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members

# NPA NEWS

The magazine of the Northern Potters Association



May - June 2011

[www.northern-potters.co.uk](http://www.northern-potters.co.uk)



In this issue:

NPA - What it's for, Wood Fired Kiln Build, A Career in Clay

## Editor's Comment

So, Eric Moss finally got an image of work on the front cover (after carefully studying the required dimensions)! Thank you, Eric. It's also brought the change of colour palette that I was hoping for. It does seem that once someone has had an image included, they continue to send in new pictures fairly regularly, so perhaps if more members took the plunge once, we'd have a wider variety to choose from - the members' gallery is a bit sparse this time.

We have 2 pages of events for National Ceramics Week (craft & design month), which shows how willing members are to participate when an idea is mooted. If you're doing something and it isn't listed, it probably means a: you haven't told me, or b: it's not on the craftanddesignmonth.net website (or it's on but your name isn't mentioned). It's a great initiative, so let's hope it continues in future years. Do send in some feedback on how your event/s go.

Paul Burton has written a piece about his work, and will be taking part in the Open Air Art exhibition at York on 7 & 8 May, so if you're in York then say hello. The Northern Stars exhibition at New School House Gallery continues until 4 June, so there's a chance to visit that at the same time.

Ruth Charlton's article about dipping her toe into online selling makes interesting reading. I think her comments about the suitability for packing and sending work abroad are worth noting - if your work is small, and relatively 'sturdy', you stand a better chance of success on a practical level than if it is very delicate and liable to damage. Ruth's work is highly detailed and intricate, but doesn't have too many 'sticky-out' bits that may break in transit.

The Evolution Mural, produced by Sue Jenkins' students in Holmfirth, is an excellent example of a collaborative project that works well and has resulted in a work which would probably have seemed too ambitious to an individual. Sue should be congratulated for aiming high on behalf of her students - I'm sure she gave them the confidence to produce such a significant piece which will influence current and future visitors who pass it.

Barbara Wood

### Cover :

Eric Moss - **Big Boat**, moulded, raku fired ware with slips and glaze

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*Members' Gallery - see page 14*

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## in this issue

Editor's Comment		page 2
Northern Stars		page 4
Book Review	(Roger Bell)	page 5
Art in Action		page 6
Craft & design month		page 7
Diary		page 9
Aquaramics	(Paul Burton)	page 10
NPA - Why did I join?	(Joanne Cook)	page 11
Online Selling	(Ruth Charlton)	page 12
New Members		page 13
Members' Gallery		page 14
A Potter's Moll writes	(Liz Robison)	page 16
Evolution Mural	(Sue Jenkins)	page 18
Trip to St Ives	(Rene Cryer)	page 20
Regional News		page 24
First or Worst	(Shirley Hetherington)	page 26

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## Next Issue

To contribute to the next issue of NPA News, send your articles, comments and / or images to  
Barbara Wood  
**by 27 June 2011**

You can write an article about a gallery / exhibition / place of interest you have visited, about your own ceramic work, or that of someone you admire. The next issue will be for July / August, so I would be particularly interested in hearing from members who will be exhibiting at Potfest in the Pens. Technical articles are always popular with readers, as is the 'first or worst' feature. Don't be shy about promoting yourself!

Please send between 300 and 1000 words, and send them as an email attachment, or on a cd, or in longhand. Email attachments are easiest for me to include, but I will re-type if necessary. High resolution (big jpeg files) digital images are preferred, as these give the best quality for printing, but I can scan photos. Low resolution (small files) digital images are the worst - they may be fine for websites, but don't have enough detail for a printed magazine.

Make sure you have permission to use any images you send. Some galleries / artists will allow you to take photographs of their work for your own reference, but not for publication. If you are asked to include a copyright statement please send it to me and I will use it (e.g. all images provided by York Museums Trust include something like 'courtesy of John Maltby / York Museums Trust').

Text and images can be e-mailed to [npanews@btinternet.com](mailto:npanews@btinternet.com), sent on CD or in long hand with photographs to Old Mills, Seaton Ross, YORK, YO42 4NH.

## Northern Stars - Barbara Wood

Northern Stars, our exhibition at the New School House Gallery in York, opened on Thursday, 21 April, and was well-received. Jim Robison gave a brief opening speech, and the gallery was crowded, including very good attendance from exhibitors.

I had to leave early, to attend another preview (at Sledmere House in East Yorkshire), but there were several red dots on labels, so it seemed to get off to a good start. It's often difficult to see the work when the gallery is so full, but I'm sure people will go back for another look if they were unable to make a decision then.

With 26 members showing work, it's a very different effect from the usual minimalist look that the gallery favours, but it all worked together well, after a few initial problems working out what went with what (and more importantly what didn't). Lesley Nason, Sylvia Holmes, Marianne von Tucka and I helped with the set up. Robert and Paula, the gallery directors, left us to it as they had other commitments, so I half expected it to have changed by the time of the preview, but in fact they had left everything in the same place, so must have been reasonably happy with what we'd done.

The exhibition continues until 4 June, open Tuesday - Saturday, 10am to 5pm.



Top left: Trudy Weir  
Above: Chiu-I Wu, Eric Moss  
Left: top shelf - Margaret Lawrenson  
bottom shelf - Michelle Freemantle, Joan Hardie



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## Book Review - Roger Bell

### THROWING LARGE

Publ: A & C Black

Nic Collins

£15.99

In his introduction Nic Collins makes clear that 'huge muscles and great strength' are not essential to throw pots that are as much as 4 times the size you can make normally. What you need are different techniques. In the first chapter (Getting Started) he refers to 'considerable design and planning....including all measurements' and goes on to 'think about...can it be lifted from the wheel...is it best if two people lift it off...is the kiln large enough...how is the pot to be manoeuvred into the kiln?'.

