

Pottery: a work of art, tradition

by Sue Charlebois

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Barbara Wigglesworth of Perkinsfield has been creating pottery with her hands for the past nine years.

Barbara started out as a dental hygienist working in Midland before she discovered the beauty of creating pottery.

Barbara began by taking a ceramic class which she did not enjoy because, "The median was too limited for it," she said.

"I could not express myself in it."

Because of this limitation and the desire to be creative, Barbara discontinued ceramics just before she met a professional potter who she worked with for three years in Toronto.

After many night and summer courses the enthusiastic potter then purchased her own wheel.

Now nine years later she is a professional potter registered under "Toasted Mud Production."

"It gives me a way of individuality," says the avid potter. "It's a feeling that you can't experience unless you do it."

Barbara said that after being on a payroll for 12 years and on a regimented schedule she did not feel appreciated.

Now she enjoys making pottery because she feels it is not only a beautiful creation but that they can be enjoyed by others as well as being very useful.

As a professional potter Barbara says, "I always had the desire for it to be this big and a desire for it to be even bigger. I'd like to be a well-known potter."

"I've never had a feeling of not going...rather a feeling of satisfaction in creating functional things."

There are three types of potters. First there is

the hobbyist, second is the production potter who will turn out 300 mugs a day if the need be and thirdly is the studio potter.

Barbara falls into the last category because she is able to reproduce in fairly large numbers any piece done but is still able to keep the originality and uniqueness of each piece.

Pottery like most crafts must be done in stages to successfully have a finished product. Barbara's process begins in Toronto where her materials are purchased.

She then starts out by wedging the clay which gets rid of any air bubbles that may be present.

Clay

The clay is then put on a wheel making sure that it is centre on the wheelhead so its spinning anti-clockwise to make the clay stable and even.

After a process which is termed throwing, Barbara then makes an initial statement in the clay to get the form that she wants.

Because each piece of clay is weighed at the start to ensure the right size of what she wants, each piece that is made comes out exactly the same in the end.

One may wonder how each piece of pottery can be duplicated so perfectly. Barbara says the secret to duplication is lots of practice and the use of a ruler also helps.

It's really, incredible to watch a piece of clay suddenly turn into something without the use of moulds or patterns as this reporter discovered when watching Barbara in action. In about 10 minutes there sat a perfectly designed teapot that only minutes ago had been a mound of wet sticky mud.

After the piece is then designed any excess clay is trimmed off to complete the base.

Kiln

The piece is then, after drying, placed in a kiln to become what is known as bisque.

After about eight hours in heat of 1,000

degrees celcius the pottery then has to stay in the kiln for another 12 hours of cooling.

After this stage the pottery is then taken out when at this time Barbara uses her own formulated glazes on the piece.

Now the glazed piece is put back in the kiln to

be fired a second time at 1,260 degrees celcius for another 12-15 hours.

Barbara now has her finished product which she can call her very own creation from start to finish.

Spending up to six hours each day working on her pottery, Barbara makes such things as

teapots, mugs, bowls, dishes, goblets, vases and much more. Barbara who is a member of the Ontario Craft Council, the Huronia Craft Guild, and the Haliburton Guild of Crafts, presently has some of her work entered in the Haliburton show. These pieces include two large casseroles and a set of black metallic wine goblets.

Barbara's work was also available for all to see at the Craft Ten Show held last weekend during the sidewalk sale.

Market

Barbara also does many shows in Toronto and hopes that soon she will be able to market more in this area.

Of all the pottery she makes, Barbara says she particularly enjoys

doing bowls because, "The shape lends itself to be thrown, I can see it growing."

Barbara is currently working with porcelain pottery and would eventually like to get into wood firing.

Whichever way the professional potter intends to go it is sure to be ever advancing where she will continue to produce her own beautiful creations.



From start...

After the clay has Barbara's initial statement in it to get the form she wants she continues spinning the clay to come up with her very own original design.



To individual touches...

Barbara adds a few more of her own individuality into one of the mugs she has made. Here she adds a few flowers to give a different effect and look.



To the finished product....

And now for the finished product. Here are just a few of the pieces that Barbara makes in their finished form.

She makes such things as goblets, mugs, glasses, tea pots, and whole place settings.

