



In Her Own Words

A Major Decision

To some people, especially women, our kiln room seemed “spooky” with shadows lurking around the base and windows, the sky-light above, two kilns roaring and now and then a sputter of burning oil. Upon occasion a burner might overflow — no harm in itself, as all surroundings were entirely fireproof, but at such a time, the cue was to insert a poker into the combustion chamber and dislodge a carbon formation — all easy enough to do, but the shower of sparks appeared infernal to the uninitiated.

One evening when I chanced to be alone “finishing off a kiln,” I had dislodged a stoppage lump and stood watching bits of burning carbon on the concrete floor. Presently I began to feel more or less uncomfortable in my legs. Being somewhat of a nervous disposition, I said to myself “what nonsense to let my legs feel hot.” So I stood still with my disciplinary thoughts. It was at the time when women wore thin shirt-waists and woolen skirts with frilly things underneath, the skirt which I wore was fortunately extremely heavy. In a moment as I looked down, a little ring of flames curled up all around the bottom of the skirt. It took thinking and quicker action. Nearby stood a tub of water left from the melting of a frit the night before. With two jumps I sat myself down in the tub with a tremendous sizzling on all sides. A few scars and a number of ruined garments were the only results. Incidentally we found some extraordinarily nice things in the kiln next day.

Once when I came back from a week in the Adirondacks with friends, very much



Mary Chase Perry loading a kiln in her studio.

refreshed, I went into our kiln room during a period of our type of quick firing. The place was so murky it was hard to see. It made my eyes smart, nevertheless the heavy air and the smell of kerosene was as incense to my nostrils and I sniffed the polluted air with positive joy. The noise of the oil burners purring along — sometimes sputtering and every now and then bursting upon the air like a pistol shot — the rolling of the jar mills with the sound of pebbles falling from the top to bottom — the whirr of belts on squeaking pulleys, the stamping of the tile press with its thud-thud all combined to make a well-loved symphony to my accustomed ears. If every man and woman could feel so about his job. At such times I have sung a silent paean of joy that I am one of the fortunates whose complete happiness is in his work. “Why am I given this sweet, when my brother only has a crust?”

Meanwhile, with more architectural opportunities being presented, it seemed possible to allow some of our revenue to

be diverted in order to correct a situation which I was recognizing. Mr. Caulkins was always open-minded, when we came to a semi-colon, not to say a period, in our progress. In fact he was almost psychic in his understanding of cause and effect. We now held an earnest conference — if a dialogue principally on one side may be termed a conference — on the type

“Why am I given this sweet, when my brother only has a crust?”

of pottery which by this time we were shipping with fair regularity to Burley and Company. Mr. Burley, our first and wisest patron, had passed away and the ordering of pottery was in the hands of professional buyers.

Under the instruction of one buyer after another, whose inspiration came from frequent trips to European centers, our

(Continued on page 3...)

Letter from the Board President

Spring is a wonderful time of year in Michigan and at the Pottery! Best of all, it means the annual “For the House & Garden” Show is just around the corner. It’s hard to believe, but this will be our 20th annual Garden Party.

The Pottery always has a full agenda, and this time of the year is no exception. As mentioned in my last report, the completion of the Campus Master Plan was a key initiative of the board. I am pleased to report the Pottery continues to make great progress meeting our milestones for timely completion of the Campus Master Plan. The Master Planning Task Force, under the exemplary leadership of Joe Vassallo, has been meeting, almost biweekly, since last fall to develop a facilities plan and select an architect. The team worked collaboratively with Cliff Synder, of Synder Consulting to make sure we optimize our existing campus resources while realistically assessing the need for additional facilities to serve our mission well into the future. The Task Force followed a deliberate process of aligning the Campus Master Plan with the mission and vision of the Pottery. The architect has begun their work, and we expect the full board to approve the plan soon.

Thanks to all the Task Force members for an outstanding job on this mission critical project and for keeping the project on time! Also, a special note of thanks to trustee Deb Ferris, who

went above and beyond to keep the Campus Master Plan on schedule.

