

# NPA News



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

October to November 2020  
£2, free to members



## In this issue

- 3 From the Chair
- 3 Your Committee
- 4 Diary
- 6 Zoom demonstration by Syl Macro
- 7 The Clay Team – helping to bring pottery to kids & adults in deprived areas
- 8 A Time to Remember – Wendy Turner
- 9 Jim Robison's courses
- 10 Rebuilding my kiln – Shirley Sheppard
- 12 2020 Vision – Jane Hurford
- 13 Finding opportunities in Lockdown – Jill Ford
- 14 Members' Gallery
- 16 Making a new studio – Thora Talling
- 17 Covid 19, part 2 – Graham Hough
- 18 Books – Roger Bell
- 21 Welcome to new members
- 22 Committee News
- 24 Regional News
- 26 Potfest in the Park 2020

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Front Cover: Vivienne Sillar, 'Canoodling Gannets', burnished and smoke fired  
Photo: Ian Daisley

Back Cover: John Scott, 'One of those days', Potfest in the Park  
Photo: Jack Hardie

## Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 23 November 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](mailto:npanews@northern-potters.co.uk)  
Email or phone the editor if you have any queries or need help.

## From the Chair

As I live in an infected area and had been in Spain during their outbreak, I decided to have a COVID test. What a mistake! Having a swab stuffed down each side of my throat and then up my nose I thought I would at least get a sweet from the nurse, but no, just a laugh! No wonder most of the home tests are negative! Who is going to self-inflict discomfort?



Welcome to several volunteers who will be helping to run the NE region. They are already planning events and a meeting. We can now cover the north and south of this large region. I wish them all the best.

We also welcome three new committee members Carol Newmarch, Kathryn Stevens and Michelle Park. I am sure that they will fit in well and enjoy the experience and in time take a specific responsibility on the committee.

I was interested to read the first NPA Bursary article in the last NPA News written by Kate Stride and her research into finding alternative sources of clay. I hope this encourages other members to apply for Bursary funding.

I also enjoyed the article by Sarah Vanic entitled "The Potters Soul". It's a difficult route to follow when you are forced to relinquish the wheel and the plan and instead go with your intuition. Well done for sharing the experience, it sounds like you enjoyed it.

I recently visited an exhibition "Fake, Steal, Forge" in which artists were asked to copy, forge or reinterpret old masters in paint and 3D materials. A few Hockneys crept in but overall the exhibition was a reinterpretation of the great masters. The exhibition poses the question "is any art truly 100% original when we have all been influenced by what we have witnessed and seen over the years". We adapt what we have seen and put our own mark on it and take ownership, but is it truly ours? As Picasso is quoted as saying, "Good artists copy, great artists steal." I'll go along with that. I just wish I could have had a chance to knock a few Picasso plates out for the exhibition. A sure winner and a steal at £30 each!

John Cook

## Your Committee

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Nadine Blakemore	Ilkley
Gerry Grant	York
Lynn Grant	York
Carol Newmarch	Middlesborough
Michelle Park	Low Bentham
Kathryn Stevens	Barrow in Furness

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## Diary

In the current circumstances, you should check with the organisers before travelling to events. To add your events to the diary and website, email Dianne Cross [publicity@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:publicity@northern-potters.co.uk)

28 Oct to 10 Jan	<b>The Winter Show</b> Studio Eleven Gallery, Kingston upon Hull Deiniol Williams
30 Oct to 1 Nov	<b>Potfest in the Pens</b> Skirsgill Market, Penrith Many NPA members
to 24 Dec	<b>Northern Stars</b> Platform Gallery, Clitheroe Graham Hough
3 to 15 Nov	<b>Fired 2020</b> Gallery 6, Newark Upon Trent NPA South East
Jan to Apr 2021	<b>Affinity</b> Arteria Gallery, Lancaster
11 Mar to 25 Apr 2021	<b>Earth Works</b> Water Street Gallery, Todmorden
12 Jul to 3 Sep 2021	<b>Prints &amp; Ceramics</b> Platform Gallery, Clitheroe

### Exhibition Opportunity

The Platform Gallery, Clitheroe, Lancashire  
**Prints & Ceramics: Connecting Crafts**

New dates: 12 July to 3 September 2021

The Platform Gallery's third exhibition of the year brings together two Northern Craft organizations; the Northern Potters Association and 10 Strong Artists. It is the aim of this exhibition to showcase the wealth of talented artists belonging to these organisations and to connect visitors with local contemporary makers and their crafts.

Submission deadline – 5 March 2021  
Application Forms from Andrea Westall & Jack Shackleton, [platform.gallery@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:platform.gallery@ribblevalley.gov.uk)  
t: 01200 425566

NPA contact: Graham Hough  
[graham@redspr.com](mailto:graham@redspr.com)

### 2020 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held at Potfest in the Pens at 5.15 on Saturday 31st October 2020 in the Hired Lad.

All members are invited, however due to Covid social distancing restrictions, numbers will be limited to 30 including the Committee members. If you are making a special journey to Potfest to attend the AGM, or would like to reserve a place in advance, please contact Sally Streuli at [secretary@northernpotters.co.uk](mailto:secretary@northernpotters.co.uk) and she will confirm your attendance.

Please note you must sign in to comply with the Hired Lad's track and trace requirements. Tea and coffee will be provided but social distancing will be required at all times.

### Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2019 AGM
3. Matters Arising
4. Election of Committee members
5. Chair's report
6. Members' Survey report
7. Treasurer's report
8. Membership Secretary's report
9. AOB

### Exhibition Opportunity

The Water Street Gallery, Todmorden is holding an NPA exhibition entitled **Earth Works**

11 March to 25 April 2021

The gallery will curate the exhibition.

Entry details will be published on their website [www.waterstreetgallery.co.uk](http://www.waterstreetgallery.co.uk) in early January, with the submission deadline of 18 February.

If your photos are too big for the online application form I advise you to apply by email with attachments.

Other fine art pieces will also be in the exhibition and all work has to be for sale. The exhibition will also be placed in the gallery's online shop.

