oxygen probe reading (if fitted), the profile number and the stage which is operating. The numerals of the display are bright red and clearly visible, in daylight or the dark.

- It will turn the kiln off when: the thermocouple probe burns out; the thermocouple is wired wrongly; the flame in a gas kiln extinguishes; an electric kiln element fails so the kiln cannot reach the set temperature.

- The indicator lights show that the kiln: is on a ramp up or down; is in the hold or soak time; and when heating up, when auxiliary output is activated.

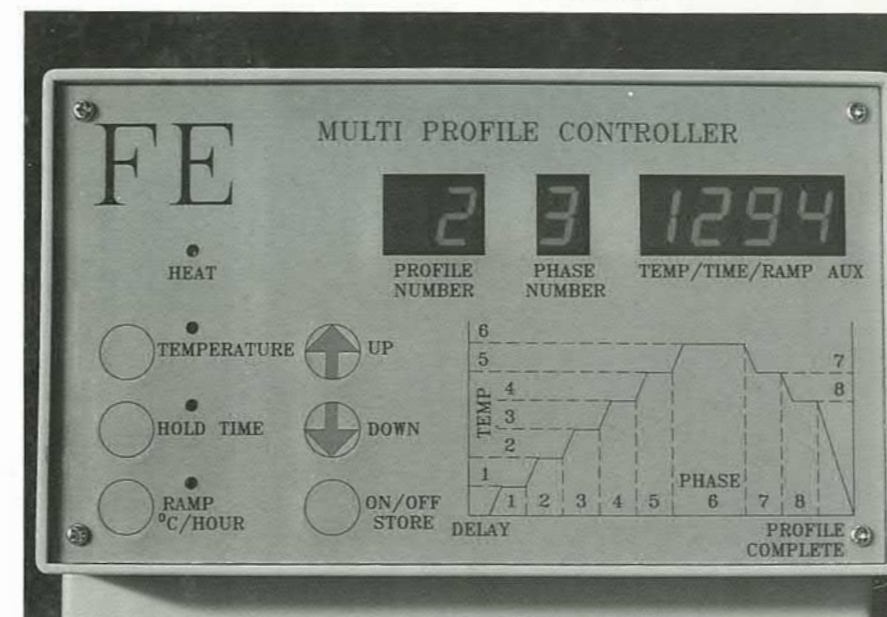
- The controller is factory set to your maximum kiln temperature. Even if you programme the controller wrongly the temperature will not exceed the maximum for your kiln.

- The controller also has 12 pre-programmed firing cycles in its memory. For example, programme 11, a drying-out cycle, ramps the kiln up by 50°C per hour to a maximum of 100°C, holding this for five hours until the pottery is bone dry. Then you can select, say, programme 14 for a low bisque firing.

- A beeper sounds for a short time when the firing cycle is completed. This can also be set to notify you when the kiln is cold enough to be safely opened — say at 80°C. The beeper sounds intermittently if the thermocouple breaks or if an element fails. The kiln will turn off and the beeper warns that something is wrong.

The new **FE Multi Profile Controller** can be fitted by any qualified electrician and it is supplied with a user's manual and wiring diagram. For more details contact:

**Furnace Engineering**  
6 Holmes Road  
P.O. Box 136  
Manurewa  
Ph: 09-267 2661



Schools and Polytechs are keen as the controller is pre-programmed eliminating the need to re-programme every firing cycle. The operator only has to select the correct firing profile.

The controller is a digital micro processor with eight programmable stages and 10 programmable memories. Each STAGE has a RAMP (rate of temperature increase) MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE and HOLD TEMPERATURE or SOAK TIME.

**With the FE Multi Profile Controller you can:**

- Programme a firing cycle in up to eight stages, up or down.
- Make a separate cycle for each of

While the controller is controlling the kiln temperature, you can change over to the **OXY** mode and display the level of oxygen in the kiln, during the firing of a gas kiln, or reduction in an electric kiln. While in this mode, adjustments can be made to the burners to achieve the right combustion or the desired amount of reduction. There is no need to change back to the temperature readout, as the kiln temperature remains under the controller's direction. You can concentrate on the combustion setting, thus giving constant glaze results with reduction, or with a gas kiln you can save on gas waste. An oxygen probe has to be fitted for this mode.

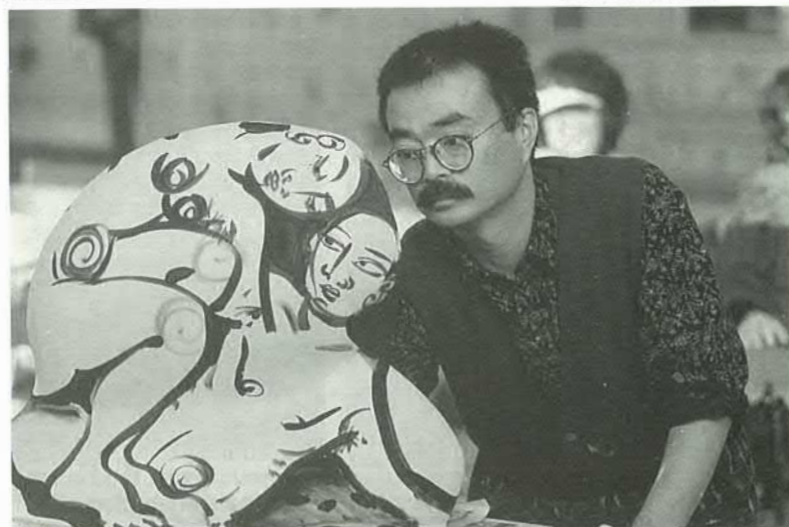
# CONE CITY CLAY

NZSP National Convention, Penrose High School

Photos of workshop demonstrators and participants, by Howard Williams.



Fletcher Challenge Award Winner, Lara Scobie



Fletcher Challenge Judge, Akio Takamori



Peter Lange building his Cone City Kiln



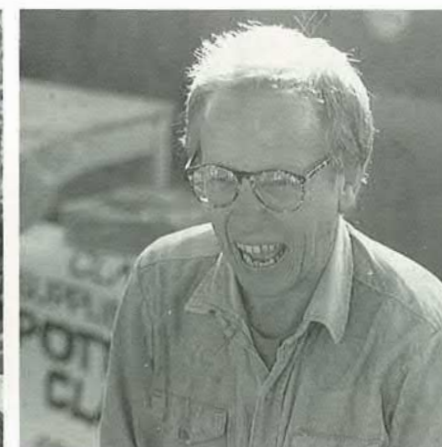
Photographer Haru Sameshima turns welder



Cone City Kiln photo by Haru Sameshima.



Bronwynne Cornish preparing her installation



Richard Parker



Rita Zwitter and Libby Boyd



Helen Pollock



Marilyn Wiseman



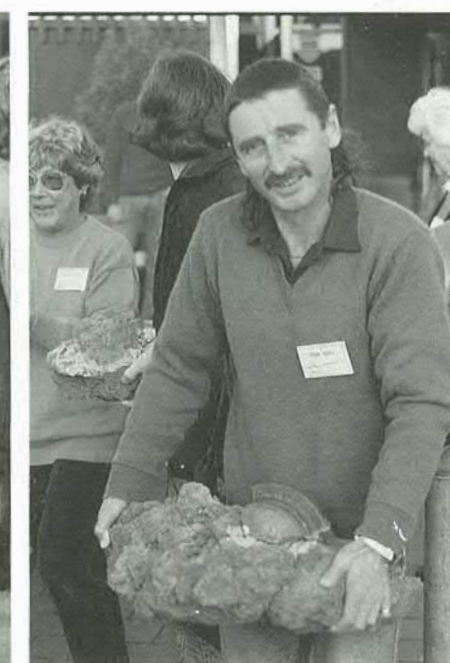
Peter Stichbury



Rosemarie McClay



Margery Smith and Patti Meads with loo decorated by Christine Harris



Rick Rudd



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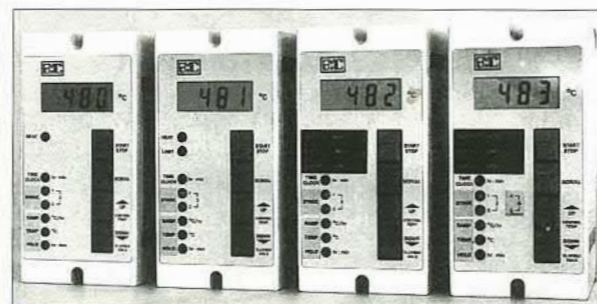
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# NORSEWEAR ART AWARD

Waipukurau Civic Theatre Complex

Selector: Peter Gibbs



Winner \$2,000: Peter Alger, *Elemental Bowl*, stoneware



Raewyn Johnson, terracotta, acrylic and shells



Steve Fullmer, *Open Sea*



Merit: John Crawford  
*Green Goddess*



Merit: Hilary Kerrod,  
*Neolithic Vessel*, earthenware



Danny Moorwood, stoneware bowl



Photos by Howard Williams



Trish Macready, *Boabab Goblets*, porcelain



Merit: Christine Black, *Ceramic Pillow*, stoneware



Janet Smith, metal-laced raku



Peter Henderson, white earthenware



Fran Dibble and Tony Reardon, *Hat Bowl*, earthenware



Sheila Brown, *Samoa*, terracotta



Ann Verdcourt, *Mermaids*, stoneware

# SEVILLE



NEW ZEALAND  
EXPO 92

Howard S. Williams, Auckland

In our last issue (Vol. 34, No. 1, 1992) we profiled four artists whose work was sent as part of the ceramics installation at the New Zealand pavilion in Seville; **Christine Boswijk, Brian Gartside, Steve Fullmer and Darryl Robertson**. Our second instalment follows, again by the artists in their own words and pictures.