This is a very practical book and covers a variety of techniques – coils, doughnut, sections, the Korean slab method and even the Chinese team method some of you may have seen at Aberystwyth in 2009. All are clearly described and illustrated. As important are the sections on clay preparation, handling finished pots, glazing and firing. Not the basic standard information but the different emphasis and greater care needed for large pots, mainly because the weight and thickness exaggerates some of the problems of drying and glazing. Also, of course, the time invested in making a large pot is so much greater.

There is a final chapter on the working methods of 11 potters (including Svend Bayer, Clive Bowen, Doug Fitch and Nic Collins himself), which illustrate the techniques described and introduce a few new ideas.

I have only one serious criticism – the paucity of information on glazing and firing options. The author describes his method of raw firing in a wood-fired kiln using only Shino and Celadon glazes, but many will want to biscuit fire, apply a variety of glazes and fire at different temperatures. This apart, it is a well written and illustrated practical book that sticks to its subject matter without padding out with general basic information. Another worthwhile Ceramic Handbook from A & C Black.

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## Potfest in the Pens - Barbara Wood

5 - 7 August, 2011

NPA will once again have a promotional stand in the foyer at Potfest in the Pens, Skirsgill Auction Mart, Penrith, CA11 0DN.

We will encourage members to get to know each other, raise issues they want the association to discuss, hope to recruit new members, and offer exhibiting members the use of NPA's mobile card payment system, which allows us to take credit and debit card payments for sales of work, at a cost of 5% of the selling price (to cover charges). This has been well used by members over the past 3 years.

We also sell back and current issues of NPA News, so if you want to be in it, send your contributions in good time (see page 3).

If you can offer half a day or a day to help on the stand, please get in touch - [barbara.wood99@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.wood99@btinternet.com). A few people have already volunteered, but if there are more we might be able to do something more hands-on with clay! If you've never visited this event I can recommend it highly. It's a friendly environment, with lots of like-minded people, and you see a wide variety of work on sale. You can talk to other potters, get hints and tips, and generally get involved in the potting community (a bit like NPA!)

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## Art in Action

21 - 24 July 2011

Every July over 4 days, 25,000 visitors flock to see over 400 artists, craftsmen, performers, musicians, teachers and lecturers come together in the grounds of Waterperry House, Oxfordshire, to demonstrate their skills and love of art. Visitors can observe artists creating sculpture, jewellery, textiles, ceramics and more. They can listen to live music, watch performing arts from around the world, hear lecturers expound on their chosen subject and learn from the teachers in the hugely popular practical classes.

Artists are housed in marquees by discipline: painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, ceramics, calligraphy, illustration, glass, metalwork, jewellery, nature in art, textiles, woodwork, and for the second year, international art. As the festival champions art in many disciplines and forms, visitors can see everything from the traditional to the contemporary.

Highlights include:

Chapungu Sculpture Park who are exhibiting work in Waterperry Gardens for a year from April 2011. Tours of the sculptures entitled 'Embracing the Spirit Master Sculptors of Zimbabwe' will be conducted by Chapungu's founder Roy Guthrie during Art in Action and visitors can also see master sculptors from Zimbabwe demonstrating their stonework.

Paul Floyd in the glass marquee will demonstrate the art of stained glass in a creative and contemporary way. Paul is strongly influenced by the natural environment, and a respectful fascination of the nature of the material and its relationship with light leads him to explore innovative ways to create a great array of textures and forms.

Barbara Jackson, a painter and printmaker, will demonstrate her etchings and aquatints in the printmaking marquee. Barbara has exhibited 3 times at the RA Summer Exhibition, held 2 successful solo exhibitions and is a member of the Southbank Printmakers Cooperative. She uses figures and cityscapes as a vehicle to capture light, movement and atmosphere.

Pat Hodson, in the textiles marquee, layers paper with silk, using drawing and collage, resist techniques and digital print to make translucent and tactile artworks. Her most recent project, Iceland Stories, was created collaboratively with poet Liz Cashdan and sound artist Jessica Rowland after they spent a month together in a remote corner of Iceland.

Carys Davies studied engineering science at Jesus College, Oxford and worked as an engineer and consultant for Rolls Royce, Phillips and IBM before turning to ceramics. She makes a variety of vessels thrown in porcelain, and they all have in common an organic, rough outside and a mechanical smooth inside inspired by her home between the sea and mountain, history and modernity.

Visit [artinaction.org.uk](http://artinaction.org.uk) for details of opening times, tickets etc.

## Craft & Design Month

As you all know, May is Craft & Design month, and the first week National Ceramics Week. Many members have arranged events and exhibitions to help promote it, and raise the profile of ceramics throughout our area.

Here are the events I know about that include NPA members - there are lots more events taking place nationally, so check [www.craftanddesignmonth.net](http://www.craftanddesignmonth.net).



