

NPA News



Northern Potters Association
www.northern-potters.co.uk

August to September 2020
£2, free to members



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Front Cover
Tony Ovenell, bowl

Back Cover
Bob Park, *Tree Form*, on display at
Halecat Sculpture Trail

Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 21 September 2020

Articles should be between 200 and 1000 words saved as text files or written in an email.

Images need to be high quality for printing, saved as .jpg files. 1MB is a suitable sized file.

Please send text and images as separate email attachments – do not embed images in documents.

Send them to npanews@northern-potters.co.uk
Email or phone the editor if you have any queries or need help.

From the Chair

It's been interesting how many events have gone online since the lock-down. For North Yorkshire Open Studios several NPA members made videos of their studios and making skills. Working in a virtual world is not for me but under the circumstances it's the only option.



A big thank you to Geoff Wilcock who is stepping down after many years as the West regional coordinator. Welcome to Kim Graham who is taking over. She is well known in the region and I am sure will get all the support she needs to carry on its success.

I was particularly interested in the last edition of NPA News and the article "My Copper Red" by Chris Barnes. If you missed it, it is worth a read.

Many thanks to our Treasurer Emmeline Butler for the audited accounts, which are on page 26. Again, the NPA is in a strong financial position.

Our 2020 AGM is scheduled to take place at Potfest in the Pens. We discussed the possibility of a virtual AGM at our last committee meeting, but we will wait to see whether Potfest goes ahead.

Many thanks to Joan Hardie for her work on the Members Survey. I am sure we will all find it a valuable tool when planning for the future. It was encouraging that over half the membership took part.

We have heard that Margaret Lawrenson has given up potting. The NPA owes Margaret a great debt in stepping up to become Chair when we were going through a difficult time and for being membership secretary for several years.

I was pleased to hear that Water Street Gallery has secured a substantial Arts Council development grant. We had a successful exhibition there in 2019 and are planning another one in 2021.

I dipped my toe into an online auction and secured a RJ Lloyd pot decorated by Reg and made by his brother in his Salisbury pottery for my collection. As someone said, "why have you bought it when you have a house full?". Such is life. John Cook

Your Committee

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Committee Members:

Nadine Blakemore	Ilkley
Gerry Grant	York
Lynn Grant	York

Diary

In the current circumstances, you should check with the organisers before travelling to events. There are links to all events on www.northern-potters.co.uk/events

To add your events to the diary and website, email Dianne Cross publicity@northern-potters.co.uk

23 August	<i>Silent Steps out of Lockdown</i> Back alley of Albemarle Rd, South Bank, York	12 & 13 Sept	<i>Pottery & Food Festival</i> Wardlow Mires, Derbyshire
to 31 August	<i>Art in Clay online</i> www.artinclay.co.uk	25 to 27 Sept	<i>Potfest Scotland</i> Scone Palace, Perth
to 31 August	<i>Art in the Pen online</i> www.artintheopen.org.uk	10 & 11 Oct	<i>York Ceramics Fair</i> York St.John's University, York
to 20 September	<i>Halecat Sculpture Trail</i> near Witherslack, Cumbria	24 & 25 Oct	<i>Oxford Ceramics Fair</i> St Edwards School, Oxford
4 to 6 Sept	<i>Potfest in the Park</i> Hutton in the Forest, Penrith	30 Oct to 1 Nov	<i>Potfest in the Pens</i> Skirsgill Market, Penrith
5 & 6 Sept	<i>Art in the Gardens</i> Botanical Gardens, Sheffield	20 to 21 Nov, tbc	<i>Crafts in the Pen</i> Skipton Auction Mart

Alternative firing retreat @ Wild Northumbrian, Tarsset

Join Muddy Fingers in the wilds of Northumberland for a 5 day alternative pottery retreat.

Based at the gorgeous site in Tarsset, beginners and more experienced potters are welcomed to learn making and firing techniques.

We will be covering pit firing, raku, saggar firing, horse hair firing and much more!

Check out Muddy Fingers Pottery on eventbrite for more details.

21st - 25th September
£180 per person

Accommodation can be arranged in a beautiful yurt that sleeps up to 4 for only £450 for 5 nights



The Potters Soul – Sarah Vanic at Chupinka Pottery

How does the potter find their way if they don't like navigating and it's sometimes so much more fun and easy being a passenger?

I can plan and I can spend lots of time planning the plan, but more recently I have tried to envision an outcome that is different to what I desire or expect. Adopting this mental approach has been very helpful to me as a potter, because it enables a softness of control, an easing of discipline and acceptance of the irregularities that often occur in clay practice.

All this thinking and preparing is a delicate balance of mind over matter – literally. Success often occurs when regular practice and study come into play but what I think is more important is staying close to one's own nature, although finding out what that nature is can be tricky. We think we know it and then poof it's gone...it's the way of the potter's soul.

Many potters follow a more planned route and I admire their dedication, integrity and refinement of form. It's inspirational. I also suspect there are a lot of potters like me out there who attempt to be consistent, achieve predictable results, write things down, measure, weigh and then, boom, get sucked up into the reverie of touch and led astray. Out of the system. Hey that's nice.

So to increase my chances of finding the way, I am hand-building sculptural items as well as thrown tableware but wouldn't you know it, Covid came along and put a temporary stop to studio visits and my mission. Luckily, me and Jake (my loyal springer) tucked ourselves under my festival gazebo out of sight with no kiln or wheel but clay and time. Hey, is this the way?

Chimeneas, rhubarb forcers, weirdo sculptural forms, small maquettes of my own body. I was definitely dredging the well with that theme.

Some survived, some didn't but the bloody rhubarb forcer had to be made three times. Number 1 cracked 'cause it got way too sunny. Number 2 was brought down to the ground with me and Jake in tow as it was too heavy for my paper-pasting table. Number 3 is patiently waiting in the queue for kiln firing.