John Cook

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# Pop-Up Pottery: a small ceramics fair in a hurry.

Fox Valley Retail Centre, Stocksbridge, Near Barnsley, 23 August 2020



This whole event started with a bit of a “why don’t you just ask?” comment from my partner Liz. The small craft fair at Fox Valley in July, which I had been planning to go to, had been called off due to weather and I was feeling a bit despondent. The only local event surviving this summer, the Meersbrook Ceramics Festival had also just been cancelled. During early lockdown I had been quite busy and all this new pottery had to go somewhere. So the idea was born: if their craft fair is off why not try and have one of our own.

An e-mail was despatched to the centre’s office “Come in and tell us more. It sounds good” was the near instant reply. And so it all started. It was an outdoor market and would comply with the then Covid regulations, good. They could provide up to twenty market stalls maximum, great. And had several dates when it could happen, brilliant. We had Art in the Gardens coming up and didn’t want to clash with that, so the best date was only four weeks away. All we now had to do was get potters to agree to come to a retail centre carpark in the Upper Don Valley next to a steelworks, and then get visitors and potential customers to come as well. What could possibly go wrong!

It started slowly at first, the minimum number of 8 was achieved, and then there was a burst and we were over a dozen. I had to send out a mail to ask people to reply quickly or they might miss out! We ended up with 21 so Wendy and I shared a stall.

Advertising was another thing. I’m now sold on the power and reach of social media. Hours were spent trying to promote the event and other potters did their bit as well, especially Lyn and Gerry Grant at Fangfoss who were great.

Fox Valley used their PR department to promote it on their outlets and they also did all the flyer printing for free. In fact Fox Valley were a joy to work with all round.

The great day came around very fast. The only thing that could go wrong now was the wind. If it gusts over 30mph the market insurance is off – game over, go home! Potters arrived and set up. The wind, which was borderline, started to drop and we breathed a sigh of relief.

The event itself went off very smoothly. Potters chatted to potters and caught up on all the gossip. Customers came from Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham and all sorts of places within 30 miles so the advertising must have had some effect. There was a lot of talk and a lot of sales. The place was busy all day. It seemed as if people were just happy to have somewhere to go to, which suited us fine.

All of a sudden it was all over. So quick, it’s time to pack up. Feedback from the potters has been good (pew) and from Fox Valley has been fantastic. When can we come back? Do we want power putting on? Do we want live music? Would we like a demo stage? Let’s see if we can get more stalls!

I hope that we can stage this fair again next year sometime. It would be nice to do it, but with a bit more time than four weeks. Watch this space.

All the very best, Nog (aka Graham Northing)



# Zoom demonstration by Syl Macro



1 Difficulties of trying to get actions to fit onto the screen.

It was a special treat when Syl Macro agreed to do the first zoom demo for NW region. Syl showed that deftness of touch that years of experience have honed to make the process look so easy. It reminded me of watching Peter Dick at Coxwold Pottery – there is something almost sacred about the movement of the hands. The fluidity and blurring that occurs in zoom added to this effect. There were lots of things to take away from this, both for new and more experienced potters. Such a wealth of talent exists in the NPA that it is wonderful for methods, techniques and approaches to be shared.

Colette Hennigan

Photos by Syl Macro



2 Rolled out, textured and coloured clay for a plaque.



4 Hedgerow and geological finds to make texture.



3 Starting to assemble a landscape plaque from a sketch.



5 Finished piece – to be slowly dried and fired to 1200C.

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# The Clay Team – helping to bring pottery to kids & adults in deprived areas

The Clay Team is a sister company to Muddy Fingers Pottery set up as a Social Enterprise (Cic) to help as many people as possible from underprivileged backgrounds access pottery and clay related activities. There are five non-exec directors who are all potters. Between us we either volunteer or are hired to mainly to do workshops with groups in the local area of South Tyneside and the North East in general.

We've made bread ovens at community centres, taught workshops to special needs groups and gone into schools to help kids make murals and pots to decorate their forest gardens.

As lockdown started we put together a funding bid to the National Lottery Covid specific fund.

In the past we've made clay packs for kids and adults which went down really well, so we wanted to expand on this by increasing the number of packs we could give away to 100. After a relatively easy application form, we waited around 8 weeks and lo and behold we were awarded £1600! The money came into the account shortly after and we started to source tools, clay and other bits and pieces. The packs include 1kg air-dry clay, a set of plastic modelling tools, a paintbrush, acrylic paints and instructions.

Air-dry clay, doesn't need to be fired so is ideal for home pottery projects. Obviously you can't use it for typical functional pottery but it's great for decorative items, sculptures, tealight holders etc. You can even make it waterproof with a brick sealant if you want to place them outdoors.

We cut clay and packaged the kits up over a couple of days then took them to a local food bank who have good local knowledge of the families affected by Covid who would need them most.

We've had great feedback so far from the project and are looking to run a couple of drop-in workshops with the money we had left over.

Do check us out on Instagram, facebook and our website to see what we are up to!

Diane Nicholson, Muddy Fingers Pottery



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## A Time to Remember – Wendy Turner

I have been a teacher of art and design in secondary schools for over 20 years and get excited when I have the chance to instigate a big project for the school and community – especially a ceramics project. In 2018, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the WW1 Armistice, I was inspired by the amazing and powerful display at the tower of London so set about planning a project to create a sea of ceramic poppies for the Academy. It was important for me and the department staff to really give our younger pupils a chance to be involved in something beyond the curriculum. Most have never had the opportunity to feel clay or construct with it due to stringent health and safety restrictions and financial limitations in schools.

Many pupils were very keen to volunteer. Little did they realise that due to the time constraints, we had our work cut out for us. Especially as we were only working for one and a half hours, one evening per week. Our aim was to make 100 poppies in seven weeks. Senior staff were hoping for 300 but I explained that although we are a Church of England Academy, I was unable to work miracles!

