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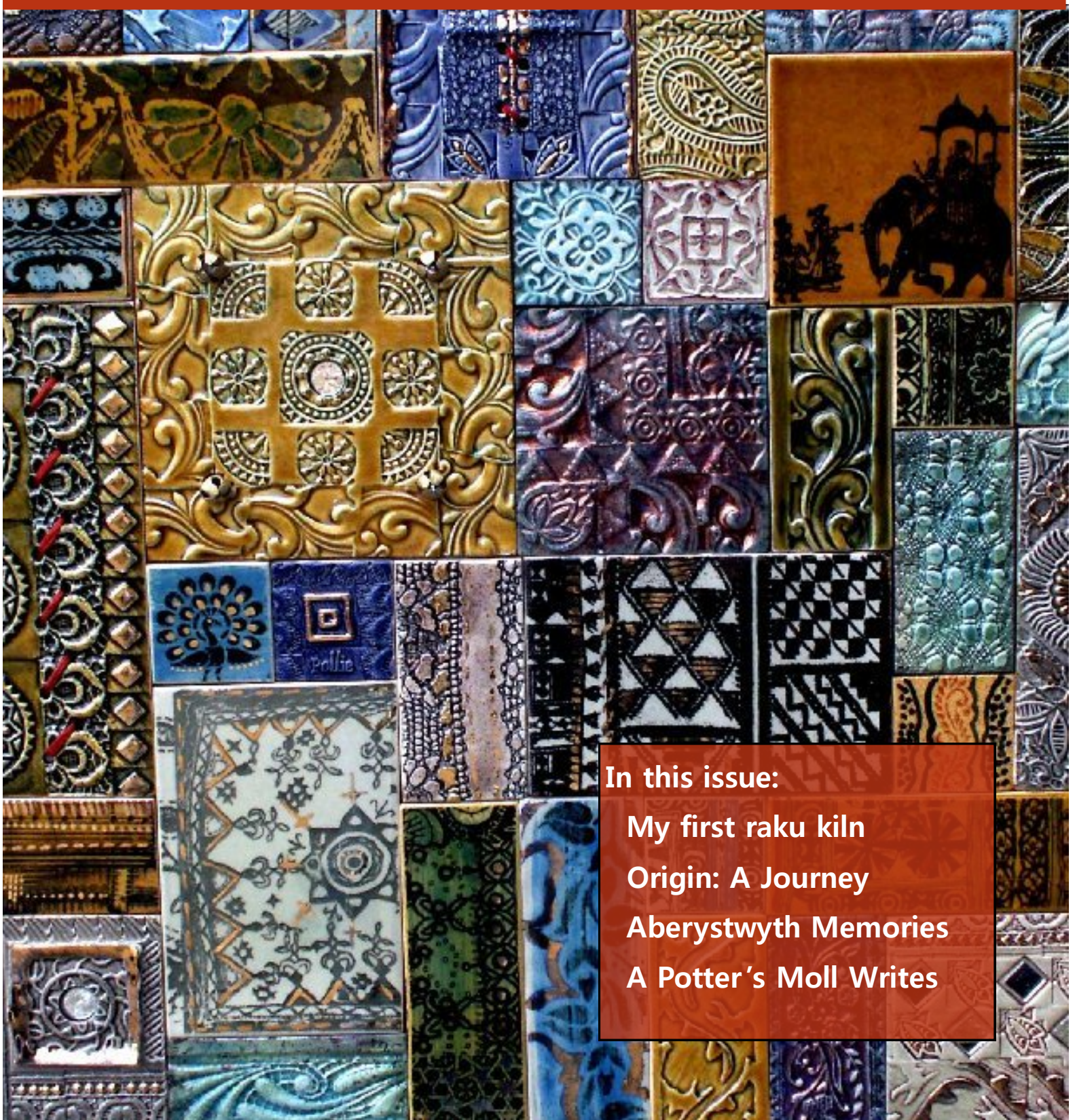
Free to
members

Northern Potters Association

www.northern-potters.co.uk



September - October 2009



In this issue:

My first raku kiln

Origin: A Journey

Aberystwyth Memories

A Potter's Moll Writes

Members' Gallery

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



Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg **Fox**
Hand built stoneware & smoke fired

Cover :
Pollie & Garry Uttley
Mixed media Quilt
Individual tiles printed,
impressed, lusted and raku



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Chat from the Chair



Fresh in my mind is the AGM last Saturday. It was good to see so many supporting the day's events. Thanks to Helen Walsh from York Art Gallery and NPA member she arranged for us to get the first view of the new 'Gallery of Pots'. It is well worth the visit. The pots are perfectly displayed in non reflective glass cabinets and superbly lit. I am looking forward to going again.

The AGM saw several new committee members and we welcome them and look forward to working with them in the future. Babs Taylor, Carol Metcalfe and Barbara Wood stood down from their posts and we thank them for all their work. Likewise Eryl Fryer, Chris Mortimer and Tony Wells also stood down and we thank them for their contribution. Matt Tyas was elected as Exhibitions Officer, and Barbara Wood has taken over as Newsletter Editor. Sylvia Holmes and Dave Horsfall have joined as committee members.

Following the AGM Philip Eglin gave an interesting talk and demonstration (I picked up several handy tips for working with small slab pieces). Having heard how he developed and constructed his work from his free flowing sketches of the human form to images of his finished pots, has given me a new insight and better understanding of his work and was much more informative than the article in Ceramic Review (which was full of 'Art Speak').