Alas, time has ticked on now and it is 3 months since the early Covid days and I've just started to get into the studio again to throw. So I ask myself, have I been navigating all this time?

I'm not sure, but clay practice and more clay practice is showing the way including a check-in every day to give that little soul a pat on the back to remember we're working together.



Sarah cosying up to her chimenea, June 2020

Covid-19 – Graham Hough

The horror of the COVID 19 Pandemic is still with us. Its impact on many of us has been appalling and has restricted life for us all.

Nevertheless, it has also allowed a positive side to our lives. Loose groups of pottery friends have become closer. Using apps like WhatsApp, Zoom and Hangout we have formed communities who as well as circulating daft videos are offering services to other folk. Many of us are still potting but are unable to access advice, equipment, materials and firing services from colleges, universities or teachers.

In our small group of potters, within NPA West, I have found a wonderfully helpful set of friends. I am truly an amateur potter, without formal training or the technical knowledge to get my grotesque ideas into clay. I usually manage to produce work but every job seems to be an experiment, learning by trial and error. Normally this works for me but every now and then I need help. Now I can use our WhatsApp 'UCLAN Potters Group' to ask for advice and support. I do not have a kiln of any sort so kind fellow potters have offered and are firing my work.

One of the joys of ceramic workshops such as those held at UCLAN in 'normal times', is the companionship and mutual support we give each other in a mixed group of potters. COVID 19 has deprived us of this comfort blanket but the creation of our WhatsApp support group has enabled us all to keep in touch with stupid gifs, making supportive comments about each other's work, seeing what we are all making or messing with, chatting, exchanging jokes, having a giggle, and generally helping us all to get through lockdown.

So although these have been and still are grim times for some, I hope it has also had the positive effect to bring us closer together as a rather excellent group of potting friends.



Corvid heads 1, 2 & 3

An Alternative Activity – Carolyn Corfield

Lockdown began just as things were gearing up for an exhibition at Locomotion, the Science Museum in Shildon by Interface Arts, a 25-strong group working in a wide range of media from glass, textiles, painting, printing to sculpture.

The event was deferred to 2021 as some members were shielding and others unable to access their studios. To keep our spirits up one of our members came up with the idea of creatively being in touch by sending each other homemade postcards and offered to coordinate this. So far 23 artists have participated, and we have all enjoyed making, sending and receiving these over recent months. An exhibition is planned for later in the year at Spectrum in Seaham, with the 23 cards received by each artist framed up for display.

I have received cards made using various techniques from water-colours, lino-prints, pencil drawings, embroidery, padded textile to melted wax. As a ceramic sculptor I thought long and hard as anything involving clay was out, so I decided to create images by manipulating photographs of my sculptural pieces to develop a series of Guardian Angels.

I am not sure whether I have enjoyed the making or receiving most. Waiting for them to arrive has been full of anticipation and a thrill when several arrive at once.

The co-ordinator, Eleanor Matthews, despite having a young family to contend with, has come up with two more projects to keep us busy. The first involves another postcard submission that responds to an image, sent in a page from the catalogue of the Pushing Paper Exhibition at the Oriental Museum in Durham. My image, of Roger Ackling's work using sunlight to make marks on wood, intrigued me. I responded with a reference to the myth of Icarus and 'played' with Fastone Viewer software to digitally alter my sculptural images. This is now part of an on-line exhibition Summer in the City – Durham.

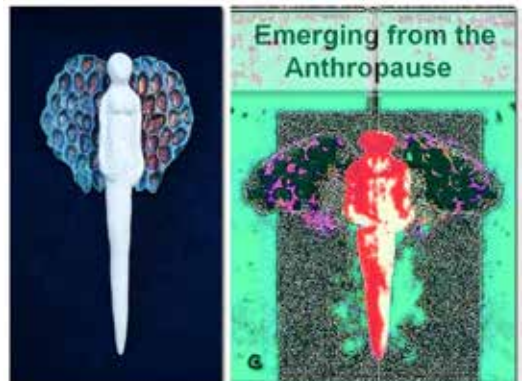
The second new project involves producing an A3 poster for window display at Street Gallery in Dawdon, Seaham. Each homeowner has been given art materials to create a response to their artist's work for display in tandem. My piece *Emerging from the Anthropause* refers to the Great Human Pause, a global scale slowdown in human activity likely to have a profound influence on other species. This event, which is also on-line, can be found at <https://eleanormatthewsart.wixsite.com/streetgallery>

The three projects have been a new departure for my work and thoroughly enjoyable escapism during these times of uncertainty. Thank you Eleanor!

Covid postcard no.16 & original sculpture



Pushing paper response & original sculpture



Street Gallery poster & original sculpture

Re-building my kiln, phase 1 – Shirley Sheppard

In 2002, with little experience and armed with Fred Olsen's Kiln book I decided to build a 21cubic foot, arched gas kiln in the back yard of my studio. It took thousands of pounds worth of bricks, metal and kiln mortar and the help of many experts and friends. The kiln fired beautifully, loudly and provided entertainment for the overlooking neighbours. BUT there were two mistakes: one was where I built it and the other using kiln mortar to cement the bricks together.

In 2006 my landlord decided to sell off the area where my kiln was and any amount of pleading didn't help. First mistake. So it had to be dismantled. This meant SMASHING – second mistake! Don't use mortar, leave the bricks free standing within the frame. So I ended up with an enormous pile of bricks with hard mortar attached to them and loads of metal to rust away. Disheartening!

In 2020 came Covid 19 and self-isolation for me (hence hubby too). What to do? Redesign my kiln for our own back garden, file off that mortar (exhausting), salvage any of the metal and knuckle down to months of hard work.