The project called for precision planning on a factory scale. Pupils took turns to be pattern cutters, decorate the petals, assemble the poppies, model the poppy centres, shape the flowers and after firing, to spray them. I possibly acted like a Dickensian workhouse slave driver as we approached the deadline, but everyone worked brilliantly and surpassed all expectations. We designed the stems based on military trip flare pickets in three different heights and had them specially made by a local craftsman. The challenge then was how and where we would store a hundred poppies? Certainly, that was the year, for a few days at least, that we had the most beautifully decorated art rooms.

The poppies were displayed on the school grounds after a special Remembrance Service. Both the pupils involved in the project and veterans from the armed forces took great pride in planting the poppies on the hill outside the Academy. It was a moment to bring tears to your eyes.





One month later we offered the poppies for sale with all proceeds shared between The British Legion and Help for Heroes. The 30 poppies that remained were donated to RAF Leeming in North Yorkshire. Each November the poppies are displayed on the main roundabout on the base, making us feel proud of being able to show our



respect to our armed forces, past and present.

I still have the bug and continue to make poppies in my own studio and also offer workshops to make them. My kiln is full of them now in readiness for Remembrance Day 2020. 15% of all takings are donated to the same charities each year.

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## Jim Robison's courses

After initial cancellation, delay and hesitation, (Liz and I are both in a vulnerable age group) we decided to offer a making course to half the usual number and increase individual spaces. Hand sanitizer and face masks were added.

As this seemed to go well we offered a glaze course, also with reduced numbers. This also went well, with exceptional results in the tests and glaze application. There were four firings in all, with a bisque, two glaze firings and a Raku evening.

In spite of some apprehension, there was a general relief that normal activities were being resumed. Best of all, the sense of isolation was lifted. The lack of conversations and lively exchange of ideas has been sorely missed.



Jim has taught ceramics and managed his own Holmfirth studio and gallery since 1975. Liz's home cooked food and social evenings add to the mix in lovely West Yorkshire countryside.

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## Rebuilding my kiln, phase 2 – Shirley Sheppard

As I write we have been isolating for 6 months and the laying of the bricks is done. I am working on a more detailed analysis of the plan for the outside metal, flu and canopy, as well as making myself a bit savvy on BTU's, Charles Law and others.

Winding back the clock to the end of phase 1:

The metal stands to bridge the gap above the burners are finished. They have openings on the sides corresponding to gaps in the breeze blocks and around the port holes to allow air flow and so hot metal will not be in contact with the blocks. Worried about rust I eventually found a rust resistant metal paint good to 1600C, which sadly had a delivery wait of 3 months, so I settled for one up to 500C.

The next big change was changing my mind as a result of a nagging, lingering thing in the back of my mind... This is a top loader, so I will lean on the top and sides to load it. If these bricks are laid loose, what will happen? I had dreams of the bricks and me falling headlong into the kiln. In the original front loader this was not a problem so I regretted having cemented the bricks together as re-using them was next to impossible.

So I decided to mortar the bricks together for stability. Also, as I will be 70 next year, I doubt that I'll be taking it apart again! Fred Olsen in his book discusses using mortar versus re-using bricks and came out in favour of mortar. I decided on air dry mortar as it sets quickly while building, whereas the other sort does not bond till heated to 200 deg C.

I had read about bricklaying and planned accordingly but the actual job was a learning experience. This mortar sets quickly so when the sun was out I put the mortar on each brick in the basement and then laid them individually outside. When cloudy I could work outside and lay faster.

I read I should always measure the diagonal to keep the shape, so I laid opposing corners first, which also enabled me to keep the correct length and width using pre-marked lengths of wood. Then with a straight edge I laid the bricks in-between, with fibre board expansion joints and cutting bricks where needed. In my original kiln the metal structure and walls were in place first, then I laid the bricks within this framework.

After each layer I evened the surface using a surform to rasp out any bumps so that each layer would lay on a uniform surface. To make the round portholes I drilled small holes around the circle, cut between them out with a small saw blade, then filed them rounder. (Unfortunately my large hole borer thing was useless.) For the spy holes I made sure that a full brick was bridging the top of each one and the pyrometer hole went through a header.



The last brick laid



Stands above burners



Brick-laying tools and spy hole

It was a slow and careful process, due to rain and my lack of ability but eventually the last brick went on and my sarcophagus kiln, was looking better. I am thinking of painting a skeleton on the outside but the other half said it might upset the neighbours. Naturally I was assisted in my labours in many ways.



My two assistants

The next step is the metal surround to protect and hold the structure together during firing. After reading, searching and experience I decided that the sides would be 1.2mm sheets of galvanized steel with 2cm fibre blanket attached; 10cm angle iron at each corner; 5cm angle iron on the rim; flat iron at the base. The top would be stainless steel with 10cm overlapping sides, made in three sections for lifting. It had to be stainless as there is no roof over the structure so where any holes are drilled or cut there will be no rust.

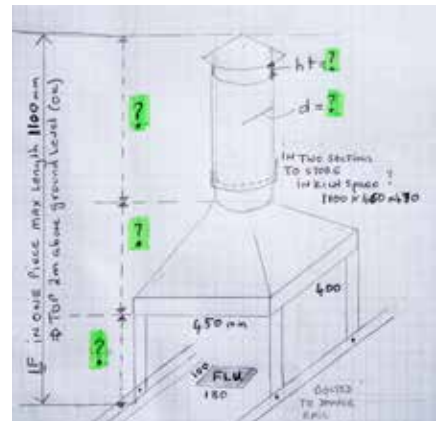
Confused? That's understandable! As I needed to discuss off-site with the metal expert Stuart, I thought in addition to all my many diagrams, a 3D model would be beneficial. How best to, make one? – Lego naturally (Duplo saves time), bits of cardboard, some rubber bands and you're cooking with gas – ha ha – pun intended.



Lego model

The flu hole has been a BIG worry.

It would be at face height, so I need protection when working near the kiln, to hide it a bit from the many overlooking neighbours, allow cooling air flow and a place for the damper slide. I could have built a down draft with a chimney but this would use more space, would be a bit of a giveaway when not in use and I hope to use it as a sort of bar-come-table.