On the topic of finances, I am pleased to report the Pottery recently received an unqualified opinion from our auditor, and we finished fiscal year 2009 on budget and in the black. This is our twelfth straight year achieving our budget, which is extraordinary for a non-profit in this environment. During these turbulent economic times, the board will continue to work closely with staff to monitor our fiscal year 2010 budget. A special thanks to the staff for taking the budget seriously, and holding everyone accountable.

Thank you for all that you do and for your continued support of the Pottery. Please take time to stop down and see all the new improvements, and don’t forget to bring a friend. In the spirit of continuous improvement, I welcome your input to make the Pottery a better community treasure, so please send me a note or call if you have any suggestions. Your involvement makes a difference!

Neil G. Bristol Jr., *President of the Board of Trustees*



Letter from the Executive Director

Happy Spring, 2010! Pewabic remains very busy—this is good news! “Made in Michigan” is a daily fact of life here with fun things to do for you and your friends or families at Pewabic Pottery this spring and summer!

Visit our brand new, permanent exhibit about the life of Pewabic’s founder: Journey of a Pioneering Spirit: Mary Chase Perry Stratton. If you have ever wondered about Pewabic’s story and the people in back of it, then this exhibit is a must-see for you. We are grateful to the Michigan Humanities Council, the National Endowment for Humanities and the Clover E. Downs Trust for making this possible.

Want to brush up your ceramic skills or try learn some new skill? New classes are designed just for you. Don’t forget to stop by and see our Passport to Pottery Summer Camp Program this summer. It’s for ages 6–12 and begins July 6.

If you’ve wondered about the kind of ceramic work you can do as a Pewabic student be sure to visit our Annual Student Faculty Exhibition which opens on July 23.

Come to Pewabic’s “For the House and Garden” June during 3–6. This annual fundraiser has a new twist this year—a Designer Challenge! We are excited to partner with three high octane local designers. Each has agreed to take on Pewabic’s challenge: Create a room vignette centered around a Pewabic fireplace. The participating designers are Maddalena Designs; Rariden Schumacher Mio Interior Design; Jones-Keena & Company.

We are always grateful to our patrons and visitors who help Pewabic carry on our century old legacy of excellence in ceramic education and design. You make Pewabic the important American heritage site it is today. We appreciate you!

Terese A. Ireland, *Executive Director*



(continued from page 1...) shapes threatened to take on the characteristics which he saw and admired there. We were in danger of losing a fresher type of design which was the very thing that first attracted the attention of Mr. Burley to the little group of jars which I had taken to Chicago to show him.

When our American buyers are able to see that domestic manufacture ought to fill both utility and aesthetic needs more fully than objects with a foreign stamp, it is possible that the public might be led to prefer them. As it is, most of the buyers study the attitude and taste of the purchaser first and try to meet it on this same ground, without attempting to raise it to a higher level.

We had come to a point where we were executing designs and shape which were in no way a reflection of our own growth and which were not in accord with our taste. We were accepting orders for lamp bases with heavy lines and not at all our type, but modeled after the imported examples admired by the buyers. It was not easy at the peak of a profitable line to make up our minds to give it up.

That is exactly what we did do, taking a stand once and for all, that our product, in pottery at least, should express our own judgement and artistic taste. Otherwise there was no fun about our adventure, and most of all, even though we were hoping to make ends meet, we wanted to work with real pleasure and satisfaction. What is there in making a thousand pin-trays, if they have not your sound and sincere approval, even though they make a profit for you? I realize this sort of reasoning is not consistent with the usual business man. It is with a surge of gratitude that my mind dwells upon his wise summing up

“We would make what we darned pleased and nothing else.”

of the matter, and that he was able to see that our immediate prosperity would limit our artistic growth.

It was purely a spiritual valuation that stepped up a channel of distribution in order to permit an unknown objective to flower into something in advance of what we had done.