### Come Celebrate



Join members of NPA-E in creating a raw clay installation of the Royal Wedding Breakfast to celebrate the nuptials and mark the start of National Ceramics Week  
April 30, 11am - 4pm  
Museum Gardens, York  
see [www.npa.moonfruit.com](http://www.npa.moonfruit.com)

#### **1 & 2 May - Rufford Country Park**

Ceramic demonstrations by **Pollie & Garry Uttley, Rachel Wood**

#### **1 & 2 May, Orchard House Open Studio**

Marston Lane, Moor Monkton, YO26 8JL  
**William and Ann Johnson**

#### **1 & 2 May, East Yorkshire**

Open Studios with 5 potters, and invited artists from other disciplines:

**Penny De Corte**, 56 Garth's End, Pocklington

**Gerry Grant**, Fangfoss Pottery, Fangfoss

**Jill Ford**, Providence House, Ellerton

**Tony Wells**, 3 Stable Court, Londesborough

**Barbara Wood**, Old Mills, Seaton Ross

includes painting, printmaking, textiles, jewellery, glass, enamels, and ceramics

#### **2 May, Open Studio**

Old Barn Studios, Ireby, Wigton, CA7 1HG  
**Ruth Charlton**

**30 April - 7 May, Open Studios Trail, Lancashire**

includes **Val Marshall, Wyn Abbot, Liz Collinson, Eryl Fryer, Julie Miles, Jenny Eaton, Anne Harworth, Babs Taylor, Jill Hampson** - email [info@juliemiles.co.uk](mailto:info@juliemiles.co.uk) for details

**Veronica Ballan**

**1 - 7 May,**

Exhibition

Bakehouse Gallery, Alnwick

and **7 May**

**Open House**

**8 Percy Terrace, Alnwick, NE66 1AF**

**12.30pm - 5.30pm**

**7 & 8 May, Parliament Street, York**

Open Air Art Exhibitions 9am - 5pm Saturday, 10am - 4pm Sunday

**7 & 8 May**

**Ceramics at Northlight**, Valley Road, Hebden Bridge

includes **Juliet Blackman**.

open 10.30am - 5pm

**1 - 8 May, Open Studio**

Robin Bow Cottage, Winskill, CA10 1PD

**Roma Short**

**1 - 8 May Earthworks Group Exhibition**

Arkwright Mill, Matlock, DE4 3RQ

includes **Alan Birchall, Mary Johnson, Carl Gray,**

**Jan Lewis-Eccleston**

**1 - 8 May, Open Studio**

Lowther, Penrith

**Stef Storey**

**1 & 2, 7 & 8 May, Sheffield**

Open Studio - **Penny Withers**

Cherry Tree Studio, S7 1NZ

**1 - 10 May, Forces of Nature Exhibition**

Moors National Park Centre, Danby, YO21 2NP

includes **Elisabeth Bailey**

**13 May - Holmfirth**

Unveiling of 'Evolution', ceramic mural by students of **Sue Jenkins** at the Holmfirth Centre. (as part of Adult Learners Week). To be carried out by the local MP

**1 - 14 May, Clay Connections Exhibition**

Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, M2 7DH

includes **Catrin Mostyn Jones, Brigitte Soltau**

**3 - 14 May, Northern Clay**

Newcastle Arts Centre, NE1 1SG

Exhibition and events culminating in a Mad Potters

Tea Party

includes **Michael Palmer, Andrew Pentland, George Ormerod, Alan Ball, Rob Watson**

**22 April - 22 May, Out of the Earth II**

Crook Hall Gardens, Durham, DH1 5SZ

**NE NPA exhibition**

**1 - 31 May, Sophie Hamilton Pottery**

Low Marishes, Malton, YO17 6UQ

open Tues - Fri, 10am - 5pm, Sat, 10am - 4pm

**21 April - 4 June, Northern Stars**

NPA exhibition, New School House Gallery, York

**3 May - 10 June**

**Dianne Cross - New Work**

Leeds College of Art

Blenheim Walk

Leeds LS2 9AQ

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## Diary

- 14, 15, 20 - 22 May      **Gone to Pot** - Diverse ceramics from 18 Calderdale College ceramics students at the Arts Festival Shop, Albert St, Hebden Bridge
- until 22 May      **Out of the Earth II**, NENPA exhibition, Crook Hall Gardens, Frankland Lane, Sidegate, Durham DH1 5ST, [crookhallgardens.co.uk](http://crookhallgardens.co.uk)
- 28 May - 27 August      Mixed exhibition including 'chair sculptures' by Roger Bell - Maiden Bridge Arts Centre, Tatham, Lancs.
- until 4 June      **Northern Stars**, NPA selected exhibition at New School House Gallery, Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PW, [schoolhousegallery.co.uk](http://schoolhousegallery.co.uk)
- 10 - 12 June      **Potfest Scotland**, Scone Palace, Perth - [potfest.co.uk](http://potfest.co.uk)
- 13 - 17 June      5 day throwing course with John Stroomer, Solway Ceramics Centre - [solwayceramicscentre.org.uk](http://solwayceramicscentre.org.uk)
- until 17 June      **Alchemy**, Exhibition, RBSA Gallery, 4 Brook St, Birmingham, B3 1SA, featuring NPA member Alex Shimwell, [rbsa.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/alchemy/](http://rbsa.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/alchemy/)
- 18 June - 3 July      Pots in the Byre, Broadwood Hall, Allendale, Northumberland, [broadwoodstudios.co.uk](http://broadwoodstudios.co.uk)
- 24 - 26 June      **Earth & Fire**, Rufford Country Park, nr Ollerton, Notts. NG22 9DF
- 3 - 9 July      Holmfirth artWEEK, Holmfirth Civiv Hall, HD9 3AS, [holmfirthartweek.org.uk](http://holmfirthartweek.org.uk)
- 8 - 10 July      Kilns, Clay, Fire & Fun, Orkneys 2nd Annual Potters' Camp - [davidholmesceramics.com](http://davidholmesceramics.com)
- 11 - 15 July      5 day throwing course with John Stroomer, Solway Ceramics Centre - [solwayceramicscentre.org.uk](http://solwayceramicscentre.org.uk)
- 21 - 24 July      **Art in Action**, Waterperry House - [artinaction.org.uk](http://artinaction.org.uk)
- 29 - 31 July      **Potfest in the Park**, Hutton-on-the-Forest, nr Penrith - [potfest.co.uk](http://potfest.co.uk)
- 2 - 4 August      Raku glazing & firing course with John Scott, Solway Ceramics Centre - [solwayceramicscentre.org.uk](http://solwayceramicscentre.org.uk)
- 5 - 7 August      **Potfest in the Pens**, Penrith - [potfest.co.uk](http://potfest.co.uk)
- 15 - 19 August      Altering and decorating thrown forms - 5 day course with John Calver, Solway Ceramics Centre - [solwayceramicscentre.org.uk](http://solwayceramicscentre.org.uk)
- 22 - 26 August      Decorative Earthenware - 5 day course with Paul Young, Solway Ceramics Centre - [solwayceramicscentre.org.uk](http://solwayceramicscentre.org.uk)
- until 30 September      **From the Earth** - sculptures in wood by Gordon Baddeley, and clay by Roger Bell, Café in the Forest, Grizedale, Hawkshead, Cumbria