Earlier in July I, along with a good many NPA members, attended the Aberystwyth International Ceramics Festival. I had a superb weekend. It was good to meet with so many of you, have a chat and a beer and share some wonderful demonstrations. The sheer scale and power of the Chinese potters' demonstration lived up to expectations, but for me I enjoyed seeing the work of Chris Gustin and Regina Heinz, and it made me consider using multiple firings in my slab pots. And of course the firing of the kilns on Saturday evening was a sociable and spectacular event. I came away feeling refreshed and buzzing with ideas to try this winter. Earth and Fire was as good as ever and the weather was kind to the exhibitors and public alike. I am afraid I succumbed to some pots and the plastic took a hammer! The NPA stand looked superb and was a credit to the potters and the NPA.

As usual there were several NPA members taking part in the annual Holmfirth Artweek, and once again the sale of their work has contributed to £35000 raised for the MacMillan Cancer Support. I always enjoy demonstrating there as it gives me the chance to promote ceramics. Potfest in the Pens saw over forty of our members with stands. I had a thoroughly enjoyable day chatting to our members about their work and the NPA. What a shame the event was hidden on the Saturday and surrounded by an enormous car boot sale! Hopefully we can get a few more members involved next year.

Deadline For Next Issue

All material for the **next issue** to be with Barbara Wood
by **20th October**

Text and images can be e-mailed to npanews@btinternet.com, sent by CD or by long hand with photographs to Old Mills, Seaton Ross, YORK, YO42 4NH

Editor's Comment

It is with much trepidation that I offer this, my first issue as editor of the newsletter - please send me your feedback, but remember it's my first time!

I am very grateful to Carol Metcalfe, who has steered this publication through a year of changes, having overcome the challenges of producing 3 different sizes, until it was agreed at the AGM that this is the format we will stick with for the time being.

There have been many interesting contributions from members, all of which are included, and I trust it will provide a nourishing read for everyone - but please send more images of your work, and remember we have some full colour pages available, so while your monochrome work may be delightful, and well worth seeing, I'd like to have more colour for the front and back pages.

I'm afraid there's rather a lot from me this time, but now that we've appointed our new Exhibitions Officer I'll be concentrating on the newsletter side of things, and Matt Tyas will be reporting on exhibitions and events in future. Quite a few topics were discussed at the AGM, and will be covered fully in the next issue, once the new committee has met and agreed the finer points.

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Exhibitions and Events - Barbara Wood

Summer Selection

The exhibition at Yorkshire Wolds Gallery will have finished by the time you read this, and turned out to be very successful for some exhibitors, with replacement stock being requested more than once. The private view was very quiet – it clashed with a p.v. at Lund Gallery, which may have led to a few people having to choose which to attend. Also, the York to Scarborough road gets very busy on a sunny weekend, and delays there may have put some people off. However, the Pimms was delightful, and we'd sold 10 pieces of ceramic work by the end of the day.

I sent invitations to our mailing list, and produced and circulated fliers for the exhibition, but I'm not sure how much publicity the gallery did. There was nothing on their website in advance, and there is still only a limited amount of information. It is important that all participating artists help to publicise such events – and we could certainly make more use of our own website. It all comes down to the time available – with more committee members perhaps we could spend more time on publicity.

As I write this, with over two weeks still to run, 45 pieces of work have been sold. I get the impression this has far exceeded the gallery owner's expectations, and may lead to the inclusion of more ceramics in future exhibitions there.

Lorraine Clay's outdoor unfired clay disc ('Mortality – third generation') didn't last as long as we'd hoped. It was displayed on a ceramic stand in the gallery garden, but succumbed to a heavy downpour after a couple of weeks, and is now in about 8 pieces in the bottom of my kiln, waiting to be bisque fired so that I can return them to Lorraine.

Earth & Fire

The NPA stand at Rufford looked excellent this year, and I hope it was successful for the participants. There are some views from them elsewhere in this issue. Should NPA participate in such events? There weren't many applicants this year, and some commented that they didn't bother to apply once they realised only 4 members could take part. If we don't get enough high quality applications, we won't be able to take part, as the final selected artists are chosen by the event organisers, and it is preferable for us to have different exhibitors each year. The CPA Associates' stall included 6 members, but the work didn't seem to have been chosen to sit together and the result was far less appealing than ours. I also think we were lucky with the location of our stall, as it had space on both sides and Carl Gray was able to go home for some plinths to extend the display area.

Potfest in the Pens

This year's Potfest was, for me, rather different from last year, in that I had my own stand as well as assisting with the NPA's promotional stand – loading everything into the car was a challenge in itself. It was disappointing that there was so little help from members – Sylvia Glover did a sterling job talking to visitors and encouraging them to consider joining the NPA, or at least to join our mailing list so that we can let them know what events we're involved in. With help from Lyn Grant and Julie Butterworth, she signed up 6 new members, gave out 50 more application forms, and generally spread the word about the NPA network.

The credit/debit card payment system proved very useful once again, and I processed over £1800 of sales on behalf of our members. There were 43 NPA members participating this year, and for those who don't have their own card payment systems this central facility can make the difference between making and missing a sale. Maintaining this facility was discussed at the AGM, and will be clarified in the next issue.

Chris Mortimer, ably assisted by Marie Kershaw, pulled off another coup by constructing a bridge with a 3' span, which supported itself, and was strong enough for Boyo, Sylvia's Welsh dragon, to sit on and defend against invaders. Once again 'we' were the only team to take up Geoff Cox's challenge. I don't know what he'll come up with for next year, but I'm sure Chris will be able to make it, and Sylvia will put a dragon on it!

My First Raku Kiln - Steve Booton

After experiencing my first raku firing in almost 28 years at Brian Holland's studio in May this year, I was hooked. I needed a raku kiln - how had I lived this long without one! So, off to the "interweb".