The pavilion has been voted one of the most successful of EXPO '92 and the ceramics acclaimed and photographed constantly. **Princess Christina** of Spain visited it as one of only five she inspected, expressing a determination after to visit New Zealand. Her brother, **Prince Felipe**, was here two years ago.

**Queen Beatrix** of Holland, here last March when she met some of our EXPO '92 potters, has also seen the pavilion and was so impressed she contacted **Ernst Veen**, director of one of Europe's leading art galleries, the *Nieuwe Kerk* in Amsterdam. On her urging, he made a special trip to Seville where after he saw our ceramics he said the European view that art comes from Europe "is nonsense".

"By this exhibition of ceramics you show much more of your country than just a film or some beautiful pictures. You succeeded in making me change my mind. I had this idea of beautiful countryside, many, many sheep and people working hard. That's all. Now you show me these works which are made from the heart."

Mr Veen has arranged that the ceramics and glass might travel to Amsterdam to go on exhibition in November, around the already arranged visits to other European capitals. The Amsterdam visit will fit in with prospective **Abel Tasman** festivals.



## BARRY BRICKELL, COROMANDEL

### Exponential Conceptions, and the Shop Floor Experience

Late in 1990, I was asked to consider making sculptural pottery forms for Expo '92 to be held at Seville, Spain. I asked **James Mack**, the organising co-ordinator, his reasons for the request and also the parameters involved. He replied it was my work in terracotta which could connect Spain in the *Age of Discovery* with the Pacific. Whew!

Both areas have great terracotta traditions. For centuries before the Islamic invasion of Southern Spain which introduced the majolica tradition, Spanish peasants had been making *ceramica popular*, thrown and coiled utility and ceremonial wares in wood-fired, often lead-glazed terracotta, a tradition which all but vanished after the industrial revolution. (Today it is being revived by younger, historically aware people).

Even before this Western tradition evolved, *Lapita* pottery was being made throughout the Pacific, and transported over long distances by sea. We are speaking of some thousands of years ago during what must have been the great *Age of Discovery* of the Pacific vastness.

During the medieval period of European history, it was Spain that pioneered ship-building and open sea navigation with its incursions into the Pacific, then a little later, its invasion into South America. To us, Spain's *Age of Discovery* culminated in the voyages of **Christopher Columbus**, who in 1492, sailed the oceans blue and "discovered" Aotearoa, at least for the West.

So, said I to myself, what a job! With barely a year to go, how does one start? Where does one start? Some confusion seemed to arise over the *Lapita* thing; was I to make modern-day *lapita* pottery for Expo? Never was there any pressure put upon me to copy, ape, fabricate or dogmatise anything. As James pointed out patiently to my confused, uncertain and overwhelmed mind, it was up to me to interpret the connections and hopefully come up not only with meaningful forms, but also lend them great beauty and strength. After completing several large works, I wished I could start all over again and make better ones.

Having been to Spain in 1978, and studied both their majolica and terracotta traditions, I gained some insight into not only this part of Spanish culture, but to some extent also, the feel of the people. Sure, there is this rather terrifying element of sophistication, but also they are fun and humour-loving people — except when one meets up with their world of officialia and bureaucracy. There, the humour usually ceases and life becomes competitive and deadly serious. Perhaps the Kiwi has not got to this stage as yet, and let us hope that he and she do not.

It must also be remembered that most modern Spanish people are not very aware of their terracotta tradition, at least in detail. We may consider our own predicament likewise — the average kiwi ignorance of important details of our own bicultural history. In catering for modern humanity in Europe, I concluded the best thing to do was to give something related to our own region of the World which was original, different and with our Pacific feel to it.

My problem with form choice never really went away except perhaps for the last part of the assignment. I believe there is a thing called the *Pacific Figure*, especially in terms of the female form which one sees so well expressed in the painting of **Gauguin**. The Pacific (the word means calm) has a feel of large, simple open spaces which all relate to each other in a strong, but gentle manner. This is the feeling I wanted to convey in my larger works.

Then there is definitely a thing called the *Pacific Bowl*. These are big, open, generous vessels endowed with decorative stories, embellishments and meanings often with a strongly anthropomorphic theme. I did want to include one of these as a complement to the phenomenon of the *European Bowl* which is utterly different in concept.

I "invented" *lapita*-like decorative areas as an excuse to make new and contrasting textures in the clay, something I have always been very fond of doing. In the two last pieces, I emphasised these areas with pastel stain-coloured slips, which was for me a fresh discovery.

From bowls to vessels. The part played by shipping in the *Ages of Discovery*, I felt to be rather important. So I dreamed up a "ship", related to something I had made many years ago while making my own discoveries about boats. This coiled terracotta piece perhaps stands for something like a mixture of galleon and container ship. It carries a coloured multi-decked cargo of Pacificalia bound for Spain. In this connection, I have always wanted to spread native manuka or tea-tree seed over Spain as a return gesture for all the exotic plants that have colonised New Zealand from Europe. Can you imagine seeing the old, weathered red hills of Northern and Central Spain billowing in the snow-bloom of our national native "weed"?

Perhaps my major regret about working for Expo was an almost total ignorance of what the other New Zealand potters were doing towards it. Working in comparative isolation on a very major theme could have its benefits however, in terms of originality. I can only hope that the work relates somehow to that of the other potters so that the total effect is orchestral in its meaning and effect.

I am grateful to James for his patience with me and help in overcoming my problems of conception. The actual carrying out on the "shop floor" was an interesting experience. At the same time I was also having to make several very large plant pots for the *Auckland Savings Bank's* new foyer — everything comes at once, that's life.

Perhaps the most daunting part was the stacking of the large wood-fired kiln and firing it for up to 24 hours. A comfortable chair near the firebox with coffee and "tube-cleaner", with *Radio Pacific* gently talking back got me through the night shifts and the next day. Eventually I trust we will know the nature of the impact of Kiwi on some of Europe, in which I might have played a wee small part.

This may have been a chance to export some seeds.



Photos by Henare Tia.



Robyn Stewart, photo by Anna Campbell

## ROBYN STEWART, WAIWERA

Awaiting my arrival home after 3½ months working and travelling through southern Africa, was a letter. "Would you be interested in a commission to prepare work for Expo '92 in Seville, Spain?"

My brief was to portray Gondwanaland (apologies for incorrectly spelling this in our last issue — Ed), tectonic plates, volcanoes; geologically the very beginnings of the Pacific area. This tied in remarkably with the direction I was wanting to explore in my work after experiencing the vast and primitive African landscape.

Like all participants involved in this project I was asked to make on a large scale. Larger than I had ever made before. I had previously found that pieces of my handbuilt, burnished and lowfired work of more than 76cm seldom survived the firing. Even at this size I needed help with lifting, which presents difficulties when one lives alone in a country area. However, I found the conception of this new commission and then its making, an enjoyable, stimulating and extending time, even though a considerable amount of money was eventually paid out to keep my neck, shoulders and back in working order!

The firings were quite another matter! For bisque firing I bought a large second-hand electric kiln — which I had been wanting for several years, and I designed and had constructed a top-hat, fibre-lined gas kiln for smoking/black firing.

After eight attempts trying to achieve the effects I wanted, I went back to firing in my usual way using dried dung, sawdust, bark and grass. I was afraid this would be disastrous also, given my losses for big pots in the past. "Oh ye of little faith!" — only one out of eight of these special large pieces cracked and there were some wonderful gifts from the fire, in the form of colour flashes such as I had never achieved before.

In true potter tradition the last piece was still warm from its firing when **James Mack** came to make his final selection and with his assistant **Martin Kelly**, fashion special individual packing for each piece for transportation to Wellington and eventually on to Seville.

In total I made 14 large hemispherical forms, half of which survived as ultimately satisfying finished pieces. A very special 4½ months in my potting experience — one which involved all my energies, mental, physical and emotional.





■ BARRY BRICKELL ■ The Ship of Discovery  
Photos by Henare Tia



■ Pacific Bowl by Barry Brickell.  
Photo courtesy National Museum of NZ



● Winds of the Four Quarters. 6cm h



● Ann Verdcourt Photos by Alan Stephens



● King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. 43cm h



● Prison with released prisoners. 36cm h



● Columbus' Sailors on their sea chest.  
● ANN VERDCOURT



Santa Maria threatened by sea worms. 50cm h



● Columbus at his desk. 42cm h



● Parrot. 21cm h



● Carib hammock in the palms. 55cm h



● Fish with Ship Fin. 40cm long



□ ROBYN STEWART



□



□ Robyn Stewart's Tectonic Volcanoes

Photos by Howard Williams



● Ann Verdcourt

## ANN VERDCOURT, DANNEVIRKE

### Something About Columbus

The brief, which gave me cold feet was — **Ann Verdcourt** will be asked to evoke in ceramics, the feeling of the Carthusia Monastery on the site, the only remaining building, from which **Isabella of Spain** farewelled **Christopher Columbus**. She will be asked to create four chambers in which she will make a statement about that historic act, hopefully, in the manner of the **Velazquez**.

I knew **James Mack**, (the exhibition curator) loved the fun in the Velazquez Girls and I had enjoyed making them (see page 24, NZ Potter Vol. 33, No. 2, 1991). I had known the paintings from early childhood, and was familiar enough with them to have a stream of pictures at the back of my mind. In fact they often bugged me when I was trying to concentrate on something quite different.

Not much fun to be had out of **Columbus**, in fact I found it all very depressing. I could find no reference material whatever to what James had in mind.

