

NPA News



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

August to September 2023
£2, free to members



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Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 18 September 2023.

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.

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

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Front Cover: Snapshots of NPA Potters Camp at UCLan

Photos: Gerry Grant and Nina Wright

Back Cover: Huge pugmill at Potclays

Photo: Ceri Jones

From the Chair

Hello and welcome to the NPA Summer newsletter. So much happened in the past 2 months, that I don't know where to begin.

Let's start with Potters Camp. It was a wonderful day and even though not everything went to plan, I enjoyed every second of it. There was so much going on. My personal favourite was the talk by Sara Howard. She opened my eyes to the amount of waste that is produced before a product even reaches my studio. I am definitely going to buy her book on circular ceramics to learn more. I also really liked the demonstrations, in fact, I liked all of them. Seeing how Micaela Schoop painstakingly paints QR codes onto her pieces was especially impressive. I hope those of you who came also enjoyed your day? And rest assured, here at the committee we are looking into your feedback and how we can make it even better for next year (I know there is room for improvement on the catering front). I also want to say a big thank you to our volunteers, helpers, sponsors, Potclays and Northern Kilns as well as the University of Central Lancashire and their students and staff.

The other thing that is happening this summer is a new membership system. Until now, everything at the NPA was done manually, and now that we have almost 800 members, we are really struggling to keep this up. Some of you have already made their voices heard on this and we have listened and are acting upon your feedback. A team of 3 committee members and Jack Hardie have been working hard on selecting a new membership system, that will speed up the process for new members and allows us and our regional coordinators to contact you directly from a safe online platform. Please have a look at the article later in this newsletter to learn more.

I would like to introduce you to Ben, who has taken over from Dianne at the events work at the NPA. If you are planning an event and would like it to appear on our website, please get in touch with him at publicity@northern-potters.co.uk.

When marketing the Potters Camp, we also realised that our private Facebook group was very limiting, also something that some of you have mentioned before. We had a bit of advice on this and decided to open a new Facebook page that is open to all. This new page can be used to set up and promote events that are open to the public and it is in addition to the private group, which will remain private. So, if you are planning an event, do add it there too to promote it. This also means we are now more desperate than ever for your help. So, if you know your way around Facebook and Instagram and are happy to give a couple of hours per month, please get in touch with me.

Best wishes, Nadine



Your Committee

Chair	Nadine Blakemore chair@northern-potters.co.uk Ilkley
Vice Chair	Lynne Rose vice-chair@northern-potters.co.uk
Secretary	Pat Morgan secretary@northern-potters.co.uk
Treasurer	Michelle Park treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk Low Bentham, Lancs
Membership	Jen Donkin Gourley membership@northern-potters.co.uk St Ives, Cornwall
Social Media	Vacant
Newsletter	Chris Barnes npanews@northern-potters.co.uk 01229 318090 Millom, Cumbria
Publicity	Ben Wilde publicity@northern-potters.co.uk
Artists, Events, Courses	John Cook website@northern-potters.co.uk 01282 695886 Burnley, Lancs
Gerry Grant	York
Lynn Grant	York
Carol Newmarch	Middlesbrough
Bev Seth	Sheffield
Kathryn Stevens	Barrow in Furness
Nina Wright	Otley

Diary

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

17 June to 11 August	NPA NE Summer Exhibition The Python Gallery The Co-op Building, Linthorpe Rd, TS1 4AT
5/6, 12/13, 19/20, 26/27 August	The Great Pottery Exhibition Saltburn Artist's Studios, Every weekend in August 10am-4pm @saltburnartiststudios NPA members and local potters work.
19 August	NPA SW event – Stretford Pottery Fair Stretford Mall, Chester Road, Stretford, M32 9BD NPA members will be showing
20 August	Pop-Up-2 Pottery Ceramics Fair Fox Valley, Socksbridge, Sheffield NPA members will be showing
27 August	Ceramics in Southwell Market Square, Southwell, Notts NG25 0FS NPA members will be showing
2 - 3 September	Art in the Gardens Botanical Gardens, Sheffield NPA members will be showing
23 - 24 September	Art at the House Cliffe House, Shepley, Huddersfield NPA members will be showing
27 Sept - 12 Nov	Shared Stories at Upfront Up Front Gallery, Penrith NPANW Exhibition
8 October	Cromford Ceramics Fair Cromford Mills, Matlock NPA members will be showing

