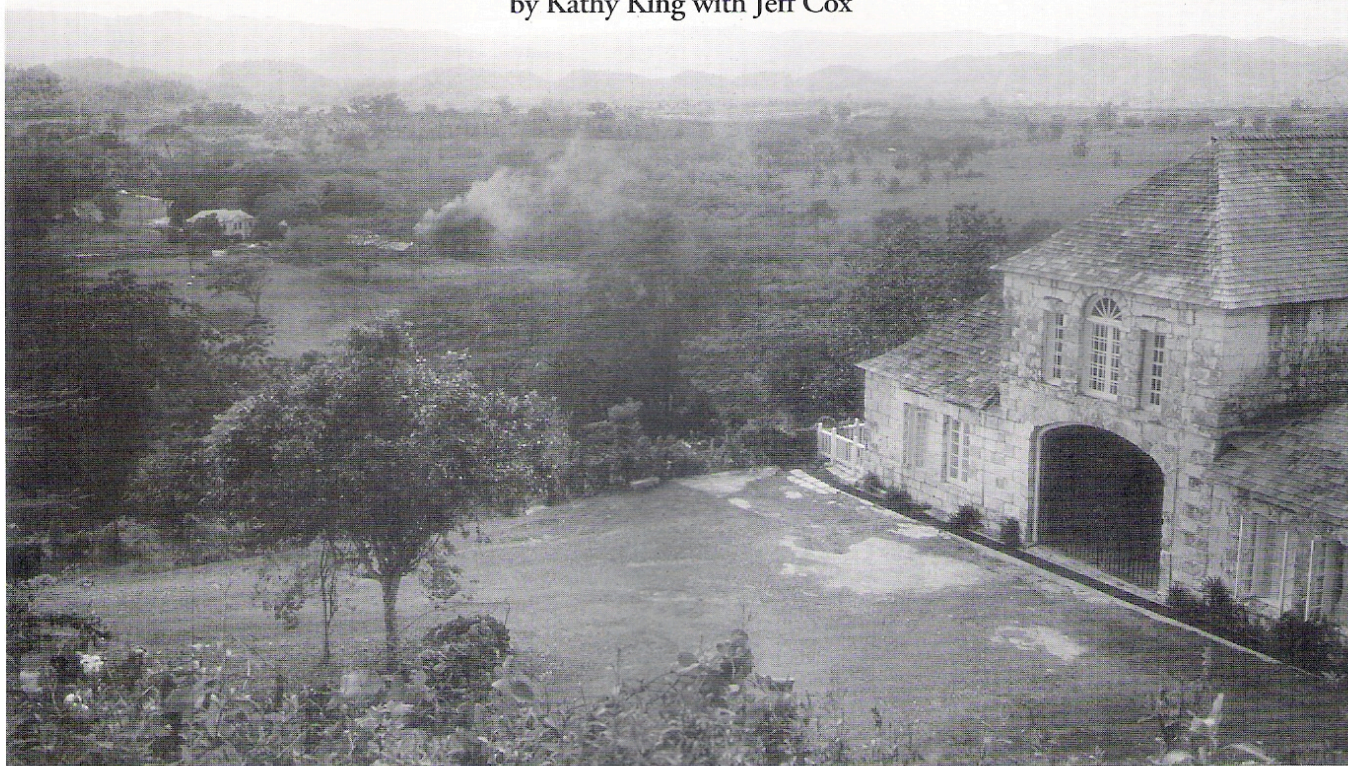


# Wood Firing in Jamaica

by Kathy King with Jeff Cox



PHOTOS: PHOEBE LAWRENCE, RICK T

Good Hope Pottery was established on a former plantation in Jamaica; the 18th-century manor house (now a ten-room hotel) overlooks the wood-burning kiln.



Jeff Cox of New York's 92nd Street YMHA/YWHA loading student pots into the Good Hope kiln.

It's winter and I'm at the airport in Montego Bay, Jamaica, newly arrived from New York City with my heavy coat still in hand. I'm standing in the customs line in front of two new friends: David Jenkins, a studio potter from Kennebunkport, Maine; and Tordier Henrickson, who runs his own pottery/cafe in Norway. A puzzled customs officer is peering into my suitcase filled with carefully packed bisqueware, as I try to explain that I am part of a group of 22 students who are here to do a wood-firing workshop with local potter David Pinto at Good Hope Pottery.

Import laws are strict in order to allow the Jamaican economy to stay strong through its own manufacturing. "These pots will not be sold in Jamaica," I promised.

Soon, other customs officials gather around. "The suitcases are filled with pot?"

"No! Pots. You know, ceramics," I explain.

After much discussion, poking and

prodding, the flustered official insists on speaking with this local potter. Enter our host, David Pinto, who darts into the customs office with a wood-fired teapot in hand, enthusiastically explaining the process and why we are all here with bags filled with bisqueware.

Once we are given clearance, we collect our bubble-wrapped pots and leave the airport for our first glimpse of Jamaica.

The seven-day workshop with guest artist Joe Bennion from Spring City, Utah, was organized by Jeff Cox, director of the 92nd Street YMHA/YWHA Clay Studio in New York City. Traditionally, the Y reserves the third week of January for a five-day visiting-artist workshop, which previously has featured Don Reitz, Warren MacKenzie, Jeff Oestreich and Mary Roehm. This was the first time the Y had offered an international experience.

The first two days of the workshop consisted of glazing our well-traveled bisqueware and loading Pinto's wood-