

# NPA News



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

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£2, free to members

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## Editor's Comment

Phew, I made it. The timing of my first newsletter as editor wasn't ideal as I returned to the UK on the day of the copy deadline after 4 weeks in America. I'm writing this three days later, hopeful that my jet lag is over but not at all sure about the quality of my editorial work.

So thank you to those who wrote articles and provided images and apologies if I've done the wrong thing with them (quite apart from the jet lag my InDesign skills have got a bit rusty). We've got a nice balance of interesting articles and lots of pots to look at. Major thanks to Barbara Wood who valiantly emailed me all the material she had and responded rapidly to all my questions. The only problem now is that I've got no stock of articles and hardly any images for the next issue.

So how about it? An image of a recent pot you are pleased with; a story about how you became a potter; an article about making or selling; an entry for the diary; a small ad? This is our newsletter so we all can make a contribution. I don't mind being inundated – stock is good. I'd also welcome feedback on the newsletter and ideas for improvements

Joan Hardie

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the Northern Potters Association.

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### Front Cover

Judy Taylor - Rhino, raku & manganese dioxide, 1250C

### Back Cover

Dianne Cross - photo Eric Moss

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## Next issue

To contribute to the next issue of NPA News send your articles, events, comments and images by **25 January 2016**

Articles should be between 300 and 1000 words saved as .doc or .txt files.

Images need to be high quality for printing, saved as .jpg files.

Please send text and images as email attachments in separate files (please don't embed images in the text) to

[npanews@btinternet.com](mailto:npanews@btinternet.com)

Please email or phone if you have any queries.

## From the Chair

I am delighted and honoured to have been elected Chair at the recent AGM. After seven years as membership secretary and a volunteer offering to take over the job I thought I would be able to step aside and take things easy – but this was not to be! I am passionate about ceramics, both making and collecting, so I will strive to fulfil the role and help the NPA to grow and prosper.

Firstly I want to thank most sincerely the retiring committee members for all their hard work: to Alan Birchall for keeping our finances organised; to Julie Ward for her secretarial skills sorting out the meeting minutes, but most especially to Barbara Wood. Barbara was secretary in 2006 when I first joined and since then she has been exhibitions officer, vice chair, newsletter editor and finally chair. Thank you, Barbara, for giving up so much time and effort to the NPA.

After our plea for help back in the summer I am delighted to say that the committee now has a full contingent. We are already getting to know each other and specific roles have been allocated. With the help of our regional coordinators I hope that we can continue to promote ceramics and raise its profile throughout the north. I would particularly like to help the regions hold more activities: social get-togethers, demonstrations, local exhibitions..... Please let us know your ideas.

I have been watching 'The Great British Throw Down' on BBC TV with some amusement and amazement. I am impressed by the huge range of skills they are expected to demonstrate especially when working under such strict time constraints. I would have been thrown out after week one, being a very slow and over-fastidious thrower. It seems that Bake Off's 'soggy bottoms' have been replaced by Throw Down's 'cracked bottoms'! And good luck to NPA's Matt Wilcock.

The end of November seems rather early to wish everyone a Happy Christmas but by the time you read this you will probably be in the thick of it. I also wish everyone a most successful year of potting in 2016.

Margaret Lawrenson

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## Proposed “Potfest Olympics” at Potfest in the Pens

A throwdown-style competition has been suggested which will pit NPA regional teams of potters against each other at Potfest in the Pens on 29-31 July 2016

The actual rules and programme of events have yet to be finalised but the basic idea is for a number of team projects to run over the three days of the show. All would involve hand building and would be morning or afternoon sessions.

The teams could be fluid and change from day to day so no one would have to commit to all three days but all members of the teams would be welcome to camp and eat with the other exhibitors and to be an integral part of the show.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact [anna-mercedes@virginmedia.com](mailto:anna-mercedes@virginmedia.com) as soon as possible.

Let's get this exciting idea off the ground!

## NPA information

### NPA Facebook Group

We now have a new Facebook Page for the WHOLE region. If you use social media please “Like” our page and share it with your Northern Potter friends, members, fans, collectors etc.

We are hoping this page will create some great discussions, interesting events, articles and exhibitions but also offer a way to make contact with the whole region at the touch of a button.

There are already two regional pages: South East Group and North West Group.

### NPA Card Reader Machine

Please note that the committee has taken the decision stop using the NPA's chip and pin card payment system.

It is now very easy to buy your own card reader machine and download an App for your smartphone. There are several companies that sell the readers and prices start from £39.99. The App is free to download and you then pay a very small charge on sales made. This is more cost effective for you and for us.

Popular card readers include Izettle, WorldPay Zinc, Paypal and Payleven; there are more. Have a look on the internet and see what will suit your phone/budget the best and remember it will take about a week to set up your account, so plan ahead.