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

Pamela Thorby Ceramics



Nunnington Pottery, Nunnington, North Yorkshire is the new working space and gallery for Pamela Thorby Ceramics, set in the glorious Ryedale countryside. Open Wednesday to Sunday from Easter through to Christmas. 10% discount for NPA members on any piece of pottery. Half day taster throwing sessions are available in York or Nunnington - two students at a time. £40 per person. Contact Pamela through her website for taster session dates.

www.pamelathorby.com

Instagram @nunningtonpottery

NPA Bursary Scheme

The NPA is offering bursaries to members needing support to develop their work by attending courses, workshops or otherwise exploring new directions. The maximum award is £250, from a fund of £5000 for 2022/23/24. See documentation here <https://www.northern-potters.co.uk/documents/>

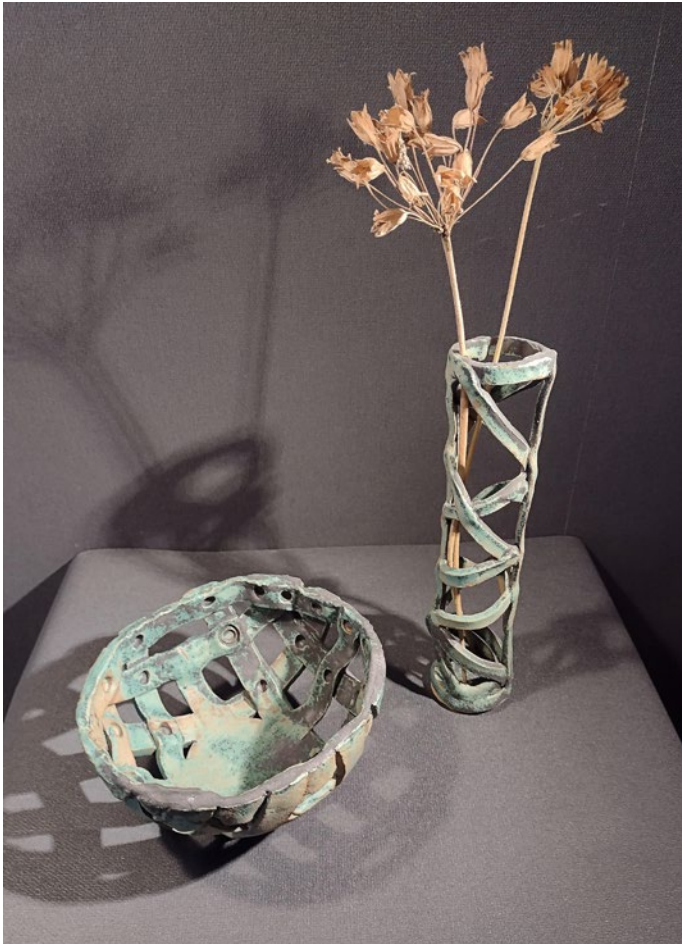
All you need to do is get an application form from treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk and complete it, outlining how and when the money will be used to benefit your practice. The committee will consider your application and let you know if you have been successful. Applicants must have been NPA members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

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

Equality & Diversity

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.

New Artists to the Website



Jennifer Cooper



Judith Glover



Richard Morris



Fiona Newby

NPA Website – Artists Pages

As an NPA member you 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 100 words, email address, phone number, plus any website, Facebook and Instagram links. Email John Cook with the details and updates website@northern-potters.co.uk



NPA Potter's Camp – July 8th 2023



After months of planning, the NPA Potter's Day Camp at UCLan in Preston had finally arrived.

Potters and friends were welcomed at reception and given a beautifully designed tote bag, containing information from pottery suppliers and a programme for the day.



Ruth King sharing her techniques

Just over 70 people had turned up and after registration took part in the pot swap. This is becoming a popular part of pottery events and it is always lovely to receive a vessel made by another potter – you never know what to expect.



Photography with Jo Garret

environmental consequences of the pottery industry. It focussed on the reduction and re-use of waste and more intelligent use of raw materials. It certainly had people talking about it all day.

Ruth King's work consists of organic, sculptural pieces, carefully designed and finished. She spent an hour explaining her working methods, showing how she used slabs as a basis for her pieces, and how her beautiful finishes are achieved using salt. There were plenty of questions from the audience...