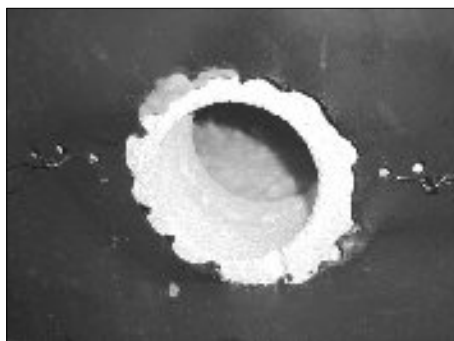
After many hours of research via web sites and You Tube I decided upon a kiln made from a 50 gallon oil drum. Question: "where do I get one?"

I immediately put out requests with as many of my friends and relatives I could think of to find a suitable drum. I waited a few weeks and just as I was ready to give up on the oil drum idea and opt for a smaller garden bin version, lo and behold, like corporation buses, two drums turned up the same day.

The next thing I needed was ceramic fibre blanket to line the kiln - back to the internet. EBay was the obvious first port of call. The price on there was around £50 for a 7metre roll. Surely I could get it cheaper (always my motto). A few more hours on the web found a company in Oldbury in the West Midlands called, Midland Refractories Ltd (they are a part of the Yorkshire Refractories Company). I chose Midland Refractories as it was the near my mum's home and I could call in on one of my visits. Yet another saving - are you spotting a trend? They sell ceramic fibre at around £30 for a 7 metre roll. They also sell ceramic fibre board and HTI bricks (useful information for my gas kiln project later this summer).

Right, down to the business of constructing the kiln.

I cut the top off the drum and cut a burner port in the base and a 4inch hole in the centre of the top for a chimney. I then lined the drum with two layers of ceramic fibre; I had 7 metres of the stuff so why not, and held it in place with ceramic buttons and off cuts of element wire saved from my electric kiln rewiring.



The burner port

I read that the ceramic fibre that surrounds the burner port can get damaged by the force of the burner so I cut a 3" hole in an HTI brick, trimmed it to fit the curve of the drum and wired it to the inside of the drum. This worked very well.

Now to the burner. I made a rudimentary 'guesstimate' of the volume of the kiln and decided to buy a pitch/tar burner. This time my desire to save money proved my downfall. It barely warmed the kiln, it wouldn't have toasted bread!!



Angled burner head

Back to the internet. I found a company called Castree Kilns that supplied burners for raku kilns and they worked out from my measurements that my kiln was over 5 cubic feet, ooops!

At a very reasonable price (almost half the price of everyone else) they supplied me with a burner fit for the job. I also asked them to put a 90degree bend before the burner head so that I could also use it in the stoneware kiln project.

Now for the firing. I packed the kiln and lit the burner; all was going well except there was a lot of black smoke coming from the chimney accompanied by a flame about a foot high. I realised that in my haste to reach temperature I was forcing too much gas into the kiln and creating a reducing atmosphere and worst of all WASTING GAS. Soon I had adjusted the burner, ('less is more' as someone once said - I never understood this saying until now) and produced some interesting pots, some of which appeared to be reduced before they were put into the sawdust!

For the reduction I used 6 large metal paint cans which I bought from Stokes Paints in Sheffield. These were £3.50 each with very well fitted lids which seal the reduction in very well. So, my first firing was a reasonable success, I can't wait for the next one.....

Thanks go to Brian Holland and Jim Simpson for all their help and advice.

You can contact me Steve Booton on 01142648340
Or at stevebootonceramics@hotmail.com

Useful contacts:
Yorkshire Refractory Products Ltd - 1422 353344/353399
Midland Refractories Ltd - 0121 5253344
Castree Kilns - 01994 241589, castreekilns.co.uk
R J Stokes & Co Ltd - 0114 258 9595

A pot from the first firing, with turned wood handle and detail



Welcome To New Members

Name	Location	E mail
Tatjana Burkert	Austria	tanja_burkert@yahoo.de
Alex Chylak	Northumberland	captainalex@alncm.net
Christine Cox	Cumbria	chris@potfest.co.uk
Dee Dickson	Newcastle upon Tyne	dee_dickson@hotmail.com
Maureen Gilroy-Thomas	Leeds	neilthomas@nmventure.com
Christine Graham	Cleveland	cgraham11@btinternet.com
Darrell Milnes	Sheffield	darrellmilnes@aol.com
Jude Moryoussef	Cheshire	Judith@comfyquilts.co.uk
Rob Ward	Sheffield	ellnitty@supanet.com
Jan Welbury	Newcastle upon Tyne	jwelbury@hotmail.com
Lorraine Wheatley-Bateman	Cumbria	lorrainewheatley@hotmail.com
Lesley Nason	Nottinghamshire	lesley.nason@btopenworld.com
Aimee Whitehead	Lancashire	aimee@aimeejane.co.uk

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

NPA Membership

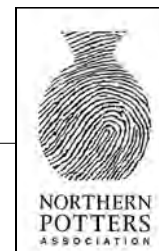
Subscription Rates:

Individual £22 (if paid by standing order)
£25 (if paid by cheque or Postal Order)
FULL TIME Student/unwaged £10 (has to be paid by cheque or PO)
(please send evidence of eligibility e.g. photocopy of SU card, UB40 etc.)

You can download a copy of the membership form from our website - northern-potters.co.uk.