*Please send me details of events you think members would like to hear about - Ed*

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## Aquaramics - Paul Burton

My name is Paul Burton I have been involved in ceramics for more than 16 years.

I started one day a week at a local education centre and found I had a passion for the versatile material - straight away I knew I wanted to turn this passion into a career.

This was then the driving force to help me develop my skills and ask questions at ceramic fairs. I was very lucky in that I met a lot of professional potters who were always willing to give great advice and steer me in the right direction.

Various college courses, short weekend courses and two years at Derby University finally gave me the skills and qualifications I needed in order to have confidence in running my own ceramics workshop. Determination and enthusiasm are what got me there as it took me 14 years to obtain premises for my workshop. My work is made and sold under the name of Aquaramics. This name came about from my love of all things nautical with most of my pots having a connection to water. I also like to dip my toe in the mystical side of things such as dragons and Chinese water dragons.

My bespoke ceramics are just starting to get the recognition they deserve as people like my unique style. I hope to exhibit at Melbourne Arts Festival (South Derbyshire) in September this year, which will be a great way to expand my customer base and I also feel it will open up further opportunities.

These Galleons are the first style of the ships I love creating. They are glazed in this manner to achieve the look of age or a shipwreck feel.

The large galleons are 7" high and 12.5" long, and the small ones 4" high and 7.5" long.



These vases are a work in progress of experimenting with cobalt oxide on white clay to create my own style of ancient Chinese Dragon pots.

They are roughly 7" high and 5" wide.

Aquaramics, 2 - 4 Broadleys,  
Clay Cross, Derbyshire, S45 9JL  
[www.aquaramics.co.uk](http://www.aquaramics.co.uk)  
[aquaramics@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aquaramics@hotmail.co.uk)  
07875 535896

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## York Open Air Art Exhibitions

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

Closing date for application 31<sup>st</sup> May



Selling exhibitions in the centre of York, for ceramics and paintings, open to members of NPA, and York Art Society.

See previous issue for full details, or contact:

Andrea Cundell,

4 Cranbrook Road, Acomb, York, YO26 5JA,

t: 07746 288809, e:andracundell462@btinternet.com

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## NPA - Why did I join? - Joanne Cook

I enjoyed reading Geoff Cox's piece asking what NPA is for, and why we'd joined. Like Barbara Wood, I was surprised that there was little or no direct response to the question, or take-up of the offer of an NPA event as part of Potfest. But I'm sure there are a lot of people who, like me, read the article, got fired up (no pun, honest!), had a good think about it, then got sidetracked by the kids, chores and clay stuff that needed attention. This happens to me a lot!

But I thought I'd make a special effort and I'm here now to witter on at you all. The kids are watching CBeebies, the dogs have been fed, the spuds are in the oven and I'm hiding in the corner of the lounge scribbling this down. So, why did I join NPA?

At the end of February 2010, after a year's maternity leave with my second son. I felt ready to re-enter the real world and the sculpture juices started flowing again. I wanted to find out what was going on in the ceramics world so I joined NPA, and having devoured some old copies of Ceramic Review, I re-subscribed and also joined the CPA. Might as well hedge my bets I thought!

I was looking to be part of something that could offer new opportunities and news on what was happening outside of schools and playgyms! Since then I've enjoyed reading the newsletters and getting back into the studio a bit more (I'm up to 2 days in a good week - yay!).

In joining NPA I was hoping to get involved in shows in new venues and attend the odd get together if life allowed. I also thought there may be things happening similar to other associations. My husband has been a selected member of Anglian Potters for years and I get to read their newsletters too. They hold regular demo days with a guest potter and a group effort lunch and in the summer a potters' camp. We can never seem to get to these though because of the dates, but mainly because of the distance. So I was hopeful that there might be events along those lines a bit nearer to home. Unfortunately it all needs people with the time and the will to organise but maybe it could be something to consider for the future? I wish I could squeeze a few more hours in the day to be of more use to NPA. I particularly liked the sound of Geoff Cox's offer to NPA of doing something as part of Potfest, but as usually happens, the Cooke Family Calendar is booked up then.

In the meantime, I will try and do my bit, take part in what I can, and continue to look forward to the latest newsletter hitting the doormat.