Canopy design

In this case venting the kiln is needed for both safety and fumes, even when outside. I designed the resulting canopy to do that as well as being removable and with a size that would allow it to be stored inside the kiln. Probably I will make the side closest to spy hole area lower.

I had already ordered the metal side-sheets and attached the fibre blanket using fibre cement after treating both sides with Rigidiser to make them less odious to handle. I now needed to discuss the whole of this metal structure with Stuart to resolve outstanding problems. Should we bolt the metal together side by side or overlapping as they are different thicknesses? Should we brace the structure using aircraft wire and turnbuckles to tighten or with rods and bolts. Do I need extra support down to the cement base or will the breeze blocks cope?

P.S. I don't think I will be firing on the 5th November – toooo cold!



Fibre on metal sheets

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## 2020 Vision – Jane Hurford

When classes closed at Hive in Shipley the managers set about keeping activities going online as far as possible. Several potters who usually came to classes or used the drop-in sessions bought their own clay and started making at home. Facebook and WhatsApp kept people in touch and we all pulled up the drawbridges, scratching the creative itch as best we could.

The worker who ran the informal writing group was furloughed. There was a need to express ourselves in words but no outlet. I found it difficult to string more than fifteen words together without losing concentration and needed a place to put these scribblings. Thinking of Grayson Perry's offering on Brexit, where he interviewed people and constructed pots with their comments and feelings, I decided to do a similar project with the pandemic as the focus. Hive asked people to email comments, drawings, and feelings on the negative and positive ways that the virus had affected them and I built two pots to display their ideas.

I make pottery at home in my darkish, cramped converted coal cellar with limited facilities, so the design had to be simple. I really enjoy coil building and the steady routine of roll, build, smooth helped keep me occupied. Potting without time pressure made a pleasant change.

The negative pot is tall and thin, mean looking and narrow, whereas the positive pot is rounder, more generous and broad. The colour scheme, of necessity, was terracotta, black or white slip and an PPE-blue underglaze. The contributions dictated the design.

In the outside world political decisions were taken and some of these are reflected on the pots but personal experiences also feature. Fear and anger are there with sadness and loss but on the positive pot there are discoveries, kindnesses and the changing world.

As time ticked on appreciation for the natural world and the chances for change also began to feature in contributors' submissions. There is humour as well as sadness, from the mundane – 'no nits' – to the profound – the Act Five, Scene Five 'tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow' speech from Macbeth could all have gone on, but it broke the fifteen word rule!

I used a Mark Dally slip trailer, a letter set to impress some words, and my own handwriting in Primary School print to add the wording. I am not a natural surface decorator, so it was all a learning process.

The pots will soon be on display at Hive. People can write on paper cutouts which fit the silhouettes on the pots to add temporary comments. As time goes on these will be replaced and the figures put into the pots, along with other writing and drawings. At some stage, who knows how far down the road, the pots will be emptied or maybe smashed as a symbolic gesture, and the shards and contents will form a different piece. An ongoing project to express our reaction to the pandemic...



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## Finding opportunities in Lockdown – Jill Ford



The lockdown has been very enlightening for creatives in many ways.

I consider myself very fortunate in that I live in a rural area so was able to go walking regularly, I have a garden (now full of veggies) and my pottery is in the garden, enabling me to work through this period of enforced distancing.

The initial fear around Coronavirus was quite debilitating for me with family living in different parts of the UK and Spain and anxiety about this unseen disease. It took a while but eventually I found that getting into the pottery, throwing some pots and the familiar cycle of glazing and firing was soothing and grounding. It brought some sanity into a confused world.

My thoughts turned to Korean Moon jars, looking at an example from the British Museum from the 17th and 18th centuries. The not too perfect spherical form and quiet milky white glaze appeal to my sensibilities having always been attracted to the wabi sabi ideals of imperfect, impermanent and incomplete. Throwing two hemispheres then joining them to form the pot provided just the right degree of challenge (I normally throw tall forms and round bowls from porcelain) known for its propensity to tire easily and collapse.

Diligently I practiced throwing the two identical hemispheres then joining them as well as forming smaller jars from one piece. It proved frustrating at times as tell-tale cracks appeared on the joins after glaze firing despite being carefully smoothed during the making. Reminding myself not to be too attached to perfection I accepted the disappointments and rejoiced in the successes.

Fired with a new creative surge, the challenge of developing new glazes came next. My standard glaze is a milky white satin and it fits the pots well. I also wanted something more textural and a decent black glaze, so resumed my research into crawling, crater and volcanic glazes. For anyone interested in this line of discovery I recommend reading Linda Bloomfield's new book "Special Effect Glazes" and also chatting to Kay Butterworth for her useful insights.

Glaze testing is a long process but the lockdown allowed time to research, test and refine that would normally have been taken up by preparation and exhibiting at shows. As a result I now have a crater glaze that reacts with black underglaze to produce startling iridescent blues, a stable pewter black and a very exciting white crawling glaze that works on my porcelain jars – at last! All need more work but are on their way.

As society moves towards opening up, most of us are moving around more freely, galleries are beginning to open and shows may actually happen late in the year. I'm grateful to Liz at Gallery 49 in Bridlington for going ahead with a carefully planned "Landscapes of the Mind" exhibition. Potfest Pens is postponed but looking likely, as is art& York and York Ceramics Fair.

Things will be different – we can stay safe and still build our thriving ceramics community. The enforced slowing down and taking stock of lives and practices has had many repercussions, some sadness and much to be grateful for especially the opportunity to review the holistic nature and importance of our creative work.

## Members' Gallery

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



Thora Talling, see article on page 16



Jan Lewis-Eccleston, tree creeper, nuthatch and wren Porcelain, decorated with underglazes and oxides, and mounted on drift wood.



Vivienne Sillar, Three Hooked Fish  
Burnished and smoke fired

Photo Ian Daisley



Viv Rumbold



Suzanne Wright, Hare in the sunshine



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](mailto:npanews@northern-potters.co.uk)

## Making and moving into a new studio – Thora Talling



It's a bit deja-vu! I have worked in my garage before using a large dining table from a friend. But this was going to be the real thing with sumptuous Belfast sink, hot and cold water, and a strong workbench in front of the new window. The builder did a sterling job, and despite a Covid delay, it has all been finished!