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## Diary

4 to 6 December	Hey Clay! events at locations throughout the UK See <a href="http://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/listings">www.craftscouncil.org.uk/listings</a>
6 December	Little Northern Christmas Craft Fair, Altringham Grammar School, Bowden, Cheshire
12 Dec to 27 Feb	Natural Makers, Touchstones Rochdale
to 12 December	Wirral Potters at Christmas, The West Kirby Concourse
to 17 December	Oriental Inspirations - NE-NPA exhibition at the Oriental Museum, Durham
to 24 December	Christmas show at The Studio at Bashall Barn, Lancs
to 31 December	December Introductions - Louise Darby & Paul Young, Leeds City Art Gallery
to 9 January	Northern Stars, Platform Gallery, Station Road, Clitheroe, Lancs
to 9 January	Natural Balance - Blandine Anderson, Leeds City Art Gallery
to 10 January	Made with love, Studio Eleven, Kingston upon Hull
to 10 January	Presents/Presence, Cupola Contemporary Art Gallery, Sheffield
16 Jan to 12 Mar	Made with Love, Craft Centre & Design Gallery, Leeds City Art Gallery
16 Jan to 30 Apr	Solo - Gin Durham, Craft Centre & Design Gallery, Leeds City Art Gallery
8 to 10 April	Ceramic Art London, Central Saint Martins, 1 Granary Square
until 9 April	Jarred: ceramics from the collection, Touchstones Rochdale
10 to 12 June	Potfest Scotland, Scone Palace, Perth
12, 19, 26 June	Holmfirth Art Market, Holmfirth, Huddersfield
24 to 26 June	Earth and Fire, Rufford Craft Centre, Near Ollerton, Newark,
29 to 31 July	Potfest in the Park, Hutton in the Forest, Penrith
5 to 7 August	Potfest in the Pens, Penrith
19 to 21 August	Art in Clay, Hatfield, Hertfordshire

Please send the editor details of any events you think members would like to hear about.

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## Sheffield Ceramics Festival September 2015



I was reminiscing to one of my mature students about David and Margaret Frith's ceramic festival, alas no longer held, which took part in a walled garden near Ruthin. The student, with the unlikely name of Kaktus, said "we have a walled garden!" Kaktus is the chair of The Meersbrook Park Users Trust. The idea for the Sheffield Ceramics Festival was born.

The garden, with its variety of themed areas, is an ideal site to launch such a festival. The Japanese garden is perfect for exhibitors to display large scale outdoor pieces, whilst the lawns are perfect for their stalls, and the greenhouses and education room for demonstrations. The garden is set in a picturesque community park two miles from the city centre.

Within two weeks of advertising our intention through the NPA newsletter and on the local grapevine we had sold the 35 allotted spaces. We hoped for a mix of well established names with new entrants and this happened. Emilie Taylor agreed to talk about her Chatsworth commissions and her Sheffield pieces, Mike Scown to deliver Raku workshops. TOP POT provided a trade presence.

Kaktus and his volunteers at the Walled Garden started planning their side of the event (later putting flyers and posters in local businesses), I set about marketing the event, Ken Taylor organising the space. Craft and Design magazine and Ceramic review were generous in highlighting our event. The advertising and essential volunteers in place, all we needed was the weather to be kind.

What a glorious warm and sunny weekend it turned out to be, how fortunate we were. How helpful, cheerful and organised the volunteers. How good the cakes made by Naomi and her volunteers. How varied and inspirational the displays by the ceramicists. A visiting writer for a local rag said "I did not expect the standard to be so high". And the visitors came in their hundreds, many seen carrying purchases.



### NPA Exhibitors

Steve Booton (below)  
 Janet Burton  
 Bob Emmett  
 Olinda Everett  
 Carl Gray  
 Lesley Anne Greene  
 Kate Gummer  
 Anne Haworth  
 Karin Hessenberg  
 Brian Holland  
 Colin Jowitt  
 Moz Khokhar (top)  
 Amberlea McNaught (left)  
 Debbie Michaels  
 Darrell Milnes  
 Beverley Seth  
 Ruby Sharp  
 Gillian Sykes  
 Linda Southwell  
 Gerald Unwin  
 Sarah Vanic  
 Kathryn Watson  
 Trudy Weir  
 Penny Withers



The next Sheffield  
 Ceramics Festival  
 will be held on 24 &  
 25 September 2016.

It was a first event and as such was highly successful. The visiting City Authorities were impressed and have given their go ahead for 2016. We had plenty to learn and were glad of the feedback. We had no budget at all until money for stalls started coming in but we now have some funds (from a share of the entrance fees) to kick start next year's event and improve the signage. Now that we know that most people prefer to set up Friday evening then the off loading can be better organised. Already we are approaching food vendors to provide savoury meals. Overall it was a good event and a huge thank you is due to Kaktus and Naomi and their volunteers and to all who took part for an excellent show.

Brian Holland



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# The Geometry of Life and Chess

As we look at the molecules of microorganisms, viruses, and even our own DNA under the microscope, geometric codes emerge; every natural pattern of growth or movement conforms to one or more geometric shapes.