If any of your contact details change, remember to let us know

Contact the membership secretary:
Margaret Lawrenson
'Seven Firs', Kemp Rd,
Swanland,
E.Yorks HU14 3LZ
Tel: 01482 634784



Diary

- 1 August - 13 September **The Decorated Table** - John Calver exhibition at Stokoe House Ceramics Gallery, Market Place, Alston, CA9 3HS. w:stokoehouseceramics.co.uk t: 01434 382137, open daily 10am - 5pm
- 10 August - 18 September **White** - an exhibition by Penny Withers and Neil Woodall, Yorkshire Artspace, 21 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BR Mon - Fri, 11am - 5pm - w: artspace.org.uk
- 11 - 26 September **Paint-Clay-Wood**: Figurative work by Bernard Culshaw, Brian Holland and Simon Kent - The X-church, Ashcroft Road, Gainsborough, DN21 1BY (open Thurs - Sat, 11am - 5pm) Private view 11 Sept, 7 - 9pm
- 17 - 19 September **Manchester Arts Fair**, Art Market, St Ann's Square, Manchester - includes Jill Ford - w: manchesterartsfair.com
- 19 - 20 September **HOST** - Huddersfield Open Studios Trail - Central & South Kirklees studios, 11am - 5pm, includes Ian Marsh, James Oughtibridge, Jim Robison, Sue Jenkins, Peter Fisher - w: hoststudios.co.uk
- 19 -20 September **Keramisto**, Milsbeek, Netherlands - international ceramics event including Annie Peaker, Pollie & Garry Uttley, Rachel Wood
- 19 September - 1 November **Between the Lines** - pots & tiles by Peter Wareing, Stokoe House Ceramics Gallery (as above)
- 26 - 27 September **HOST** - Huddersfield Open Studios Trail - North Kirklees studios, 11am - 5pm - w: hoststudios.co.uk
- 26 - 27 September **Cheshire Open Studios**, 10am - 5pm, includes Sylvia Glover, Pat Higginbotham w.cheshireopenstudios.org.uk
- 1 - 4 October **Newcastle/Gateshead Art Fair** - work by Carolyn Corfield and Pat Dalton will be on the Mick Oxley Gallery stand C12
- 3-4, 10-11 October **Reveal** Hull & East Riding Open Studios - includes Penny de Corte, Jill Ford, Michelle Freemantle, Gerry Grant, Barbara Wood - w: reveal-art.org
- 6 - 11, 13 - 18 October **Origin: The London Craft Fair**, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA - week 2 includes Jill Ford
- 17 - 18 October **Raku Weekend**, Broadwood Hall, Allendale, Northumberland w: broadwoodstudios.co.uk
- 22 - 25 October **Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair**, Spinningfields, Manchester City Centre - includes Brigitte Soltau, Catherine Ball, Jill Ford, Nigel Edmondson, Rebecca Callis - w: greatnorthernevents.co.uk
- 31 October - 1 November **Oxford Ceramics Fair**, St Edward's School, Woodstock Rd, Oxford - includes Nigel Edmondson, Chris Jenkins, Annie Peaker - open 10am - 6pm Sat, 10am - 4pm Sun
- 3 - 4 November **Isabel K-J Denyer's Annual Open House**, Wighill House, Wighill, nr Tadcaster, LS24 8BG. t: 01937 835632 e: isapot@btinternet.com open 10.30am - 7.30pm daily
- 16 November - 19 December **Jill Ford Christmas selling exhibition** and workshops - The Old Courthouse, Westgate, Thirsk, YO7 1QA - ruralarts.org
- 22 November **Holmfirth Art Market** - w: artmarkets.co.uk

Please let me know of future events that may be of interest to other members

Origin: A Journey - Jill Ford

At the turn of the millennium I embarked upon a life-changing career move. As a teacher I had risen through the ranks of class teacher to deputy head, then as my own children grew up I switched to part time contracts and Nursery teaching. But an HND course in Design Crafts (2000 – 2002) was the catalyst for change, as I set up my own pottery in a converted garage in rural East Riding of Yorkshire. Armed with a second-hand wheel and kiln, a sink, a small supply of porcelain and a huge supply of enthusiasm, I started out again as a self-employed ceramist, establishing Jill Ford Ceramics. Seven years down the line, the business has grown and my contemporary porcelain has developed in confidence and voice. I supply around 50 galleries throughout the UK and Europe and a couple in the US and exhibit at major craft/ceramics fairs around the country.

Origin, the London Craft Fair, has long been in my sights. The old version, Chelsea Craft Fair was always an inspiration with its packed corridors and rooms brimming with craft talent. The re-branded version – Origin, at Somerset House, London is ideally located to attract national and international visitors as well as residential and business communities in the capital. Over two separate weeks, work from 300 makers will be showcased in a bespoke pavilion designed to provide a light and stylish environment in which to see and buy the thousands of objects on offer. It offers the opportunity for first timers such as me to exhibit alongside internationally acclaimed artists and to put work under the scrutiny thousands of discerning visitors.

The initial feeling of euphoria on being accepted has not quite evaporated, and the long making process has begun along with decisions about selection of work. I will be showing my signature porcelain wall pieces and thrown bowls and vases: simple elegant shapes decorated with minimal colour and textural relief. Spindly silver birches carved into the white porcelain contrast against thick dark foliage in the Landscape Range. Echinacea bowls with finely pinched rims squeezed whilst still damp from the wheel and new wall pieces and vessels decorated with shrub roses, their full flat flowers modelled from hundreds of wafer thin layers of porcelain. My work explores the fragile strength of this smooth sensuous clay - pinching, turning and squeezing it to the brink of collapse. This year has seen the introduction of the Old Fashioned Roses jewellery collection in bone china and silver, statement jewellery that is fun and flamboyant.

Origin will undoubtedly be a huge logistical and artistic challenge, one to be relished. The journey so far, from tentative steps entering the Ceramics Room at York College to the prestige of exhibiting in central London has been exciting and fast-paced. I view Origin as a hub along that path, a convergence of artists and public - the platform for many new travels.

