

# McHugh Pottery

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John McHugh founded the McHugh Pottery at Sandhill in Launceston, Tasmania in 1873. Under John the company produced bricks, pipes, tiles, flower pots and a variety of utilitarian pottery, including sanitary products and kitchenware. This production was unmarked so what pieces that have survived are very difficult to identify. In 1891 John passed his business on to his sons James and Hugh, in the following year (1892) John passed away. As the art in pottery is my principal interest I am not going to leave the early story of McHugh here. From what I have been able to determine McHugh's production of Art Ware (or "Fancy Ware" as it was called at McHugh) was over a very limited period. I have discussed this with Robert (the curator of the "Erin May Collection"), Andrew (the curator of "The McGowan Collection") and Ross Pentreath. By looking at these collections we have determined that about one third of the examples in these collections are dated between 1933 and 1935. Ross tells me that he does have one pot dated 1932. It is our belief that McHugh only produced art ware between perhaps 1932 at the earliest and 1936 at the latest. The pot above is dated 1938, this is quite crude in form and glaze and it really bears no resemblance to the McHugh production of the 1932 to 1936 period. Even the maker's mark seems to be a rather rudimentary copy of the mark that was used just a few years earlier. If the date on the base of this vase is correct I can only conclude that by 1938 McHugh had lost the ability to produce the quality of production they were producing between 1932 & 1936.

What sets McHugh's production above that of their contemporaries (such as John Campbell Pty Ltd) are the impressive range of glaze colours that they employed. If you scan through the shapes below you will see the full majesty of their glazes. To me the outstanding examples of McHugh glazes are the three examples of shape 60 (see the the shapes by pattern number category further down the page). It has always interested me that the colours and the "Drip Glaze" method employed by such Aussie companies such as McHugh, Campbell and Remeud is in the style of the Arts & Craft movement in Britain. In the UK this style of pottery had basically died out by the late 1920's, here in Australia it had a life that went in the case of Remued right up until 1956. British manufacturers employing this style of production are C.H. Brannam Ltd of Bairnstable in Devon (Jug above on right), Ruskin Pottery of Birmingham and Minton Hollins of Stoke on Trent in Staffordshire (twin handle vase above on left). What began in Britain as the dark subdued colours of the Edwardian era ended as bright and bold colours of Aussie Pottery. There are three names that are associated with the McHugh's Art Ware production. Henry Trevena was in charge of the manufacture of McHugh's Art Ware. The thrower, glazier and mould maker Danny Beckett and the glazier Francis Manallack, both of whom had honed their skills in various potteries in Victoria. On page 103 of "The Pottries of Brunswick", Gregory Hill talks about Francis Manallack and his time at McHugh. Greg says that it was Francis Manallack who was responsible for the cobalt glaze that was employed at McHugh to such a striking effect. There are two style of incized base marks on the base of McHugh pottery. On page 157 of the "Encyclopedia Of Australian Potter's Marks", Geoff Ford shows an example of the makers mark in the style of the one below and attributes this mark to Henry Trevena (this mark is green one below). There are two styles labels used for the marking of McHugh Art Pottery, the first is a silver foil on brown paper and the second is a green and silver label There is also a stamped under glaze mark that is occasionally used on the base of McHugh Pottery. It reads "H McHugh, Launceston". Geoff Ford dates this mark from 1926 to 1939, I have only ever seen one art ware pot with this mark, it is a fairly nondescript shape number 10. The Shapes Vase - Shape 1

Left not dated - Right dated 1935

height 12.5 cm (5") tall

Vase - Shape 2

Left dated 1935 - Right dated 1934

height 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 3

Left not dated - Right dated 1934

height range from 15cm (6") to 20 cm (8")

Vase - Shape 4

Left not dated - Right dated 1934

height 11.5 cm (4.5")

Vase - Shape 5

Left not dated - Right dated 1935

height 13.5 cm (5.4")

Vase - Shape 6

Left dated 1933 - Right not dated

height range from 7.5 cm (3") to 13 cm (5.12")

Vase - Shape 7

Left not dated - right dated 1935

height 13 cm (5.12")

Vase - Shape 8

Left dated 1935 - right not dated

height 14 cm (5.5")

Vase - Shape 9

height 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 10

Left dated 1934 - right not dated

height range from 12.5 cm (5") to 17.5 cm (7")Vase - Shape 11

height 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 12

height 8cm (3.12")

Vase - Shape 13

height 17.5 cm (7")

Shape 14 No example known!Have you got an example of this Shape?