My pieces are directly inspired by the period I grew up in as a very small child of the 1960's. During this time designers were defiantly harnessing the tension of the nuclear age and produced striking designs all based on atomic particles. What they were most worried about appeared in their art. Meantime these designs are now known as Vintage Cool Mid Century Modern Atomic – plus ca change. It seems there is no escaping these influences and my ceramics are full of the spikes, spheres and geometric patterns of the 1960's, and maybe, some of the preoccupations of our own times.



## Nature's geometric codes

The geometric patterns of creation are constantly being discovered throughout modern science. My response was to create an art work that, similar to the designs of the 1960's, was inspired by scientific discoveries. Researchers have found that all organisms have very similar genetic codes and they can be expressed by 64 different elements. So I made a chess board with 64 squares to be an appropriate environment for ceramic micro-organisms chess pieces.

## Geometric Chess

The chess pieces sit on a chess board where the squares drip down organically exaggerating the clean lines and repeating patterns used in the pieces. The chess pieces represent perfect 3-dimensional forms such as the tetrahedron and hexahedron and the repeating patterns of nature seen when you view viruses and flowers under the microscope. Geometric Chess demonstrates the microscopic geometry of all life forms in a game. There are identical pieces on either side of the chess board, but the opposing sides are in black and white to emphasise their difference.



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### Making things and inspiration

I have been making things for as long as I can remember, and I am inspired by the shape of objects I find, and often take this as my starting point when designing my work.

My work is hand-built ceramic, sometimes decorated with mixed media metal items for sculptural emphasis. During my recent residency at Liverpool Hope University (2014 to 2015) I started producing black and white sculptural forms inspired by the geometric forms of viruses as they appear under a microscope, almost like flowers but not quite.

My style of working, which is both imaginative and methodical, enables the production of these striking objects made from a succession of identical hand built ceramic elements. I hand build my ceramic pieces adding coils, slabs and spheres of clay together. I also make a range of my own glazes, some are glossy, others matte, to set off the geometry of my ceramics.

Helen Birnbaum



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# The Great Pottery Throw Down

Are you watching it? Are you hooked?

Is it the best thing to happen to pottery since the invention of the wheel...or the worst?

John Rivers felt compelled to put pen to paper after each of the first three episodes...

## Throw Down 1

Where to start? The slavishly borrowed format, the challenges, the personalities, or the wonderful craft of pot-making?

I'd like the professional pair to reveal some interesting or empathetic signs, the whipper-in to coin one new phrase per episode, but crucially the tasks to be realistic. Every phase of each task was impossible to complete, or learn from in the time (both audience & contestants).

Twenty handles in an hour?? Four, properly pulled, would be plenty and would reveal more. The crazy egg-cup challenge?? All were misshapen, big enough to shove a tennis ball in, and we never saw it being done gracefully. Get them to attempt that task in a later episode, to make as many as they want but to select just two. Judgement, learning skills, selecting quality are all profoundly televisual.

The clay? Again, I blame the professional pair. Everyone who pots has to choose and then interact with a particular clay for a time - and all clays are different. The cracking seemed to me avoidable and humiliating; but I guess it was due to the coarseness of that red clay, yes to "inadequate wedging", but also to drying it far too fast.

Or, were they all being set up to fail??

The sad televisual judgement is that the contestants did seem potentially interesting, to have an appropriate semi-skilled range of experience and skills for such a programme. So why not give us a couple of introductory episodes without evictions so the weak throwers can catch-up, so those who've been using say high-temperature/stoneware /poured glazes can find out how low-temperature/brush-on glazes work etc...??, and we can all get to know them.

I'm a self-taught throwing potter but it's taken 35 years to attain a modest level of competence. I've never "thrown off a lump". I'd still want a week to experiment and then make six graduated bowls, or a month to dabble with new glazes as well. But reporting back on what I'd have learnt would be good value.

Provisional judgement, after 1 hour??

Sideline the 'experts' and the whipper-in. Reduce the frenetic rush. Follow the contestants as they practise and experiment.

LESS IS MORE

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## Throw Down 2

Well, that was better. But flaws in the design of the series still show. Our host-potter pontificated as a “deadline” drew near, “And time is of the essence in pottery.”

Is it 'eck! Time is a distraction... it rushes ideas as they are taking shape... it introduces pointless panics ... it cracks pots...

But the project was challenging - to make a basin with clay coils that was accurate enough to receive a proper plumbed plug, and was interestingly decorative. ‘Coils’ are roughly rolled snakes of clay and become the body of the basin, laid in an ascending spiral which has to be smeared and smoothed into an impermeable unit, like half a football that miraculously won’t sag as it rests on its point of contact. And then to be decorated.

“Please, Sir, will the outside be visible or countersunk into a wash-stand? Do we decorate the outside?”

The question was unasked, and so-unanswered; most decorated both surfaces, whereby the challenge became an abstract conceptual challenge: decorating.

But give credit. Some decorations were stunning, however impractical. Matthew covered the inside with small flat spiral-shaped bosses embedded into the surface; and found a dark gleaming, green glaze which picked out every detail of the texture. James wanted a bit of rough in his basin. Its inner hemisphere was textured till it looked like a scree-slope. Would you risk grazing your

hands every morning, and how would you clean it? But it looked starkly grand.