It took faith in our ability too, that is, in my personal qualifications, for that is what it meant. At all events, we took a stand to the amazement of our patrons, and discontinued completely almost all the “lines” we were making. Mr. Caulkins assured me that “we would make what we darned pleased and nothing else.”

Three months went by, trying new shapes, far more simple forms, without applied decorations. Our leaf forms had lived their day. How glad I was to be able to discontinue them notwithstanding the orders which persisted in coming in by mail, but less often called for in person by visitors at the Pottery. They could see that we were changing our type when they watched Herrich throwing on his wheel, following new outlines pinned on the wall in front of him. He was a trump too, when called upon to right-about-face, and turned his earnest efforts toward a different expression in clay. His wheel worked well at his bidding, and when I sometimes complimented him upon catching my idea quickly, he would chuckle to himself, and say “It was the wheel that did it,” and then he would take a little snuff as if pleasuring himself in his own way.

This decision and experience may illustrate the difference between a manufacturing plant and a laboratory-studio.

Pewabic In the News



Fashion Week 2010 in New York had an Arts & Crafts look this year with Designer Anna Sui and jewelry design team Erickson Beamon creating one-of-a-kind handcrafted necklaces and brooches incorporating actual tiles from Pewabic Pottery.



Detroit Media Partnership has once again selected Pewabic Pottery for their Summer Dreams Grant Program. Pewabic’s summer camp will be profiled in the Summer Dreams section for publication in May.

Setting Goals is the Key

Pewabic's Trustees Welcome Advisory Council Members

To celebrate the opening of the new permanent Museum Exhibition honoring the achievements of artist and Pewabic founder Mary Chase Perry Stratton, Pewabic Trustees and Advisory Council members gathered to enjoy a private viewing at a reception in April. The evening was also an opportunity to meet and thank historian Dr. Thomas Brunk, exhibition designer Mike Crosson, archivist Hanne Nielsen, and Pewabic Program Director, Gerri Kelley for their many hours of work on the execution of this exhibit.

Trustee Roger Garrett graciously introduced each member with a brief history of their background in the art world.

Kim Ross Clayson: Detroit attorney and President of the Villages Community Development Corporation, a non-profit group comprised of nine leading near eastside Detroit neighborhoods

Anne Crane: Long-time Pewabic trustee; one of the founders of the Pewabic Society; served as board President; chaired the Museum Committee for many years; a noted ceramic collector

Gene Gargaro: Long-time supporter of the arts; a mainstay in the preservation and promotion of arts in Detroit; currently serving as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the DIA

Barbara Kratchman: Co-founder of Art Serve; served as chair of the Michigan Council for the Arts; serves on board of Friends of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts; consultant to the DIA

Tim Mast: Long-time Pewabic trustee; served as President of Pewabic's board; chaired the Exhibition Committee for many years; noted ceramics collector; currently serving as Chair of the nominating committee for the board of Cranbrook School



Photography by: Paul Erickson

Archivist Hanne Nielsen, trustees Anmarie Erickson and Carol Harris



Tim Mast, Linda Ross, Barbara Kratchman, Anne Crane, Marilyn Wheaton, Kim Clayson, Not pictured: Gene Gargaro and Janis Wetsman

Linda Ross: Operated the Syberis Gallery in Royal Oak for many years; curated an international exhibition for Pewabic; developed a docent training module for the new museum exhibition at Pewabic, developed a special course for the History of Contemporary Crafts she taught at College for Creative Studies; currently a private art dealer/consultant/curator with her own firm, Linda Ross Contemporary Art

Janis Wetsman: Long-time supporter of the arts; operated a successful contemporary gallery in Birmingham for many years; member of the Board of Directors of the DIA; board member of the Friends of Modern and Contemporary Art at the DIA

Marilyn Wheaton: Former Director of Cultural Affairs for the City of Detroit; one of the founders of the Michigan Legacy Art Park; board member Greening of Detroit; currently Director of the Marshall Fredricks Museum at Saginaw Valley State University

Pewabic Pottery welcomes their expertise and support!