Entries for the Joan Hardie Award



Raku kiln building with Chris Barnes

Then it was time to start properly with the attendees being directed to the different rooms for their workshops - Raku led by Chris Barnes, photography by Jo Garrett, and throwing by Cath Criscenti

The talks kicked off with a Zoom lecture and discussion by Sara Howard in Indonesia on circular ceramics – an interesting overview of the

And so, into the afternoon.... The workshops continued. The raku room was strewn with wire cages, foil and ceramic fibre as the kilns came to fruition.



Sara Howard - Circular Ceramics



Throwing with Cath Criscenti

Micaela Schloop struggled with the growing humidity in the room – it was becoming unbearably hot. However, everyone listened intently – fascinated to hear about how she models her work on her knee. Her decorative techniques – sometimes using shellac - were described in detail, even down to the QR codes she integrates into her designs.

There was another opportunity to join in a guided tour of the ceramics department at UCLAN, led by Rob Parr. What an amazing MA course is offered- spread over one or two years, and worth considering if you want to extend your knowledge and working practices in ceramics. Such an inspiring place...

Other things were also happening in the building. There was the opportunity to see the work produced by the demonstrators in a special exhibition upstairs. (I have a penchant for earrings so buying a pair of Micaela's was a must for me!)

Also upstairs were the entries for the Joan Hardy Award. The competition was entitled "Vessel from Another World" and attracted 16 entries. The winner was Gerry Grant from Fangfoss with his "Nando Land Vessel". He was awarded with a 3d computer-printed vase and was absolutely delighted – being a great admirer of Jack and Joan's work and having bought one of the first produced, years ago!"

Then there was the "Tower Build". Called "Making an Impression" potters were asked to model a piece of clay and add it to a cylindrical former. This is being



Micaela Schloop demonstrating



Doug Fitch with blow torch to his jug handle

fired in the University – fingers crossed it works out well as it will be a memento of the day.

Doug Fitch and Hannah McAndrew drew the day to a close. They started with a short PowerPoint presentation of their lives and work leading up to their present studio in Dumfries and Galloway. Then Hannah demonstrated her amazing slip trailing skills with her decoration of a large charger, while Doug talked about his influences from Medieval potters to make a large jug. A hair-raising moment occurred when Doug dried his jug off using a blow torch before attaching a handle....Luckily the fire alarms didn't go off!!!

There were only a couple of things left to do – the drawing of the raffle and the “Thank You”. Nadine, our chairperson, competed with claps of thunder and rain pounding on the roof to thank everyone for a great day. This included all the demonstrators and people who led the workshops, the volunteers, the technicians, the staff at UCLAN (and it's authorities) and all the people who attended. A special mention was made to Kathryn Stevens – without whom the event would not have been possible.



Hannah McAndrew charger decoration

This was a trial for a possible bigger event next year. There are some things that worked really well and some that could have been improved. We're having a bit of a rest now, reading your evaluations and then taking it from there.



The Tower Build - "Making an Impression"

NPA Accounts – Michelle Park

These figures have been approved by Steve Wood, the NPA accountant.

NORTHERN POTTERS ASSOCIATION

Financial Statement for the period ending 31st March 2023

	31 March 2023		31 March 2022	
	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS				
Membership Fees		17,305.33		16,314.23
Events Income	8,897.22		1,895.00	
Events Expenditure	<u>7,563.56</u>	1,333.66	<u>2,694.30</u>	-799.30
Regional		0.00		0.00
Interest		0.00		0.00
Sundry Income		503.98		25.00
Total Receipts		<u>19,142.97</u>		<u>15,539.93</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Committee Travel and Venue Costs		1,192.36		880.27
Exhibition Travel Expenses		479.16		0.00
Postage & Stationery		188.96		345.85
Insurance		271.04		271.04
Publicity		0.00		40.00
Website Expenditure		213.78		171.28
Newsletter	12,477.27		10,358.60	
Less Adverts and sales	<u>915.00</u>	11,562.27	<u>1,066.10</u>	9,292.50
Bursary		750.00		750.00
Sundries		641.82		1,005.25
Auditor		300.00		300.00
Total Expenditure		<u>15,599.39</u>		<u>13,056.19</u>
Current Surplus/Deficit		<u>£3,543.58</u>		<u>£2,483.74</u>
BALANCE SHEET				
Assets				
Co-op Bank Current Account		24,650.51		19,573.43
Unpresented items / Timing Differences		1,300.00		-4.00
Total Assets		<u>£25,950.51</u>		<u>£19,569.43</u>
Liabilities				
Opening Accumulated Funds		19,569.43		17,085.69
Current Surplus/Deficit		3,543.58		2,483.74
Timing Differences		2,837.50		0.00
Total Liabilities		<u>£25,950.51</u>		<u>£19,569.43</u>