However the format pitted these two against Nigel who had never made a coil-pot before. It was like asking a bespoke tailor to make a business suit without a tape-measure. His basin cracked at every stress-point and its whole bottom third became a hole.

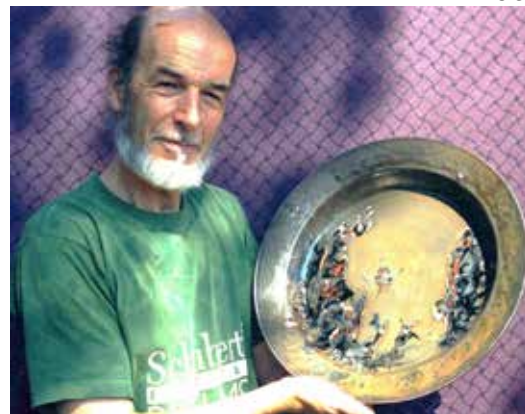
Potters are not all-purpose artisans. Each has to develop an individual skillset: freeform, or wheel thrown? An impression of strength or of fragility in design? Gloss/bright glazes or matt/quiet ones that reflect our English cloudy skies.

And a potter is only as good as the symbiotic relationship between him/her and his/her kiln. Our potters have no link with their greatest ally – their kiln.(See later episodes – I guess)

There was an intriguing final task, though it was light relief and not crucial for the “challenge”. “Here’s a kilo of prepared clay. Throw it as TALL as you can! You will be measured.”

This is a game when hordes of professional potters assemble, and those potters who have honed years of dexterity on the wheel fight it out: 11 ¼”...11 7/16...I’m over the ruler!...I’m opening a book... 3 to 1 on Janet .... But the most experienced must win over those who sculpt for a living. So it’s not- quite- fair. Oh and I forgot - each contestant will be blindfold!

John Rivers



Are you following the Throw Down?

Send your thoughts on the programme to the editor for the next issue of NPA News.

Join the Northern Potters Association Facebook group and post your views there.

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## Throw Down 3

Episode 3 was an interesting hour. My default irritation is weakening in the face of an acceptance that this is mass entertainment and not an attempt at revealing the subtleties of clay's potential.

A raku pot (this week's main focus) is porous, decorative and hazardous to make, but has wonderful potential. I gasped at the array of pieces on show. Did they make these? No. These were the iconic targets. But we did see red-hot pots being dunked, pieces slipping out of tongs and smashing. It was the miracle of ceramic transformation in vivid, fiery images.... with occasional successes and 'Generation-Game' inevitable failures.

On the other hand someone who's never done this before cannot hope for success, only pray – and fumble blindly. Jim had plenty of experience, James none and Sandra very little. James got the chop.

I mentioned last time how kiln-work had been absent in 2 episodes. This was kiln-work but not their own kilns. Nor had some ever taken a red-hot piece out with tongs. And even tongs can have a 3-point claw grip rather than the 1-finger grip they were given.

I wish they had scrapped the other two challenges and seen one of the contestants at home - how they fired, to what temperature, trying to create what shapes ... then seen them have another go at taming the raku kiln. It might have revealed that "total serendipity rules", or that some could process their experience: The raku challenge could have been "use just 3 glazes your choice, that you calculate will work well".

There was a throw-down challenge (make a candle stand like the one you watched being thrown); and a spot-challenge (to decorate 3 factory jugs with slip). But they were not fired and the criteria proposed for judging them seemed to be "expert's preference."

However other issues came into view.

PS I'm glad they've found a role for Sarah other than saucy source of innuendos. She explains the technical processes rather well (vital); and is becoming the Mother-Confessor (necessary in the minefield of "reality pottery"). John

1. What is a professional potter? Are any of the challengers 'professional'? Certainly they will finish up in a rank-order reflecting their hours of experience – more or less. Most of us 'professional' observers can now say who the top 3 will be and I guess could have done this after two episodes.

I'd guess Tom and Matthew can make a reasonable living, or at least join most of us potters – ducking and diving. But Tom likes silence to work in! Matt has an all-around wide experience that leads him towards professionalism e.g. making his own mould for the basin, and throwing identical pots with two markers not one, for the revolving clay to fly past like a benign asteroid.

2. Here am I trying to write purposefully (I used "pontificate" of Keith last week). But what makes me professional, or even Keith?

I find myself drawn into the human dimension – the one that floods Keith with tears when individuals fail at tasks, the one that fills every potter with a sense of inadequacy at times. Me included. Despite 30+ years throwing, digging and refining my own clay, building my gas-kiln, I've nothing to qualify me as professional, and this week I guess I'd have been ejected instead of James!

