

CLAY IN HAWKE'S BAY

The earthenware clays of the East Coast once fed three kilns in this area. In Napier, Dolbel's operated a large brick-works in Hyderabad Road, at the base of the hill. It closed down in 1958 and ^{was} demolished soon after.

John Fulford, who came from a family with a long involvement with pottery, arrived in Napier in 1875. With his son, John Junior, to work at Dolbell's brickyard. In the 1880's, John Junior moved to Havelock North.

In Te Mata Road, and later in Joll Road, he made bricks, pipes urns and glazed ware until 1914. His son Huelin continued to produce and fire earthenware in Fulford Road, and manufactured flower pots until 1970. David Fulford produced thrown ware until the late 1970's.

Samuel Eves, and later his son Reg, operated a brickworks in Campbell Street, Havelock North from 1905 until 1959.

Both the Eves factory and the Napier works suffered severely from the decline in brick construction after the 1931 Earthquake.

Elizabeth Matheson, who was awarded the BEM for her services to potting in New Zealand, worked in Havelock North in the 1930's producing Paka Pottery. In 1940 she moved to Wellington, taking that name with her.

But it was in 1955 that the potters' art began to flourish here. May Smith and Connie Verboeket, with the help of Leo Bestall, Director of the Hawke's Bay Art Gallery and Museum, founded the Art Gallery Pottery Group which operated initially in an old

office building next to the Museum. Mary Hardwick Smith gave the first class, and for some years all work produced by the swelling membership was of Fulford's Te Mata clay. This was well suited to lead-glazed slipware, and Hilary Thurston, an early member skilled in that idiom, encouraged this vernacular approach.

The Group has grown, and like several other local pottery clubs now has its own well equipped premises.

HAWKE'S BAY

After around 800 years of occupation by the Ngati Kahungunu people, Hawke's Bay received its first European visitors with Cook's arrival in 1769. Pakeha settlement began in 1839 when the botanist F.W.C. Sturm arrived at Nuhaka. Whalers operated in the 1840's, William Colenso established his Mission Station at Waitangi, near Clive, in 1844, and Alexander Alexander opened a general store at Ahururi in 1846.

With its favourable climate, the rich soil of the Heretaunga Plains, and the hill country's suitability for grazing, Hawke's Bay flourished until the disastrous earthquake and fires of February 3rd, 1931. Napier and Hastings suffered severe damage but both towns were rebuilt and their unique and consistent architecture, the result of a concentrated reconstruction programme during a time when the building industry was in worldwide depression is still much in evidence.

The province today is a popular tourist area, with industries largely based on its primary produce.

Hawke's Bay hosted the 3rd New Zealand Potters Exhibition during its provincial centennial in 1958, at McLean Park in Napier, and the 18th Exhibition at the Hastings City Cultural Centre in 1975. Welcome to the third national exhibition to be held in the province.

The HAWKE'S BAY ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM

The Hawke's Bay Art Gallery and Museum, venue for the exhibition, is one of the longer established provincial galleries and is the oldest of New Zealand's few combined museums and art galleries. Established in 1936, it has grown to become a major institution with large and important collections of New Zealand and European ceramics, Maori, Pacific and Chinese arts, European antiques, textiles, and New Zealand fine arts, local historical material, photographs and archives.

Contemporary studio pottery has been collected since 1950 when Edgar Mansfield purchased two fine pieces by Bernard Leach at St Ives. Examples by David Leach and several from Winchcombe Pottery followed.

New Zealand pottery has been purchased since the late 1950's and is now an important and growing area of the collection. The New Zealand Society of Potters Collection is currently on deposit here and includes several pots by Michael Cardew and Alan Caiger Smith, as well as New Zealand work.

Recently, several pots by Lucy Rie and Bernard Leach were gifted to the collection and Edgar Mansfield has purchased new work in England by Colin Pearson, Jennifer Lee and Betty Blandino.

The newly completed ceramics display area on the lower floor of the museum includes a range of English and New Zealand pieces from 1950 to the present.