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Northern Potters Association

www.northern-potters.co.uk



Caroline Lee

Website News - p.6 Exhibition Opportunities - p.8

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ISSUE:**

Issue February - March 09

Members' Gallery

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

Catherine Boyne-
Whitelegg

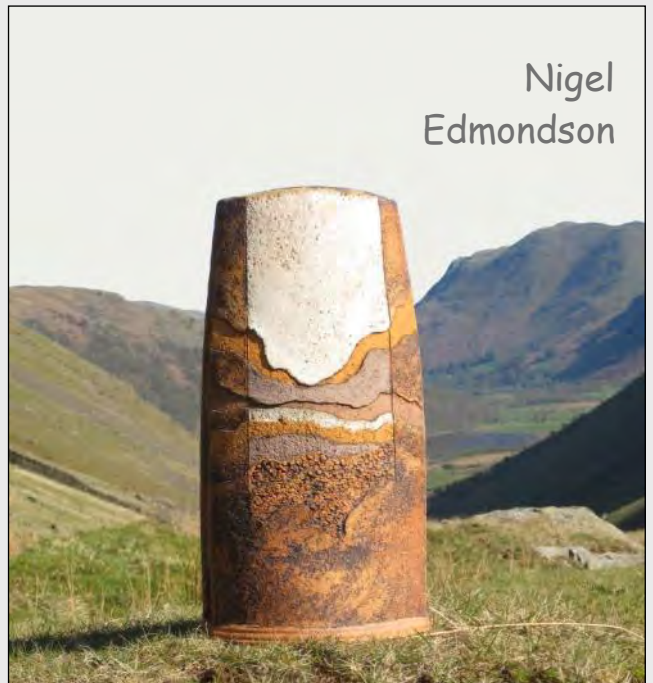


Caroline Lee



Cath Ball

Nigel
Edmondson



Your Committee

Ian Marsh, Chair & Website
35 Meltham Road, Marsden, Huddersfield. HD7 6JZ
Tel: 01484 846 312
E-mail: marshiepot@aol.com

Babs Taylor Vice-Chair
Studio Pottery, 13 Chorley New Rd.,
Horwich, Bolton BL6 7QJ
Tel: 01204 668490
E-mail: babs@babstaylor.co.uk

Liz Collinson, Treasurer
Bonded Warehouse, 20A St. George's Quay,
Lancaster, LA1 1RB
E-mail: ceramic@lizc.info

Julie Ward Secretary
45 Whitestone Dr, York YO31 9HY
Tel: 01904 611895
E-mail: jward@hotmail.co.uk

Carol Metcalfe Newsletter Editor
Wintylow Farm Cottage, Brough Park, Catterick,
Richmond, N. Yorks., DL10 7PL
Tel: 01748 811069
E-mail: carol4npa@yahoo.co.uk

Barbara Wood Exhibitions
Old Mills, Seaton Ross, York. YO42 4NH
Tel: 01759 318146
E-mail: barbara.wood@ukonline.co.uk

Stephen Plumstead Exhibitions assistant
142 Barnsley Rd, Flockton, Wakefield WF4 4AA
Tel: 07876 183465
E-mail: splumstead@dewsbury.ac.uk

Tony Wells Exhibitions Assistant
3 Stable Court, Londesborough, York YO43 3LF
Tel: 01430 873293
E-mail: tony.wells5@btinternet.com

Margaret Lawrenson Membership Secretary
'Seven Firs', Kemp Rd, Swanland, E. Yorks HU14 3LZ
Tel: 01482 634784
E-mail: Margaret@sevenfirs.karoo.co.uk

Helen Walsh
York Art Gallery, Exhibition Square, York YO31 7PN
E-mail: Helen.walsh@ymt.org.uk

Eryl Fryer
1 Oakleaf Close, Goosnargh, Preston, Lancs, PR3 2DQ
E-mail: eryl.fryer@btopenworld.com

Chris Mortimer
Mill Barn, Goosefoot Close, Samlesbury, Preston,
Lancs, PR5 0SS
Tel: 01254 853300
E-mail: chris@millbarn.net

Chat from the Chair

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year. I hope you had a good Christmas and after much imbibing, feasting and making merry you are now once again up to your elbows in clay. I found time over Christmas to relax, read and go for some long walks over the local moors - thoroughly self indulgent, but wonderfully invigorating and refreshing.