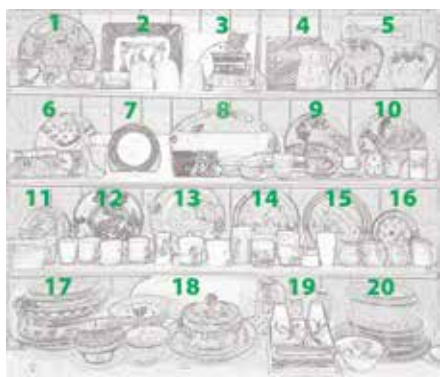
I've never been near a raku kiln, hardly use slip, never done a formal course and have no eager-beaver lust to try out 103 new possibilities, and be graded on showing, at best, some potential. Maybe my initial irritation was fear at being a one-trick pony, revealing myself as a fraud on prime-time TV?

So, congratulations to the contestants at taking that risk, and to all of you for being such evidently nice people.

Ah. I've run out of words so can't try and describe my hard-earned, few skills, or even try and convey how some images, and certain glaze combinations, still bring me out in goose-bumps.

## Xmas Quiz

Fill those idle moments during the festive season trying to identify the makers of any of the pieces in Pollie and Garry Uttley's "shelfie".



Email answers to the editor at  
[npanews@btinternet.com](mailto:npanews@btinternet.com)

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## Members' Gallery

Send images of your work to the editor for inclusion in the gallery.





1. Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg - condiments
2. Steve Booton
3. Dianne Cross - photo Eric Moss
4. David Wright - Bottle - coiled, wood fired stoneware, Celadon glaze over black and white slip
5. Jack Hardie - apple bowl, 3D printed, porcelain with body stain

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## From the Ismay Archive - Alex McErlain

Patrick Sargent is now regarded as one of the pioneers of European wood firing, but at the time when he made this bowl, anagama fired pots were not universally popular. It is unusual to have the kind of documentation about a specific pot that exists about this bowl. By chance, in February 1991, I was filming Sargent as he took this pot from his kiln. On camera he can be heard to say 'this is one for Bill Ismay' which I took to be a measure of his appreciation of the pot.

In the Ismay archive (archive no 1024) is a letter dated 01/04/91 in which he refers again to the pot

'Also a big thank you for visiting my show in Exeter and buying the pots. The brown bowl with slip trailing and chun over glaze is possibly the best pot to come out of the fourth firing of my kiln in Switzerland. I am in pain to see it go, but the healing is knowing where it is going to.'

The relationship between maker and collector is interesting. Sargent reveals his pleasure in having his work represented in an important collection and perhaps feels it will preserve it in a worthy context.

The bowl is in some ways unusual for Sargent in that it has been glazed on the outside by him, rather than by his kiln. This is a pot that has to be 'read' with some knowledge of the implications of its formation.

Sargent made pots specifically to fit into different parts of his kiln in order to maximise the potential of the sixty hour wood firing. Some pots were intended to be stacked one inside the other for the firing and took their proportions accordingly. This bowl was fired sitting inside a larger bowl and in turn it too contained a smaller pot. Sargent knew that ash from the fire would not affect the outer surface of these inner stacked bowls, so he glazed them.



Patrick Sargent 1956 - 1998  
Thrown bowl, stoneware, wood fired in Switzerland, 1991,  
h. 10.6cm d. 14.2cm  
Photograph Phil Sayer.

The pot has a slip trailed design to the outside and has been dipped in a shiny brown glaze with some details highlighted in chun.

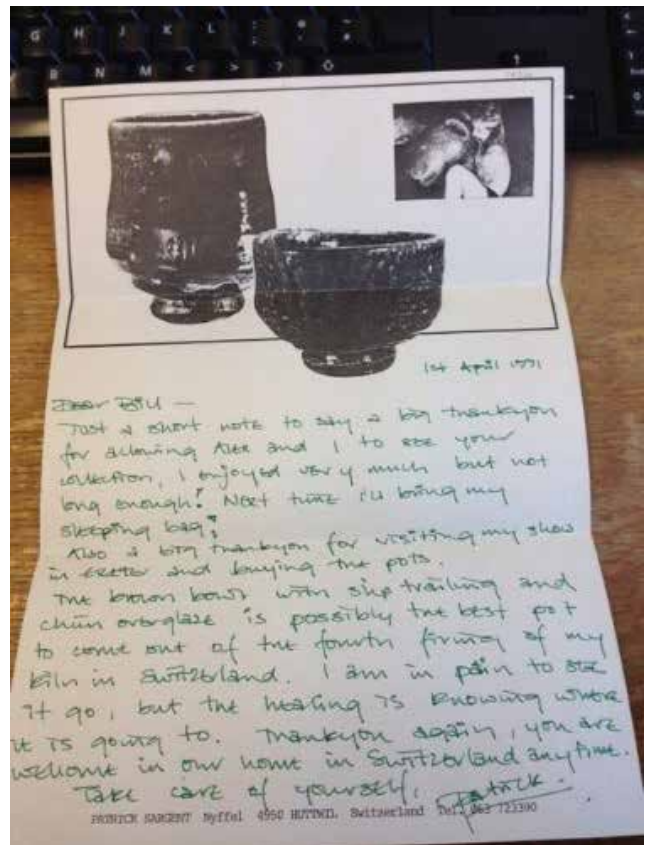
One of the distinctive characteristics of the pot is the contrast between the outer and inner colours. The inner colours are created by the interplay between clay body, brushed white slip and wood ash from the fire. On the foot ring the evidence of the potter's fingers where he gripped it when dipping in the glaze can be seen.