Discounts on Pottery Supplies – Nadine Blakemore

Members' discounts on Pottery supplies

We have just checked membership discounts with various suppliers in the country and I would like to give you an overview of which supplier is taking part and how you can get your discounts:

Please get in touch if your favourite supplier is not on the list and you would like us to approach them:

CTM in Doncaster

<https://www.ctmpotterssupplies.co.uk/>,

Tel. 01709 77 0801,

offer a 5% member's discount. Just show or register your membership number. If you have agreed to GDPR when you signed up to NPA, we now share your membership number in a safe way, so you are automatically on their list. (Applies from August 2023). Please check with CTM which items are included in the discount, and ask for a discount if you are buying large items such as wheels or kilns.

Potclays

<https://www.potclays.co.uk/>,

Tel. 01782 219816

also offer a 5% discount. Similar to CTM we regularly share membership numbers with them in a safe way, so all you need to do is to mention that you are a NPA member and your name.

Scarva

<https://www.scarva.com/>

offer a generous 10% discount to NPA member through their website. All you need to do is enter the code NORPA2023 at checkout and the discount will apply automatically. This code is valid until the end of the year 2023 and we will let you know the new code in due course.

Potterycrafts

<https://www.potterycrafts.co.uk/>,

Tel. 01782 745000

also offer 10% discount. Just enter NOR32 into the promotions code box on the website this will apply the discount. It works on both Potterycrafts and the sculpting supplies website Tiranti.co.uk. The discount only applies to full-price items.

Clayman Supplies Limited

<https://www.claymansupplies.co.uk/>,

Tel. 01243 265845

are offering a 5% discount on all items including kilns and equipment. You just need to advise them by email or phone that you are a NPA member and they set up their web shop and order processes to award the discount automatically.

Both **BathPotters Supplies** and **BlueMatchbox** do not currently offer discounts.

From **mud** to
work of art
...and everything in
between



John Cook



June Roddam



Judith Roberts

5% member discount proof required

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21 Questions for potters - David Lawson

– Michelle Webb

David has a beautiful old stone barn workshop in Hexham, with a cobbled floor, whitewashed walls, and a huge solid wood carpenters bench in the corner he rolls his clay on. There are shelves of drying pots on every wall and drying handles hang off plaster bats. A big Alsager pottery wheel in front of the window overlooking a well-tended garden of acer trees and evergreen plants. David likes the solitariness of potting on his own, but he was very warm and welcoming when I came to ask him lots of questions,

2. What got you started?

I used to play with clay a lot as a child, always modelling and making things. I used to do graphics in fine art, but I liked the quick results of pottery making.

3. What was your very first pot like, and do you still have it?

Yes, I still have it, it's a "Beaker People" Bronze Age style beaker pot, made from Scottish Red Clay with carved texture.



while he was trying to make stock for the upcoming Potfest in the park.

1. How many years have you been potting?

About 20 years. Went to Newcastle College when I was 20, started ceramics there. Then went on to study ceramics at the Glasgow School of Art, with a 4-month exchange to Canberra, Australia, where Fergus Stewart taught me how to woodfire pottery.

4. Who were your influences?

Fergus Stewart was a big influence in my early years as a ceramicist. Walter Keeler, I liked his forms, glaze and texture, also Steve Harrison for his glaze quality and the functionality of his pots.

5. What cone do you fire to?

Cone 10 woodfire and electric bisque fire.



6. What clay do you like using?

Porcelain at the bottom of the kiln, the black/green glazes look good, and stoneware above.

7. What firing techniques do you do?

Woodfire only.

8. Do you make your own glazes?

Yes, black (cobalt) slip mostly. The salt really changes the surface.

9. What are your favourite colours?

Blacks, Blues and Earthtones. A good blue, means you had a good firing.