Judging by having spoken to several of you recently, you like myself are thinking about which events you have entered for or are thinking of applying for – although in the current economic climate there is the nagging thought of will there be many sales. My attitude in the present climate is to be optimistic and have good time. It is also a time to try to get a body of work made and to experiment with new ideas. I have enjoyed being back in the studio playing with clay. It is just a pity that life (cooking, cleaning, washing, shopping, paperwork) keeps getting in the way. Never mind, roll on the lighter nights.

Thank you to those members who have sent amendments for the website. Hopefully by the time you receive the newsletter it should have been updated. Our intention is to start to use the website to inform members of national and regional events and general ceramics news.

Ian Marsh



Deadline For Next Issue

All material for the **next issue** to be with Carol Metcalfe
by the **20th March**

Text and images can be e-mailed (**carol4npa@yahoo.co.uk**), sent by CD
or by long hand with photographs to
Wintylow Farm Cottage, Brough Park, Richmond, N. Yorks., DL10 7PL

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Editor's Comment



So here it is, another size option for the newsletter for you [25.6cm x 20.6 cm]. The committee is planning to review not only the size and cost of the newsletter but its overall style, so now is the time for you to let us know what you think. We can then take your views into consideration during our discussions. How do you want future newsletters to look?

Unfortunately in the last issue I was not able to bring you the Potter's Moll, due to a lost email, but Liz is back in this one with a double bill looking back over two of the Autumn's events [p.17]. Thanks also to Dave Horsfall for his article on page 7. On the subject of emails, I do make a point of acknowledging any contributions sent within a couple of days of receiving them, so if you do not get a reply from me, please contact me again.

I still need more of you to send contributions for the newsletter on any aspect of ceramics - reviewing an exhibition or workshop you have attended; your views on education in ceramics; the inspirations for your work; your favourite tips; etc - anything other members might find interesting. This is your newsletter but it will be a very slim publication without your articles!

Carol Metcalfe.

Membership - Margaret Lawrenson

In the August 08 newsletter we requested that all members update their details by filling in the enclosed form and returning it to the membership secretary. It is very useful and time saving for us to have up-to-date telephone numbers and e-mail addresses and also to know which regional group you prefer.

So, a big 'thank you' to those who replied - about a third of our membership in all. However, that leaves almost 200 members whose details have not been updated, so please could you send this information as soon as possible (and preferably by e-mail).

See 'Your Committee' on page 3 for Margaret's contact details

Exhibitions and Events - Barbara Wood

It's been a fairly quiet time for me so far as NPA activities have been concerned lately, which is probably just as well, as I'm trying to catch up on some of the household and personal business development tasks that didn't quite happen last year! Unfortunately I don't have any NPA exhibitions lined up in the first half of the year - the non-stop NPA 30 events last year took more of my time than I could afford, and the few approaches to galleries that I was able to make have not yet materialised. However, I am confident that 2010 will be a good year, with two exciting exhibitions agreed in principle, and my successor will be able to start planning for the years ahead. Speaking of which, I am hoping that someone out there is seriously thinking about taking on the role of Exhibitions Officer - nobody has contacted me yet, but I have total confidence that someone among our 360+ members will be willing to volunteer. If you're considering it, please get in touch.

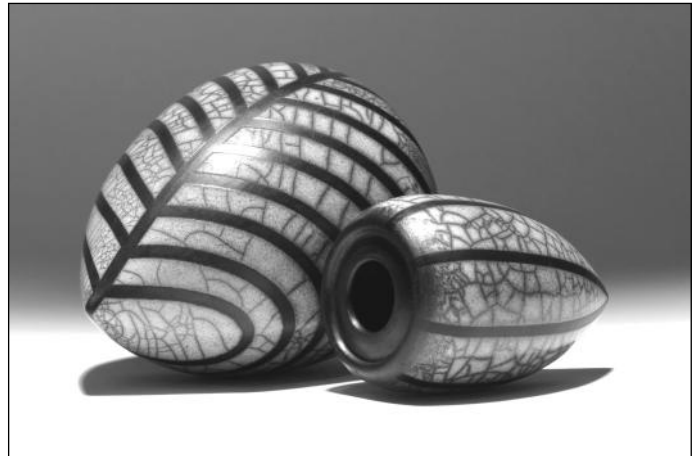
The one event which has required some action is the group stand at Earth & Fire. From a disappointingly low number of applications, the four artists selected were Carl Gray, Eric Moss, Hannah McAndrew and Michelle Freemantle. It is quite challenging to pick 4 artists whose work can sit together on one stand, so anyone submitting a wide range of colours and styles, is perhaps disadvantaged. The selectors looked for a high degree of technical competence, an individually recognisable style, and a range of pieces and prices that make them likely to appeal to the visiting public. The selected artists meet these criteria, and we felt that their work, as well as demonstrating different decorating and firing techniques, could be arranged to produce an attractive, cohesive display.