I find this bowl to be a remarkably subtle work for an angama fired pot which now sits in stark contrast to some of the extremely unsubtle work being produced by many contemporary practitioners.

Born in Northampton, Patrick Sargent studied at West Surrey College of Art and Design, Farnham. His first studios were in Northamptonshire but after a spell of travelling to France and Germany for work, he settled in Switzerland in 1986. Here he continued to live and work until his untimely death.

In a statement written in 1996 he wrote

"Most days I take an early morning walk in the forest. It is just one part of my way of being. I like it when my pots give me the same feeling as that forest walk. I certainly seek to capture qualities of directness, freedom and rhythm that I only find in nature. Neither the pot nor the forest walk is the final statement, merely a small part of a long road."



Many thanks to AlexMcErlain for his series of six interesting and well-informed articles From the Ismay Archive.

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## Profile - David Wright, NPA Exhibitions

The NPA covers a vast area, it dawned upon me at the AGM how few members I really know. A sea of faces that I couldn't put names to. It has been suggested that members who have taken on some responsibilities, add their profile and introduce themselves, so here's mine.

I studied Graphic Design at Art College and started work in an Advertising Agency. It wasn't what I was looking for so I enrolled for pottery evening classes to learn the basics. It was a need to make something with my hands and be creative for myself and not others. That was in the 1970's, circumstance, lack of space to work and many life detours meant that making pots was limited, but I stuck with it. Making pots with coils or ropes of clay was convenient as it required little space and almost no equipment. Wrapping half finished work in plastic shopping bags has become a way of life. I never got to grips with making pots on the wheel, I'm happy working in this traditional way.

Coiling is an ancient pottery tradition, dating back 15,000 years to the Jomon culture in prehistoric Japan. I like the rhythmic way of working, rolling the clay with the flat part of my fingers, pressing and blending the coils together, drawing the clay walls upwards, coaxing the pot to it's final shape. I start each pot with nothing more than a pinched disc of clay, each pot the product of all those made before. It will have it's own identity, it's own character, occupy it's own space. It will inform the next one.

After all this effort and care, I have chosen to fire my work in a wood fuelled kiln. Not only will the pots shrink, but may also warp and twist. The kiln is an untamed element and I give several months' work to the demands of the fire with some trepidation. When the pots are placed in the kiln there is always an expectation of what I may find when the firing is complete and the kiln has cooled.



Photo: Ben Boswell



Wooden lidded caddy  
Ash glaze and tenmoku splash with elm lid

The reality never matches the vision and I am meeting these new pots for the first time. I take six or so that take my eye and place them on the kitchen table, I live with them for a few days and reacquaint myself with them, looking at how the glaze has run, the myriad of textures and colours. There is a beauty of things imperfect; there is a beauty of things modest and humble and the information gleaned from this batch of pots will inform the next.

The Design Company that I eventually worked for became very successful and for 30 years I worked on exhibitions and retail projects worldwide. I now work full time as a potter and I joined the NPA to meet others. I work and fire my kiln alone, I solve my own problems, so the opportunity to meet others, exchange knowledge, take part in events and exhibitions would not have been available to me otherwise.

I joined the NPA Committee (or was it coerced?) to look after exhibitions. It's something where I can add value and give something back, rather than moan about it.

The strength of the NPA is it's size, over 450 members means that we can produce a high quality news letter, have a really good website that gets a lot of hits. It gives us a voice in the north and enables the NPA to approach larger exhibition venues in prestige



Wooden lidded boxes  
L - Celadon with black slip, elm lid; R - Shino with yew lid

locations, placing members work in front of a wider audience. Even so it is not easy to find locations and sometimes can take a couple of years to get a slot. The search is on going, but the new committee is enthusiastic and their efforts will soon bear pottery fruit.



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# Summary of minutes from 2016 AGM

30 members signed in as present, apologies were received from 21 members

The minutes from the last AGM were approved and signed with no matters arising.

## Chairperson's report

Two successful selected exhibitions during 2014, no suitable venue available in 2015,

Gallery Oldham booked for October 2016.

Joan Hardie is taking over as newsletter editor.

164 members listed on website, still only 1/3 of membership.

Volunteers are needed in several regions to take over regional coordinator roles.

NPA presence noted at Potfest in Pens 2014, Helen Twomey's CoCA lecture and Earth and Fire 2014.

Point of Sale service for members likely to be withdrawn at future Potfest in Pens.

## Treasurer's report

The NPA financial position remains healthy: overall balance was just over £9000 at year end.

Newsletter and website production/maintenance, travel costs for exhibitions and committee meetings were the primary expenses incurred in 2014-15. Steve Wood FCMA was appointed auditor for 2015-16.