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## Online Selling - Ruth Charlton

Eighteen months ago, I decided that it was time to have a go at setting up an online shop. I wasn't actively going out searching for new galleries to take my work, I was fed up with lugging boxes of work to craft fairs and not selling enough to cover the stand cost and I thought it would be great to be able to sell directly to customers, maybe even find some abroad.



Talking to other potters, it seemed to be the way forward, so I forked out an extra £70 to upgrade my website, spent a week uploading photos and information and waited for the orders to come in. Four months later, I was still waiting. Not even an expression of interest from anyone! Very disappointing.

My next desperate attempt was to put some work on Ebay - old stock at reduced prices. Surely someone would spot a bargain and make an impulse buy. The work was listed for a week and not a single sale. I have to admit to getting a bit depressed at this point and taking it personally. Although I knew the reasons for the lack of sales – not enough traffic to my website and Ebay not being the right selling environment - these experiences put me off trying to sell online for quite a while.

Earlier this month, however, I came across a website called Etsy which only sells handmade or vintage stuff and decided that it might be worth investing some more time and money into another attempt. Now, I'm

not saying that it would work for everyone and I don't want to sound like a salesperson for Etsy, but I have found it to be very user-friendly and reasonably priced if anyone else is looking for a way into selling online. It's free to register and set up a shop. They charge 20 cents per item listed with up to four photographs per item for four months. There is a commission of 3.5% on sales and you do need to have a Paypal account which will also take a commission. If you don't already have a customer base, you would also need to promote your work regularly which is an added cost.

Since joining three weeks ago, I have had seven orders – five from America, one from Austria and one from Scotland. Not massive orders but still very exciting and I've found that it's really encouraging to have direct contact with customers. The beauty of it is that there is already a network of buyers and sellers for you to tap into and you don't have to invest a lot of money. It is ideal for people who make smaller, light-weight pieces, which are cheaper to post, because it's an American site so lots of their customers are in America. The down side is that it does take a lot of time, sitting at the computer getting the info and photos onto the site – I spent about five hours yesterday uploading info about 18 pieces (16mins each piece). I guess this would be cut down if you make multiples of things and list them at the same time. If you do decide to have a go, I would recommend that you prepare all the information you need in advance



(description of work, size, weight, postal rates to different countries) so that you can just cut and paste as needed.

Apart from feeling the need to check my emails every five minutes for sales, it's been a good experience for me and I thought other members might be interested to hear about it. Let's hope I haven't put a jinx on it by writing about it so enthusiastically here. What are other people's experiences of online marketing?

If you would like to check out my shop with a view to doing your own, the web address is <http://www.etsy.com/shop/ruthcharltonceramics>. Feel free to contact me if you need any help - [ruthcharlton5@hotmail.com](mailto:ruthcharlton5@hotmail.com).

**MOSS & MAZZA**

fiona mazza      eric moss

**New work in raku for  
Open Studios North Yorkshire 2011**



**on 10th/11th/12th & 18th/19th JUNE  
from 10.30am - 5.30pm  
at 119 West End Avenue, Harrogate HG2 9BU**  
also at No. 119: painting & Pastels by Kim Coley  
and animals & birds in wire by Chris Moss; and  
at No. 94: stained glass by Caryl Hallett and  
Jewellery by Janet Yeun Yau.

**'Google' artists' names for more, or go to [www.nyos.org.uk](http://www.nyos.org.uk)**

## Welcome To New Members

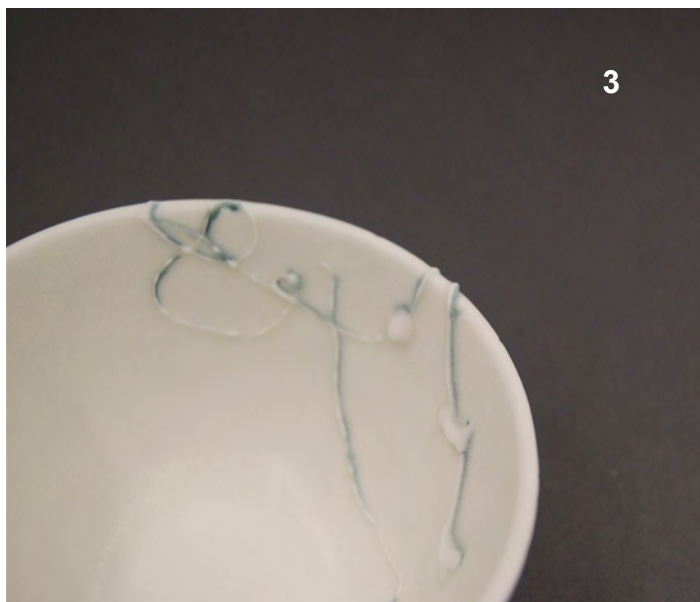
Christele Askew	Hemswell	Lincolnshire
Moz Khokhar	Barnsley	S. Yorkshire
Rachel Lee	Haworth, Keighley	West Yorks
Laura Manners	Newark	Notts
Crispin Owen	Preston	Lancs
Lynne Penman	Byker	Newcastle upon Tyne
Paul Reid	Denton	Manchester

A warm welcome is extended to our new members. We look forward to seeing you and your work at future events.

