

# Reviews

## Harry Peach — Dryad and DIA

Pat Kirkham  
*The Design Council* £9.50

Most older Craft Design and Technology teachers recall the Dryad leaflets and handbooks, notably the classic volumes by Gregory. Some will know that the Dryad company was not only a publisher but also a considerable supplier of craft materials of very high quality and was founded by Harry Peach, a remarkable entrepreneur who died prematurely in 1936. But even fewer will know the astonishing mixture of high principle and opportunism that led to the founding of the Dryad Works in Leicester in 1907.

In this highly informative and excellently written study by Pat Kirkham much new light is thrown on this remarkable pioneer. Peach's career is traced meticulously from his early enthusiasm for the ideas of Ruskin, Morris and the Fabian socialists, and most particularly for the ideas of Lethaby and Fletcher, head of Leicester's School of Art. All of Peach's enterprises — the early manufacture of well designed cane furniture, the Dryad metal works and eventual move into craft supplies and publishing, are all identified as evidence of the remarkable link between commerce and ideology that characterises Peach's life.

Yet business alone was but a small part of Peach's life. In 1915 he played a major part in founding the Design and Industry Association as a challenge to what Peach saw as the elitism of the art and craft movement. In the 20s and early 30s he played an equally large part in the work of the Council for Preservation of Rural England notably in the Save the Countryside campaign. A particular feature of the book are the illustrations of this campaign which played such a major part in preserving the heritage of the English countryside into the present day. Without Peach and his allies the English landscape would almost certainly be the poorer.

Overall the book is a vivid demonstration of the potent and highly beneficial effects that design education and the awareness it brings. It shows beyond doubt that it has played, and can play, a major part in enhancing the quality of modern life. The example of

Peach is timely and highly relevant; we should be grateful to Pat Kirkham and the Design Council for alerting us to it in this most effective way.

John Eggleston

## Graphic Communication

Jack Whitehead  
*Heinemann* £3.95

This book in the 'Made Simple' is divided into 22 sections, 19 of which represent the standard content of a traditional school course in Graphic Communication (e.g. geometry, pictorial drawing, loci, machine drawing, logos etc.). The last three sections are concerned with CAD, layout techniques and perspective drawing and seem to be included almost as an after thought.

As a thorough grounding in the traditional skills and techniques, the book may well achieve the stated aim of the 'Made Simple' series to take the reader 'step by step, clearly and methodically, through the course'. It may also, as the author claims, 'prepare students for the 'O' level, CSE and the GCSE examinations' although it should be noted that 'O' levels and CSE have only one more year to run while GCSE Graphic Communication is not a CDT course. However, for these traditional courses, the book provides a comprehensive and detailed guide to the skills, techniques and knowledge required by the draughtsman or woman and will prove a useful manual for the Technical Drawing teacher. It may also be of use to the CDT teacher as a reference work.

The section of CAD is of interest only because of its inclusion in this conventional work. Although it gives a brief introduction to some of the peripherals available for micro-computers, it fails to exploit this exciting and important development in Graphic Communication. The same problem applies to Layout Techniques, which only hints at some of the possibilities of drawing presentation.

My major concern about this book is that it fails to address itself to the challenges raised by the new GCSE CDT: Design and Communication

examinations. There is no attempt to deal with the development of design and making skills nor is there any mention of control, energy, materials and components and ergonomics and anthropometrics, all of which must be included in any new GCSE syllabus which carries the CDT prefix. Because each drawing skill is dealt with separately, it reinforces the view that there is inherent value in learning say, how to draw a cycloid. Clearly, this book is about how to draw using well tried and proven methods and, as I have already pointed out, will be of use to those teachers and pupils engaged in traditional drawing courses. It is a great pity that an opportunity has been missed to further the development of new learning approaches in Graphic Communication and I find it sad and frustrating that such an essentially traditional Technical Drawing course should be considered for use in schools.

Brian Oppenheim

## Design & Craft, Second Edition

A. Yarwood and S. Dunn  
*Edward Arnold* £4.75

## Woodwork Technology

T. Pettit  
*Edward Arnold* £3.25

Design and Craft has become one of the best selling texts for GCE and CSE courses and now the authors and publishers have brought out a new GCSE version focussing on the design and realisation area. It is much as before but with the inclusion of colour graphics, greater variety of presentation techniques and somewhat more on methods of development.

The volume offers an interesting perspective on the present development or lack of development of Craft Design and Technology for up to half a century. Surprising large sections of the book could have come straight from the woodwork and metalwork techniques of the thirties — geometric developments, timber conversion, French polishing, designing candle holders and much else. To all this is added motor car design (the Ford Sierra of course) design briefs,

electronic and ergonomics. But surprisingly, there is no mention of computer assisted design or manufacturing techniques.

A particular depressing feature of the book is the quality of some of the finished work illustrated which seems to fall short even of the most modest design criteria enunciated in the book.

A similar updating has been undertaken by Pettit whose book also is targetted on examinations though with a much narrower focus on woodworking tools and processes. For this reason alone it is unlikely to have a lengthy GCSE future.

Once again much of the book could have been written at least fifty years previously and indeed, many of the illustrations borrowed from the tool catalogues seem to be precisely of that vintage. The examination questions are of unspecified sources often of similar vintage. For example 'Contrast the uses of the following nails (a) round wire (b) panel pin (c) escutcheon pin (d) upholstery nail (e) cut tack. Illustrate your answers with sketches'; and 'How would you prepare Scotch glue? For what kind of work is it used and why?'

Yet, notwithstanding its limitations, the book has the merit of clarity and precision. It is complemented by a photocopy master pack (reviewed in this issue by Brian Oppenheim).