Now (unfortunately?) 20 years on I am not so ignorant of firing dangers, safety and other things and living in a suburban area on a steep hill the design phase took some time. I wanted to use existing shelves so the layout must fit them and my updraft burners. I couldn't have it too high so I could reach over to load it. After many hours of layout plans on paper, more reading of Fred's book and ending with a layout of the base and first layer in the basement I was ready for the next step.

Because of space I couldn't build the same design, so decided on a longer, flat-roofed top-loading updraft kiln mounted on breeze blocks (mistake number 3? Well, at least a major problem). In the first weeks of lockdown after moving things in the garden and Tony laboriously digging out earth and rubble plus building the wooden frame for cementing I coned the man working next door into laying the 12cm concrete base.

Then the breeze blocks: which ones, whether to lay them holes up or sideways? Read, research... I eventually decided on sideways to allow air flow through the holes. What about moisture? No shelter above this kiln. They have been known to EXPLODE under kilns...EEEEK.

Online searching came up with many differing opinions and solutions to stop this, along with their pros and cons: using Hardie Backer Board above them..."I used it and its great, not strong enough, disintegrates with heat over time as is also cement based"... to flattened expanded metal..."gives air flow it's great no problems, warped with time a disaster"...so read on, research and ask experts.



The original kiln



After Takehown



Layout

I found that expert help from Martin at SWP (StudWeldPro), my original brick suppliers in Ollerton. Last time their man Dave was my saving angel who helped me design the arch and other things. After calculating Cold Face temperature at 1280C, under the two layers of kiln base we added a layer of Splits to reduce the heat. Still I was not perfectly happy and rejected the Hardie Board and Expanded metal in favour of another layer of old filed off kiln bricks from my supply. A week of filing and 66 bricks later that was done, planned and laid onto the breeze blocks.

Now there are three layers of 76mm kiln bricks and one of Molar splits giving a total base of around 25cm. That should do. I will make it a 5th November initial firing in case the breeze blocks explode.

Still cautious I thought I would check with friend Steve Tootell a fellow wood firer, who in turn contacted his friend David Frith, who thankfully added the next spanner in my works – heat from the burner ports! Hadn't thought of that! He has the same burners as me and wraps them in a cage of fibre blanket to protect the breeze blocks. So next is designing that cage so it will fit, protect and be easily removed when the kiln is not in use. That fibre blanket stuff is awful and handling it regularly unless properly encased is not recommended.

At the same time I was working on the problem of support for the kiln bricks above the gap that the burners slip into. I wanted more than just the small overlap of the bricks on the sides. The first idea was two strips of angle iron screwed into the breeze blocks along the sides. They were measured, cut and drilled, then attached to the breeze block side...oops, one then the second bit of breeze block broke off, even with careful drilling. Idea abandoned. I am now in the process of designing, for my ever helpful metal worker Stewart at FabraWeld, two metal support stands that fit exactly, are strong enough, won't rust, can take the heat, won't warp and come with a box of dark chocolates and a bunch of flowers...I don't ask for much.

All the bricks are now cut, mortar filed off, measured and new ones bought. The breeze blocks are laid out on the concrete base with the kiln outline mapped on, so when these stands are made phase two, the building of the brick part of the kiln will begin. Meanwhile I have the metal support structure, the flat roof design, flue and the exhaust canopy plans to continue working on and refining. That's phase two. I am now in the 19th week of isolation and the hardest phase is probably behind me. Phase three is the first firing!

To be continued...



Kiln place and concrete base



First base layer



Burner gap problem

Did you dig it? (part 2) – Kate Stride

It began in Sept 2018, when I came across a patch of clay beside a local reservoir and started an over-enthusiastic if disorganised project of processing and working with some of the clay. Whilst doing this I became more curious as to what clay is, and where it comes from. My experiences were featured in the June/July 2019 NPA News.

With the help from the NPA Bursary Award I was able to continue the project with a more ordered and methodical approach, learn about the origins and structure of clay, and experiment further with three types of locally sourced clay.

The research started with geology and the rock cycle, then to chemistry and the chemical components of clay: silicon, oxygen, aluminium and hydrogen. The equation of clay and symbols is quite complex but interesting, and looking at the origins of clay was really fascinating. A book I found useful is Hamer F & J, *Clay*, Pitman.

I learned about Igneous, Sedimentary and Metamorphic Rocks and Primary and Secondary Clays, their physical characteristics which included their plasticity and reaction to heat

Time had come to get hands-on and I started by making grog from the reservoir clay. A website I looked at said, “why bother making grog when it’s so cheap to buy and is made up of even particles”. But I wasn’t going to be put off. I weighed out 500g of dry, powdered clay, added 250ml of water, mixed it and smeared it onto a board and left it to dry for a few days before crushing and bisque firing it. I crushed it again and fired it to 1180C.

It finally weighed in at 411g to which I added the ground reservoir clay (R2).

Making grog was time consuming and the particles were uneven, but it was satisfying to do the process myself.

The second clay was from the garden of fellow potter, Nigel Cunis in Silkstone South Yorkshire. He kindly gave me some clay he had prepared using the wet method and put through the pug mill twice (N1) and also some dried lumps of clay to process myself (N2).

The third clay (G) is from my garden, found just under 1m down. I would say that these are all Secondary or Sedimentary clays, meaning they have been transported by water from their origin.

The first test I did was to assess workability by rolling a coil about finger thickness and tying it in a knot. N1 withstood this well. It has strength and is a plastic, fat or long clay and very smooth.

R2 withstood the test with some difficulty as it cracked and tore, probably due to the large uneven grog particles. I processed this clay using the dry method, grinding the dry clay and slowly adding water until it becomes workable, not too dry and doesn’t stick to your hands. I added bentonite to the dry clay to give plasticity. Bentonite is much better added in powdered form, as in water it goes a bit gloopy.