## Membership

Membership stands at 473, including 16 joint memberships. Membership fees have not been increased in 12 years.

## Committee

Barbara Wood, Alan Birchall and Julie Ward all stood down from the committee.

### Newly elected officers:

Margaret Lawrenson (Chair)

Anna-Mercedes Wear (Vice-Chair)

John Robinson (Treasurer)

Sylvia Holmes (Secretary)

### New committee members:

Jill Christie

Anna-Mercedes Wear

Sarah Villeneuve

Wendy Turner

Stephan Aal

Suzan Kemp

Joan Hardie

Barbara Robinson

## Other business

Better communication was requested within regional groups and better feedback between regional groups and the committee.

Devolution of NPA committee functions to the regions (including finances) was suggested. There was a brief discussion of some of the difficulties involved. The proposer was asked to put their suggestions in writing for consideration by the committee.

A vote of thanks was given to the retiring Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

---

The next committee meeting will be held on Sunday 17th January starting at 11:30 am.

Sylvia Holmes

## Welcome to new members

Marilyn Bentham	Bainton	East Yorkshire
Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg	York	North Yorkshire
Helen Hyde	North Ferriby	East Yorkshire
Martin Miles-Moore	Hornby	Lancashire
Stewart Taylor	Hessle	East Yorkshire
Sally Warton	Bolton, Appleby	Cumbria



A warm welcome is extended to our new members. We look forward to seeing you and your work at future events and images of your work in our Members' Gallery and website.

## NPA membership

### Subscription rates:

Individual	£22 by SO
	£25 by cheque
	£30 overseas
Joint (2 members at one address)	£34 by SO or cheque
Full time ceramics student	£15 by cheque with evidence of eligibility

Membership forms can be downloaded from [northern-potters.co.uk](http://northern-potters.co.uk)



## Advertising in NPA News

### Per issue prices:

Diary listings	free		
Small ads (30 words max.)	free to members		
Boxed adverts colour	1/2 page £30	1/4page £18	1/8page £10
B&W	1/2 page £20	1/4 page £15	1/8 page £8
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## Regional News

The regional liaison/advisor role in the committee is being taken on by Anna-Mercedes Wear, the NPA Vice-Chair. She plans to excite, involve and enthuse all the regional groups to further action, so watch this space!

There are also some changes amongst the regional coordinators. The coordinator of East region is to be Barbara Wood, and South region Barbara Chadwick. Very many thanks on behalf of the NPA go to retiring coordinators Gillian Holt and Clive Weake for all their efforts.

South East region members have recently been asked by email if they wish to volunteer for the position of SE regional coordinator. If there are several volunteers, an email election will be held and we hope that all SE members will all make their voices heard by taking part. Our thanks to Brian Holland for all his efforts in the role over the last seven years.

Finally, the committee is planning to conduct an email survey of all members shortly, via the coordinators, to find out what you hope or expect to get from your membership of the NPA now and in the future.



North West

The next social get-together will be held at Bob and Audrey March's house from 12.30pm on Sunday 6th December. Hutton Lodge, Soulby, Kirkby Stephen, CA17 4PL. Tel: 017683 71396. E mail: potrobert@btinternet.com

Amongst other things, we will discuss the possibility of an annual selling exhibition.

Coordinator: Ruth Charlton

Email: [ruthcharlton5@gmail.com](mailto:ruthcharlton5@gmail.com)

Tel: 016973 71690



West

The BBC is now showing the series 'The Great Pottery Throw Down', Tuesday 9.00 p.m. We are avidly watching and supporting our member Matthew Wilcock, who has got through to the 3rd round. Middleport Pottery is a great location and there is some interesting background information. We wish him well.

Our last meeting had unanimous agreement of our members to actively pursue possible new venues for exhibitions. Individuals will report progress at the next meeting. Our thanks to Julie Miles were recorded for keeping NPA West Facebook site up to date, a time consuming task, and we are grateful for the many hours she dedicates to this.

Congratulations to Sally Streuli on MA Ceramics graduation in October, an imaginative display of surface pattern.

NPA West members are currently exhibiting at [Lancashire Hot Potters – Platform Gallery, Clitheroe](#); [Taste of the West – PR1 Gallery, UCLAN; Preston](#); [Graham's Heads - Platform Gallery, Clitheroe](#); [Walled Garden Open Studio – Dolphinholme, near Lancaster](#); [Earthy Delights – Platform Gallery, Clitheroe](#)

Forthcoming Exhibition: Platform Gallery, Clitheroe, mid summer 2016, date still to be confirmed. Details of future exhibitions will be forwarded to members.

Our December meeting will be held on Tuesday 15th at Ale Emporium at 7.15 p.m. and it will be our annual festive 'Jacob's Join'; the ceramic themed piece is 'Spirit'. This is usually really well attended with members bringing festive delights to sample.