There were already shelves from a previous life and 2/3 of the floor was painted. So my lovely neighbour, Marie and I set-to with roller and paintbrush and three days later had lovely white distressed/shabby-chic walls. It was easy painting the rest of the floor.

During the interruption of lockdown I was able to use both my studios. I would roll out clay at Catwalk using my reconditioned mangle and make bases for half a dozen fruit bowls. These then lined six large dishes and I coiled the sides in front of my new window, looking out onto the apple tree and blossoming plant life. The days were lovely and lazy, I got a lot done as my normal duties of looking after mother and part-time job were suspended. The weather was like the South of France, allowing breakfast outside with the cat, then into the pottery.

I decorate using slips, underglaze, wax and cobalt wash. There was some choice of horse photos from Briery Close's website. I used to work here in the 90's, and the Arabian horses are fabulous.

I was glad to complete these bowls and have used Dora Billington's matt glaze on one, just to see... The definition is much clearer, the cobalt and lead glaze leads to bleeding, which is really the desired effect of this technique. The bowls were then taken back to Catwalk to be glazed and fired.

More cat bowls appeared, then sold to raise money for Compassion for Greek Paws, a very good charity for stray dogs in Greece. Also I am dabbling in tin glaze using watered down underglaze colours, oxides and a 'How to' Chinese painting book, bought for my mother. I have now a series of 'Chinese vases'.

Otherwise my lockdown contribution has been decorating pottery with my neighbour's grandchildren, and giving pre-fired bisque tiles to friends with colours and underglaze pencils which I have just discovered. I think they are very underrated!

So now I am back to my part-time job in a supermarket. Mum has resumed her privileges, much to her relief and inaugurated the finished Garage Studio. The cat has taken up residence on the wooden scratch board below the sink. A radio has been introduced, mostly Classic FM or Radio Cumbria.

I look forward to getting on with the next project...it will involve throwing to provide bowls for friends to decorate, and of course, for more cat painting.

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## Covid 19, part 2 – Graham Hough

This dangerous disease continues. Living in Chorley I am surrounded and isolated from Preston, Blackburn & Darwen, Wigan and Greater Manchester, all with additional restrictions imposed. The isolation has made me look for inspiration locally and use salvaged or alternative equipment.

A poke around at home in the kitchen drawers, shed, garage plus trips to B&M, Pound and charity shops, have provided me with tools, moulds, brushes, rollers and many other useful items.

I have an obsession with porcelain paperclay as it allows me to portray my ideas while tolerating my limited skills. I love the way it can be used to soak cloth, rewetted when it dries out, used as thin sheets and as lumps all in one piece, repaired post bisque firing, and is so white that it makes a perfect base for underglazes.

It also allows the use of my hoard of recycled equipment. I use plastic bowls, pots or cups lined with cling film, plastic bags or grease-proof paper to make shapes. The creases in the lining material can give skin-like texture to the clay. Pressing in lumps of clay creates fissures and folds. Rolling out on to lace, brocade, carpet, rubber mats, or mixing with hair, straw, sawdust creates more textures. These materials can be separated from the clay by a barrier of recycled plastic bags or left in/on the clay to be burnt off when fired. If it doesn't work you have at least learnt something and as my guru of ceramics, Pauline Wilcock, said "Its only mud".

Paperclay can be rolled out into thin sheets of clay and draped over formers and tailored into clothing or drapery. Inflated balloons make adjustable formers that can be made to a specific size and reshaped. I lay on layers of paperclay then dry it with a hot air gun (cheap paint stripper gun) and when the clay is self-supporting the balloon can be burst and withdrawn through a suitable orifice.

I am sure you have many more ideas of how work can be made using recycled materials; it would be good to hear about them. So the current COVID restrictions have a few positive factors but, as well as the creation of WhatsApp groups, it has stimulated me to look around my own 'bubble' for ideas and sources of equipment.

Keep safe and keep potting



Barend



Ebsel



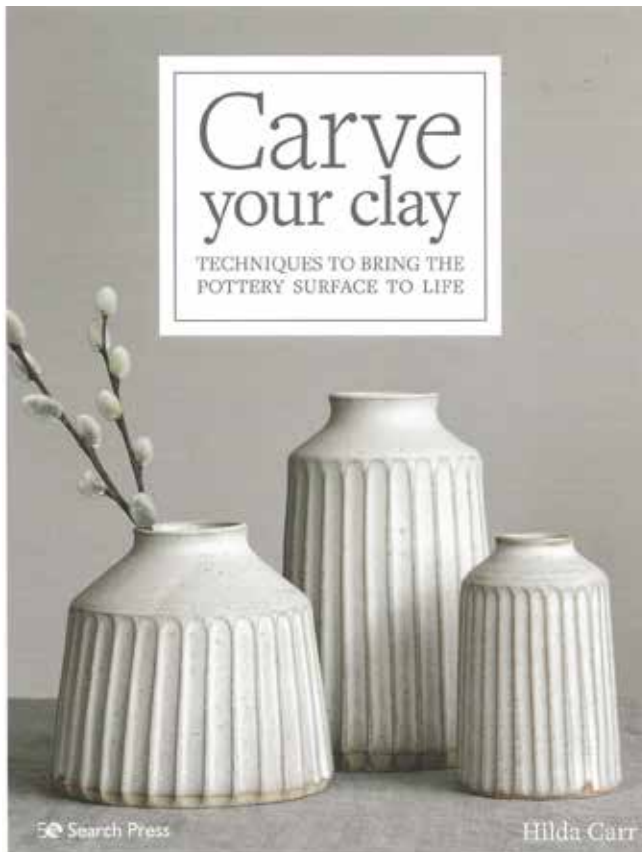
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## Books – Roger Bell

### Review

#### Carve your clay, Hilda Carr



It is nice to discover another publisher of ceramics (and other craft) books. Search Press have half a dozen more on pottery including two by Jaqui Atkin, all very reasonably priced.