Clay samples, knot and size test



R2, mixing the grog



R2 in need of further crushing



N2 crushed clay



G being prepared

G did not withstand the knot tie test, the coils were harder to form and broke when tying. It lacks strength and plasticity – a lean or short clay. This could be because of the mix of different size particles, clay, sand and silt. After adding bentonite I was able to complete the test but only just.

I made 48mm disc test pieces and bisque fired them to measure the shrinkage: N1 = 41mm; R2 = 44mm (less shrinkage due to the added grog); G = 42mm.

The colour of the unfired clays varied: N1 is very yellow, R2 is more of a pale sandy colour and G is a grey colour. They all contain an amount of iron oxide, and the grey colour in G could be because it also contains an amount of carbon which burnt away during firing, resulting in all three clays being similar in colour after firing.

I made small hand-built pieces with the clays. The two small finished pieces made from N1 and R2 have been coloured with red iron oxide and waxed. N1 is a good workable clay with a slightly darker fired colour. R2 is workable and will be used soon to make a hand built piece reflecting the place the clay came from.

After using the dry method of processing for G, it's still difficult to work with and prone to cracking. I wouldn't consider it to be workable clay on its own but, blended with a commercial clay, I am sure it will work. I'm hoping that wet processing for G will produce a workable clay that doesn't need blending, as there's quite a lot in my garden.

I broke the dry lumps of clay from Nigel, (N2) and processed it using the wet method but not having a large sieve I removed unwanted stones and bits by hand. Once the clay had broken down I drained off the excess water and poured the slip-like clay into a cotton pillow case and left it to drip. I will use this method again, but with more caution and forethought! The excess water didn't drip from the pillow case very well as I poured in far too much. I got absolutely covered in clay when trying to retrieve it from the heavy sodden pillow case on to the plaster bat.

The two methods of processing clay are enjoyable. The wet method takes more time but produces a better quality clay as very small pieces of unwanted materials have been filtered out. The dry method is quicker and less clay is lost when

filtering but produces a clay of lesser quality. When processing clay in the future, I will make a large screen/sieve and take up the offer from a friend to go to her studio and use the pug mill.

My project came to an abrupt halt on 23 March with the COVID-19 virus lock-down. The small piece I was determined to make with G, and the test pieces set aside for stoneware firing have not yet been fired as the kiln is at the studio not at home.

N2 is still in a bag and in need of further wedging before using. I'm looking forward to getting back to the studio and completing this part of my project. I want to see if the clays stand up to stoneware temperature without making a mess of the kiln shelf.

I am also keen to see the colour produced from a stoneware firing which hopefully will be a lot richer – a clay body colour that stands on its own without needing additional coloured glazes.

If you have the time I would thoroughly recommend digging and processing your own clay as it is really fulfilling. You only need to dig up and process a small amount at first to assess whether its workable. If it's been there for a long time it will still be there when you go back for more.

I enjoyed the research and learnt a great deal about the origins and structure of clay. Processing and experimenting with the clays and grog was also really informative and enjoyable, and will be developed into future work.

Thank you NPA.



Fired pots



N2 wet method

NPA members' Survey 2020 – findings

There were 342 responses to the survey, spread across all regions. This is about 60% of members.

Our members

There is no “typical” NPA member but the data shows us some of our collective characteristics.

Most members are over 40 (chart 1).

95% of us are makers, with small numbers also describing themselves as teachers, collectors, gallery owners, or retired / lapsed potters.

Professional, serious amateur and hobby potters are all well represented (chart 2).

Active potters are a mix of regular part-time, full time and occasional potters (chart 3).

Most (77%) work at home, 14% have separate premises, 8% share studios, with smaller numbers making at colleges, classes, community studios, or another potter’s studio.

Our number of years of potting is widely spread, gradually decreasing from 23% with 10 years or less, to 12% with 50 years or more (chart 4). In contrast, 65% have been NPA members for less than 10 years, so new members are not all new to pottery.

Most people gave two or three reasons for joining the NPA:

To meet other potters	72%
To see potters' work	50%
To learn about pottery	45%
To promote their work	37%
To sell their work	29%

Most members can drive to events, though the distance they would travel and suitable days vary.

Home computers, email and the web are used by the majority of members and 92% rate their computer skills as adequate or better.

Facebook and Instagram are the most used social media platforms at 59% and 47% of members and 70% rate their social media skills as adequate or better.

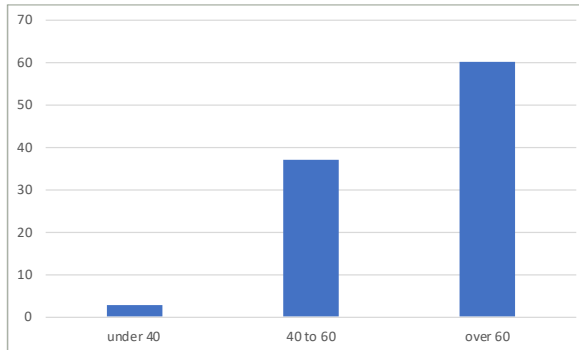


Chart 1, members in each age group (%)

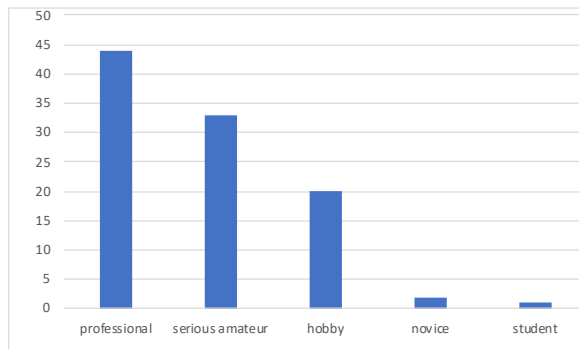


Chart 2, how makers describe themselves (%)