Jill will be at Origin from 13 - 18 October



Jill Ford - Old Fashioned Roses oval dish; thrown and altered porcelain, with roses embellishment

Isabel K-J Denyer Open House, 3-4 Nov

Ceramics – Isabel K-J Denyer
Ceramic Sculpture – Wendy Lawrence
Book-bindings – Sarah Jarrett-Kerr
Baskets – Caroline Smith
Jewellery – Charmian Ottaway
Leatherwork – Sue Lowday
Textiles – Sophie Pattinson

**WANTED ASAP 5 LEACH TYPE KICK WHEELS
OR SIMILAR.**

CONTACT: Claude Frere-Smith
claudefrere@yahoo.co.uk or 07950047775

Aberystwyth Memories - Shirley Hetherington

Aberystwyth, that little old fashioned seaside town clinging to the very edge of Wales has, over the years, become a place of pilgrimage for clay worshippers.

My first visit was in the 1980's, travelling around Wales on the Dylan Thomas trail with my daughter, who was writing about the poet for her dissertation. My part of the bargain was that we would finish the journey at the International Ceramic Camp and this is how I was hooked into the heady excitement of watching and listening to makers from all over the world.

It was a much smaller affair then, but still attracted the big names. I remember long tables with a buffet set out on Michael Cardew's beautiful dishes, in what was then the Big Hall. Since then the Festival has changed, and so has the Art Centre. In 2000 it had a £4m makeover to become the biggest in Wales.

I have been to about seven Festivals since that first one, arriving by different modes of transport. Once I missed my friend at Birmingham train station and travelled to Aberystwyth with a charming old gentleman wearing a black beret, suit and beard, who turned out to be Bill Ismay, the great ceramic collector.

Everyone has their own recollections and out of that heady brew these are some of mine:

At a Paul Soldner workshop he grabbed a foot from the front row, wearing a trainer with an interesting sole pattern which he imprinted onto one of his raku pieces. In 1989 two women potters, Asabe Magaji and Assibi Iddo, who had never been away from their Nigerian villages before, stand gracefully to coil their beautiful cooking pots which they fired in a bonfire over the weekend.

All the wonderful and weird outdoor kilns I have witnessed there come to mind—a paper kiln, a rocket kiln, a kiln made from a car, a climbing kiln (when there was a hill behind the Art Centre), Nina Hole's spectacular kilns cooling into sculptures and, believe it or not, even a kiln of ice!

Aberystwyth, of course, is a great social event; a place to meet up with old friends, some from years before. Friends from Northern Potters and from residencies held at the Craft Centre in Middlesbrough, including Takeshi, Sabina Teutenberg and Regina Heinz who was demonstrating at this year's Festival. In 2007 it was lovely to see once again Richard Dewar and Francoise Dufayard, whose studios I had visited in France, and also in that year be introduced to the mystery of a Japanese tea ceremony.

Over the years I have become a Festival "groupie" to some of my favourite makers, visiting workshops and listening to their lectures—Wally Keeler, Mo Jupp, Carol McNicholl, Henry Pim and Claire Curneen, to mention a few. I loved the delicate porcelain torsos of Vladimir Tsirin from the USSR and Udai Kuhmar's wonderful Rajasthan terracotta horses. Also, never to be forgotten, the smiling face of Akira Yoshida making his small minigama kilns.

And, keeping everything together, the M.C.'s who have done a wonderful job in co-ordinating and fielding numerous questions from the floor. Lovely Michael Casson was the first, followed by the equally lovely and unflappable Jim.

As for this year's Festival, the highlights have to be Sandy Brown's exhibition of her exuberant sculptures, the three Chinese potters who together centred and threw the sections for an enormous 10 foot pot which they assembled like a troupe of acrobats perched on the scaffolding before a breath-holding, finger-crossing audience. The rainbow colours of Tom Barnett's fire capsule, lighting up the evening sky and, in the morning, poignant fired clocks, empty like some remnants of Hiroshima. I also enjoyed Jack Doherty's throwing and modest humour. These are just some of my personal Festival memories, which I wanted to share. As the train pulled out of the station this year, I became fanciful—imagining Aberystwyth as some kind of Welsh Brigadoon, disappearing after we leave only to emerge from the sea mist two years later in time for the next International Ceramics Festival.

Some images from Aberystwyth appear on the back cover.

NPA @ Earth & Fire

Hannah McAndrew

A group stand is always an interesting event. Four people, all using clay, but four completely different end products, at first it's hard to see how you could make it work within such a small space. Interesting too because I don't think any of us knew each other particularly well to begin with either. It took what felt like hours to set out the shelving on the stand but after that it all somehow fell into place quite smoothly. The stand was commented on for looking smart and cohesive and was compared more favourably to the CPA Associates stand which was also a group stand but felt crowded and more cluttered than the NPA one. All in all a very positive experience - I rarely have help at shows and am used to working out the shortest route to the toilets and to the tea room so it was great to be able to have time off to see the demos and walk around the show knowing that there were people manning the stall.

Eric Moss

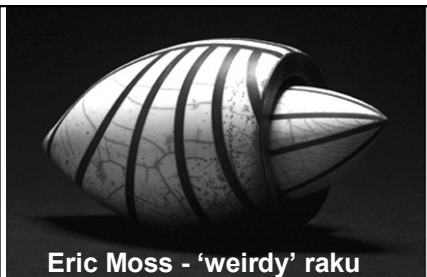
I was chuffed to bits to be selected as one of the potters on our NPA stall at Rufford E&F in June. Showing alongside Hannah Macandrew's bold, illustrative honey glazed slipware, Michelle Freemantle's contemporary table ware and Carl Gray's exacting wood fired thrown ware was very encouraging as their work combines very high quality finish with obvious technical prowess and strong creative themes. My stuff is, to quote one visitor, "weirdy" raku which, being low-fired and of no practical use, exists purely to feed the soul (if that constitutes a 'use' however impractical).