Earth and Fire has a high number of knowledgeable visitors, some galleries and serious collectors, and some (like many of our members) interested to see new work, talk to the makers, and possibly be tempted to take a small memento home. Below are the brief statements from each artist which will appear in the catalogue, and an image of their work.



Carl Gray

My work is based upon the philosophy of coexisting with nature and having the least possible negative impact upon the environment. Decoration is minimal – a few marks made when the clay is wet to let glazes pool or break or fly ash paint the pot to create a magical surface.



Eric Moss

I work in raku where clay takes a spectacular, elemental journey through fire, air and water to become ceramic. Random crackle glazes dress thrown forms inspired by aeronautical/spacecraft engines, seedpods, nuts and flowers. Decoration, where applied, is simple and geometric counterpointing the crackle, which is the "signature" of raku.



Hannah McAndrew

I make pots with a purpose for use in the home, I enjoy the challenge of creating a piece of work that will perform its task, be attractive and comfortable to have around the house. My work, thrown in red earthenware, is decorated using coloured slips and a rich honey glaze.



Michelle Freemantle

The series 'Grasping the Orient' was born from the visual and mental impact Japan had on me. The circle and cross imagery represents how experiences are carried with you throughout your life and never really have a cut off point, due to them infiltrating the past, present and future.

Website - Ian Marsh

Some time ago I said we would publish the rationale behind the new website. My brief to the website design company Lightbulb was to generate pages which served both members and non-members. It should be modern in design and yet the focus should be the members work and the activities of the NPA. The article below was written by David Henzell of Lightbulb.

APPROACH

Starting a project such as the Northern Potters website, certain key aspects needed to be appreciated. The content, the audience and the use of the site.

DESIGN

The site design needed to be simple. In terms of design I opted for a muted, stylish look that would at no time conflict with the imagery that would need to be included. Hence a colour palette that would complement the art, not fight against it.

The design also needed to be flexible - to accommodate the sheer number of pages, to allow for the easy addition of pages and to allow a user easy access to any site section from wherever they are.

In addition, due to the extent of the site 'Quick Find' menus were added for speed of action.

FUNCTIONALITY

The site has a number of key features:

1. To inform about the NPA
2. To provide information on its members
3. To showcase members' work in an attractive manner
4. To enable membership enquiries
5. To facilitate an NPA Updatable News Section to avoid recourse to expensive design updates.

The design and build uses CSS & PHP to maintain speed of download and ease of maintenance. It is also search engine friendly and accessible.

The Gallery alone has been produced in Flash. In designing this aspect of the site I sought to enable visitors to deliberately choose an artist and visit their page - or - to experience the breadth and variety of all artists work via an interactive gallery. In addition, individual artists work can be examined in the gallery as well as their own page. I want people to 'browse' the work as well as be targetted.

NAVIGATION

Navigation is important. The NPA website features a standard navigation structure throughout to avoid any confusion. It is text based meaning that it is fast to load and will be compatible across all browsers.

When designing a website the first things we ensure are cross-browser issues - so all work is checked thoroughly on IE, Firefox, Safari, Flock & Opera on both Mac and Windows. In addition, sites are optimised for Vista where possible.

Its impossible to cover every possible aspect such as text size, screen size, browser configuration etc - so we take a view that covers most bases.

Talking Points

Keep sending us your thoughts on the various newsletter formats.

Thanks to Stephen Breuer for this comment on the A4 & A5 sizes:

"As far as I am concerned the extra cost involved in bringing colour to the newsletter is justified, the extra cost in keeping with A4 is not. I vote for A5 in as much colour as we can afford."

SUMMER SCHOOLS - Dave Horsfall

My interest and modest knowledge of ceramics dates back to my school days and in the early nineties I found my job in graphics and advertising becoming very stressful. I was looking around for an interest that would take my mind off my business and also give me some quality chill out time. I contacted Pilling Pottery and for the next ten Sundays I headed off there and sat next to Jim Cross and threw pots – it worked wonders!! After the ten weeks I purchased a wheel and a refurbished kiln, set them up in my garage and continued practising. During the years since I have drifted in and out of pottery, but never seemed to fully master the skills, due to both work and family commitments.