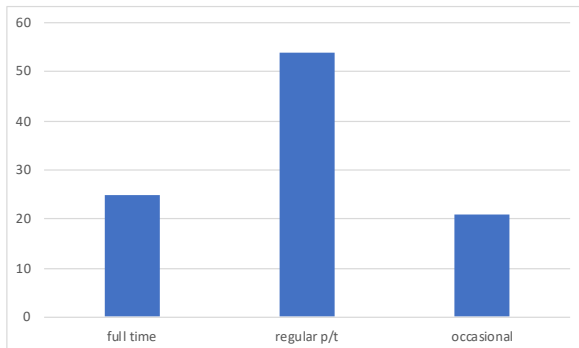


Chart 3, time spent on pottery (%)

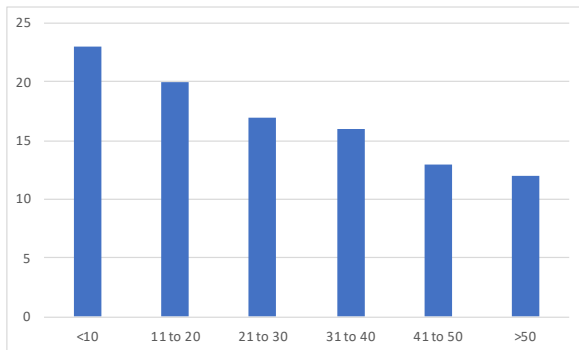


Chart 4, years of involvement with pottery (%)

Our interests

Four key questions explored the interest in different types of events and in gaining advice and support from other members. The responses are given in order of popularity (most popular first).

All types of events are of wide interest (chart 5).

Demonstrations	82%
Exhibition visits	81%
Talks by makers	73%
Firings	69%
Studio visits	66%
Making workshops	63%
Social events	51%

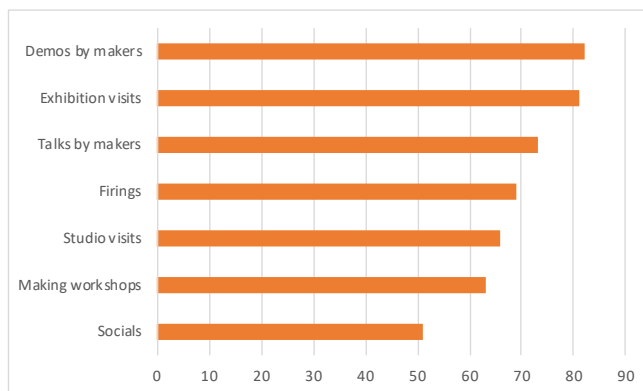


Chart 5, events of interest (%)

There was a lower but still substantial level of interest in help and advice on different subjects (chart 6).

Glazing and firing	55%
Selling online	50%
Promoting work	46%
Selling in galleries	44%
Photography	43%
Making techniques	39%
Social media	35%
Selling at shows	32%
Computing	25%

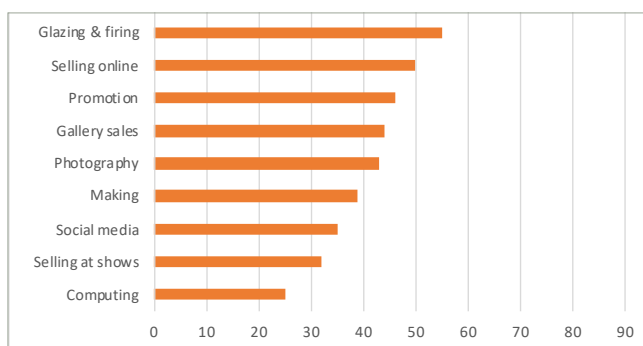


Chart 6, areas for help and advice of interest (%)

The most popular ways of getting support or advice within the NPA were

Articles in NPA News	79%
Face to face in region	71%
The NPA website	57%
By email	55%
In person at an NPA event	50%
Social media	42%
Online discussion forum	33%
By phone	18%

A big majority (85%) are interested in taking part in a shared NPA contact list or directory.

Thanks to all the members who completed the survey, especially those who went to extra trouble to do so. The response level is very encouraging, as were the many supportive comments, suggestions and offers of help. It has been very illuminating and worth all the hard work.

Joan Hardie

Involvement in the NPA

Participation is about 40% for each of

- the website gallery
- contributing to NPA News
- following an NPA Facebook group.

A lower proportion of 30% are currently active in their region.

The NPA Bursary scheme has strong support with 89% thinking it a good use of our funds and 35% considering making an application in the future.

Many members are willing to participate more in activities, particularly within their own region.

To help other members	59%
To help organise an activity	55%
To demonstrate a skill	37%

Members' Gallery

All NPA members are invited to send images of their work to the editor for inclusion in the gallery.



Suzanne Wright, Swaledale sheep



Martine Becquet, sawdust fired, photo Kate Kirkwood



Ali Bradley, different clays and the same glaze



Sally Smith, sculptural piece after a wave-worn shell, from the Isle of Harris. A combination of throwing and hand building. Dipped, sprayed and brushed glaze. 36cm high, fired to 1260C.



Ann Haworth, photo Prue Edwards



Sarah Vanic, *Swirl*, 12"



Tony Ovenell



Nadine Blakemore



Gill Jones

When sending images for the Gallery, please provide a print quality jpg file of about 1MB or more, sent as an email attachment.

It is helpful to readers if you give short details about the piece including its title, size, material and key firing information. Email to npanews@northern-potters.co.uk

Profile – Pamela Thorby



I'm two years into becoming a ceramicist (or doing the claying as my family refers to it) but the passion for making has been a constant during my previous 25 years as a musician and teacher of music. I was very fortunate to visit fantastic galleries and museums during my touring life and have collected functional ceramics since my school-days. It turns out that I admired several NPA members' work before I knew anything about this world.