I have selected Carve Your Clay as it covers a specific area of clay working used both in domestic and sculptural work and was published this year. Is there another book specifically on this subject? Hilda is a set designer who only turned to ceramics in 2014 but is obviously an expert on this subject. I like the fact that the book does not waste space by covering other aspects of making, be it health and safety, materials or firing methods unless relevant to carved clay. Even the 2 pages on glazing are relevant e.g. 'use glazes that break on carved and raised lines to accentuate a pattern'.

### New Books

Ceramics Masterclass Louisa Taylor	£24.08
North Carolina Potteries Through Time Stephen Compton	£17.00
Painting Porcelain Boxes Gigi Branch	£14.50
The Potteries of Persia D K Keleken	£19.00

The first pages describe the basic considerations before you start – clay types, tools, basic forming methods and carving techniques. Brief but always relevant. For example sgraffito is best with a fine clay on the dry side of leather hard, while faceting is more difficult if clay is not on the wet end of leather hard. The photos of faceting on too wet, too dry and just right clay illustrate this very well.

Sixteen projects follow utilizing all the available techniques on flat ware, thrown work and hand built pieces, which make for a range of interesting effects.

Each starts with basic information – clay type and weight, tools and materials required. There is a description of why she uses 'this' technique on 'this' form. Then sections on forming the piece and carrying out the carving. Very clear photos show the finished piece and each stage of the making. The projects are by no means all simple, some need throwing skills, others quite significant hand eye coordination to achieve. There are projects which can be completed quickly with just basic skills (tiles) but others require a lot of preparatory work (agateware serving bowl) Many of the potential problem points in particular pieces are discussed.

'Carve Your Clay' can be used by a beginner but is also useful to those wanting to extend the technical skills available to them. It has 144 pages – all relevant and useful. No padding-out with photos of work by other potters. A very reasonable price and excellent value for money.

Published by Search Press at £12.99

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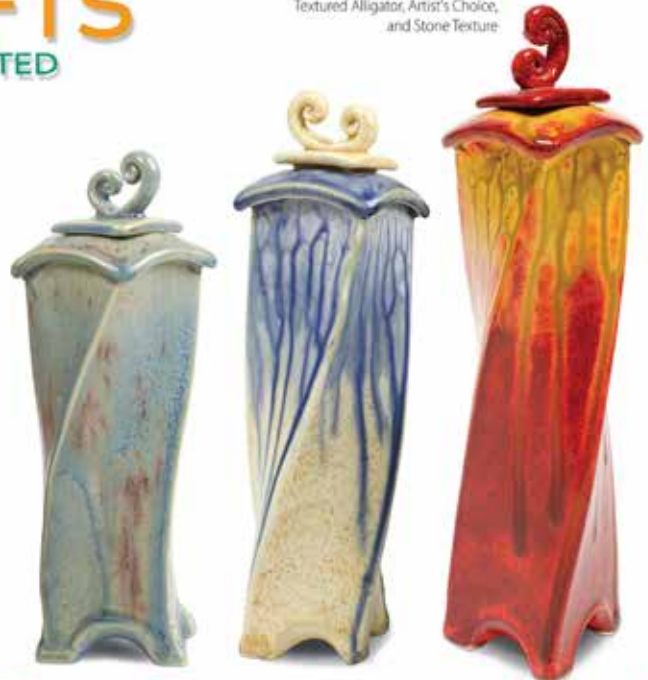
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## Welcome to new members

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.

Robert Campbell	Newcastle upon Tyne
Sarah Cawthray	Kirkby Moorside, York
Colin Chapman	Darlington, Durham
Nigel Cunis	Silkstone, South Yorkshire
Trudi Harrison	Little Haywood, Stafford
Clare Hyde	Longridge, Lancashire
Terry Nason	Eggington, Derbyshire
Richard Pearson	Belper, Derbyshire
Peter Singer	Matlock, Derbyshire



Ann Davis  
Membership Secretary

Visit [northern-potters.co.uk](http://northern-potters.co.uk) for membership forms and subscription rates.

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Contact Nigel Edmondson on 015395 61546 or [nigel.libby@btinternet.com](mailto:nigel.libby@btinternet.com)

### 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 and updates. [website@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:website@northern-potters.co.uk)

### Advertising in NPA News

#### Per issue prices

Small ads (30 words) Free to members

Boxed adverts

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 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](mailto: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.

### 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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## Committee News

### September committee meeting

We were very pleased to welcome three new committee members to our third Zoom meeting.

**Members Survey** Much of the meeting was spent considering the results of the members survey and the most important issues to address. Two priority areas were discussed.

**Enabling Contact** 85% of the members would like to have contact with other members in their area or sharing interests. Various ways of enabling this were discussed.

A printed/pdf members' directory, making contact details available to all, either across the NPA or within regions. Data protection must be maintained with participating members knowingly giving permission to have their details made available to other members.

A dedicated password protected area on the website was suggested. This could be costly and would require ongoing management.

Encourage expansion of Whatsapp groups active within the regions as an effective and secure way of contacting each other online.

The NPA Facebook page was also mentioned as a general contact area but this is currently a public page (only members may post on it). Each region also has a Facebook page and it was stated that if these Facebook pages are public they cannot be used securely. Diane suggested that the main Facebook page be made private and only used by NPA members.

**Attracting younger members** The vast majority of NPA members are over 40. It was agreed sharing knowledge across the generations would be of benefit to all. The increased use of social media, particularly Instagram, and a direct approach to teaching colleges and studios are good ways of encouraging new younger members.

**Social Media** Pamela and Nadine have focused on developing use of Instagram. The main page functions as a general information point and window for potential new membership and the regional pages will display and promote individual members' work. We have 330 Instagram members.

The Facebook page is working well with an increasing number of people using it. Dianne has asked organisers of events to post these on the main Facebook page.

**Website** More inventive ways are needed to drive traffic towards the website and to encourage members to utilise the artist's gallery.