Bowl - Shape 15

height 7 cm (2.75")

Vase - Shape 16

Both examples are dated 1934

height 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 17

height 9cm (3.5")

Vase - Shape 18

Dated 1934

Height range from to 12.5 cm (5") to at least 15 cm (6")Shape 18 is a very large shape, it has a larger girth than it does height. For instance the example from "The McGowan Collection" is 15 cm (6") tall and it has a diameter of 20 cm (8").  
Flower Bowl - Shape 18

This Flower Bowl or Centre Piece is marked Shape 18, I have only seen one other example of this shape and it was not marked. Is the shape 18 number on the base of the Flower Bowl a factory mistake - I hope this will become clear if more examples come to light. Vase - Shape 19height 13 cm (5.12") Bowl - Shape 20

Both are dated 1934

Height 6 cm (2.36")

Bowl - Shape 21

Height range 6 cm (2.37") to 9 cm (3.5")

Vase - Shape 22

Left dated 1933 - Right dated 1935

Height range 9.5 cm (3.5") up to 20 cm (8")

Vase - Shape 23

Left not dated - right dated 1933

Height range 12 cm (4.75") to 14 cm (5.5")

Vase - Shape 24

Height 11 cm (4.37")

Vase - Shape 25

Left dated 1935 - Right not dated

Height range 8cm (3.12") to 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 26

Height range 10 cm (4") to 12 cm (4.75")

Vase - Shape 27

Height range 9 cm (3.5") to 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 28

Left dated 1935 - Right not dated

Height 9cm (3.5")

Shape 29

No example known!Have you got an example of this Shape?

Vase - Shape 30

Height 13.5 cm (5.37")

Vase - Shape 31A

height 23 cm (9.1")Interesting that this vase is marked 31A, has anybody ever seen another example of this shape or a Pot marked 31? Vase - Shape 32

Dated 1933

Dated 1934

height 8.5 cm (3.37")

McHugh Ball Flower Aid (Frog) - Shape 33

height range from 6.5cm (2.5") to 9cm (3.5")

McHugh Jar & Cover - Shape34

left dated 1934 - right dated 1935

height 11 cm (4.37")

Grecian Urn - Shape 35

height 9.5 cm (3.75")

Image courtesy of Ross & Sharron Pentreath

Teapot - Shape 36 Have you got an example of this Shape?

Vase - Shape 37

height 22cm (8.75")

Sugar Bowl - Shape 37

Dated 1934

Dated 1935

height 8 cm (3.2")

Sugar Bowl with Lid - Shape 37

Dated 1934 There are 3 variations of shape 37 - the first is a large twin handle vase. The second is a tri-handle pot which comes also with a lid. The curator of the "Erin May Collection" tells me that he has seen two examples of shape 37 with a lid. It could be argued that the lid comes from something else and that this shape does not have a lid - I will leave this argument until I have further information.

Vase - Shape 38

Both Vase are dated 1935

height 12.5cm (5") Vase - Shape 38A

Height 20 cm (8")

Pin Dish - Shape 39

height 3 cm (1.25")

Ashtray - Shape 39

Shape 34 comes in two variations, with cigarette rest or without.