During a wonderful exploratory year of foundation art and design at York College in 2016 I made films, sculptures, prints and installations – everything except visiting the ceramics studio. I couldn't have foreseen that within a couple of years more I would go crazy for clay.

As a material it provides me with all I need to make that vital connection between head, heart and hands. I am totally serious about this new path as an artist, putting as much physical and mental energy into this second vocation as my first.

The experience of learning to throw, to gather knowledge and study some of the many skills of hand building, glazing etc. and then to show the end result is incredibly similar to the lifelong process of learning to play an instrument. Both demand isolation, hard work and dedicated time with repetitive practice needed to keep up and hone those skills. The presentation of the artefact at the end of that process is also an enlightening parallel experience.

I can see that there are as many diverse ways of expression (intellectually, practically, imaginatively)

with clay as there are choices and pathways with music and I think about these parallels all the time while I'm making my work.

Lockdown life has caused me to reflect on recurring themes which play in my mind in the background to all the 'things' – performances, compositions, recordings, objects – I have made past and present; particularly our perception of time and our place in it. I've been so thankful for the time with my family these past few months, the time to talk over ideas together and the time to make in my studio. I know and truly appreciate how fortunate I am.

York Open Studios 2020 would have been a first for me but I'll be raring to show my work when it reappears next year. October this year will be my first time as an installation artist at Art&2020 at York Racecourse. I'll be showing *Meek* a three part work consisting of a piece of sound art entitled *Time and Motion Study*, a *Cabinet of Ceramic Curiosities* and I'll be constructing a *viral sculpture-a-day* over the course of the exhibition.

In lockdown I've grasped the nettle of social media and the online side of being an artist these days. After volunteering to join the committee I was very surprised to be encouraged to become Vice Chair, accepted and will do my bit to be positive, enthusiastic, fair and a good listener at all times. I'm also having a go at being our social media person, which my children find hilarious. The Internet is definitely not my habitat of choice, but don't we all wish that the only 'viral sensation' that we have to think about right now is just the latest online trend?



You can see my own ceramics journey on Instagram @pamelathorbyceramics.



Viral sculpture, part of the *Meek* installation for Art&2020

Lockdown turn up – Eric Moss

Following an Instagram conversation with extraordinary American metal sculptor Chris Bathgate, he gifted me a dozen exotic wooden components from the overrun of his latest project with free rein to do "whatever I liked with them".

Based in Baltimore, Chris works at the opposite end of the technological spectrum to most of us potters, using Computer Aided Design to bring his designs to life and CNC milling machines to carve complex forms from solid lumps of metal with tolerances finer than a tenth of a millimetre.

The dozen carved wooden pieces are all the same size so I need to calculate in reverse how the three different clays I'll use might 'shrink to fit' their dimensions – not easy when you consider I'm also aiming for different firing temperatures for raku and stoneware! Of course, I can more easily shave down the wooden element to fit the finished ceramic and, if these are simply for a dozen unique works of art, that would be fine.



But Chris has dangled the carrot of a possible collaboration piece, with a pre-order edition marketed through his well established subscriber following, for which I will need to plan a streamlined manufacturing process (or give myself the possible headache of a huge workload of repetitive tasks, depending on take-up). I'm at early prototypes stage in these images, but you can follow my progress on Instagram @ericmossceramics.

Books – Roger Bell

Review

Ceramics Ireland magazine

For a change I will review a magazine for this issue of the newsletter. 'Ceramics Ireland' is the magazine of the ceramic organisation for Ireland founded in 1977. It is the sister of Ceramic Review published by the CPA with which most of you will be familiar. It is understandably similar in so many ways that a copy on a table could be either publication if you cannot read the title – A4 in size, similar cover and paper, slightly fewer pages as there are fewer advertisements in Ceramics Ireland. The layout of articles is more conventional and standard, where Ceramic Review is perhaps flashier. It's a matter of taste which you prefer.

So let us consider the differences. There are only two issues a year so it has not reached issue 50 whereas Ceramic Review, with six editions per year, is now over 300 issues. Price is a very modest 6 Euros compared to £9.90 for Ceramic Review! The quality of writing and photography is mainly very high in both magazines.

Ceramics Ireland includes 25 or so articles of two, three or four pages where Ceramic Review has perhaps 15 of varying length (issue 302 devoted eight pages to Adam Buick throwing a Moon Jar), plus some half-page news snippets. While not neglecting other ceramicists from abroad, Ceramics Ireland devotes more space to home grown artists, whereas Ceramic Review has moved over the years to a more international emphasis. Also Ceramics Ireland seems to give more coverage to exhibitions and galleries, while Ceramic Review is devoting more space to auctions and price trends.

While Ceramic Review is more relevant for most UK potters and others interested in ceramics, Ceramics Ireland would be an interesting and reasonably priced addition. In 2017 Ceramics Ireland published a 270 page book, priced at 30 Euros, celebrating 40 years of the organisation.



New Books

Creative Pottery, Judith Schwartzkopf	£19.99
Carve Your Clay, Hilda Carr	£12.99
Ceramique 50 Artistes Contemporain Vannier & Laforet	
China's Porcelain Capital, M B Gillette	£25.99
From Clay To Kiln, Stuart Carey	£14.99
Making Pots, Stefan Anderson	£15.99
The Pottery Gardener, Arthur Parkinson (The Hunters Press)	£25.00
Special Effect Glazes, Linda Bloomfield	£20.00