**Finance** Invoices and payments are up to date and, with very few regional events, there has been little activity. It was agreed a bursary should be awarded for Sarah Vanic's unusual project based on collaboration during lockdown. An article will be written for the newsletter on completion. Emmeline intends to step down as Treasurer, but will stay on until a replacement is found.

**Membership** Numbers joining are going up – the membership form is a pdf on the website and payment is by standing order. Ann suggested that the process could be improved by integrating the membership joining process into the website. A question on age range when joining would let us track the membership demographic and it was agreed to add this to the application form.

**Regional matters** It was suggested that regional co-ordinators could use Zoom to share information on running events. The NPA could invest in a Zoom pro package for £160 that allows multiple hosts. It was agreed to investigate this further.

The NPA has two banners kept by the publicity officer along with other marketing materials. It was agreed that each region would benefit from a set of banners to be used at NPA regional events and that now would be a good time to have them made so that they are ready when events restart.

Sally Streuli



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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.

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I'm pleased to say Rachel Wood has offered to host a studio visit sometime next year and is looking forward to our visit. With a lot of bravery from Syl Macro we held our first Zoom demonstration in September which was greatly appreciated and very inspirational. Our next zoom demo is on 3 October when Sue Clark will demonstrate her wheel thrown hollow forms. I've emailed joining instructions. Anyone wishing to give us a demo via zoom please let me know.

Potfest in the Park was a great success with lots of visitors. For members exhibiting at Potfest in the Pens at the end of October it would be great to share your work on instagram using #npanw.

Voting was close for the theme title for the Blackwell exhibition in 2022 with "The Arts & Crafts Movement" winning. The runner-up "Shared Stories" will be the title of the 2021 Upfront Gallery exhibition. Proposals will now be sent and I will let you know once we have confirmed dates.

Our Facebook page is a great way to share ideas, ask questions or seek advice. We can inspire future generations via our Instagram page so if you have some recent examples of your work please share them via social media or email me a copy.

[Kathryn Stevens](#)

[northernpottersnw@gmail.com](mailto:northernpottersnw@gmail.com)

[Facebook: NPAnorthwest](#)

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The role of coordinator is a new one for me and I'm still getting used to everything – thank you to those who have helped me settle in! Thanks to a WhatsApp group for Ceramic ArtLab at UCLan, we've been able to keep in touch and help each other with firings and equipment. There has been a safe distance gathering on Avenham Park in Preston. I wasn't able to attend but will do my best for the next one. We're looking forward to being back in the UCLan studio at some point soon.

We haven't had a face to face meeting since before March as we've been forever hopeful that things would become easier but as we lurch into even more restrictions in Preston and Lancashire I think we'll have to consider Zoom!

Graham Hough has work in the Northern Star exhibition at The Platform Gallery, Clitheroe. The exhibition planned for Garstang Arts Centre will now take place next year. The Affinity exhibition at The Arteria Galley Lancaster is planned to run from January to April 2021.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or suggestions. Happy making!

[Kim Graham](#)

[west@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:west@northern-potters.co.uk)

[Facebook: NPAnwest](#)

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The good news is that The Didsbury Old Parsonage has given us a new date for our exhibition there but it won't be until the end of May 2021 now.

We are hoping to get an exhibition date for Middleport Pottery too.

A practice zoom meeting was held with me at the helm. I got there in the end but if anyone would like to steer the meeting for me that would be great as I am certainly not an expert at this and I would love to set one up for all our SW members to come along to.

[Juliet Myers](#)

[email@sw-npa.co.uk](mailto:email@sw-npa.co.uk)

[Facebook: NPAsouthwest](#)

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Any member can ask to be included in any regional mailing list.  
You must have given your consent to receive NPA emails.

## Regional News

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The new NE team met on 1 September to agree our approach. Given our large area we decided to try to mirror events in the north and south of the region so that more members could join in. We will vary our meeting locations, use a Whatsapp group and occasional Zoom meetings.



NE

We agreed to evolve a mix of exhibitions, workshop and seminars, and educational opportunities such as training in specific skills, recognising the varying needs of the membership. Cornerstone Arts Centre in Darlington is booked for our first exhibition in February '21 and submissions will be invited shortly. We are also investigating smaller pop-up selling opportunities before Christmas and are organising a group gallery visit/handling session at The Shipley, Gateshead in November.

We encourage members from all regions to follow and contribute to our northeastnorthernpotters Instagram page, and NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast on Facebook and also to add their profiles to the NPA website.

In a bid to reach a younger group of potential members, we'll approach local further/higher education establishments when restrictions allow.

[Robert Campbell, Carol Newmarch, Diane Nicholson, Helen Pickard, Wendy Turner & Jaime Westwood](#)  
[north-east@northern-potters.co.uk](mailto:north-east@northern-potters.co.uk) Facebook: [NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast](#)

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Here's a sample of how NPA East members have made the best of the last few month



E

Collaboration with independent shops has helped Ali Bradley with sales. Pamela Thorby has an installation 'Cabinet of Ceramic Curiosities' in York in October. Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg has resumed teaching in her now spotless studio. She has an exhibition in the Chapel, Cemetery Road York in November with her husband. Nina Wright has returned to God's Own County to her studio in Otley and will hopefully be able to commute to London and work from both locations. Francesca Green staged an exhibition 'Silent Steps out of Lockdown' in York and hopes to start clay therapy clinics in 2021. Eleni and Bill Smith are back in Greece and will be sorely missed by the group and by Hive. They supported events, volunteered their skills and time and always attended meet-ups. Hive are resuming classes with half the class attending in person and half on Zoom in alternating weeks. Lyn Grant ran a children's workshop a few weeks ago which was popular. Being educational it is exempt from the 6 person rule. Ros Walker is one of the 10 finalists for the SCAF Emerging Artist Award. Everyone is looking forward to meeting up and talking all things clay, its been such a long time...

[Lyn Clarke & Kay Butterworth](#) [enpa.coordinator@gmail.com](mailto:enpa.coordinator@gmail.com) Facebook: [NPAEast](#)

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It was a quiet start to the year as we all adjusted to the restrictions. Since then we have been through a busy patch. The social meet-up at Cannon Hall in July had 12 attendees with lots to say and gossip to share. We hope to organise another before Christmas, if restrictions allow.