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## Members' Gallery

Let me have images of your latest work for inclusion in the members' gallery - Ed



- 1: Joanne Cook - **Pair of Old English Dogs**
- 2: Steve Booton
- 3: Bethan Jones - **Bowl M**, slipcast porcelain, fired to 1280°C, individually decorated using cotton
- 4: Victoria Leeks - **Renewed Existence**, porcelain paper clay, fired to 1220°C
- 5: Veronica Ballan - **Otters**
- 6: Dianne Cross - **Blue Footed Box**, h 21cm
- 7: Dianne Cross - **Black and White Bottle Form**, h 35cm



## A Potter's Moll writes.... - Liz Robison

Clearing out a drawer recently I came across a forgotten item: a presentation pack of Royal Mail stamps issued in 1987 celebrating Studio Pottery. Does anyone remember them? The pack includes an essay and photos of the history from Bernard Leech to William Staite Murray to Michael Cardew to Lucie Rie to Hans Coper and ends with Alison Britton, Jacqueline Poncelet and Elizabeth Fritsch.



The essay ends with the observance: 'Between the extremes of banal repetition and meaningless experiment the best studio potters have invariably found for themselves a standard of excellence in which functionalism and self-expression are in harmony.' The text is credited to Edwin Mullins.

The Observer's Nigel Slater is my favourite food writer and I was pleased to read the following in a recent article: 'I get great pleasure from choosing cooking pots. Accidents aside, a pot is for life and worth spending money on. I'm a sucker for hand thrown ware from craft potters, *of which this country has an extraordinary wealth*. I sometimes think it is what I would have done if I had not been a cook, even though my early attempts wouldn't hold water, let alone supper for six.' You tell 'em, Nigel!

We recently attended a Crafts Council event at the University of Sunderland where three speakers described their ways of 'up-cycling.' (Buyers expect re-cycled articles to be cheap.) A glass artist, a community artist who is working with people in Cocker-mouth who lost precious articles in the floods, and an artist who did a project at the V&A in which she repli-

cated a William Morris flocked wallpaper using the contents of the vacuum-cleaner bags of that unseen army who emerge when the visitors have gone home. Food for thought here – how can potters re-cycle (or up-cycle) other than by pugging clay, using wood ash glazes and using off-cuts of wood for kiln firing?

Sunderland is the home of the exciting National Glass Centre (NGC) housed in a contemporary glass and steel building on the banks of the River Wear; it is part of the University's Faculty of Art Design and Media. The UK's largest art glass making facility is here and a high walkway offers visitors a bird's eye view of the processes as well as the opportunity to visit several galleries, a shop and a restaurant.

The 'Re-make/Re-model' exhibition includes work using cans, bottles, smashed windscreens, TVs and food cans all of which have been given a new lease of life. Work by Jacob Dahlgren impressed – including cans, coat hangers and dartboards - as did Christian Graser, who re-used drinks bottles from the NGC restaurant, and old NGC posters, leaflets and flyers.

Another gallery was devoted to the history of glass making in the city and there was a fascinating display of 'friggers', the unusual novelty creations of factory glass workers who at the end of the day were free to use the leftover molten glass – items such as rolling pins, boots and walking canes. They either used them to decorate their homes or sold them on the side to supplement their income. There was an informative book on display in the gallery called *The People's Art* by Emmanuel Cooper.

In York recently we visited the new School House Gallery (behind the Quilt museum). The exhibition on show was called 'I am Human', a discourse on human rights through the media of ceramics, textiles and photography to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2011. Pieces by Stephen Dixon appealed as did the recorded stories of three Holocaust survivors.



I am Human - Stephen Dixon

Then we rushed off to the opening of 'Art in Yorkshire', a York Museums Trust Project whereby 19 Yorkshire galleries will have loans from Tate London. The brain-child of Janet Barnes, CEO of York Museums Trust, the exhibits are curated by an old friend of mine, Caroline Krejzinka. The loan at York Art Gallery is David Hockney's 'Bigger Trees at Warter', which completely fills one long wall of the gallery – very impressive and thrilling. It will be on show later in Hull and Bradford. David Hockney was there, (or outside having a fag!) and Tate director Nicholas Serota made the opening remarks praising the breadth of outlook of the scheme and asserting that the works in the Tate collections do not belong to the Tate, but to the nation.

It was a thrill to be present on such an auspicious occasion but it also gave us the chance to catch up on the marvellous 'Honest Pots' exhibition previously reviewed in the NPA NEWS. It is curated with great skill by Alex McErlain and Helen Walsh and features historic and contemporary 'country pots'. The absolute honey pot for all visitors we saw that day was the magical film of Isaac Button working at Soil Hill, Halifax.

We have had some magical Spring days and it has been a great pleasure to stroll the woodland walk we made last year and see the snowdrops I planted in bloom. I think I planted 500 but I think more are needed to get any sense of what the gardening mags call 'drifts'.

Last weekend Jim did a day's demo for a group of 80 enthusiasts near Wolverhampton, organised with great energy by Geoff Townsend et al. Again the heroes of these events are the volunteers.

This weekend we are off to Kindrogan Arts Centre in the Cairngorms for the Scottish Potters' Association's annual event. There are many old friends as this is Jim's third visit in 30 years. On the list of 'What to bring to Kindrogan', near the top of the list are: warm clothing and hot water bottles, so maybe the Saturday night Ceilidh is for warming up purposes as well as entertainment. Watch this space!



Bigger Trees at Warter - David Hockney

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## Evolution Mural - Sue Jenkins

Holmfirth Adult Education Centre

Having taught at our local Adult Education Centre for many years, I've always enjoyed (as have the students!) giving my students regular challenges, usually for displays in the local Tourist Information Centre during Adult Learners' week, in the coffee bar at the centre at Christmas and of course for the Artweek Fringe exhibition.

Usually these have involved the students working on their own individual pieces for display all on the same theme, like Teapots, Coffee Pots, Clocks, Olympians etc, etc. It's always really interesting to see how everyone interprets a theme differently, often with stunning and unusual results.