About 5 years ago I was in North Wales on holiday and spotted a “Lark” book on ceramics marked down to half price and that sparked the flame once more. I had recently taken early retirement and felt I had more time to devote to my interest so the wheel was duly dusted off and put to good use once more.



My throwing technique did improve but my next hurdle was glazing, so it was time to explore the internet for further education courses. A one-week course was being offered by Annie Peaker in August 2007 in figurative ceramics, an area that I had been drawn to and started to attempt by coiling methods. The course did not mention glazing specifically but it was affordable, fairly local and offered the use of her studio in the evenings, important to me as I would be staying in my caravan on the village campsite and would be frustrated if I was not able to use the studio at night. The workshop facilities were excellent, the tuition brilliant and seemed appropriate to all levels of students on the course (5). The delicious lunches and afternoon teas were provided by Andrew, Annie's husband, served most afternoons out on the patio in the outdoor gallery area.

It was clear that Annie wanted us to grasp not only the techniques she used but also give us a complete insight into the processes used to build her brilliant figures. The course inspired me & also gave me a hunger to learn more about other building techniques and she suggested joining the NPA and recommended the Jim Robison course also.

Last August I attended the Jim Robison summer school which was local, affordable and also offered the use of his studio in the evenings. I met Jim at his gates where he helped me to navigate the caravan to its pitch on his land. Jim, for anyone who has yet to meet him, radiates happiness and a feeling of well-being and with a positive approach manages to teach students of mixed abilities. The course is well-rounded, covering all aspects including texture, form and construction which also includes extrusion and surface decoration. Whilst Jim is giving his 110% in the studio, Liz, his wife, is busy in the kitchen preparing lunches and evening meals to everyone's dietary requirements. So, if you are like me and enjoy meeting other potters from all walks of life and have a hunger to learn more about this art, then overdose on learning, great food and hospitality. These were great times I will never forget and I now have acquaintances that I meet up with at various venues. I haven't decided yet which course to enrol on next summer as there are two which sound inspiring; maybe I will just have to attend both of them!!

AND A POTTERS TIP FROM DAVE:

If like me you can never find the tool you need in your box of tricks, one way to have easy access and sight of all your individual tools is to use a magnetic tool holder. I bought mine from IKEA, very inexpensive and it may also be purchased from any Machine Mart where the cost is a little over £8 for a set of 3 lengths.



Opportunities

Blandscliff Gallery exhibition opportunity from Shirley Sheppard

The gallery has now been running for eight years with the normal ups and downs that one experiences with selling quality works in Scarborough, which is more known for its bucket and spade tourism. But the gallery is becoming better known, with visitors returning every year to see what new things we have. Word of mouth has also sent us many new people, which is extremely rewarding and promising. Being an artist run gallery, visitors find it a positive experience that I can prattle on about different clays, glazes, firing methods as well as painting and printing. We have run special evenings/days for groups like Rotary and School groups, which have been very well received.

The 2009 opening by Lady Ayckbourn will be on **Sat 28th March**. I would like to have a complete renewal of all the ceramics we have in the gallery. Last year saw really good sales of the ceramics above paintings, in both functional ware and smaller sculptural works. **So I need your help and participation to have a good display of ceramics** that will remain on display (unless sold!) until the end of the year often two – It is amazing how regular visitors come in and buy saying “that’s new” and it’s been here for over a year. Hopefully some of you in areas can get together to deliver works.

Please email or contact me on:

shirleysheppard@onetel.com or 01723 367252
or by mail at Blandscliff Gallery, 9 Blands Cliff, Scarborough, YO11 1NR.

Please contact to express interest by the end of February.

Delivery of works will be around 14th-21st March.

Happy 2009 Shirley

Lady Ayckbourn opening the 2008 exhibition



CALL FOR ENTRIES

RBSA OPEN CERAMICS EXHIBITION 2009 29th JULY - 5th SEPTEMBER

A OPEN exhibition of Ceramics. Each artists can submit up to SIX pieces based upon THREE images of their style of work. Selection will be by a panel of judges from those images.

Key dates

15th MAY, DEADLINE for Photographs.
22nd MAY, Selection of ARTISTS.
26th JULY DELIVERY of work by ARTISTS.
29th JULY EXHIBITION open to public.
5th SEPTEMBER, CLOSE of Exhibition, Collection of unsold work.