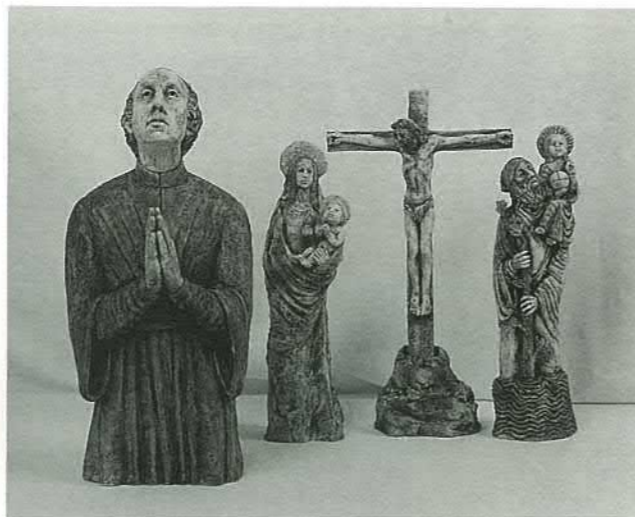
A load of pictures of the monastery appeared at my request, all taken from the same view! That was enough to put me off — the whole thing was scary. Then there was the problem of scale, unless I made a huge building the figures would be minute.

James did not want me to say no to the project. He was very good, didn't badger me, just said to think it over. He seemed to have enough faith in me to carry me through, should I dare to do it.

I had already read the Columbus journals, and was struck with the idea of making a group, showing Columbus picking out of the sea a plant that was translated as *Wild Rose*. This was the first sign of land after many weeks at sea. I wanted above all, to be as accurate as possible, so I wrote to the Natural History Department of the *National Museum* asking for information on this plant. "Too difficult, no can do," was the reply. I wrote to *Kew Gardens* in England. The answer was "You have a bad translation. The original language means *barnacle* such as would be scraped from the boat's bottom." So I wiped that idea.

I read all the histories of Columbus I could, and found many of the childrens' books full of romantic myths and stupidities — a sad state of affairs. I did find some lovely woodcuts by a sixteenth century author **Oviedo**. A pineapple and an iguana in particular made me see a way I could tackle the subject. When James rang again I said I would do it. Then I went out and bought some insurance just in case I would have to pay the commission money back.

Now I had a new brief. Show the first voyage from Columbus' sponsors to the landing in the Caribbean. All pieces to be clearly understood without the aid of words. Nothing esoteric was wanted. The work must be factual, non political and if possible, given the depressing side of the subject, enjoyable. There would be three sections instead of four. I made a list of all the things I would need to show to make a complete story. I was rather a long list.



### Section One: Spain

Columbus at his desk: the man, his knowledge and piety  
Columbus kneeling: Patron Saint  
Mary, Crucifix, St Christopher  
Bookcase, Winds: ideas about wind use  
Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand: the sponsors and authority  
Granada: to contrast Medieval town against Caribbean building  
Prison with four reprieved prisoners: Royal decree to help crew the ships

### Section Two: Voyage

The Three Ships: show how small they were compared with the ocean  
Santa Maria with woodworm: woodworm one of the perils of ocean-going wooden ships  
Navigation aids  
Big ship with fish fin: many sailors believed in monsters etc  
Mermaids  
Sailors on sea chest: one chest between two  
Ship's water barrel  
Fire-place: show cooking facilities  
Live pigs: food etc.  
Plates with figs and nuts, knives  
Gold and goods for exchange: goods used for currency.  
Hats, hawks' bells and beads, show gold ornaments with these  
Cannon, helmets, swords: defence of ship and selves, use chessmen type figures

### Section Three: Caribbean

Native village and canoe: combine housing, boats, nude people on one piece  
Bread making, cassava root: food and tools  
Iguana, parrots  
Trees, palm trees and hammock: the first seen by sailors who slept on the deck on a mat  
Religious objects or gods: to contrast with crucifix etc.  
Cannibals (Caribs): some natives hoped Columbus would protect them from the Caribs so he was welcomed

Having settled on what to make and cutting down on James' vision of hundreds of parrots blotting out the sun, as portrayed in Columbus' journal, I moved into my wash-house studio and began to pin on the wall, images from 1492.

The first piece I made was the prison. One of Isabella's palaces later became a prison so I allowed myself some licence over the choice of building. This piece with the four tiny prisoners outside a large building was to confront

James with the problem of scale. I should have known scale was no problem at all. James soon made it clear that medieval folk had no problem with scale. I decided then to just get on and make the works to fit in my kiln and let James have the worry of how to arrange them. To me, the works were like pictures in a child's book. On a page a small fish and a large ship can be the same size, the things fall into place in the viewer's mind.

Because our house, which is one of the oldest in Dannevirke, took such a beating in the two large earthquakes in 1990, it now rocks and shakes with a passing lorry or train. I lost a huge amount of work in those quakes as well as the oil kiln. A minor quake now sends me rushing for piles of plastic 'cushions' to surround work that cannot be packed safely away. Not for me the luxury of leaving all the pieces out to see how they would 'grow' together.

The time factor prevented me from playing with the stylization of the figures. These pieces would have to be straight forward, look like real, understood at a glance, easy for me to conceive. It would not do for me to dwell on the fact that I had not done any real figurative work apart from heads for twenty years at least! (The Velazquez Girls don't count because the box-like costume is a gift to ceramic perception).

I could not afford to think too much about the quite ravishing figurative works in Spain or Italy that are truly humbling for one's ego. I said to myself "you have taken on the job, begin at the beginning and get to the end in the best way you can".

Not every piece progressed smoothly. The winds I made as a kind of arch to be placed at the back of the Columbus desk figure. These were completed and I was feeling uncertain about them. A visitor called and seeing them exclaimed "Oh how cute". When she had gone I smashed them with a hammer. The winds then became the four classical types seen on maps. These were a problem for **Martin Kelly** display-wise.

The cannibals were a worry. How to show these? Could I really place a group of look-like-real nude men eating parts of look-like-real nude men alongside the group of natives making cassava bread? I did joke with James about 'bumburgers' but I was dreading making the cannibals. As so often happens the thing one dreads turns out to be quite innocuous. Purely by chance I found a photograph of South American Quimbaya terracotta figures. Delightful nude males each holding a baby. Columbus did travel this side of the coast though not on the first voyage, but there is that wonderful thing, artistic licence. The single "dad" became a



pair holding a leg between them. Nothing like the gruesome pictures in old books but getting the point over just the same. I really enjoyed making this piece.

There was, of course, a traumatic experience. On completing the kneeling Columbus, I made an air hole through the top of the head deep into the body. Being unable to lay my hand on the thin steel wire used for this purpose I grabbed a bamboo kebab skewer, drove it in and to my horror it stuck fast. However I tried I could not budge it. The damp clay had made the bamboo swell instantly. (Since this time I have waxed all wooden sticks!) As the clay dried the bamboo was held in a vice-like grip and the figure went into the kiln (on its own for fear of flying shards) with the skewer in situ. The kiln had its longest, slowest ever firing; three days and nights. The piece came out perfect which is more than I can say for my nerves at the time.

Very early on it became obvious I would need a new electric kiln. I bought a *Cobcraft Decagon* and am very pleased with it except I can't reach the bottom even standing on a box. My arms aren't long enough. I have to rely on my husband **John** to help me pack the lowest shelves.

The studio door had to come off and part of the wall out, to get the kiln in. I hired a crane to lift the kiln off the lorry into the studio. The carrier omitted to let me know of the kiln's arrival and when he came, he was in a great hurry. I rang the crane hire — Sorry, couldn't get there 'til later — then another crane drove by the gate. I rushed after it and got it to come back, but just as the kiln was lifted over the threshold, the first crane arrived. Two large cranes plus a huge delivery truck in our driveway was only funny some days after the event.

Along with the kiln, extra elements, new switches, more house wiring that cost almost as much as the kiln itself. I bought shelves, props and a pyrometer — a hitherto unaffordable luxury, but necessary when firing modelling.

I had to find a clay that was one hundred percent reliable in the shrinkage department and could take thick and thin walls without cracking. Though New Zealand clays are very good I could not find one that came up to these criteria. Sadly not one can compare with the English '*T' Material*'. I had not used this clay before and it took a while to learn to work with the mixture which seemed to be a cross between cement and suet pudding. It is not a beautiful clay when fired but it does not warp or crack easily and the work is not noticeably smaller at the finish. One disadvantage is the horrendous amount of wedging it requires.

The objects were made by a combination of coiling, slab and solid modelling, the solid work being cut, hollowed and rejoined in the leather state. This is not a method undertaken lightly, but sometimes it is the only way to get the shapes you want. All pieces were finished with modelling and surface texture to get a look of fifteenth century woodcuts. I don't think I quite achieved this, but time was against experiments.

When the clay was white-hard I painted colour combined of commercial stains, oxides and fluxes in the form of a wash onto the surface, but I had to cut down the number of firings, as it was a question of time. After a 950°C bisque fire which took on average a day, night, and day, I coloured each piece with a black stain washed into the texture only. The Caribbean pieces had less black on them, as I wanted a heightening of colour on that section. Next to the nudity of the inhabitants, Columbus was most impressed by the bright colours of the new world. The final firings were to 1260°C though '*T' Material*' will go to 1350°.

All that remained after the final firing was to join up the palm trees (they were too tall to fit in the kiln in one piece) string the beads, attach strings and pegs to the traverse board and get some photos taken.

The most enjoyable part of the whole venture was the packing up and a lunch on one of those days when James, Martin, John and myself were joined by **Margaret Taylor**.

At this moment I am trying to cope with power cuts and the firing of **Abel Tasman**.

# FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD 1992

Auckland Studio Potters Inc.  
Auckland War Memorial Museum

Judge: Akio Takamori, USA

## PREMIER AWARD, NZ\$10,000

Lara Scobie, Scotland Hand-built Stoneware Vessels. 37cm h



## MERIT AWARDS, NZ\$1,000

Photos by Haru Sameshima



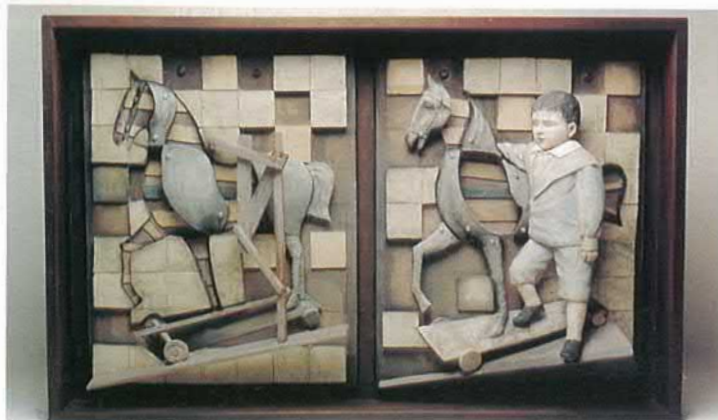
Tina Schrameijer, Netherlands



Marlene Miller, USA



Christine Thacker, New Zealand



Vilma Villaverde, Argentina



Lazlo Fekete, Hungary



Woody Hughes, USA



Marilyn Wiseman, New Zealand



Matt McLean, New Zealand



Judy Trim, England



Rowley Drysdale, Australia



Hans Meeuwssen, Netherlands



Barbara Wieland, Germany



Madeleine Child, England

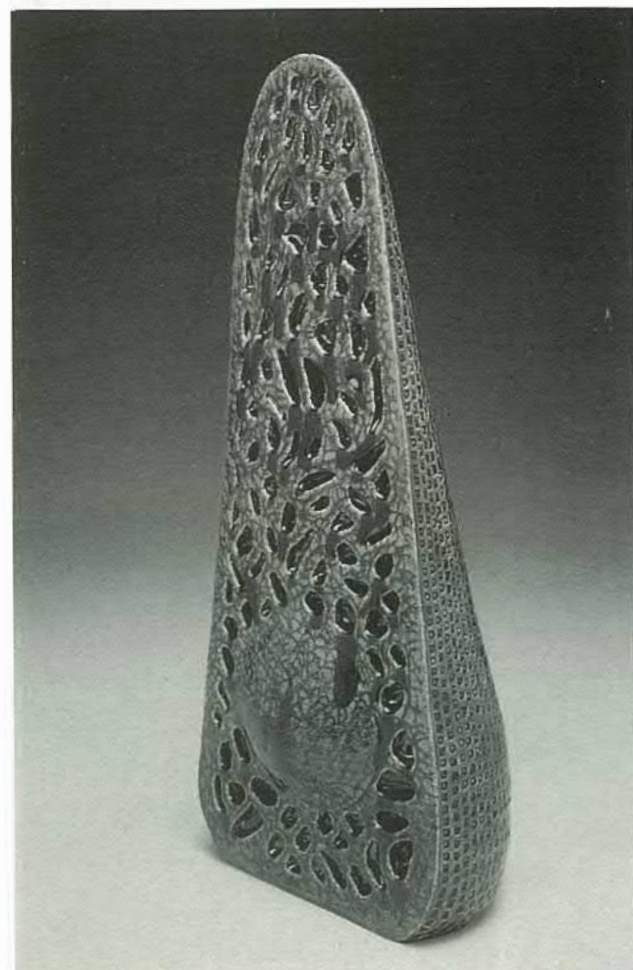


Kazunori Takeoka, Japan



Hanne Matthiesen, Denmark

## FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD 1992



Hideaki Suzuki, USA

Jane Hamlyn, England



## FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD 1993

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IT IS INTENDED TO SEND  
Slide 1: View of entire work  
Slide 2: Another view or angle  
Slide 3: Detail shot if desirable

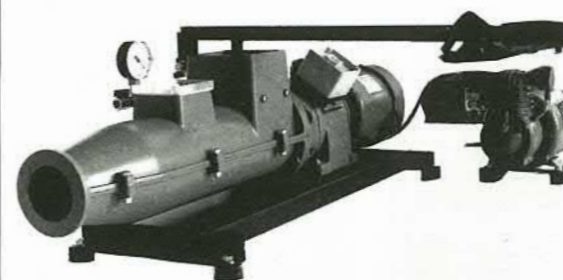
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Note: All prices in Australian dollars — ex  
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crates. Cost Insurance and Freight  
(C.I.F.) Pricing upon application.

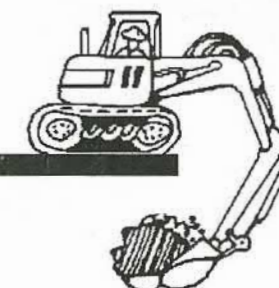
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# NZSP EASTER SHOW AWARD EXHIBITION

NZ Expo Centre

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Selector: Len Castle

Photos by Howard Williams



Winner, Non-functional, \$3,000: Gaeleen Morley



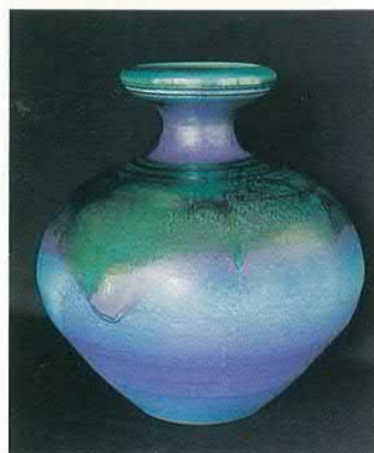
Winner, Functional, \$3,000: Merilyn Wiseman