(l-r) Hannah McAndrew, Eric Moss, Michelle Freemantle, Carl Gray

Spookily, though travelling from 3 compass points and wildly different distances, all four of us arrived on-site to set up within a window of about 10 minutes and got straight to rummaging out all the crisply ironed and folded NPA livery (thanks to maker, ironer and storer, Barbara Wood) for our stand. After about an hour of experimentation of layouts, we agreed on a simple stepped display and, following Carl's fastidious tape measuring activity, the stand was prepped for our work – A further 10 minutes saw it all out on show – and we were ready! Tea break time.

Together our work covered quite a range of techniques and styles which, hopefully, would delight the eye of the passing customer and convince them to exchange some bits of metal for bits of clay. I helped on the Saturday shift and soon realised that our stand, though impressive in display terms, wasn't the best placed to attract customers away from the path which it stood well back from and at a right angle to ('scuse my grammar). Though we did have a steady stream of customers a proportion were sticking resolutely to the path. I considered employing a lasso, or perhaps a pea shooter, to attract their attention.



At one point I entertained a blowpipe with anaesthetic darts – we could roll the unconscious potential customers over to the front of our stand and, when they awoke, surely they would think themselves in heaven! Well, maybe that was overkill and, in the end such extreme measures weren't necessary. The stand made a tidy sum with everyone selling work and it earned many plaudits the high standard of display and work. Oh, and it didn't rain this year (well, certainly not on the Saturday)!

New Books - Roger Bell

Nancy & Gordon Baldwin		7.50 Ru
Ceramics – A Lifelong Passion (coolection Peter Siemssen)		110.00\$Au
Choosing Craft: The Artist's Viewpoint	Halper & Douglas	35.00\$
Clay, Light & Water (Jan 2010)	Margaret O'Rorke	15.99 BI
Clay Shared: Key Words for Accompanying Creativity	Ed Girard	14.50Euro
Collecting Contemporary Ceramics	Dames & Fielding	12.00 Ru
Contemporary Ceramics	Emmanuel Cooper	24.95 TH
Claire Curneen 'Succour'	Fielding & Wilcox	12.00 Ru
Lowri Davies		10.00 Ru
Dry Glazes (Nov 2009)	Jeremy Jenegan	15.99 BI
Ruth Duckworth		12.00 Ru
Robin Hopper Ceramics: A Lifetime of Works, Ideas & Teachings	Robin Hopper	44.99\$
Grayson Perry	Jacky Klein	35.00 TH
Installing Exhibitions	Pete Smithson	19.99 BI
Low-Firing and Burnishing (Oct 2009)	Sumi von Dassow	15.99 BI
Gilbert Portanier: Oeuvres 2000-2009		45.00 Ar
Painting with Smoke: David Roberts – Raku Potter	Lynne Green	35.00
Wall Pieces (Nov 2009)	Dominique Bivar-Segurado	15.99 BI
Welsh Table		4.50 Ru
Winchcombe PotteryTechniques: Throwing		21.99 DVD
Worcester Porcelain	John Sandon	5.99 Sh

Book Review - Roger Bell

ANN STOKES: ARTISTS POTTER
Ed. Tanya Harrod

35.00
Lund Humphries

This volume is in the same format as the previously published books on Richard Slee, Magdalene Odundo & Carol McNicoll. It was published to coincide with Ann's major exhibition at Camden Arts Centre in London this year. I had not previously heard of Ann Stokes and Grey Gowrie's foreword admits that while not widely known, she is owned by many arbiters of taste.

Born into a missionary family in 1922, reading, music and art were encouraged during her childhood. Her sister Margaret went to Edinburgh College of Art and married artist Adrian Stokes. They moved to the St Ives area, mixing with Nicholson, Hepworth, Wood & Gabo. Ann spent time with them helping her sister instead of going to University. In the course of time Ann took up dancing, then helped with the war effort. Her first artistic work was fretwork toys, about which she also wrote articles. After her sister's divorce, she married Adrian in Switzerland. Her interest in ceramics had been developing for some time, first from visiting Bernard Leach's workshop when in Cornwall, later seeing Picasso's pots in France. She first worked with clay with her son at Saturday morning lessons. He gave up, she continued.

Over the years she has made plates, bowls and other domestic pieces, but also animals, mirrors, garden pots and sculptural work. Most work is treated in a painterly fashion in a very free way. Indeed paintings have always been produced alongside her ceramic work. Initially most work was sold through an annual show at her Hampstead home and through recommendation. But from 1970 to the present day she has contributed to exhibitions in the UK & Europe, particularly with Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London.

The text is clear and scholarly, without 'artspeak', by Tanya Harrod, Hilary Spurling, and Richard Morphet. It is profusely illustrated with her work and relevant photos of people, places and the like. It is good to see Lund Humphries continuing with monographs on artist/craftspeople.

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A Potter's Moll Writes



Let's draw a veil over Hot Pots at Belvoir Castle in May: poor signage and lack of punters being the main problems as I see it. It comes to something when Jim gets a round of applause from all the other stallholders in our marquee when he wrapped up a tripod planter.

Even the Saturday evening catering conspired against us. The caterer's van promised us 'a taste of the Mediterranean' and I thought we might be in for a touch of Greek dancing when a flaming tea towel came flying out of the van followed by a man dancing vigorously on it to put out the flames. In the event, 45 minutes later than promised we got lukewarm Shepherd's pie, (Greek shepherd?), and vegetable lasagne followed by apple pie and cream. All served by a row of people dolloping the food on your plate who had clearly all fallen out with each other.