Submission fee of £15 per Artists (non returnable).

Contact the RBSA Gallery, 4 Brook Street, St Pauls, Birmingham B3 1SA. for FULL details terms & conditions entry forms etc.

By post please enclose a S.A.E. for reply, A4 size.

Details will also be on www.rbsa.org.uk

Please mark enquiries 'OPEN CERAMICS 2009'.

York Open Air Art Exhibitions

Once again all welcome

Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th April 2009

Closing date for application 31st March

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th June 2009

Closing date for application 31st May.

You may attend any or all of the four days.

A selling exhibition held in the main central square in York for Pottery and Fine Art. Potters are supplied with a 6ft table, Artists with screens. The cost is £15 per day. For one extra table add £10 per day (maximum two tables per potter). This year 10% of any sales will be donated to a charity chosen by the Art Festival Committee which will be announced at a later date.

These exhibitions are open to all members of the York Art Society and Northern Potters Association.

Potters are welcome to demonstrate - handbuild or bring a wheel, but please contact me first so suitable arrangements can be made.

Applications forms are available now for the April weekend. Forms for the June weekend will be available in April. For either set of forms send an A5 S.A.E. at the appropriate time. Alternatively, those attending the April event can pick up their June forms then.

Please remember to tick the appropriate box if you require two tables.



For application forms please send A5
S.A.E.s (but not cheques) to:-

Andrea Cundell
4 Cranbrook Road
Acomb,
York.
YO26 5JA
07746 288809



Events Calendar & NPA Members' Listings

NENPA exhibition 'Impact', Philip Bastow Gallery, Reeth in Swaledale, Richmond from 25 Mar - 10 May 2009

British Craft Trade Fair, Harrogate. 5th, 6th, 7th April

Ceramics in The Round, Buxton, Derbyshire. 25th, 26th April

Spring Fling Open Studios Event across Dumfries and Galloway. 23rd, 24th, 25th May

Crafts at Bovey Tracey, with the Devon Guild of Craftsmen. 5th, 6th, 7th June

Slipware workshop, Taena Pottery, Upton St. Leonards, Gloucestershire. 20th, 21st June

Earth & Fire. 26 - 28 June 2009

Aberystwyth International Ceramics Festival, Roseberry Ceramics Group are organising a coach depart Middlesbrough Friday morning July 3rd, returning Sunday 5th arr M'bro 22.00hrs ish! Contact Tel: 01287 204051

Potfest in the Park, Hutton-in-the-Forest, Penrith, Cumbria. 24th, 25th, 26th July

Potfest in the Pens, Penrith. 7th, 8th, 9th August

NPA Open Exhibition, Sylvester Space, Sheffield. 18 - 31 August 2009

Pottery courses running throughout the year including Raku Days & Glazing workshops

Details: Claude Frere-Smith Tel: 01287 204051

Do you know of any other events, local or national? Let me know and I will include them in future issues.

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.)

Contact the membership secretary:

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

E-mail: Margaret@sevenfirs.karoo.co.uk



Standing Orders:

Request from the treasurer and membership secretary: Please could members check their bank account name on their standing order is the same as the name and address the newsletter is sent to. Some standing orders come through with only the business name and not necessarily the name of the potter. It could result in you not receiving your newsletter!

Welcome To New Members

Name	Address		E mail
Petra Lloyd	Croft-on-Tees	Co. Durham	petra33@btinternet.com
Andrew Pentland	Houghton-le-Spring	Tyne & Wear	clayman2000@hotmail.com
Tersea Smith	Leyland	Lancs	tasmith@uclan.ac.uk
Matthew Tyas	Penistone	S.Yorks	matt@matthewtyas.co.uk

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

New Books - Roger Bell

Ceramics In America
English Pottery 1620 – 1840
Masterpieces of World Ceramics

Ed Robert Hunter \$65
Robin Hildyard 50.00 BI
Liefkes& Young 30.00 BI

Book Review - Roger Bell

THE CERAMICS DESIGN COURSE

Publ: Thames & Hudson

Anthony Quinn

£13.95

Anthony Quinn lectures in ceramics at Central St Martins College in London and this book has presumably been developed from course notes for modules in the ceramics BA course. It is extremely well organised and certainly delivers on the aim to be 'a complete course in designing ceramics' and not just in the sense of designing for somebody else to manufacture. The original idea, he points out, may relate to function, decoration, social/political events, the material used or whatever. The subtitle of the book is 'Principles, Practices and Techniques' and these are interwoven very clearly into the 4 chapters: The Design Process, Practical Considerations, Processes and Creative Concepts.