From Left to Right: Linda Ross, Thomas Brunk, Hanne Nielsen, and Mike Crosson



From Left to Right: trustee Joseph Vassallo, Dr. Max Wisgerhof, trustee Debra Ferris, trustee Mary Wisgerhof

Gifts and Memberships to Pewabic Make a Difference

Many thanks to the generosity of our supporters. The following list reflects donations from Foundations and Corporations since October 2009. A complete listing of all donations can be found on the website at Pewabic.org.

Pewabic Pottery programs are made possible through this support. Pewabic depends upon your help to maintain our National Historic Landmark Building, and support for our educational and museum programs. Please use the remittance envelope provided in this newsletter to renew your membership.

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EVENTS AT PEWABIC

SINCE 1903



2010 Calendar of Events

All events are free and open to the public unless noted.



GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Mark Burleson *Clutter Truck* May 7–July 3

Burleson received his MFA from Mills College and a BFA from Tufts University and is currently an Assistant Professor of Ceramics at University of Georgia. He uses print media and other materials mixed with ceramics to convey attitudes towards aspects of contemporary culture.

Pewabic Student and Staff Exhibition July 23–September 31

Annual show featuring the work of more than 40 students and staff.

Tom Phardel September 10–October 31

Phardel received his BFA from Eastern Michigan University and his MFA from University of Michigan. He is the head of the Center for Creative Studies ceramics department, but works in other sculpture media as well as clay. This will be his first one person show since 2006, although he has been in numerous group shows and a two person show at the Lemberg Gallery.

SPECIAL EVENTS

JUNE

For the House & Garden Show Ticketed Preview Party Thursday, June 3 • 6–9pm Tickets \$75 per person Call 313.822.0954 (ext. 0)

The weekend event continues on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 4–6 • 10am–5 pm.

Free and open to the public

AUGUST

ONE DAY Summer Sale FOR MEMBERS ONLY August 21 • 10am–5pm

30–50% off on Pewabic Pottery and tile overruns. To purchase a membership, please call 313.822.0954 (ext. 0).

SEPTEMBER

Member Appreciation Month September 1–30

Pewabic Members get double discounts up to 20% on all gallery purchases. To become a member, call 313.822.0954 (ext. 114).

OCTOBER

Annual Raku Party Saturday, October 9

Reservations can be made by calling 313.822.0954 (ext. 100).

NOVEMBER

Earthy Treasures Holiday Show Opening Reception Thurs., Nov. 11 Continues through December 31

For additional information and hours, please check the website at www.pewabic.org.

EDUCATION

Family Fun Day Tuesday, August 24 • 10am–3pm

One time fee of \$5 for some activities such as jewelry making, mask decorating and free activities include clay target practice, clay Olympics and more. Demonstrations, tours.

Passport to Pottery Summer Camp July 6–August 9 Mon–Fri • 9am–Noon \$95 each week

Discover the world, one habitat at a time. Students will travel the globe in this week long summer camp; learn about habitats and their importance in maintaining a balanced ecosystem. From the rain forest to the Arctic, students will create timeless ceramic pieces and craft projects. For reservations, please call 313.822.0954 (ext. 100).

Teen Wheel Throwing Camp Week of July 12 & Week of Aug. 9 Ages 13–17 • \$95 each week

Both beginners and advanced students are welcome. Complete class listing can be found on-line at www.pewabic.org.

MUSEUM

Pottery Closed

Memorial Day
July 5 for Independence Day
Labor Day
September 30 – Inventory
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

Pewabic Pottery is
FREE & Open to the Public

Mon–Sat • 10AM–6PM
Sun • NOON–4PM





PEWABIC POTTERY
 10125 East Jefferson Avenue
 Detroit, MI 48214
 p 313.822.0954
 f 313.822.6266
 www.pewabic.org
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EVENTS AT PEWABIC

for the PEWABIC POTTERY'S 20th Annual Benefit Show & Sale

House & Garden

June 4~6, 2010
 Friday, Saturday & Sunday
 10:00AM~5:00PM
 { Free & Open to the Public }

SINCE 1903

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