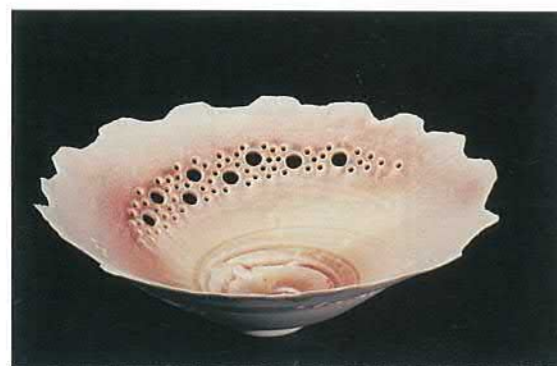
Chris Cockell



Carol Swan



Winner, Popular Vote, \$1,000: Graeme Storm  
Photo by Graeme Storm



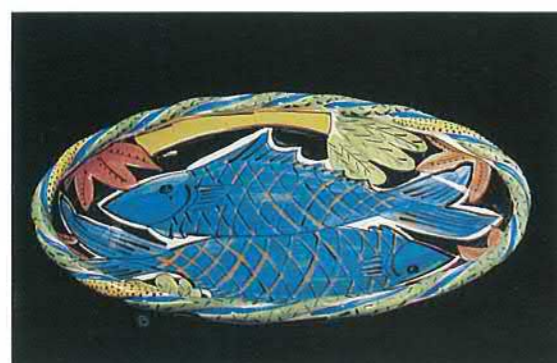
Jan Cockell



Ian Firth



Claire Neilson



Jeannie van der Putten



Peter Alge

# NZSP 34th NATIONAL EXHIBITION

Masterworks Gallery, Parnell

Selectors: Sara Sadd, Rosemarie McClay, Meg Latham

Photos by Howard Williams



Rosemarie McClay. Horniverous



Meg Latham. Trinket Boxes



John Crawford. Asking Directions



Rosie Murray. Salt-glazed dish



Louise Rive. An Abundance of Golden Apples



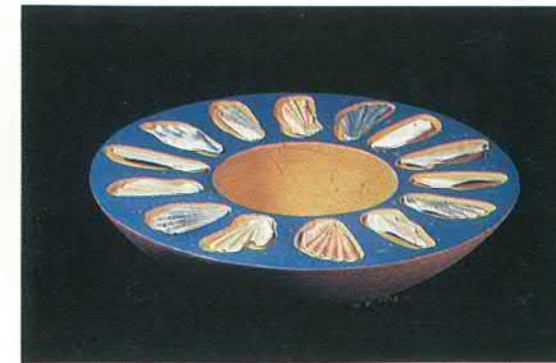
Gloria Young. Cup and Saucer



Chris Cockell. Bottles



Raewyn Atkinson. Hakirimata Quintet



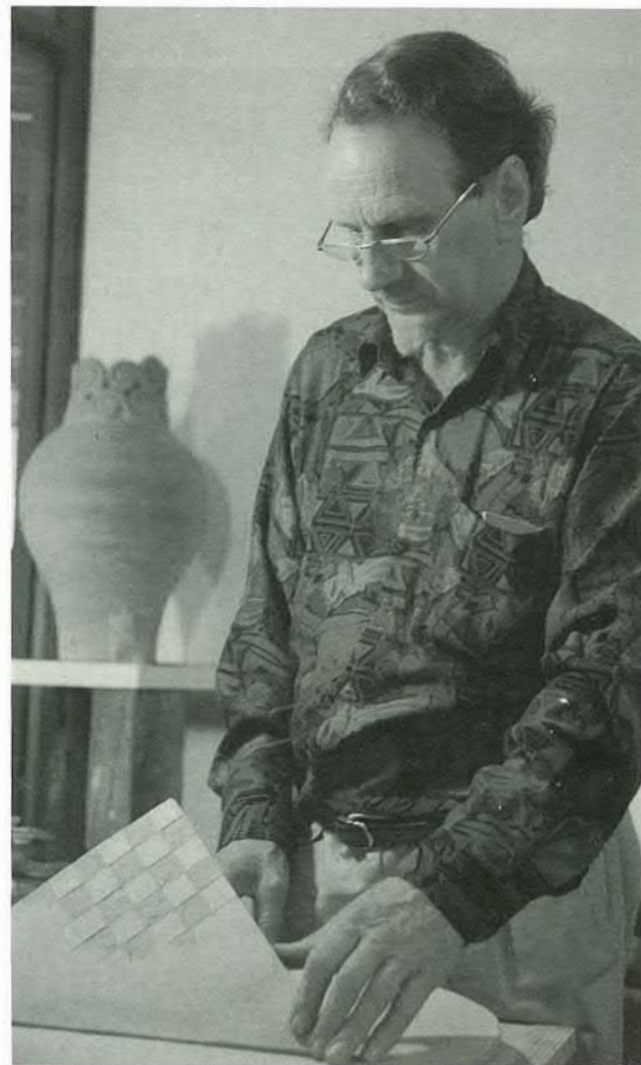
Raewyn Johnson. Castlecliff Series I



Kevin Kilsby. Hallelujah Sisters

# RESCUE 1992!

Or — How Keith Blight Saved New Vision Gallery



What do you do when the main outlet for your work suddenly falls over and the proprietor turns up at your door with a stationwagon load of your work and another load to come? This, at a time when your other outlets are failing or cutting back in the recession that sees failures in all sorts of businesses.

One's first thoughts were that this should not have happened to *New Vision*, one of New Zealand's first, and up to recent times, foremost galleries. A gallery that set the standard ever since **Tina** and **Kees Hos** started the original one in the early sixties.

Since the gallery relocated as *New Vision Ceramics*, in the Great Northern Arcade at the bottom of Auckland's Queen Street, it had blossomed into a gallery with major exposure to international tourists and the corporate sector. Though its standards had fallen in the last year, it was still a top retailer and others in the arcade were devastated to be faced with another empty shop — one of many in the downtown area.

On two occasions I looked at this wonderful, but empty space. Other influences and half-formulated ideas had been floating around in my subconscious, but now I approached the landlord, a large insurance company, and soon arranged an agreement for a short term lease that did not commit the lessee if it did not work out. Not a free rent deal.

Then it was all on and with help, advice and incredible luck things somehow pulled together.

First was the problem of display. Over the years I had rescued from various sources unwanted cupboard doors and large offcuts of particle board — these I covered with an assortment of coloured hessian also accumulated over the years. Old hat? Come and judge for yourself.

The next problem was display stands. **Margaret Sumich** of *Artisan Potters* lent me large black cylindrical bases and **Peter Lange** from the *ASP Centre* found where others could be obtained. We now have accumulated our own.

A large particle board box, also a discard, with a flush door added on top solved the problem of a sales desk. Former tenants in the building had dumped large sheets of polystyrene and use of a spray can produced an acceptable graffiti-style temporary sign — *Keith Blight Gallery*. I was in business!

With valuable advice from potter **Ian Firth**, a small group of people was asked to join what was becoming a loose sort of co-operative. This has developed on a two tier basis. All work in the gallery is on commission, so members work either a day in the gallery (about once every 10 days) and I take a lower commission, or if they don't want to do gallery time, I take a higher commission. The members now give a fairly complete coverage in the range of ceramics we stock.

The former gallery was a craft one and wishing to retain that image we have the work of **Lasma Treacher**, fibre artist, and **Ian Fish**, wood turner. We are not into paintings, though the **Kindleysides** family is represented with **Ted** supplying mainly pots and some paintings, his wife **Ilsa Posmyk** with her delightful small paintings and their daughter **Verity**, prints and cards.

Other potters include **Ian Firth**, **Ennis Oliver** and **Ron Efferion**, while **Jeannie Court** is doing interesting work electroplating clay modelled, and natural found objects. Jeannie and Ron also work together on multi-media pieces.

Auckland's downtown is suffering more than most areas, as many customers now prefer the suburban malls and shopping complexes. Could we make this work? It was a great challenge and in the initial stages like being on a high, with late nights and early mornings.

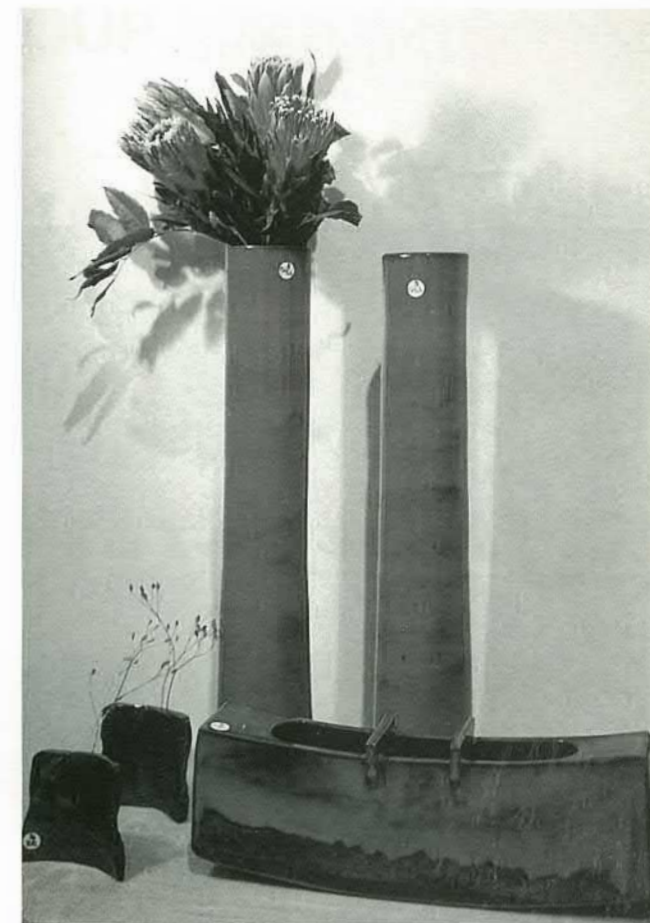
My initial problem was when to find time to make my pots. This has been solved by turning part of the gallery front inside a main window, into a studio area where I can keep up my production of slab pots. It is also a great drawcard for customers — to see a potter actually at work. Hand-building allows you to break off easily to serve someone, and it keeps you sane on those days when sales are low.

Fine tuning is now being done as we learn how all this works. The so important lighting is almost sorted out, the lease has happily been extended and we have a unique permanent gallery sign — *Keith Blight Gallery* consisting of three-dimensional letters, each separately made by members of the group in their own style and materials.

Looks like the rescue attempt has worked! ■



Pots by Ian Firth



Pots by Keith Blight

Photos by Howard Williams

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## HALSWELL POTTERY GROUP 1992 EXHIBITION

Duncan Lindsay, Christchurch



The Rose Gallery of the *Canterbury Museum* was the venue for the *Halswell Pottery Group's* March exhibition. **Vic Evans**, from Nelson, was the selector. He ran a very successful weekend school preceding the exhibition and also displayed his installation *Etak, Pacific Navigation* as part of the exhibition. The well-attended official opening was by the Mayoress of Christchurch, **Ms Vicki Buck**.

**Barry Allom** of the *Christchurch Press* described Vic Evans' installation. "*Etak — Pacific Navigation* forms a floor mosaic full of Pacific significance. *Etak* is a method of navigation used for centuries by the so-called primitive people of the Solomon Islands.

This system, laid out as a map of the Pacific in his large installation, forms the dramatic theme which Vic Evans further explores in the seven large pots which emanate out from the hoisted-up central piece *Etak II*, a simple, effective and deeply indigenous pot.

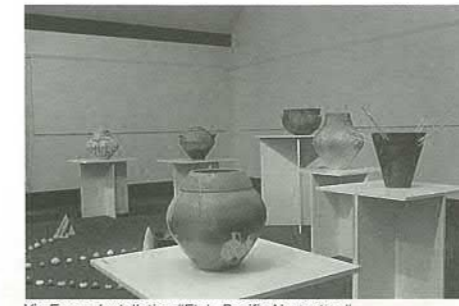
There is a touch of flippancy about *Club Med*, of foreboding in the protruding rods and barrels, or the trivial in the omnipresent limpet barbie-doll faces which constantly remind us of the impact of a superficial Euro-American culture . . . Clusters of white coral, shaped suspiciously like nuclear warheads and groups of high volcanic islands linked by an intriguing collection of small stepping stones, are all dominated by a symbolic canoe."