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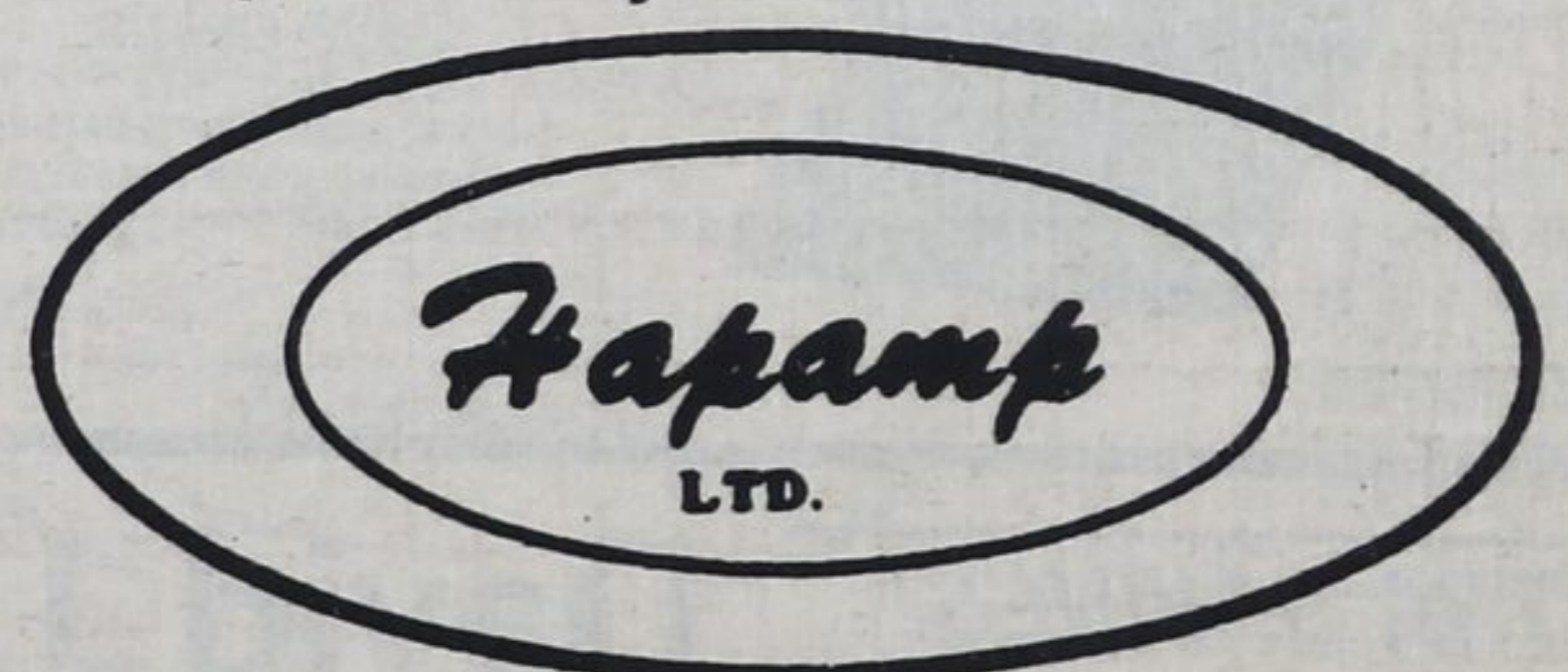


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Cigarette package scheme all smoke and no fire, society says

TORONTO — Every few years, someone starts the rumour that if you collect a certain number of empty cigarette packages you can exchange them for a wheelchair or other aid for physically handicapped people.

There is absolutely no truth in this rumour, says the Ontario Society for Crippled Children.

An article appearing in the Society's newsletter, Horizons, emphasizes this fact. Recently a woman in Fenelon Falls, Ont., collected 200,000 empty cigarette packages in the hope of trading them

for an electric wheelchair for her daughter who has cerebral palsy.

Tobacco company officials told her the scheme was founded on rumour with no basis in

Missing windsurfer was spotted

MIDLAND — OPP investigation into the theft of a windsurfer from near a cottage on Go-Home Bay, north of Honey Harbour, continues.

The windsurfer, the property of a Toronto man, Douglas McKenzie, 28, was reported stolen July 17.

fact.

Ian Bain, executive director of the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, says "This (rumour) has been going on for at least 20 years to my certain

knowledge."

The Society does not know of any organization collecting or accepting old cigarette packages to exchange for wheelchairs.

Witnesses told the OPP they saw two aluminum boats in the area.

They confronted the occupants of one boat and said the windsurfer

the five males and one female teenager had with them was McKenzie's windsurfer. The witnesses then withdrew, they told police.

Penetang police

Police in Penetanguishene report a quiet weekend, with

only four liquor offence charges and four speeding charges laid.