It is amazing how much information is packed into a mere 150 pages which include diagrams, photos and sketches to clearly illustrate the points being made in the text. Unlike the more simple 'how to' books it does not take a number of 'projects' and try to show 'principles from these. Quinn works through from the original inspiration via practical steps to get to the object(s) that achieves the idea. Practical methods are introduced along the way but, acknowledging that the steps required need not always be carried out in the same order, he refers the reader back to reconsider previous sections i.e. the iterative approach.

I would place the market for this book in two areas. Firstly it could save new teaching staff a lot of effort. It could easily be developed for other art and craft media. Secondly it could be used as a remote learning course for those who cannot attend a teaching establishment. For either of these purposes it is a bargain. I personally hope it will help me think ideas through before making the 'definitive' piece that on completion shows the need of further work.

Adverts

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or phone Annie & Andy on 01768 870492



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For details, contact: Jim and Liz Robison
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Holmfirth, HD9 2QT Tel: 01484 685270
Email: jim.robison@virgin.net
Web site: www.jimrobison.co.uk

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Watford Road, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3TL
Tel: +44 (0)1923 800006 | Fax +44 (0)1923 245544
www.potterycrafts.co.uk | enquiries@potterycrafts.co.uk

Advertising in NPA News

Cost of advert for one issue:

Listings: free to members

Boxed Adverts: whole page £25
half page £15
quarter page £10
eighth page £7.50

Repeat Adverts: Six consecutive inclusions
for the price of four

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(Cheques made out to NPA, sent to the
Treasurer)**

Liz Collinson,
Bonded Warehouse, 20A St. George's Quay,
Lancaster, LA1 1RB
E-mail: ceramic@lizc.info

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March 21st – 22nd
April 25th – 26th

FULL WEEK COURSE encompassing, clay preparation, throwing, turning, decorating, kiln-packing (bisque + glaze), glazing July 13th – 19th

I dig and prepare our clay and built the gas-kiln so it's your chance to raise any questions...experience the ceramic cycle...and develop your skills exponentially.

See our website for details (and film)...consult "visitors".

Riddings Pottery, Greenhill Lane, Riddings,
Derbyshire. DE55 4AY.
www.riddingspottery.co.uk

Second Hand Pottery Equipment

For collection or delivery

1. Alsager electric pottery throwing wheel – with wooden casing and a yellow splash tray. Standard wheelhead. Cost new £1580.
£500 plus vat
2. Pugmill-vertical, 3" outlet. Excellent condition, not much use. Complete with base. 3 phase. Cost new £2000.
£600 plus vat
3. Pugmill-vertical, 4" outlet. Complete with base. Single phase. Cost new £3000.
£500 plus vat
4. Glaze/slip mixer. Cost new £260.
£80 plus vat
5. Extruder – Galvanised steel, wall mounted c/w dies. Cost new £166.
£40 plus vat
6. Northern Kilns (Model 012) oval top loading kiln – 18 kw excellent condition has been used only to fire tile decals to 780° C but this kiln is rated to 1300°C. Complete with 10-programme controller. Chamber size 37" long x 23.5" wide x 27" high. Cost new £3500
£1400 plus vat
7. Extruder – Heavy Duty Pottery crafts wall or bench mounted. Cost new £400
£80 plus vat
8. Kiln props – various sizes
Half price – or less

Sedgefield Pottery Supplies 01740 621998



Sedgefield Pottery Supplies

The Old Smithy, Cross Street
Segefield, Co.Durham, TS21 2AH

Tel.01740 621998

e-mail: wrtodd@tiscali.co.uk

Over 30 Clay Bodies available from stock
Agents for Valentines, Potclays, Northern Kilns
New Kilns supplied & fitted - not just delivered
Kiln elements made to order, kiln repairs
Old fashioned service

Regions

Cumbria

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

The photo session with Ian Marsh has been arranged for Jan 25th at Penrith (Gwen Bainbridge). We will show the Phil Rogers DVD during the day also. The Keswick Museum exhibition starts on Sat 25th April with setting up on the previous Thurs & Fri.

Dates still to be fixed for the sculpture walk and social event with Collette Hennigan from Kirkby Stephen, and doubtless, one or more raku sessions.