Professional potters in the Group made a major contribution to the exhibition, but it was also pleasing to see quality work entered by other members as they develop their skills. Because of the venue, many visitors to the exhibition were overseas tourists who welcomed the opportunity to talk to members of the Group about the work on display. ■

Photos by Duncan Lindsay



The Rose Gallery, Canterbury Museum



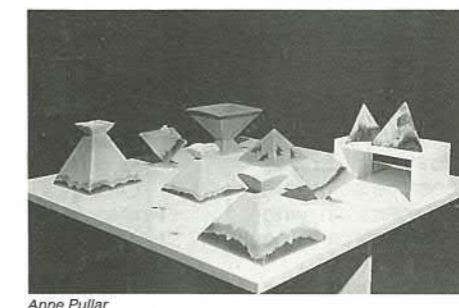
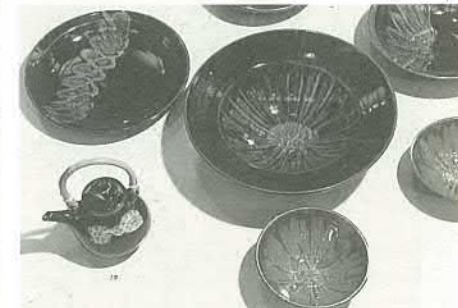
Vic Evans, Installation "Etak, Pacific Navigation"



Averil Cave



Vic Evans, Guest potter



Anne Pullar



Esma Lyons



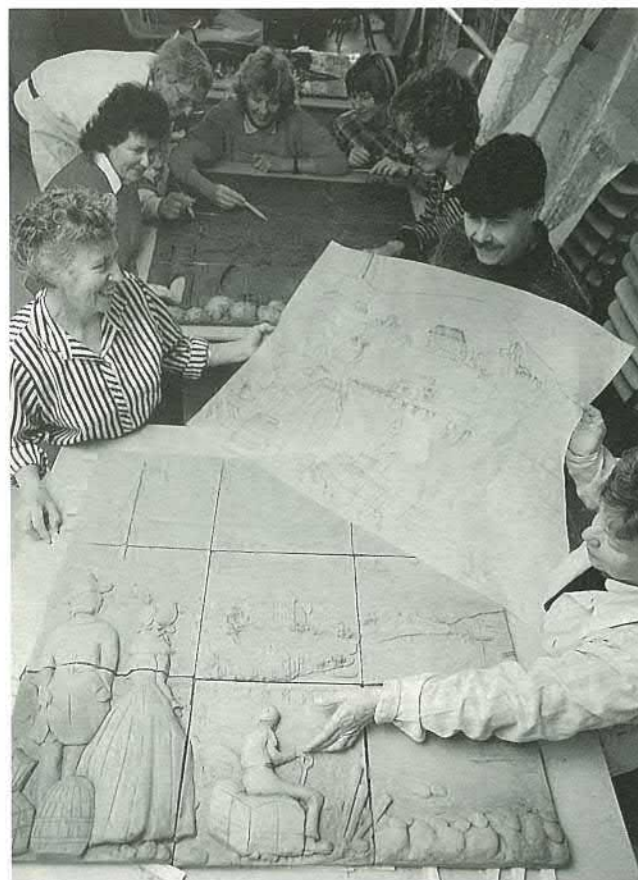
Ngaira van Grondelle



Rosemary Perry

# NEW PLYMOUTH POTTERS' PROJECT

Compiled by the Mural Committee



From paper to clay

1991 was a special year for New Plymouth. It marked our Sesquicentennial — 150 years of colonisation. The year was marked by numerous activities and celebrations by all sections of the community. As part of these celebrations a seafront area housing an original stone dwelling, *Richmond Cottage*, had already been selected to accommodate public sculpture and historical items as well as to provide a parklike area near the centre of the city.

This area, *Pukeariki Landing*, is itself historically significant in the development of New Plymouth. It was to this area surrounding the mouth of the Huatoki River that the first settlers arrived by ship. The river became important as a boat building centre and the base for lighters carrying cargo and passengers from ship to shore. The first pier was built and settlement developed in this area.

With all this in mind it was suggested by local potter and then Horticultural and Planning Manager for the Parks Division of the *New Plymouth District Council*, **Graham Mulvay**, that *New Plymouth Potters Club* construct a commemorative mural. A steering committee was formed (**Joyce Young, Graham Mulvay, Anne Tomasi and Ruth Goodwin**) to research and design a suitable mural to be erected on the Pukeariki Landing on a curved wall alongside the Huatoki River that within metres flows into the Tasman Sea.

Recalling the lecture and slides shown to us by English potter **Kenneth Clark**, when he visited New Plymouth, of the huge tile wall he designed, depicting the history of the city of Plymouth, England, the committee set about planning our contribution to the city's celebrations.

Research at the museum provided us with masses of

photos and information about the area and opened our eyes to local history.

Sketches were made and final full-size plans drawn up — allowing for shrinkage. Five panels were planned, each consisting of nine 30 cm square (finished measurement) tiles, with a single tile between each panel.

The panels depict 1: Maori pre-European community, 2: arrival of the first settlers, 3: reclamation of the area for railyards, 4: the first railway station and 5: the area as it is today. The single tiles in between depict Coats of Arms of the various governing bodies of the area since 1841.

Now to the "real work". We decided to use *SC80* clay and ran some tests as to suitability, shrinkage and colour. The clay was rolled to a thickness of 1.5cm, placed onto thin plastic and boards for moveability, roughly cut to size, textured and allowed to firm. Then they were cut exactly to size and placed in position again on plastic and rigid boards. The full-size design was then traced onto the clay and the work of achieving the desired low relief pictorial groups began.

One complete panel was made by the committee to iron out most of the problems before calling in "the troops". Up to 20 club members took part over the next several weeks of construction and became totally absorbed in the whole venture.

To achieve an authentic Taranaki Maori design on the border of the first panel, one of the members of the *Rangimarie Maori Art and Craft Centre* came to the clubrooms and carved the leather hard clay for us. As the tiles firmed their backs were scored and tidied, then they were set on battens for even drying with air circulating, and weighted down.

Firing was another mammoth task in the club's natural gas 9 cu ft kiln. The greenware tiles were stacked on edge, with bricks to support and take the weight in the centre of the kiln — approximately 20 tiles in each firing to 900°C. A couple of "disasters" in the bisque firing were quite easily replaced using our full-size plans.

The tiles were coloured in a flurry of activity using burnt amber and manganese, rubber gloves, paint brushes, sponges and buckets of water. To achieve (hopefully) "graffiti proof" finishes, the tiles were sprayed with gerstley borate before their final firing — 1260-1280°C.

To our great relief the District Council took over the task of installing the panels and then covering them until the official opening. Mounting was achieved by routing out the measured size of each panel on the fluted concrete block wall and applying concrete mortar to attach the clay tiles. This was also used as a grout between the tiles.

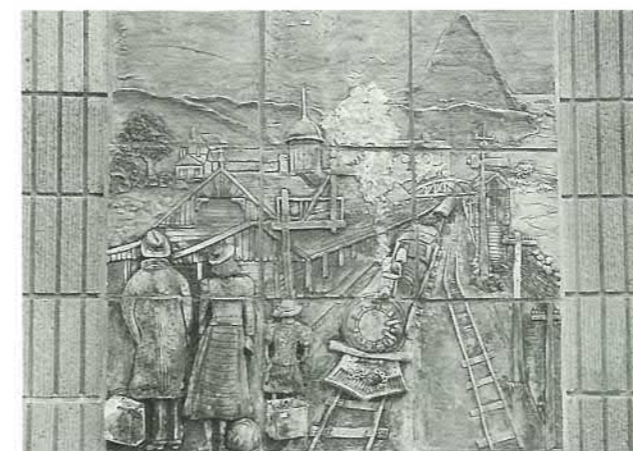
On October 18th 1991 the mural was unveiled by the New Plymouth Mayor **David Lean**, in front of a large audience of potters, interested members of the public and several public dignitaries. When the speeches and photos were completed we adjourned to the clubrooms to celebrate the completion of our "Sesqui" effort.

The following is an excerpt from a letter received from the Mayor — "... you have every reason to be proud of the efforts and achievements of your members in producing a superb public work of art that will be in place for many decades. That work will be admired and appreciated by many generations to come. In many respects your members' contribution is quite unique. Normally such public art works are confined entirely to parks and public areas outside New Zealand, and are commissioned using internationally acclaimed artists.

Your combined achievement is much better because it comes from the heart, makes an absolute statement about your talents and says something very special about your care and love for our community. ...."



From left: Ruth Goodwin, Anne Tomasi, Graham Mulvay, Joyce Young



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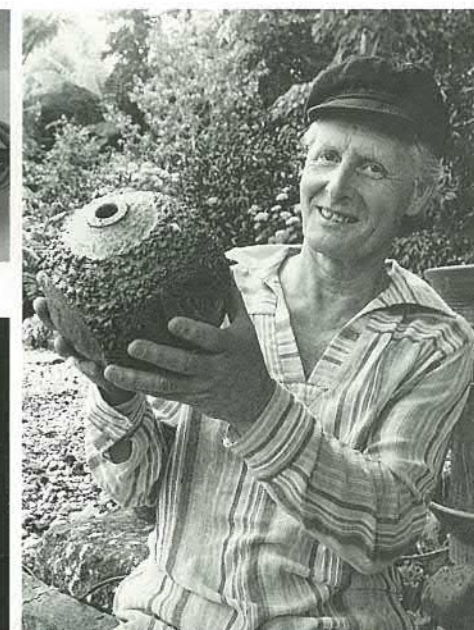
Strata I and II. 55cm h



Earthcrust bowl. 50cm d



Earthcrust bowl. 36cm d



Melis Van der Sluis in his Hamilton garden



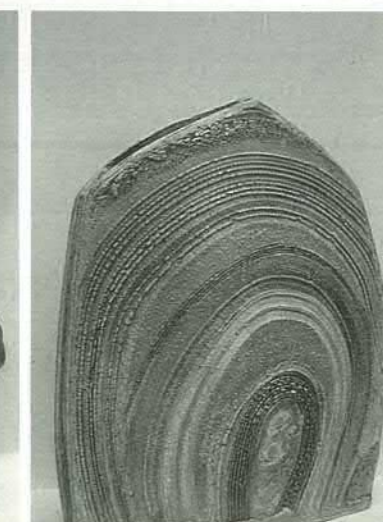
Strata III, detail



Earth Pot I. 40cm h



Strata V. 35cm h



Strata I. 55cm h

There are many creative people working with clay in the Netherlands, a country steeped in art of yesterday and today; a country full of galleries and museums, with art works as diverse in style as the people living in that small over-crowded land.