10. How long does it take to make your work?

The big lidded jars can take up to 3 days, throwing the base and coiling the top. I can throw a pestle bowl in 3 minutes though, so depends on what I'm making.

11. How many shows a year do you do?

4 Pottfest's in the summer, and various Christmas Fairs.

12. Throwing or hand building?

Throwing can get tedious sometimes, I like the mindful quietness of hand building the coils.

13. What infuriates you the most in the process?

Collecting the wood for the firings, re-arranging the stacks of wood (air stacking). I can spend 2 months

out of the year sorting wood piles.

14. What are your 3 most important tools?

Hands (there's two!) Sledging tool for making foot ring profiles

15. What piece of equipment do you wish you had?

A Slab Roller! (this would be the 3rd important tool!) I'd make bigger pots, I currently hand roll all my big oval dishes.

16. Is there any pottery technique you would still want to try?

Lustre Firing of copper's and silver.

17. Are you a tidy potter?

Yes, I like to keep the studio organised.

18. Where do you find inspiration for your work?

Mostly from the natural world, I like carving the texture in my pots from plants and flowers.

19. Who do you admire now?

German potters like Tomas Tunig, another salt glazer, he does tall oil lamps.

20. What has been the highlight of your career so far?

When my peers want to swap pots with you, it's a good feeling when potters you admire appreciate your work too.

21. Have you collaborated with other artists?

No, but I like the idea of Anagama kiln firing with a team of people.



NPA South West Region - Potclays Visit – Ceri Jones

South West Region – Potclays visit 10.07.2023

On a wet Monday morning in July, members met in the Potclays shop, eagerly awaiting our private tour around the famous Potclays factory, Stoke-on-Trent, and we were not disappointed!



Beginning of the tour

We were met by the Director, James Otter, where he shared stories of how Potclays first came into existence. Established in 1932 as a clay mining company; The Potters Coal and Clay Company, under the Directorship of Becky's great grandfather, William Noake. As many of you will know, Becky is James'

wife. It was later incorporated as The Potters Clay and Coal Company Limited with William Noake as Governing Director.

James told us how William Noake gathered all the information he needed to find out where the best site for clay was in the area, and how he very astutely spent many an evening going around all the pubs talking to all the miners! These were the men who worked in the mines and knew which one's mined the best coal, and which ones didn't, because they were full of dirty sludgy clay! – Bingo!



First stage of processing



Compressing clay into giant sheets

As instructed, we all arrived in suitable footwear, to accommodate the working environment and the great British weather! We were guided round the different sections of the factory, which all operated on different levels, where, in the processing of the clay they have taken full advantage of the (free) force of gravity, wherever possible.



Mixing specific recipes

We were shown how the materials are brought in to begin their processing journey; each step of the process explained. Who knew there was so much work involved in providing the lovely clay that we all know and use? There was lots of mixing and sieving, compressing, and pugging going on. All very precise measurements and lots of attention to detail to make up the many different recipes that they have developed over the years; over 70 recipes! The lads all made the lifting, slicing, shovelling, and bagging look so easy, we were amazed! A better work out than paying to go to the gym!

As we walked round, members quizzed James about ingredients, platelets, age of all the machinery, and

there were definitely a few twitchy fingers, itching to stick them in the clay!!

Throughout the tour it was clear that they are very keen on health and safety; the lads wore protective PPE and machines kitted out with airflow venting systems – very impressive.

At the end of the tour, we were able to see samples of different grogs which are used in the clay bodies, and of course we could all stick our fingers in and have a feel; how can a potter resist!

The processes on site have been well refined over the years, and continue to be ever evolving, to respond to demand. This amazing family business produce high quality materials that are shipped all over the world. Having seen the high-spec processes involved, it sheds a whole new light on the humble bag of clay.

It was fascinating to learn about the rich history of such a wonderful family business, now in its 91st year of business, and still in the same family. Currently it is 4th generation, and succession planning is already being discussed to bring in their 5th generation!

Many of us took full advantage of the Potclays member discount, which is available to all NPA members (you will need to provide your membership number), before heading back out into the rain, in full awe of what Potclays produce for us lucky potters to use! Our visit was followed with a lovely lively lunch together chatting all things pottery (and some), at the New Vic Theatre which is just up the road from the factory.

A fabulous day out was had by our members, and well worth a visit! The next Potclays Open Day is Saturday 16 September, 9am – 3pm.