It was my birthday soon after and I was delighted with a **Steve Woodhead** toast rack – another potter who must have made a sale that weekend.

So a month later it was *Earth and Fire* at Rufford. Oh, the joys of good signage – big yellow signs on roundabouts in all directions saying dates, venue, Ceramic Fair and directions. And the luxury of a fine catalogue and location maps, beautifully produced. I think one of the joys of Rufford is that there are so many events and activities of offer – stalls, demos, trade stands, books and of course the main gallery which this year housed the triumphant *Concordia* exhibition by **David and Margaret Frith**.

Our stall was next to **James Hake** and we had interesting conversations about sales and building up a following of buyers. He is quite phlegmatic about selling lots of small pieces, often candle holders, in the belief that if they are well made they will eventually sell larger pieces, maybe in a gallery setting later. As **Gordon Cooke** once said to us after a not-so-good event: 'Never mind, you've still got your stock.'

The festival was a three day event this year and there were mixed reactions from stall holders – we felt we probably sold the same amount over three days as we would have over two, and of course it cost more for the stall for three days. Others felt it was definitely better for their sales. (You know who you are, J C and C M!)

Another potter pointed out that if you sold 'products' you probably did better; candles and plants completing the pot and defining its use. Having said that, **Nigel Edmondson's** stall did look wonderful and he deservedly won the prize for the Best Stall. When I congratulated him, he said he hoped to retain the common touch. (I've always thought he was a bit common!)

There was an up-beat moment when a young man from one of the student stalls came rushing to tell us with great glee that he had won Jim's pot on the Tombola stall. He said his tutor was 'always going on' about Jim's work.

We enjoyed the conviviality of meeting old friends and making new ones, and friends and relatives and students old and new came by. I did my usual bit of eavesdropping as two women apparently admired a vase on our stall. But what I actually heard was: 'That's a nice shade of nail varnish.'

'Oh, thanks, I meant to take it off before we came out.'

And a couple came back to our stall to say they'd been arguing all afternoon about the name of the *flowers* in one of our vases. (Astrantia, if you ask.)

Jim enjoyed the **Fergus Stewart** and **Tessa Wolfe Murray** demonstrations, and I must say I liked Fergus's work very much. There is always something for everyone at Rufford and as one visitor said, you cannot believe that so many different things can be done with the same material.

It was back home to slam into preparations for Holmfirth ArtWeek and our Fringe Show as part of it, featuring the work of **Carol Peevor, Jane Barker** and **Moz Khokar**, as well as paintings, prints and photos. I stayed here to man the fort while Jim shot off to be MC at the International Ceramics Festival at Aberystwyth which by all accounts was a splendid success and he came back home buzzing about it all – especially the spectacular finale bravura performance by three Chinese potters who threw, with the aid of scaffolding, a three metre high pot.

Last week we had a studio course for eight potters who showed their experience and expertise by absorbing and sharing techniques rather than wanting a specific big pot to take home. I think everyone, including us, enjoyed the conviviality as well as the learning and sharing of knowledge and skills.

It's definitely time for a little R and R now, so Calke Abbey, a National Trust property in Derbyshire and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park are on the agenda next week, driven to in the MG, top-down, weather permitting.



Liz's Steve Woodhead toast rack in action

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Light at the End of the Tunnel - Stephen Green

POTFEST IN THE PENS 2009

It was with much trepidation that I looked forward to the approach of the "Pens" 2009. My philosophy in the present economic climate was – 'Well ! it will be a good time to share ideas and meet new people', however after 2 minutes I had made my first sale and after 2 days I had doubled my sales from the previous year. Surprisingly (!), my perspective changed totally. I am not writing this to be clever or to gloat but to encourage everyone. People still have money and are happy to buy something that inspires them, so do not be down hearted.

An added bonus for me was meeting some like minded and wonderful fellow potters. Steve Valentine and Laura Jane Hancock - I love you both. You made me feel like I was 18 again.

I wish all members of the Northern Potters Association a great year.
 As Gok Wan says "It's all about the confidence"



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Richard Godfrey Ceramics

Regional News

There was a little confusion over the last issue, when some of the old names were used for the regions, so, here are the new names and contact details for the regional coordinators. Only two regions have sent in reports, so any urgent news will have to be sent out by email to those members whose details we have.

North West

(the region formerly known as 'Cumbria')

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



The raku day at Mary Chapplehow's workshop on 18th July was a great success. We were lucky to have such a welcoming host. The threatening weather first thing soon changed to sun. Unlike 2008 standard raku, naked raku and copper matte methods were all successfully employed. The new pyrometer was a great help. Thanks go to Val Marshall for dealing so well with the copper matte firing and Jane Smith for untiring effort.

South West

Co-ordinator: Sylvia Glover
Email: sylvia.glover@ntlworld.com
Tel: 0161 456 2464



The Region is active! Since our inaugural meeting on 12th March, we have been busy trying to get our group active. A working group of 4 has met every 6 weeks or so to discuss issues and areas where we hope that we can push the group forward to make the most of our members and what is happening in our area.

The group decided that we would meet again in September and would meet for a practical session.

We were so inspired by the pots that people brought along at our last gathering that it was agreed that the practical session would be on 'feathering' and would be run in Hale where we met.

The session will be run on 23rd September but at the moment we aren't sure whether to run it as a day or evening session. If you are interested in attending the session please let me know if you would prefer day or evening by emailing me at sunflowerjelly@gmail.com .