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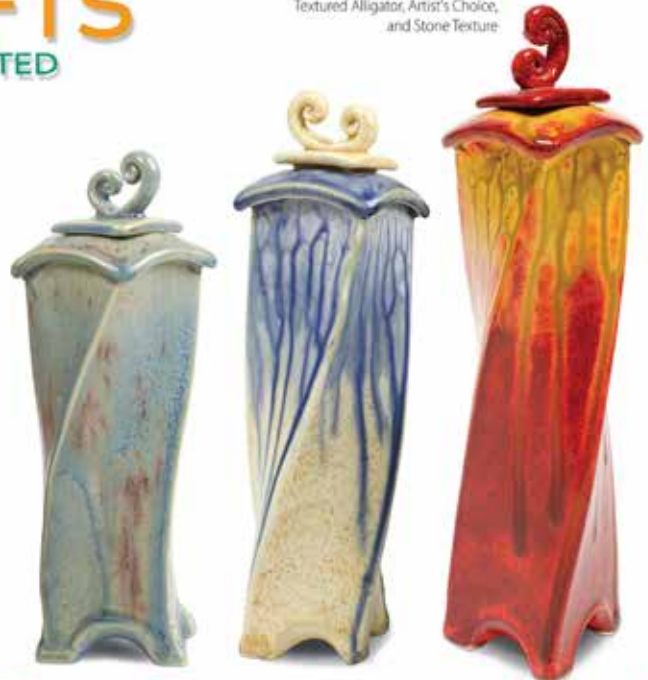
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Welcome to new members

A warm welcome is extended to all our new members.

We look forward to seeing you at events and images of your work in our gallery.

Ravi Ivaturi	Sheffield
Tom James	Sheffield
Anna-Marie & Philip Magson	York
Loretta Mayfield	Sheffield
Kath McDonald	Lancaster
Lou Wills	Sheffield



Ann Davis

Membership Secretary

Visit northern-potters.co.uk for membership forms and subscription rates

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colour	1/2 pp £30	1/4 pp £18	1/8 pp £10
B&W	1/2 pp £20	1/4 pp £15	1/8 pp £8
Size	176Wx106H	86Wx106H	86Wx53H

NPA Artists' Gallery

All NPA members can have a page on the NPA website to display and promote your work.

You will need to provide up to four photos of your work, an artist's statement of about 100 words, email address, phone number, plus any website, Facebook and Instagram links.

Contact John Cook with the details website@northern-potters.co.uk

New entries in our Artists' Gallery at northern-potters.co.uk



Veronica Bell



Ann Magson

Pamela Thorby



Committee News

Zoom committee meeting

Our second Zoom meeting was held on 12 July, with all committee members taking part.

Regional Liaison We have not had a committee member responsible for the role of liaison with the regional coordinators for several years. We agreed that we should reinstate the role and discussed the challenges faced by the regional coordinators and what positive support we could offer.

Social media Pamela Thorby has been very active on the social media front, creating an NPA Instagram account, revitalising NPA Twitter and joining Dianne Cross as Facebook administrator.

Events Potfest in the Pens has been moved to late October so it will be too cold for demonstrations. Gerry Grant expects these to be rearranged for 2021. We hope to hold the AGM at the Pens and will review the situation in a few weeks. If a 'real' meeting is not possible the AGM will be run as a virtual meeting.

Newsletter The survey has suggested many topics of interest to members. Joan Hardie will try to elicit contributions to cover them. She has received a good range of contributions recently.

Membership The Access database used to maintain our membership records has now been upgraded, giving us greater security and also limited multi-user access for committee members.

Members' Survey We discussed the findings of the survey and some of its implications for the future. The discussion continues by email and we hope to develop ideas which incorporate many of the responses and suggestions.

Sally Streuli



@NorthernPotters



Northern Potters Association



@NorthernPotters

NPA Bursary Scheme

In 2020 the NPA is offering up to 8 bursaries of £100 to any member who would like to develop their work by attending courses, workshops or otherwise exploring new directions.

All you need to do is get an application form from treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk and complete it, outlining how and when the money will be used to benefit your practice. The committee will consider your application and let you know if you have been successful.

The final step is to write a short illustrated article about your experience for NPA News.

Northeast region volunteers

I have contacted all those members in the region who have given permission for the NPA to use their email addresses.

The northeast region is the only one of our six regions without a member on the NPA Committee and we urgently need to address the situation if we are to function successfully.

We also urgently need volunteers to work with the Regional Coordinator to develop events and exhibitions in the northeast. The region has been inactive for too long.

You all need to think very carefully about how you can help the NPA in the northeast. All those who are interested please contact me at mr.jccookie@googlemail.com for further information.

John Cook (NPA Chair)

Equality & Diversity Statement

The NPA is an inclusive, not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers which welcomes and values diversity (of age, ethnicity, race, religion, disability, belief or non-belief, sex or sexual orientation) within its membership. Our aim is to ensure that all our members are treated with dignity and respect.



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Regional News

Regional groups were set up to help members communicate with others locally and to arrange events in their area.

As some lockdown restrictions are starting to be lifted it's encouraging to see some outdoor events taking place. Regional members Roger Bell, Bob Park and myself are currently exhibiting at Halecat sculpture Trail, near Witherslack, until the 20 September. Potfest in the Park has been rescheduled to 4 to 6 September and Potfest in the Pens will take place over the weekend of 30 October to 1 November. For members exhibiting at Potfest events it would be great to share your work with our Instagram followers using #npanw.

Exhibitions held inside venues are proving to be more challenging. Although still waiting for final confirmation, it's likely that our event at the Upfront Gallery will be postponed until next year. Work continues to pull together an exhibition schedule for 2021.

Through our Facebook page, members have identified a couple of choices for studio visits sometime in the future. Thank you to those who took the time to vote. Contact has been made with the two ceramicists chosen, to see when this would be possible. Zoom meetings continue, our latest get-together focused on the benefits of social media, which proved fruitful.

Kathryn Stevens

northernpottersnw@gmail.com

Facebook: NPAnorthwest

Exhibitions that are hopefully still proceeding:

Garstang Arts Centre, 17 October to 14 November, wall hangings only.