NPA SW Exhibition – Juliet Meyers



The Old Parsonage, Didsbury

Fifteen potters spread across three galleries were to be found at the Old Parsonage, Didsbury, Manchester over the second May Bank holiday. The Parsonage is a historic building going back to 1646. Its oak floors, wood lined rooms and corridors and its stunning stained glass windows provide the SW NPA with an amazing venue to display and sell our work annually. We had earthenware, stoneware, porcelain and raku, tableware, garden pots, and sculpture. We had visitors discovering us by accident, visitors seeking us out from social media and visitors that return to see us each year. The Old Parsonage is run by The Didsbury Trust, a registered charity. We donate a percentage of our taking to them to help keep the building running as a community hub. This year we donated over £900. Well done SW NPA potters.



Sue Clark



Gill McMillan



Annie Tortora



Barbara Chadwick



Fiona Newby



Stacy White



Marilyn Gollom



Hazel Higham



Juliet Myers



Lindy Garner

New Membership system

As you might know, your NPA now has almost 800 members and our committee volunteers spend a lot of time keeping everything ticking over. This includes manually checking payments against members, compiling data into spreadsheets, writing membership cards, welcome emails and much more. For new members, this process is often perceived as very slow and we did have a few members mention this.

We have also found that all processes using membership data have now become difficult if done manually and safely under strict GDPR rules. For instance, to email you our pdf newsletter, two emails have to be sent from our membership secretary to our newsletter editor, one with the password-protected spreadsheet and one with the password. Then again, the data needs to be uploaded into Mailchimp manually every other month. You can guess how much time this takes and with safer seamless cloud-based solutions out there, it can be very frustrating for those having to do it.

So, a team of 3 committee members and our website administrator have investigated those solutions and have compared 4 cloud-based systems with each other and against the NPA criteria which included:

- Setup fee and ongoing cost of the software
- Online Safety
- UK based with access to a helpline
- User-friendliness
- Multiple Logins for all our regional coordinators
- The ability to customize it to some extent to make it look and feel NPA

The team recommended two strong contenders to the committee and during our last committee meeting, we chose the one that comes with the best support. This is because we are volunteers and are grateful for the help offered and we believe it is safer as we are no experts in this field. We are now starting the process of “onboarding”, this means we are building a new NPA membership portal that all of you are going to (hopefully) enjoy. In there, you will see regional events, and be able to change your data or your preferences easily, for

instance, if you would like to receive the newsletter via email or by post. New members will be set up instantly.

I would like to say that we are following all the GDPR guidelines and all your data is kept safe during this process and no third party will have access to sensitive information. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact me directly at npachair@northern-potters.co.uk.

Once this process is closer to completion, I will know more about the “ins and outs” and will let you all know in the next newsletter.

Kind Regards

Nadine



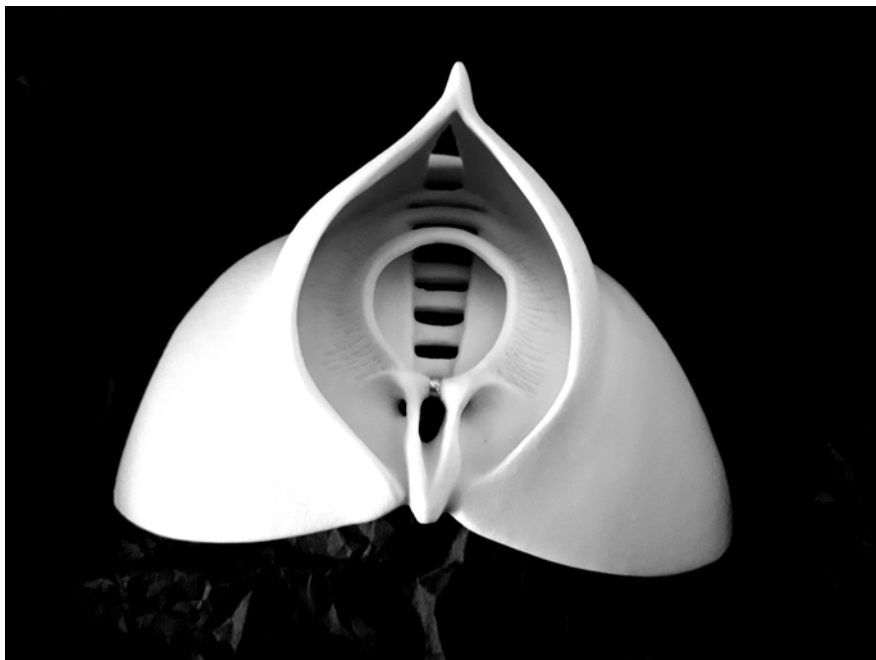
Micaela Schoop

Members' Gallery

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



Pamela Thorby



Maggie Barnes



Maggie Barnes

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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.