I have worked with different groups before on mural projects as one-offs, and thought it would be really good to work with my students who already have experience and knowledge of the materials, to achieve something special, for posterity and to enhance the centre and 'show off' their skills.

I proposed a few suggestions and we added more of their ideas before we finally settled on the evolution theme, it was also Darwin's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary so there was quite a bit in the media to aid our research. I teach six groups of students and there are 12 Evolutionary epochs, so two per group fitted nicely. They chose which eras they fancied having a go at, and I asked a particular student from each group to do a design for their panel, putting in the main characteristics of evolution from that era. Luckily we have an ex geology student so she checked my research!



Large pieces of clay were rolled and work began transferring the previously drawn designs, which were then built up in relief, a new technique that not everyone had tried before. After each class the panels were dampened and well-wrapped to keep them workable for the following weeks, then the next group's panels were worked on, and so on...

It was good to see people working on the panels together, collaborating, some one week on a particular creature/life form, then others the following weeks, learning and passing on skills and different ways of doing things to each other.

Once the panels were made they were painted with some coloured clays, fired, coloured again with pigments, glazed and fired again. We then mounted them onto plywood to be hung by the College team, on the stair well going down to the pottery room at the Holmfirth Centre.



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All in all, it was a very satisfying and rewarding project to have instigated and finally finished, I am very proud and pleased with how everyone worked together, rose to the challenge and achieved an excellent result, everyone involved should be rightly pleased and proud of this stunning piece of art.

## A student's view - Clive Hetherington

Cooperating both within our class group and between classes to construct a large mural consisting of TWELVE panels was a major change for all of us. Each class was to plan, design and produce two panels each one depicting an epoch of evolutionary time. For the vast majority this would be our first taste of a joint ceramics project where we had to collaborate on all stages from initial research to finishing and mounting.

In the past, when classes had been engaged on themed exercises these had involved individuals making the same type of product such as a teapot. Each student had the same brief but essentially was solely responsible for the design and manufacture of their own piece. Now we were being asked to come to a consensus collaborative design and work together as a group on a single piece.

While this was outside the "comfort zone" of many of us, once we had started it was really satisfying. Talking over our research on the particular epoch, choosing what to depict on the panel, roughing out a design as a group, but bringing our own ideas into the mix, was new and exciting.

At the manufacturing stage several people were often working simultaneously on the piece. This was the perfect setting to watch and learn from how other students, who where perhaps more skilled in certain techniques, achieved their results or to pass on some skills of your own.

We had a real sense of joint ownership in the finished piece and when all the panels from the other classes were brought together and mounted as one mural it was amazing to see what we had achieved.

While it is always satisfying to produce your own individual pieces here was a source of immense satisfaction and pride, to have been part of a team that had produced this major piece of art.



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## Trip to St Ives - Rene Cryer

Since reading the comments of another member of Northern Potters who visited St. Ives, I have been looking forward to seeing for myself the work of Barbara Hepworth. Having just come back from a short visit to Cornwall I can say it was a wonderful experience.

I have returned with renewed inspiration to try more sculptural pieces – of course in a different medium and size. I enclose a few photographs of some of the work to be seen in the beautiful setting of her garden, which in itself was worth a visit. Cornwall must be at least a month ahead of us here in the north of England and many of the plants we associate with summer were already in full bloom!

I don't think I have ever seen so many galleries in three days – in and around St. Ives and we also managed to visit the Eden Project where there were many more sculptures to be seen. St. Ives is an inspirational place with its narrow streets which all seem to house galleries of art work, pottery and sculpture. I thought we must have seen all that was on offer the first day – but not so. There seemed to be galleries and craft places around each corner waiting to be discovered!



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## NPA Website

We are aware that our website, [www.northern-potters.co.uk](http://www.northern-potters.co.uk), is not currently serving its purpose, and we ask you to be patient while we deal with it. As mentioned in the last issue, we are taking steps to resolve this, but it is taking longer than expected, so we must ask you to extend your patience again.

The current website has proved to be time consuming and expensive to maintain properly, so we are considering ways of simplifying it, and in doing so providing a better, more up to date, service to members. without the need to increase everyone's membership fees to cover the costs.

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### 'Back Door' gallery Hebden Bridge

five ceramists from Northlight Studios will be exhibit-  
ing their work for one weekend only, 7th & 8th May,  
10.30 - 5pm. Do Come.

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### Cost of advert for one issue:

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## Regional News

Please send ideas for any events you'd like to help organise, or suggestions for regional group activities. Remember, regional activities should be open to all members, so inform Sylvia Holmes - [sylviajaneholmes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sylviajaneholmes@yahoo.co.uk) - of your plans so that she can let other members know via their regional coordinators.

We're still looking for a volunteer to coordinate the East region, so if you can help, please let Sylvia know.

### North East

Co-ordinator: Geoff Proudlock, 46 Cleveland Terrace, Darlington, DL3 7HA  
Tel: 01325 353445  
Email: [geoff@gproudlock.plus.com](mailto:geoff@gproudlock.plus.com)

Our Crook Hall exhibition, "Out of the Earth II", opening on 22 April continues until 22 May. Details of opening times are on the Crook Hall website: [www.crookhallgardens.co.uk](http://www.crookhallgardens.co.uk) tel. 0191 3848028.

Preview Invitations and Flyers have been sent to the North East, East, and North West Regions.