PR1 Gallery, UCLAN, Preston, 2 to 18 November

The exhibition 'Affinity' at the Arteria Gallery, Lancaster will run for 4 months, starting in January. The gallery will select the work to be displayed from the images sent in, a statement needs to be included with your images. The contact is Sharon, e-mail: info@arteriashop.co.uk

I have been in touch with John (Chair) to relinquish the position of coordinator for West region as I am about to retire from UCLAN, though not from ceramics. I will be hoping to spend more time travelling and therefore feel it would be a good opportunity for another member to take up the opportunity. I would like to thank members who have supported and encouraged me during my time in the role. Our new coordinator is Kim Graham. Kim will be in touch with NPA West members regarding future meetings and staying in touch.

Geoff Wilcock (retiring)

ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk

01772 862852

Kim Graham (incoming)

kimgraham@btinternet.com

07867638179

Facebook: NPAwest

No news from the SW this time, so here are some of Barbara Chadwick's jolly hand-made plates.



Juliet Myers



email@sw-npa.co.uk



Facebook: NPAsouthwest



NW



W



SW

We've got two pottery events to put in our diaries this autumn.

We are planning an NPA Raku event at The Newmarch Workshops in Middlesbrough on Sunday 27 September and Sunday 4 October. The 27th will be a HALF DAY making workshop, with 5 places in the morning and 5 in the afternoon. They will be seated workshops, so we must keep spaces limited. Your work will be bisque fired ready for the following weekend. The firing day will include outdoor space so we will be able to maintain social distancing while we glaze and fire the work. The cost for the two workshops combined will be £50 including materials and refreshments. To book your place email carolnewmarchceramics@gmail.com



NE

The popular Empty Bowls event will now be held on Thursday 29 October, 6-8pm at Tyne Bank Brewery. Buy a ticket, choose a bowl, get it filled, eat, drink and take it home. Supports local food charities. Tickets via Facebook [@emptybowlsnewcastleupontyne](https://www.facebook.com/emptybowlsnewcastleupontyne)

Helen Pickard helen.pickard@icloud.com Facebook: [@North East Potters](https://www.facebook.com/@NorthEastPotters) Twitter: [@ne_npa](https://twitter.com/@ne_npa)

So far this year we have missed all the events we organised after our January meeting. That will teach us for congratulating ourselves for doing a better job of filling the calendar this year...

We sent an email round asking what people had done during lockdown and had some brilliant replies. People have learned new techniques, experimented with glazes, made forays into online selling, collaborated with other artists and produced Covid statement pots reflecting the emotional, political and social impact of lockdown amongst many other things. The photos and accounts are really inspiring and all those artists who shared their expertise on Facebook and Youtube we applaud you, your efforts have been appreciated.



E

Lyn Clarke & Kay Butterworth enpa.coordinator@gmail.com Facebook: [NPAEast](https://www.facebook.com/NPAEast) Twitter [@NPA_E](https://twitter.com/@NPA_E)

It's been a strange few months as shows and markets have been cancelled. Sadly, the Sheffield Ceramics Fair won't be going ahead but potters are a resilient lot and we've seen some interesting initiatives from members. Kate Cooke held a pop-up stall with a printmaker friend outside her house, socially distanced and sanitised, and we've lost count of the online sales and exhibitions.

Prompted by the committee we set up an Instagram account [@northernpottersassociationse](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationse) and Wendy has been busy trawling through Instagram hunting for members accounts so that she can repost their pictures. It's not been an easy job and if she's missed you out please let her know. Better still, send us pictures and news about events, classes or anything else we can publicise.



SE

Nog has organised a stroll-n-chat at Cannon Hall Country Park, that as I write has yet to take place but hopefully we can all gather, share stories and have a socially distanced cuppa. He has also been organising a pop-up ceramics market scheduled for Sunday 23 August at Fox Valley Retail Centre in Stocksbridge. We're hoping it will become an annual event. With Covid restrictions in place there will be space for 20 potters so if you'd like to take part please let us know.

We've just heard that Art in the Gardens will take place in September which is great. Wendy will send out details to those taking part as soon as they are finalised. We've also been busy planning for an exhibition at Gallery 6 in Newark later in the year. This is an event which is curated by the gallery. We've had quite a few members expressing an interest in taking part but we'd like to hear from more of you. Do look out for emails with details and let us know if you'd like to exhibit.

Graham Northing & Wendy Wall senpacoordinator@outlook.com Facebook: [NPAsoutheast](https://www.facebook.com/NPAsoutheast)

Financial Statement 2019/2020

**Financial statements to April 2020
NORTHERN POTTERS ASSOCIATION**

	>	31 Mar 2020	>	31 Mar 2019
RECEIPTS				
Membership Fees		13274.22		12716.22
Events Income	2101.00		1443.00	
Events Expenditure	2463.75	-362.75	1880.05	-437.05
UCLAN Talks				
Regional		0.00		0.00
Interest		0.00		0.00
POS Admin Charges				
POS Trans Charges				
Sundry Income		0.00		
		12911.47		12279.17
EXPENDITURE				
Committee Travel and Venue Costs		1770.01		1421.13
Exhibition Travel Expenses		0.00		0.00
Postage & Stationery		217.38		98.48
Insurance		259.84		412.84
Publicity		0.00		
Website Expenditure		2322.24		1512.00
Newsletter	9383.28		9270.87	
Less Adverts and sales	1834.00	7549.28	1570.50	7700.37
Bursary				
Sundries		0.00		
Auditor		300.00		300.00
		12418.75		11444.82
Current Surplus/Deficit		492.72		834.35
BALANCE SHEET				
Assets				
Yorkshire Bank – closed				
Co-op Bank Current Account		14903.43		14335.71
Timing Differences		-35.00		40.00
		14868.43		14375.71
Liabilities				
Opening Accumulated Funds		14375.71		13541.36
Current Surplus/Deficit		492.72		834.35
Timing Differences				
		14868.43		14375.71



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