Members outside Cumbria who would like to be kept in touch should email me.

Cheshire

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

North East

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

'Impact' - exhibition at Reeth

There has been a good response to this exhibition at Philip Bastow Gallery, Reeth in Swaledale, Richmond from 25 March to 10 May 2009, which is being organised by Carolyn Corfield and Carol Metcalfe . The selectors are Prof Kevin Petrie and Dr Andrew Livingstone both from the University of Sunderland together with Philip Bastow, the gallery owner. Selection is currently taking place and applicants will be advised of the outcome in early April.

We would like to extend an invitation to all members to our
Pre-Easter 'Meet the Artists' Event at the gallery, 2-5pm Sat. 4th April 2009

Visit to Shipley Gallery, Gateshead – 28th April, 1pm

Arrangements have been made to view the Rothschild Collection held in store. There is a maximum of 15 places, so booking is **essential**.

Please contact Carolyn Corfield 01325 352322 ccsculptor@btinternet.com

Sheffield

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

A CALL OUT FOR ALL NPA MEMBERS LIVING AND WORKING IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE AND FURTHER SOUTH.

Happy New Year. Are you interested in being part of a regional group of the NPA, organising events - under the NPA umbrella - in our region, forming a mutual support and information structure in the area, helping the NPA with events in this area and generally giving regional support to the NPA?

I would like to hear from you as I wish to get the ball rolling and organise a meeting in February.

Please e-mail or phone or write your views to Brian Holland:

01909 724781, 0114 2494175, 07812928174, or brian.holland100@virgin.net or

16 High Street, Whitwell Worksop, Notts. S80 4QU or

Studio 3, Yorkshire Artspace, Persistence Works, 21 Brown St, Sheffield, S1 2BS

North West

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

Yorkshire

Co-ordinator: Andrea Cundell, 4 Cranbrook Road, Acomb,
York YO26 5JA
Tel: 01904 797631 E-mail: sue.porter4@ntlworld.com

A Potter's Moll Writes

Liz Robison reviews two of last Autumn's events:

CERAMICS IRELAND, 2008

Thomastown, County Kilkenny, 5th-7th September 2008

The stunning location of the riverside mill venue of this festival lifts the heart. Then there are the stairs! The demonstrations and lectures were held on the top floor – good exercise for all the participants. Fortunately the student helpers of the Ceramic Skills and Design School were on hand to do all the fetching and carrying, and they were magnificent. Everything ran like clockwork, though through the eyes of a visitor from England, it is a slightly different clock they have in Ireland.

The festival presented an interesting mix of presentations, demonstrations, lectures and slide shows and all six demonstrators had work-stations around the mill so that delegates could go and watch work in progress, ask questions on a one-to-one basis, or discuss methods and materials.

The six demonstrators represented six different approaches to clay as their work in the exhibition in the mill and in the Kozo Gallery in Thomastown showed. Kira Campbell from USA shows endless permutations of doll-like representations of jointed porcelain figures embellished with ribbons, feathers and crochet. Her compatriot, Jason Walker, makes astonishing and thought-provoking work which examines the questions 'What is Nature?' and 'Is the opposite of Nature Culture?' His work is basically hand built and decorated, sometimes with detailed drawn decoration, sometimes embellished with slip-cast detail. One work was entitled 'Fishing Machine', part wading bird, part fish, part mechanical object; the materials were porcelain, underglaze and stainless steel hooks.

Jim Robison (UK) and Jim Turner (Ireland) gave virtuoso performances in their joint demonstration, (dubbed The Old Codgers by Jim Turner, but The Vigorous Codgers would be closer to the mark.) Both use combinations of hand building and extrusions and Jim Turner demonstrated use of paper clay and thrown and altered forms while the other Jim decorated with slabs and slips.

Also from UK, Mike Dodd gave a very generous demonstration which carefully considered exactly what he wanted to show the audience: how to attach a teapot spout, how to throw a lid, how to facet a thrown bowl, how to apply ball clay to a thrown pot and then alter the shape from inside the pot.



Frances Lambe

Frances Lambe, Ireland, produces sculptural forms working from grogged terracotta through white stoneware to porcelain. Her basic technique of working is described as 'the extended pinch method of hand-building', and the forms demonstrate her awareness of the inter-relatedness of forms of life on planet Earth.