### East

Co-ordinator: Ann Decker  
Email: [ann.decker1@btinternet.com](mailto:ann.decker1@btinternet.com)  
Tel: 01904 788156

For National Ceramics Week (first week in May) we have planned several events (some of which will have happened before this arrives):  
We will put on a 'Royal Wedding Breakfast Feast' in raw clay on 30 April in Museum Gardens, York to promote ceramics through public involvement;

On 5 May, Barbara Wood will host a Pot Luck Social Event at her home in Seaton Ross where members will share food and exchange crafted plates;

Several potters will be demonstrating during the Potters' Market in Parliament Street, York on 7 & 8 May to augment the selling exhibition and further promote ceramics.

Five members will be opening their studios in the west of the East Riding of Yorkshire on 1 & 2 May, and several exhibitions are taking place in May. We look forward to raising the public profile of ceramics. Good luck to everyone.



### South East

Co-ordinator: Brian Holland  
Email: [brian.holland100@virgin.net](mailto:brian.holland100@virgin.net)  
Tel: 01909 724781

The SE group are planning an exhibition at Thoresby Gallery in October, and a site specific show at Sheffield's Anglican Cathedral in November. More details of these later but those interested please get in touch. Some of the members are currently running a shop / exhibition of ceramics at a former hair salon - thanks to the generosity of Steve Booton's wife - in a busy part of Sheffield. There has been much interest and sales are going well. Sheffield Open Up, Open Studio event will be happening 30th April, 1st, 2nd, 7th and 8th May and several NPA members in Sheffield will be opening their studios to visitors. Any NPA member in this area who wishes to run an activity or who has an idea for an event please get in touch. Happy Easter everyone.



## South West

Co-ordinator: Clive Weake  
Email: [clive.weake@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:clive.weake@tiscali.co.uk)  
Tel: 01772 330895

Kirsti Fattorini has invited us to meet at her studio in Hale on Monday 16th May from 1.30pm onwards. We will be sharing ideas and also trying our hand at mocha ware - [www.kirstifattorini.com](http://www.kirstifattorini.com)

Tuesday 9th August to Sunday 4th September our Summer Exhibition at Knutsford Heritage Centre. We think we can accommodate up to 14 exhibitors. There are still a few spaces left. We will also be doing demonstrations - [www.knutsfordheritage.co.uk](http://www.knutsfordheritage.co.uk)

Anyone interested in either event can contact me.



## West

Co-ordinator: Dave Harper / Geoff Wilcock  
E-mail: [dpharper@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:dpharper@uclan.ac.uk) / [ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk)  
Tel: 01782 617801 or Tel: 01204 674901

The March meeting opened with members presenting their vessels for our themed 'St. David's Day' Issues raised:

Exhibition at 'Arteria', Lancaster – titled 'Tea Party'.

Exhibition at PR1 Gallery, Preston – titled 'March West'

Forthcoming exhibition at Lytham Heritage Centre, Lytham, Nr. Blackpool – titled 'Clay Matters'

National Ceramics Week – the following members are opening their studios to the public:

Val Marshall, Wyn Abbot, Liz Collinson and Eryl Fryer, Julie Miles, Jenny Eaton, Pottery on the Park – Amanda Healy, Ann Haworth, Babs Taylor, Jill Hampson, - please contact individuals for more information.

### Degree Shows

3<sup>rd</sup> Year Student members of N.P.A. will be displaying their work at University of Central Lancashire, Victoria Building, Preston. PR1  
Opening Night - Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 5.00pm onwards  
Work on display until 17<sup>th</sup> June – 10.00am – 5.00pm  
All members welcome.

Next meeting – Mon 13th June at UCLAN, Ceramic Dept, Victoria Building, Preston. 6.45pm a chance to view Degree Shows. Theme for vessel – 'Celebrations'



## North West

Co-ordinator: Roger Bell, Gale Mount, 11High Gale, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 0BG  
Tel: 015394 32730 E-mail: [bell.roger@btinternet.com](mailto:bell.roger@btinternet.com)

Those participating in the Arteria exhibition shared transport delivery and collection.

Keswick Museum show will not be possible for 2011 because of refurbishment.

For Ceramics Week 10 potters including local NPA members have taken over Ambleside Parish Centre for the first weekend of May. The following weekend Geoff & Chris Cox have organised similar at Greystoke Parish Church. This will also involve an exhibition inspired by items in the church. It is hoped to make this an annual event.

As always it would be great to receive some input from NW members as to what they would like organised and what they could help organise.



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## First or Worst - Shirley Hetherington

The first time I had my hands on clay was many moons ago at Teacher Training College in Worcester. This, my first piece—a mother consoling her daughter—leaves a lot to be desired as far as modelling and glazing are concerned, but there is a lot of emotion invested in it, a reaction to the death of my father while I was at college. It still has pride of place on a shelf at home.

I always remembered that first excitement of working with clay on the art projects and, when my own children were older, signed up for ceramic and sculpture classes at Cleveland College of Art and Design. Later I acquired a kiln and my own small workshop. Of course, there have been many “worsts” over the years, but in spite of frustrations, I like to think that nothing has been wasted and that these disasters can be put down to experience and surely must be character-forming... if nothing else.



Mother and daughter



Dandelion clock

I realise, of course, that this freedom to experiment and changes in direction are a luxury not always afforded to potters with commercial interests.

For over forty years I have worked with different clays, glazes, firings and techniques, exhibiting and selling, and I am still in love with clay.

Taking part in our NENPA “Out of Earth” garden exhibition last year sparked off ideas for tree pieces, one of which was this hanging seed head sculpture which I made for the show. When a French friend showed me her collection of ceramic hens and asked if I could add one to the flock, it set me off in another direction and I produced a posse of raku-fired fat hens.



Fat hen

*Please send in your own 'first or worst' memories - Ed*

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