

## Nodding Couple - Mevagissey & District Museum



This distinctive piece of pottery was made by Bernard Moss who came to live in Mevagissey with his wife, Moreen, in 1949. Initially they lived in a rented cottage with no gas, electricity or even running water. He was born in London, a descendant of Russian immigrants. The figures have a Jewish theme and the earlier models were painted terracotta, black and white with later models, after 1960, in blue, black and white. The decoration was carried out by Moreen, a skilled graphic designer. The "nodding or rocking" movement was designed by Bernard and created by means of pivots and counter-balances. When touched, the couple in the bath rock back and forth. Other models have nodding heads and in the case of the mermaid, her tail rocks. Moss Pottery has had a variety of stamp marks, including Mevagissey Pottery, Moss Mevagissey and St Ewe Moss and these can help date the year of production.

In the late 1950's Bernard took his "nodder" to Heal's department store in London and at first was rejected, but a chance encounter with one of the directors of the store rewarded him with an order for a dozen. In future years the order increased to around eighty annually, to be given to the store's best customers. These had a special mark of Heal Fabrics on the base.

Bernard retired in 1983, but still retained an interest in designing new models, firing them in a tiny electric kiln and giving them to his friends and family.