Vase - Shape 40

left vase dated 1934 - right vase dated 1935

height 9cm (3.6")

Vase - Shape 41

Left not dated - Right dated 1934

height 14.5 cm (5.75")

Vase - Shape 42

Left not dated - Right dated 1934

height 13.5 cm (5.38")

height 30 cm (12")Note the height variation between these 3 vase, all have the same shape number but one is huge. Vase - Shape 43

height 15 cm (6")

Vase - Shape 44

height 11.5 cm (4.5")

Vase - Shape 45

height 12.5 cm (5")

Vase - Shape 46

Left vase not dated - Right vase dated 1935

height 15cm (6")

Vase - Shape 47

height 20 cm (8")

Vase - Shape 48

height 23 cm (9.1")

Vase - Shape 49

height 20cm (8")

Trinket Bowl - Shape 50

height 7.5 cm (3")

Vase - Shape 51

height 15 cm (6")

Vase - Shape 52

left dated 1924 - right not dated

Height 20 cm (8")

Vase - Shape 53

Dated 1934

Height 30 cm (12")

Vase - Shape 54

Dated 1935

Height 17 cm (6.75")

Vase - Shape 54

height 26 cm (10.25")

Image courtesy of Ross & Sharron Pentreath  
Note: There are two examples of pots marked as shape number 54, Ross says the number on the base of his is very clear. Is the mark on the base of one of these a mistake made at the time of production, I don't know. Does anybody else have an example of either of these shapes. Flower Bowl with Flower - Aid Shape 55

Dated 1934

Height 5 cm (2"), diameter 28 cm (11")

Candle Stick - Shape 56

One of these was listed on eBay some time ago,

it was a tall candle holder similar in shape to vase 38 Have you got an example of this Shape?

Candle Stick - Shape 57

One of these was listed on eBay some time ago,

it was a candle holder with a handle for carrying it Have you got an example of this Shape?

Shape 58 No example known! Have you got an example of this Shape?

Shape 59 No example known! Have you got an example of this Shape?

Cylinder Vase - Shape 60

Height ranges from 20 cm (8") to 36 cm (14")

Shape 61

height 12.5cm (5")

Image courtesy of Bernie Gallagher

Vase - Shape 62

height 15cm (6")

Image

Vase - Shape 63

height 9cm (3.5")

Vase - Shape 64

height 10 cm (4")

Vase - Shape 65

height 15 cm (6")

Vase - Shape 66

height 16 cm (6.3")

Vase - Shape 67

height 13.5 cm (5.32")

Vase - Shape 69

height 13.5 cm (5.25")

Jardiniere - Shape 75

height 16.5 cm (6.5")

diameter 21 cm (8.25")

Vase - Shape 76

height 19.5 cm (7.7")

Image courtesy of Ross & Sharron Pentreath

Deco Handle Pitcher - 96A

height 25 cm (10") The example have pictured here does not have a shape number, but Paul McHugh tells me that he has an example fo this shape and that it is clearly marked 96A

Speicmen Vase

height 9 cm (3.5") This wee pot may have a number on the base, it is hard to make out but I feel it could be 29 - can anybody confirm this.

Jardiniere

dated 1935

height 18.5 cm (7.25")

Planter

height 16 cm (6.25")This is an unusual shape, it almost appears to be a pot sitting in a saucer, but it is all on piece.

Posy Ring or Wreath

height 5 cm (2") & diameter 17cm (6.75")

Flower Aid or Frog

height 6 cm (2.37")

Trough with Original Wire Flower Aid

27 cm (10.6") long and 10 cm (4") tall

Flower Bowl with Flower Aid Lid or Centre Piece

height 12.5 cm (5") and 20 cm (8") diameter The Erin May Collection has an example of this shaped marked 18.

Tall Flower Bowl with Flower Aid Lid or Tall Centre Piece

height 18 cm (7")

Wall Pocket- Bulbous Base

height 15 cm (6")

Wall Pocket - Flat Base

height 15 cm (6")

Image courtesy of Ross & Sharron Pentreath There is at least one other wall pocket shape, but at this stage I do not have a photo of it. Creamer 1/4 Pint

Creamer 1/2 Pint

Creamer 3/4 Pint

Each of the three creamers above were clearly marked to the base with their size. I have made them 3 different sizes to representative of each capacity, this is not an accurate depiction of each of the sizes.

Tobacco Jar or Humidor

height 11 cm (4.4")

Minature Potty - A Salesman Sample

height 4.5 cm (1.25")

Leaf Shaped Pin Dish

Coffee Mug

height 11 cm (4.32")

Character Jug or Toby Jug

Dog Door Stop

33 cm (13") long These seated dogs come in at least 4 colourways - I would love to have examples of the other to colourways.