Coordinator: Dave Harper & Geoff Wilcock

Email: [ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk)

Tel: 01772 862852



Clive Weake has stepped down after five years as our Regional Coordinator. During his stewardship we have enjoyed a wide range of excellent opportunities for interesting meetings and exhibitions throughout the area. Thank you Clive for all your hard work, inspiration and enthusiasm, we appreciate all you have done for us.

Barbara Chadwick will be the new Regional Coordinator with help from other members and we are already looking forward to exciting opportunities, old and new venues for the group. We will be planning a get together quite soon to discuss future plans.

Coordinator: Barbara Chadwick

Email: [barbarachadwickceramics@yahoo.com](mailto:barbarachadwickceramics@yahoo.com)

Tel: 0161 980 2111



We have been offered an exhibition from 23 February - 8th March 2016, with a private view on the 26th February, at THE ARTHOUSE, Carver Street, Sheffield, free of charge. The ARTHOUSE is a new gallery space with workshops, studio and cafe in the centre of Sheffield. We will be having our next meeting there at 12:30 on Sunday 24th January. This will give us a chance to see the space, and also to meet the new regional coordinator. Please bring a contribution towards lunch as the cafe is closed on Sundays.

The SHEFFIELD CERAMICS FESTIVAL is continuing in 2016 and will take place on 24 & 25 September. I am now calling for exhibitors. The first 35 people to send a cheque for £50 made out to THE SHEFFIELD CERAMICS FESTIVAL will gain a place. Please send a cheque, a copy of your public liability insurance and 2 images ( of at least 300dpi) to Brian Holland, Studio 3 Yorkshire Artspace, Persistence Works, 21 Brown St, Sheffield S1 2BS.

We have also been offered an exhibition at THE OLD MARKET GALLERY in Rotherham sometime next year. This is a huge space and will take very large pieces, installations etc.

Coordinator: Brian Holland

Email: [brianhollandceramics@yahoo.com](mailto:brianhollandceramics@yahoo.com)

Tel: 01909 724781



Gillian Holt is handing over to Barbara Wood as the coordinator for the East region.

Coordinator: Barbara Wood Email: [barbara.wood99@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.wood99@btinternet.com)

Tel: 01759 318146



Our exhibition "Oriental Inspirations" continues at Durham's Oriental Museum until 17th Dec. We had a successful Preview Evening on the 8th Oct. The exhibition was highly praised by the Curator and staff who have been helpful with the arrangements. The selection and display of the 24 exhibitors' work was carried out by the Curators. Sales are going well.

We are now looking forward to our "Meet the Artists" event on Sunday 15 Nov. which will include short talks by three of the exhibitors.

Coordinator: Geoff Proudlock

Email: [goeff@proudlock.plus.com](mailto:goeff@proudlock.plus.com)

Tel: 01325 35344

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## On the Shelf - Shirley Hetherington



It is embarrassing that one of my own pots comes first, but that is just how the shelf looked when I photographed it. This is my collection going up in order of merit!

First my raku flat fossil pot, made about ten years ago in crank clay.

Next one of Peter Beard's pots, which I was lucky enough to win in a raffle at an N.P.A weekend. I think it was at Bretton Hall. I loved the vibrant blue glazes and the texture, which reminded me of sand at low tide.

Number three is by John Maltby, a smoked angel, carrying a bouquet. I went to one of John's courses at Aberystwyth Arts Centre and bought this small sculpture as a souvenir of a happy work-shopping week.

Next is the striped smoked porcelain fruit, made by Jackie Atkin which I bought at the Welsh Makers' Exhibition at the International Potters Festival in Aberystwyth. It is burnished and very tactile, just the right size to fit inside the hand.

Number five is a precious pot by David Greaves, our dear late tutor at Cleveland College of Art and Design. It's clever layering of coloured clays and castellated rim reminds me of David and his inspiring tuition when we were students.

Number six is one of Kate Malone's "baby sliced fruits", an avocado, press-moulded and pebble glazed. My son bought this for me after we had visited her studio in Ballspod Road with its wrought iron balcony and gates. She shared this space with up to 14 other ceramists and I was very impressed to see Kate glazing an enormous pineapple at the time.

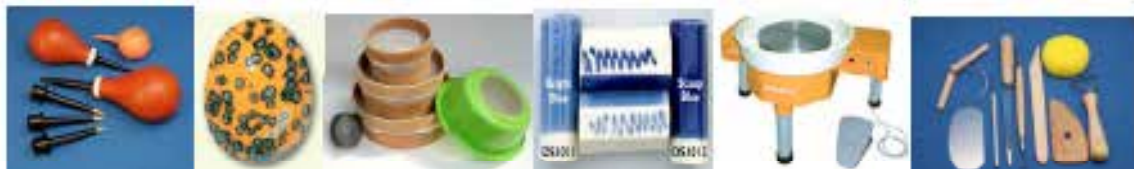
Lastly, this lovely green glazed jug with beak-like spout and blue wavy foot, poses a question. It was acquired from the Lund Gallery at Easingwold, but I'm afraid I have forgotten the name of the maker, it has no mark. Perhaps one of your dear readers can help me out?

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