It was this country that Melis Van Der Sluis left 40 years ago to settle in New Zealand. As a student at Ardmore Teachers College he was introduced to clay by Peter Stichbury who was lecturing there at the time.

Pottery remained a hobby during the 12 years of teaching that followed. Then came the plunge — fulltime potting in 1968. Melis has lived in Hamilton working as a professional potter since then and has taken part in numerous group exhibitions around

the country, and also one-man exhibitions here and overseas.

His favourite overseas venue for exhibitions is his native country, the Netherlands, where lies his own cultural background.

To celebrate his 40 years of life in New Zealand, Melis had a special exhibition of new work in a well-known ceramics museum in Friesland, his birth province. He attended the opening of this exhibition early this year.

This new work has been inspired by the unique colours, textures and patterns of the volcanic landscape of the central regions of the North Island of New Zealand. The hand-built forms are constructed from richly textured slabs, decorated with impressed

patterns, incisions, oxides and engobes. The work is reduction fired to 1280°C in his 120 cu ft gas kiln.

Speaking of his exhibition on the other side of the world, Melis said, "I was thrilled to see my work professionally exhibited in an historic building in the city I know so well from my student days."

The museum, *Het Princessehof* is special, being one of only three in Europe specialising in ceramics. It has impressive collections of Asian and European pottery and also a contemporary European ceramics collection. Melis recommends *Het Princessehof* to any potters about to travel in Europe, as a place of great interest.

Photos by Glywn McInnes

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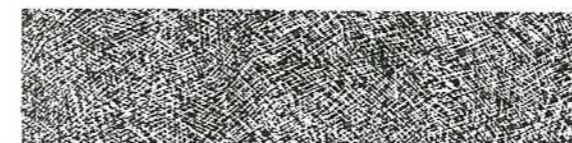
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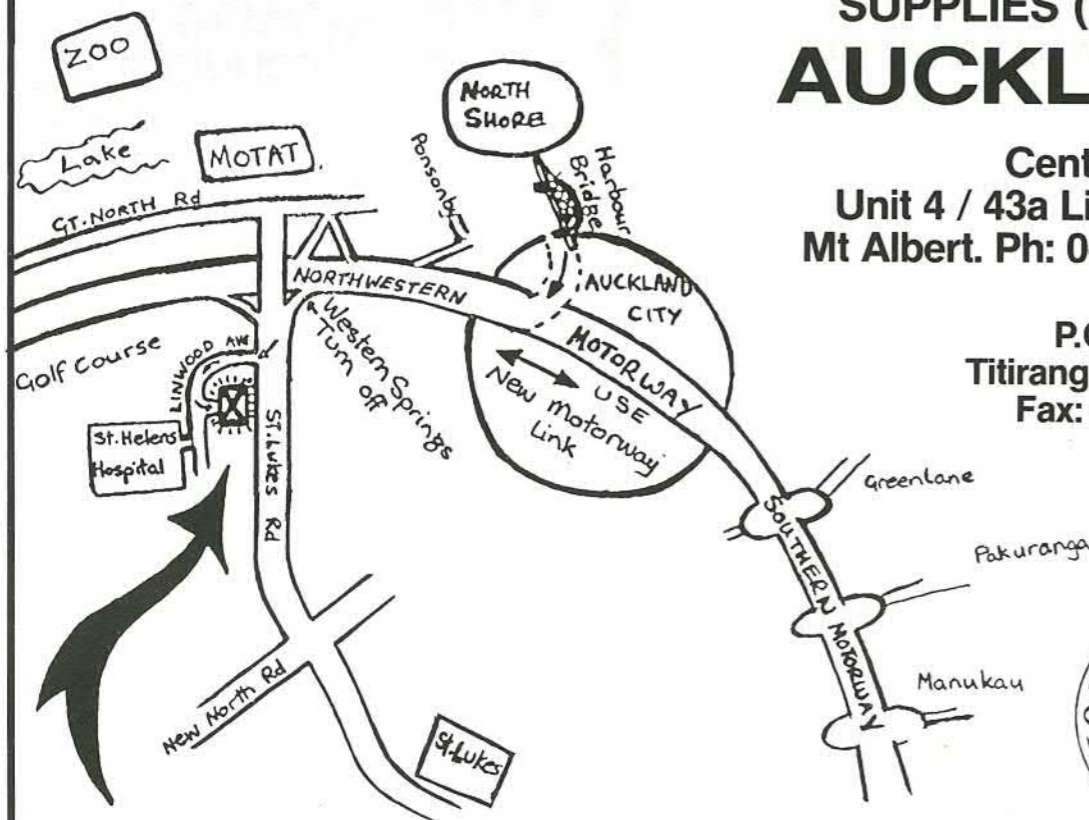
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# BETHLEHEM POTTERY CLUB

Frank Bishop (president), Tauranga



Peter Collis, president NZSP

Of course it could be done!

And so it was done. On Saturday, 28 September 1991 a party atmosphere prevailed as friends, former members, tutors and those involved gathered to officially open the brand new clubrooms of the *Bethlehem Pottery Club*, situated on the outer fringe of Tauranga City. The occasion marked the end of a prolonged effort spread over four years. We are rather proud of what has been achieved by a club of 50 members, none of whom are "well heeled".

Our club was honoured to have the president of the *N.Z. Society of Potters* **Peter Collis** as one of our guest speakers. Peter has tutored, entertained and inspired groups of us on four occasions. We feel that he is a personal friend of the club.

A retired Tauranga potter, **Frank Wallis**, is affectionately known as the father of the *BPC*. He conducted many a workshop and as a member of the *Tauranga Arts Council* guided the group through its formative years. He reminisced, during his speech at the opening, giving cartoon-like descriptions of the early days, such as that of two ladies, "a bulbous one who always made big fat pots and a tall slim person whose pots were tall and always had a starved but elegant appearance." But lets start at the beginning . . . . .

In 1976 pottery was becoming a popular pastime. Night classes were quickly filled. Two local ladies missed out, but were very keen to learn the skills, so they advertised for others who would be interested in starting a group in Bethlehem. This attracted five others and although it was not realised at the time, they had given birth to the *Bethlehem Pottery Club*.

Fostered by the Headmaster, the group met regularly using the local school facilities. Others joined them. Various potters were brought in to tutor and a brick kiln was built on the school property.

By the end of 1978 there were 16 members when the friendly Headmaster retired. The new man kicked the potters out, and converted their kiln into an incinerator. There followed a time of frustration until a member found an old house some miles away. This building was up on blocks awaiting a new site. Despite the difficulty of getting gear and wheels in and out and the fact that the roof leaked badly, it was home for a few months.

At this time the group decided to make itself 'official'. A constitution was drawn up and accepted by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies. The *Bethlehem Pottery Club* made its debut.

Towards the end of 1979 the club applied to the Lands & Survey Department to lease the redundant Bethlehem School residence. This kauri house was over 100 years old and the very place where **Sylvia Ashton Warner** had written a number of her books. It was ideal, not only for the facilities it offered, but also for its atmosphere, created by the spacious grounds and the majestic trees which surround it.

The lease was granted and the premises occupied in February 1980. Though it was to be home to the *BPC* for the next eleven years at no stage was the tenure secure. The old house was repaired, modified to suit the club's needs and a

Club president, Frank Bishop holds the ceremonial pot while Tauranga Mayor, Nobby Clarke smashes it.



Bethlehem Pottery Club opening day, 28/9/91.

small gallery opened to the public. This proved to be a steady and increasingly valuable source of funds over the years. Gradually equipment was purchased until now the new building houses eight electric wheels, a slab roller, a 4 cu.ft electric kiln, and a 9 cu.ft gas kiln. A 30 cu.ft woodfired kiln has been built on a member's orchard nearby.

The years in the 'old house' were great. It was here where the spirit of the club began to evolve. An oil-fired brick kiln was soon built and fired. To quote from the recently published booklet, *The Bethlehem Pottery Club Story* by **Val Sinclair**, "Stories abound about the firing of that diesel kiln."

The first firing was of course a special occasion and celebration. A neighbour living just through the hedge voiced her concern to the District Nurse, not knowing she was involved, saying that the *Black Power Gang* had made merry in and around the house until midnight. She was quite concerned for her new neighbours, and totally ignorant of the custom that requires diesel and wood kilns to be toasted at regular intervals during the firing."

In 1982 the club had its first two day school with a big name potter — the inimitable **Brian Gartside**. Great stuff! From that time there have been a succession of top class tutors to instruct, inspire and lead to new heights.

The club held its first exhibition at the end of 1983. As we look back, it was a rather humble affair, but from then on an exhibition has been held each year in Tauranga, notable for the number of exhibits and their quality and diversity.

Because the tenure of the schoolhouse could not be secured, the club's committee decided that they should investigate the possibility of acquiring a permanent home. To that end fund raising was begun in 1987.

By the end of the following year, (1988) a section had been purchased and dollar-earning went into top gear. We built up capital with debentures, gifts, grants, advance subs, raffles, gallery sales, dinners, pottery video screenings, open days — with pit and raku firings in progress — and what seemed like hundreds of cake stalls. In one year nine stalls netted the club \$4,600.

Gradually the money accumulated and building sketches were discussed, drawn and modified. A decision was made that no stage of construction would be started until money was in hand to complete it.

The final plan incorporated a large work room, kitchenette, gallery, glaze and drying room, kiln room and conveniences. If at a future date it was necessary, the building could be converted to a comfortable three bedroom house without too much expense.