John Guest

### Calligraphy Techniques

John Lancaster  
*B.T. Batsford £9.95*

Those who become mesmerised by the skill of calligraphy often become avid collectors of books on the subject. There is no shortage of supply, for the craft is remarkable in that it is not filtering down from the Art establishments, (where it is now rarely taught as a specialised craft but absorbed by the all embracing title of 'Graphics'), it is an enthusiasm prompted and fuelled by public interest. Nostalgia associated with writing at school, the increased amount of leisure time in society, and the reaction against electronic aids of communication, have all been cited as reasons for this revival. Whatever the

cause it is hoped that individuals coming to the skill of calligraphy for the first time will be lucky enough to obtain the kind of information which ensures a good start and encourages them to see beyond the limitations of their early efforts.

John Lancaster's book is certainly compiled to achieve such a result, giving details as to the essential kit of materials and equipment required, a little historical background and plenty of calligraphic reproductions both by the author and other contributors, which clearly illustrates the versatility of the square edged pen. When you see a profusion of explanatory illustrations it makes you feel you are getting value for your money!

The chief virtue of the book, so it appears to me, is to convey a feeling for a free and liberal approach to the subject before the disciplines of letter making are reached, and it is evident from the authors work that this calligraphic enjoyment is present. Those of us who were brought up under the older regime and dragooned into writing endless lines and pages of practise letters found that it put many 'off' the subject. Today we tend to favour a preparation period where we can experience the flavour and spirit of the craft and it is important that beginners start the craft with a feeling of enjoyment, as long as it does eventually lead to the process of learning, for all skills require some 'sweat blood and tears' before the real freedom of knowledge takes over.

If the book was intended for the novice I would have liked to have seen more directions given as to how to construct letters indicating the sequence of strokes. It is the absence of this information that first-timers to the craft often criticise when looking for appropriate books, but I suspect that John Lancaster's main purpose was to stimulate people into calligraphy and not make them expire! He would no doubt argue that there are many other books available giving more precise directions about styles and construction details?

This book should encourage more people to discover the magic of the square cut nib and help to give the art of calligraphy an extra push along the road of popularity thereby bringing a little more grace into our lives.

Tom Barnard

### Woodwork Technology Construction Skills Pack

T. Pettit  
*Edward Arnold £25.00*

This skills pack is a series of 46 sheets which detail all the major woodworking joints required for frame, carcass and slab constructions. It is very comprehensive in its coverage and includes, for example, 11 different types of mortice and tenon joints. At the bottom of each sheet are five questions which relate to joints introduced above. The publishers will allow multiple copies to be made providing these are used only within one institution.

On the whole the information is presented clearly through drawings and text, although I do feel that the sheets are rather 'old fashioned' in appearance and could be more exciting. Too much reliance on writing may be a disadvantage to certain pupils and I would like to have seen more emphasis placed on presenting the information through large, bold sketches. The written text too, is rather daunting and pupils may find it difficult to extract the information they require. The questions on each sheet are helpful in reinforcing the important principles but again their wording makes them difficult to understand.

My main concern about this work is that it deals in such great depth with only one material. Although there is clearly a demand from schools for some of this information to be available in a form that can be readily copied for class use, I question the need for so much detail exclusively on woodwork construction. Within the context of the new GCSE examinations, I wonder how many teachers will have the time to teach, for example, drawer construction using slips to fit the bottom. While this type of 'craft' skill may be important in a vocational or training context, it has very little validity in the secondary school CDT curriculum. I also feel that the title 'Woodwork Technology' is an inappropriate use of the word technology. This is not technology as defined by GCSE and by including the word in the title of such a traditional work, it undermines the efforts of many CDT teachers to get Technological activities established in schools.

However, despite my reservations, I expect that many schools will find this pack a useful addition to their resource and providing it is used as a resource rather than a teaching programme, it may prove valuable to both teacher and pupil.

Brian Oppenheim

**Design for the Real World (Second Edition)**

Victor Papanek  
*Thames and Hudson Ltd. £7.95*

Originally written in 1971 Papanek's study has become one of the classic texts on design. On publication the work was significantly ahead of its time and Papanek suffered a lengthy period of rejection by most of the professional designers of the Western world in his pioneering attempt to show how design can be used to reduce pollution, crowding, starvation, obsolescence and many of the other perils of our modern society. His words were unacceptable to

a generation of designers whose established and successful practices were largely responsible for these evils. Yet linked with other authors such as Toffler and Schumacher Papanek's views ultimately became the conventional wisdom of the new generation of post-oral crisis designers and consultants.

In this new revised edition of his book Papanek develops his vision of a new age of responsible design and makes a particularly effective link between the problems of the developed and less developed world. He takes his analysis further in many ways. For example, his famous description of motor cars as 'gas guzzlers' is now augmented by his definition of homes as 'space guzzlers' as well as energy guzzlers.

Papanek's new edition will be received enthusiastically by his admirers; it will also remain a powerful stimulus for new generations of students. To all it will offer a salutary warning of the perils of modern society; a warning still as timely and urgent as it was when Papanek first wrote in 1971.

John Eggleston

● *Continued from page 50*

reporting the content involvement of a particular technological task and of a consistent means of measuring technological performance. Underlying many of these recommendations is the assumption that the unique nature of technological capability (the ability of individuals and groups to tackle unique problems, each determining certain resources of knowledge and skill) is amenable to generalised description without loss of significance. Experience suggests that this assumption is not yet valid. There is therefore, an urgent need to underpin the development of technological capability in education by the development of a single and acceptable means of reporting the totality of technological experience which makes explicit the complex inter-relationship of *process activities* with *resources of knowledge and skill* and with the *meeting of human values*.

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