Demonstrators were able to deepen the audience's awareness of their philosophies and motivations through slide shows and lectures. Mike Dodd showed the silent black and white film 'Isaac Button, last country potter'. The audience was simply spell-bound.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that demonstrators do need to decide in advance exactly what they want to show the audience within the time constraints of the forty five minutes – attaching a coil to a pinch pot or joining two small pieces of clay with slip is perhaps not the best use of the time, though the accompanying account of philosophy and motivation is always interesting as are questions from the audience.

Lectures included Clive Fiddis on Glaze Technology, Audrey Whitty on the History of Irish Ceramics, and one I found particularly stimulating, Sean McCrum on Critical Thinking. He began by asking the audience to handle an eclectic mixture of small artefacts: a lively way to introduce the notion of criticism, which can otherwise have somewhat negative connotations.

The whole festival was marked by enthusiasm and generosity, with a talented and hard working committee, all working to their individual strengths. I name but two, partly because their role is sometimes side-lined: Kieren Whitelaw and Laura O'Hagan for their gentle probing and encouraging support as Joint Masters of Ceremonies.



KELOWNA CLAY FESTIVAL

British Columbia, Canada 19th September 2008

The Okanagan Potters Association presented this unique and intimate festival in August. The Master of Ceremonies, Bob Kingsmill, reminded us that ceramics represent a large community around the world, and that potters are known for their generosity.

Jim Robison (UK) showed the variety of work from murals to stretched dishes that he produces. One of his demonstrations was spectacular for the collapse of a big slab ware vase as he tried to stand it up to join the two sections (the fault of unfamiliar clay.) What the audience will remember, however, is his quick recovery and how the pieces were re-rolled and reassembled by next day. Many in the audience commented on how valuable it was to see how to recover from a blip. His square 'slam dunk' dishes, stretched footed dish and extruder demonstrations were all successful and useful to the audience.

Paul Andrew Wanless from Philadelphia explored different ways to address the surface of ceramic pieces. He told his audience that as long as you understand a process you can apply it anywhere and that is a more important thing to take away from a workshop than actual artefacts. He also pointed out that making art means you must respect criticism because you cannot expect every one to like your work.

Lorel Sternig from Kamloops, BC, worked on hand building and mosaics. Many of her works are commissions and she produces raku pieces also, such as animals and birds.

James Hibbert (Naramata, BC) amused the audience with a film clip of him carrying buckets of clay as a child, reminding us what a heavy medium clay is. Experimentation is crucial to him and he says, 'Creative mess is better than tidy idleness.' On Saturday James demonstrated throwing techniques – how to join two thrown pieces together. He likes to see strength in the rim of a vase, as that is where the form ends. He also demonstrated his novel 'clay-o-tine' which clamps a pot so it can be cut in half without toppling over – useful to turn a bowl into two wall light covers.

Tony Clennel from Ontario was influenced by an aunt and uncle who started a pottery in 1947 and worked there until they died. Tony has made a conscious effort to move from the kitchen to the living room with the scale of his pots as he believes people will pay more to enhance their living rooms than for utilitarian kitchen pots – an important consideration when your whole living is made from pots. Tony provided entertaining commentary during his demonstration added to the strong and skilled work he put into producing larger-than-life casseroles and dishes with fine detailing on handles and knobs. He also talked about the importance of continued learning as he is working on a Masters degree, while teaching as well.



The audience was free to wander from demo to demo or concentrate on one presenter in more depth. There was a trade stand and Yosuke Koizumi demonstrated Shippo wheels and Japanese throwing techniques. There was also the opportunity to view the travelling exhibition BC in a Box 2008: Fingerplay, small works by members of the Potters Guild of British Columbia.

Social activities included the Presenters and Okanagan Potters Association exhibition opening at the Art Ark Gallery in the town one evening and a barbecue social and pottery exchange on another. Truly something for everyone.

On the Sunday the Festival broadened out with a Family Fun Day, where people were encouraged to throw or hand-build a pot or have one raku-fired. Potters and helpers were generous with time and patience and the event was punctuated by volunteers blind throwing cylinders and trying to pull the longest handle.

On Monday and Tuesday 36 enthusiasts turned up for Hands-On workshops with Jim Robison and Paul Wandless. Intensive or what? Congratulations to all concerned with Kelowna Clay Festival 2008, it was a triumph.

Liz Robison



CERAMICS IRELAND, 2008

KELOWNA CLAY FESTIVAL: James Hibbert & Jim Robison demonstrate



Members' Gallery



**Sandra
Martin**