I have also been in contact with Stoke Museum and Art Gallery and have made arrangements for NPA to visit on Thursday 19th November at 2.00 pm. The afternoon is open to a maximum of 20 people (so please email me at sunflowerjelly@gmail.com to reserve your place) and will consist of a visit to the studio pottery gallery and the Wedgwood exhibition followed by a handling session in the stores. This will cost £5 per person.

Alex McErlain has offered a mini filmfest and handling session at MMU this term - date tba.

East

(formerly 'Yorkshire')

A new regional coordinator will be appointed shortly, and we hope to include news of local activities in the next issue.

North East

Co-ordinator: Geoff Proudlock, 46 Cleveland Terrace, Darlington,
Tel: 01325 353445
Email: geoff@gproudlock.plus.com

West

(formerly 'North West')

Co-ordinator: Dave Harper
E-mail: dpharper@uclan.ac.uk
Tel: 01782 617801 or Tel: 01204 674901

South East

Co-ordinator: Brian Holland
Email: brian.holland100@virgin.net
Tel: 01909 724781

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Nancy Pliener course leader ceramics, tel: 01482 598751

or curriculum office, Park street tel: 01482 598754

email: Cso.HISAD@hull-college.ac.uk

**Enrolment for these take place at
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These are the courses Hull College is offering at the ceramics department this academic year and the enrolment is the first week in September.

A new Foundation Degree course in 3D Design

Crafts (Jewellery and Ceramics)

has just received validation and applications can now be made to Hull College. The course has been designed to be accessible to those in work, particularly teaching or part-time, as it will run from mid afternoon until 8.30 in the evening, one evening per week. There will be an extended college year to give extra studio time. The key thing is that students can specialise in ceramics or combine with glass. Pathways in jewellery and silversmithing are also offered. Interviews are currently taking place for enrolment in the last week of September. H.E. courses come under the Hull School of Art & Design within Hull College. This course will be delivered from the Park Street site - the address is: Hull College, Park Street Centre, Park Street, Hull, HU2 8RR. Hull School of Art & Design is located at Queens Gardens, Hull, HU1 3DG .



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Internal college application forms are available from Park Street.

Web details are www.artdesignhull.ac.uk and www.hull-college.ac.uk (for contacts). To view the department phone 01482 598751 (direct line). Course leader for ceramics is Nancy Pliener.

Reflections - Barbara Wood

Having now completed my term as exhibitions officer, it is time to reflect on some of the highs and lows.

The main benefits of NPA selected exhibitions are that they allow our members access to prestigious galleries which may not consider including their work individually, and can provide less experienced members with an easy introduction to exhibiting. The NPA name and track record give the gallery confidence that the work will be of a suitable quality, and the admin support that we offer makes the gallery's dealings with the artists very straightforward – they have one contact point rather than 20, write one cheque for sales at the end, and get as much assistance as they require in setting up, displaying, and packing up the show. Many of our members are experienced professional ceramists, and need no help from us, but it is very rewarding when they apply to participate as this raises the overall standard.

Staging an exhibition can be quite demanding for the NPA exhibitions team, but is seen as a service to members. We aim cover the costs of the selection process from the application fee that we charge (currently £5 per artist), and the small amount of commission on sales that NPA takes goes towards the admin costs. Fortunately, in the last few years, sales have been fairly good, and overall there has been a small surplus of income over expenditure.

That said, we must make sure that we are always aware of the cost implications, and don't embark on an event that will cost a significant amount without providing a noticeable benefit to the membership. Sylvester Space, Sheffield, was a case in point - a booking was made last year, when the space was being used regularly for interesting exhibitions, and it seemed that a clientele was building up. Later in the year the space became a workshop for Sheffield Hallam University, and so was only available for exhibitions between academic terms. It became unlikely that any event we held there would attract a wide audience, and the costs would have been wasted, so the decision was made to cancel the booking and forfeit the deposit.

One of the highlights of the role has to be seeing work from different members, meeting members, and particularly being involved with those artists who are exhibiting with NPA for the first time. Over time the work develops, and the members grow in confidence. It always gives me a thrill to see new work 'in the clay' rather than just images, and to be able to touch and place it is a privilege.

My favourite bit is setting up the display – some galleries do this themselves, and of course it is their prerogative – occasionally I've been called on to produce the labels, which is not quite so satisfying, but I would always prefer this to having badly labelled work. Labelling is part of the presentation of the work, and can enhance the impression given.

My least favourite part has to be packing up at the end of the show – and of course having to let people know when they haven't been selected. Even that has a positive side though, if the selectors can give constructive feedback to members who have not been selected, this can help them develop for the future, or at least soften the blow (note to Matt: choose your selectors carefully).

I have learned something from every gallery I have worked with, and really appreciate the opportunity the NPA gave me to develop my exhibition skills. There has been incredible help available from other members, and I offer particular thanks to Helen Walsh, Ali Brice, Andrea Cundell, Marianne von Tucka and Chiu-i Wu, who have all contributed their time and effort to help make our exhibitions successful.

So, welcome to Matthew Tyas, who is taking over the role. I hope he will enjoy it as much as I have, and find it a useful experience. Next year's exhibitions are agreed, so Matt will have time to start developing the programme for 2011 and beyond without too much immediate pressure, and I feel sure that he will do an excellent job. You can imagine my relief when he first rang to say he was interested in the role, and my surprise that I didn't say anything to put him off!

Summer Selection
Images from the NPA exhibition at Yorkshire Wolds Gallery



Steve Booton raku vessels with turned wood detail



Angie Mitchell plates and dishes



Marianne von Tucka vessels and wall pieces

Aberystwyth Memories

Chinese potters starting out.....



.....later that day!



A Nina Hole kiln



Nigerian Potter