SE

The Pop-Up Pottery event at Fox Valley went very well. There is a report and photos on page 5. Art in the Gardens in Sheffield was a fantastic weekend. We had a marquee with 8 NPA potters who all sold well. 17 members showed their work in our 'inclusive' table where we invited all the SE members to include a pot for sale or display: over half were sold. Several NPA members had their own stands and also did well. At a rough count about 1800 people visited our marquee.

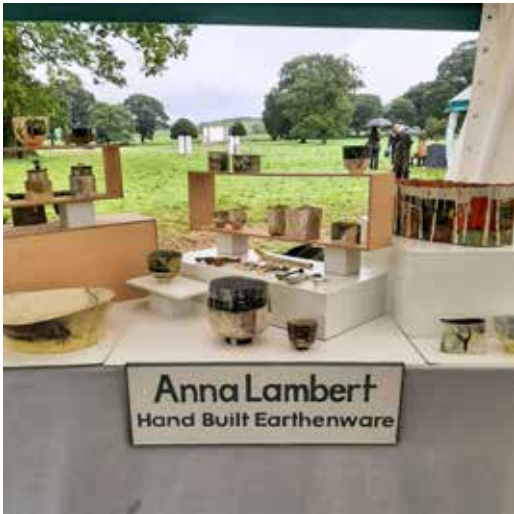
Our last scheduled event this year is the exhibition at Gallery 6 in Newark in November called 'Fired 2020 – New Directions'. It's coming together very well and should be all sorted soon.

As ever we are always on the lookout for ideas and suggestions for things to do, courses to run or attend and places to hold them. If you have any thoughts please let us know.

[Graham Northing & Wendy Wall](#) [senpacoordinator@outlook.com](mailto:senpacoordinator@outlook.com) Facebook: [NPAsetheast](#)

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# Potfest in the Park 2020



Clockwise from top left:  
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Chiu-i Wu  
Rebecca Callis  
Debbie Barber  
James Hake  
Anna Lambert  
Photos: Dianne Cross



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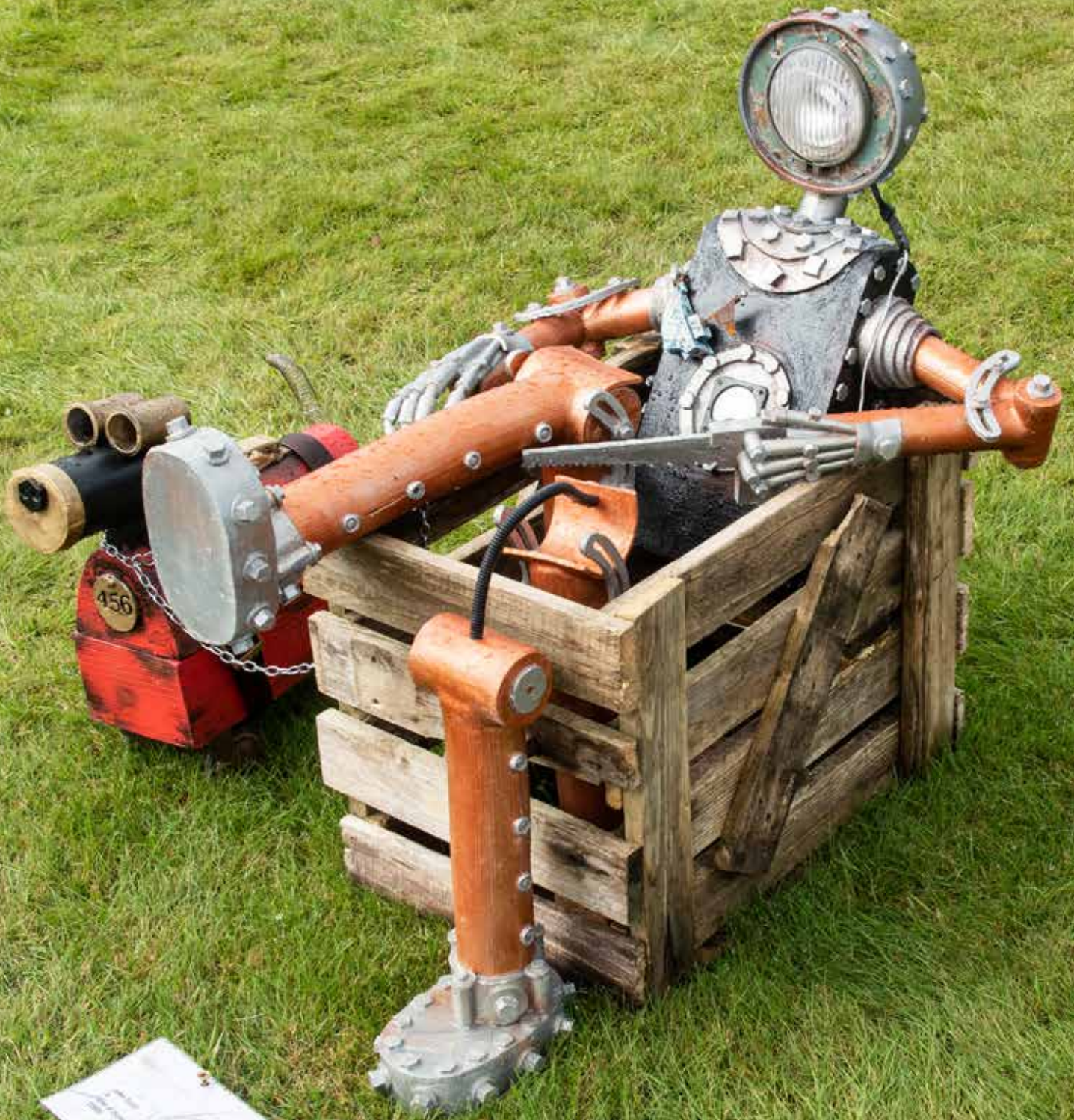


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