Jill Benson	Nallerton	N.Yorks
Laura Boardman	Failsworth	Manchester
Jessica Brown	Holmfirth	W. Yorks
Sarah Churchill	Sheffield	S. Yorks
Sue Cragg	Manchester	
Irene De Luis de la Cruz	Sheffield	S. Yorks
Rob Fisher	Otley	W. Yorks
Becky Gibbs	Cumbria	
Charlotte Gower	Holmfirth	W. Yorks
SharoN.Lea	Macclesfield	Cheshire
Jo-Anne Mitchell	Rotherham	S. Yorks
Anne-Marie Morton	Rotherham	S. Yorks
DawN.Ogilvie	Sherburn In Elmet	N.Yorks
AlisoN.Peacock	Driffield	East Yorks
Krithika Rajagopal	Wakefield	W. Yorks
Rebecca Storey	Nottingham	Notts
Caroline Welch	Redcar	Cleveland
Philippa Whiteside	Preston	Lancashire

Jen Donkin Gourley
Membership Secretary

Visit <https://www.northern-potters.co.uk/> for membership forms and subscription rates.



From the Membership Secretary

Digital Newsletter now available

You can now choose to receive your NPA Newsletter as a PDF by email instead of the paper edition in the post. If you would like to give it a try, send an email to membership@northern-potters.co.uk requesting this. Send it from the email address you want to receive the PDF at, and please make the subject PDF Newsletter. You will be able to change your choice back to a postal copy at any time. No action is required by members wishing to continue receiving a printed copy by post.

Other reminders:

Don't forget to let membership@northern-potters.co.uk know if you have changed any of your contact details so that you don't miss out on any events and/or information.

Also, please remember that we don't send out membership renewal reminders - you're in charge of your membership.

If you have any queries don't hesitate to contact me at membership@northern-potters.co.uk

Jen Donkin Gourley

Small ads

Small ads are free to members!

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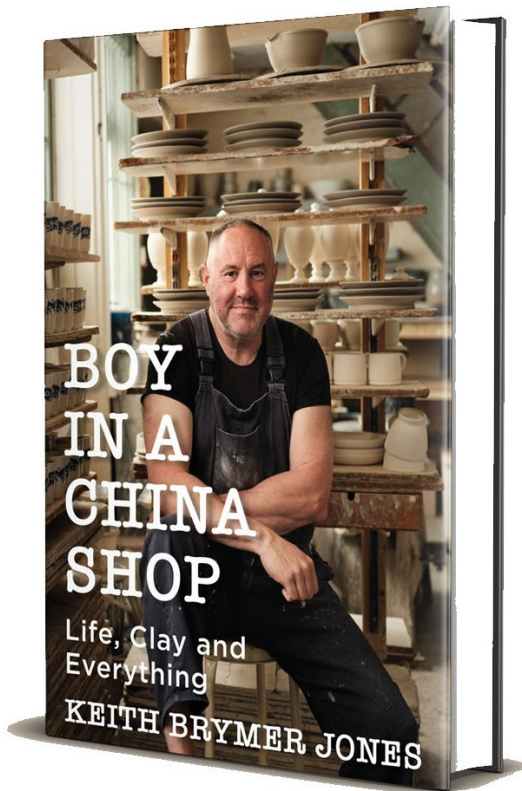
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Book Review – Sarah Vanic



Boy in a China Shop

Life, Clay and Everything

By Keith Brymer Jones & Michael James

...if we choose to make something of the choices we can make in life, it can have reverberations not only throughout our own lives but in those of people we have never met.