The section was levelled, a concrete floor poured and as soon as funds were available, the frame erected and closed in by contractors. Members did the donkey (or should it be wombat?) work for the septic tank, drains etc. Then came the lull. The piggy bank was empty.

As if on cue, the *Lottery Board* came good with a grant of \$15,000. This made possible the completion of the building with enough left over to cobblestone the drive and entries.

After eleven years as tenants in the schoolhouse, the club moved into its new premises. The old building has once again been modified, this time to accommodate the local *Kohanga Reo*.

Of the seven original people who first came together back in 1976, not one is any longer a potter, though one who joined the following year is still an active member of the club. But their initiative and will to succeed lives on.

The Mayor of Tauranga, **Nobby Clarke**, congratulated the *Bethlehem Potters* on what has been achieved. To symbolise the official opening he smashed a large bisqued pot.

Like the Children of Israel, we were given the push. We wandered in the wilderness. We endured. We crossed the River Jordan (or was it the Wairoa River?) We now have a home of our own in the village of Bethlehem. To us it is "the promised land." Now that we have achieved this goal we must set up new targets.

Part of the Bethlehem Gallery.



# GALLERY GUIDE

Entries for this listing cost \$15 — boxed \$20 — (incl GST) for up to 25 words. Cash with order, to NZ Potter, PO Box 881, Auckland. Next deadline 1st September.

## NORTHLAND

NORTHLAND SOCIETY OF ARTS — Reyburn House Gallery, Lower Quay Street, Whangarei. Monthly exhibitions of artists, craft people and various media — Hours: Tues-Fri 10.30-4.00, Weekends 1-4.

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WARKWORTH CRAFT GALLERY CO-OPERATIVE, Cnr Baxter and Neville St. Excellent selection of local pottery, woodwork, weaving, jewellery and clothing. Open 9.30-5.00 daily. Phone (09) 425-8790.

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COMPENDIUM GALLERY, Victoria Road, Devonport. Ph (09) 445-1577. Open 7 days. Greatest selection of quality NZ crafts anywhere — ceramics, jewellery, clothing, glass and woodware.

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LOPDELL HOUSE, Waitakere Arts and Cultural Centre, three galleries, two craft working studios, craft shop. Open 7 days 10am-4.30pm. Phone (09) 817-8087.

MASTERWORKS GALLERY, 8 York Street, Parnell. Phone (09) 309-5843. Ceramics, glass, fibre, wood, jewellery. Superb selection of New Zealand's best. Open Monday to Saturday.

MUDLARCS, Hunters Plaza, Papatoetoe, (behind the trees next to K Mart). Offer an extensive selection of quality stoneware, raku and pit fired pottery. Open 7 days, Phone (09) 277-6868.

PALMS GALLERY (Auckland), 57 High Street, Auckland City. Pottery, wood and glass. Barbara, Barry, Scott, and Arran Hockenhill, also Melissa McInnes. Open Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm, Friday 9am-7pm, Saturday 9am-Midday. Phone (09) 357-6660.

POTS OF PONSONBY, 298 Ponsonby Road, Auckland. Ph (09) 760-145. Craft co-operative gallery offering a wide range of quality handmade domestic and decorative pottery and other crafts.

SUNPARK GALLERY, Main Road, RD 2 Albany. 8kms north of Albany village. Excellent selection of fine pottery and ceramics. Open 7 days. Phone (09) 415-9373.

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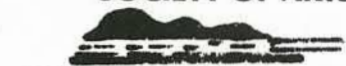
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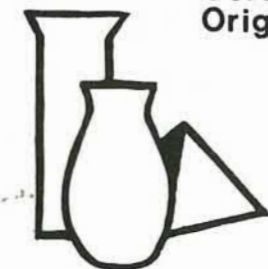
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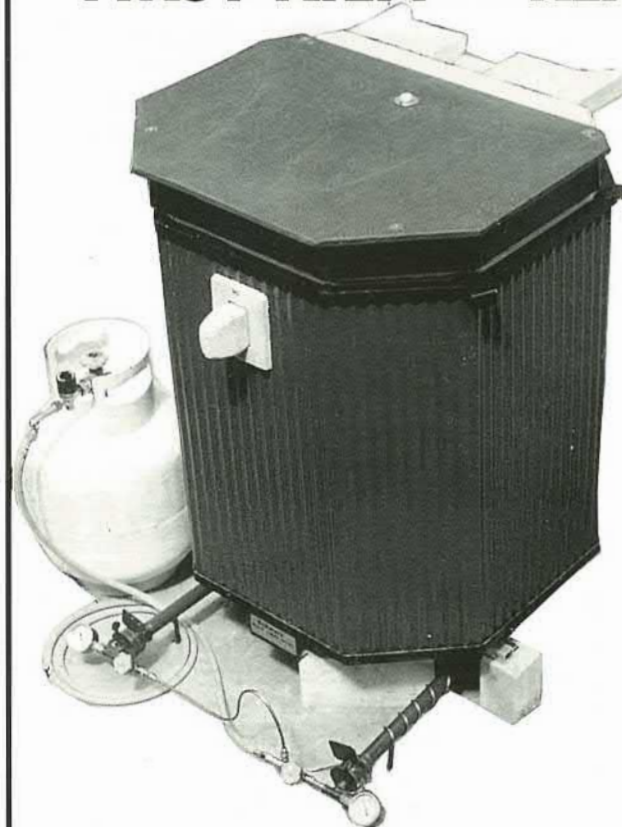
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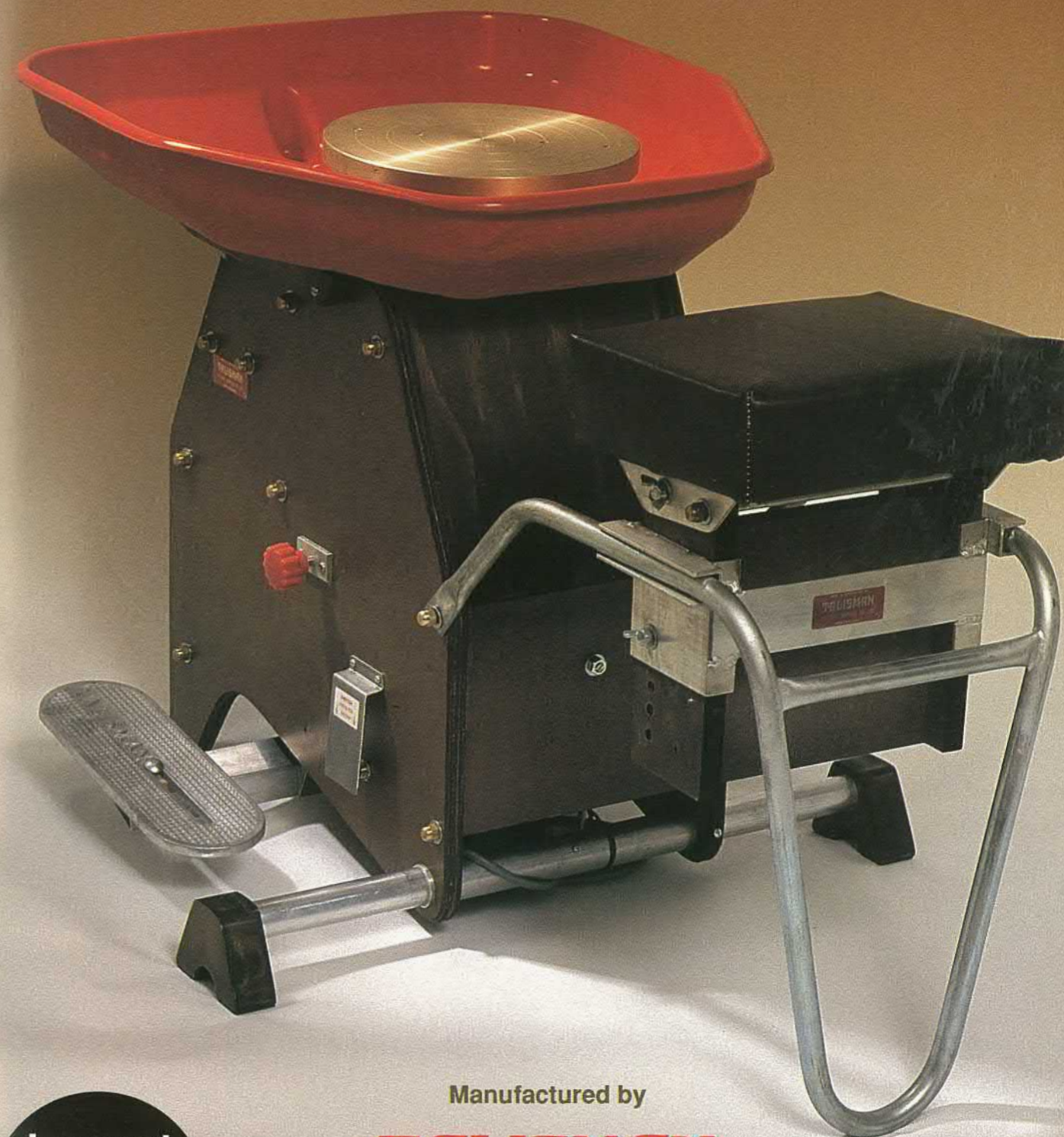
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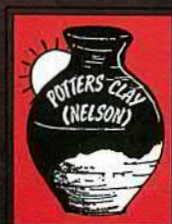
**A New Rich Red Earthenware Clay**

■  
**Firing to 1168°C — Cone 03 — Cone 3**

■  
**Oxidation & Reduction Atmosphere**

■  
**Coarser and Stronger (than E2)**

■  
**Suitable for Larger Pieces**



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For Further Information write:*

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