Keith Brymer Jones

Like many of us, I first came across Keith Brymer Jones on 'The Pottery Throwdown' which I absolutely love, and so much so, that I applied to be a participant on the programme. I didn't know who KBJ was at the time and I did think; who the hell is this guy? Quite a character and I'm ashamed to admit that I thought he was more of a telly character (not a real potter). Little did I realise though, that his history with clay goes way back. In fact, clay came seriously

into his life at the age of 18 apprenticing for two chaps out in Harefield Pottery. We're talking the 80's here and for the next three decades Keith grafts!

And I have to say, I am impressed. Keith, and the term graft, are synonymous. He is dogged in his pursuit to keep his hands in clay. He is excessive and to the limit. If you choose to pick up his book you will find out the definitions of stamina, persistence and determination. He also tackles that age old nut ' how to survive as a full time potter.' With the help of his oldest and dearest friend Michael James, they work together to make his ramblings into a book. They begin classically & chronologically from little boy to middle aged potter. Usually reading about someone else's early years can be dull or conversely traumatising but Keith keeps it all into perspective. He doesn't shy away from embarrassing events initially detailing two journeys; one as potter by day and lead singer by night . He takes the reader on a right good ride entertaining us with throwing adventures and exploits of singing his lungs out. No shame, he gives 100 % and if you want to see the man throwing himself about, look up Curious Wigs music circa 1980 and his manly covers of Sinead and Adele.

His voice and physicality is felt throughout this book which most probably helps from seeing and hearing him on the telly. We also know from Throwdown viewing that Keith likes a tear or two, but surprisingly he's less tearful in this book. He speaks from a rational and emotional heart; one which keeps growing and understanding itself.

What is most overriding throughout the book is his passion for clay, especially throwing. This autobiography is very entertaining, funny, and full of heart. It's brilliant. I can even hear the man himself saying, It's bloody brilliant !



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Regional News

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

In June, as part of the Silverdale and Arnside Art Trail, NPANW held a ceramics exhibition at Silverdale Village Institute. It was well attended and some of the group enjoyed a shared meal over the weekend. These sort of activities are a positive experience in many ways, not just a boost to sales but an important point of contact between fellow creatives.

The region will hold an exhibition titled *Shared Stories at Upfront* at the Up Front Gallery, Unthank Farm/Unthank, Penrith - 27th September to 12th November.

The Potters Camp at UCLan was great! It was good to see so many NPANW members there.

Thank you to all who responded to our recent Questionnaire to members. The consensus was that the face to face and Zoom meetings were found to be useful and a good way of finding out what is going on. There were few responses but

some points/suggestions were:

- Sometimes meeting places are too far to travel to.
- Social gatherings could be held at other potters homes or studios on a rotation basis.

Going forward we shall take on board these suggestions and try to implement them.

Possible topics for future Zoom or meetings could be:

- How to present your work for exhibitions
- How to photograph work
- How to use instagram

Best wishes, Kath, Chris and Deborah



NW

NW Regional co-ordinators: Kathryn Stevens, Deborah Robinson, Chris Barnes
northernpottersnw@gmail.com  NPANorthwest  @northernpottersassociationNW

Hi Everyone – what a busy summer so far!

Potters Camp at UCLan went really well, it was great to meet so many potters and see the workshops and presentations.

UCLan ClayLab is now on Summer break until September.

Our focus is on identifying new exhibition spaces so please let us know if you have any suggestions. We're already in talks with a couple of venues. As soon as these are confirmed we'll let you know.

Kim Graham & Helen Pemberton west@northern-potters.co.uk  NPAwest  @northernpottersassociationWest (TBC)

A reminder that we still need a few more members for Lytham Heritage Centre exhibition to go ahead next year. Please let us know if you're interested.

British Ceramics Biennial 25 Sept – 5 Nov, have a call out for volunteers. Check out their website if you're interested. www.britishceramicsbiennial.com

Happy Potting!

Kim and Helen



W

We were saddened to hear that one of our fellow members and previous coordinator, Simone Cobbold passed away on the 30th May 2023.

Fifteen of our members filled three galleries at the Old Parsonage, Didsbury Manchester on 27th-29th May - a successful event which we hold annually at this venue.

Members had a great day out at Potclays on the 10th July. The tour was really interesting and geared specifically to us. Many of us followed it with a lovely lively lunch together at the New Vic theatre just up the road.

Stacy White is busy organizing our Pottery Market in Stretford Mall, Manchester. It's to be held on Saturday 19th August. Stacy has also set up a new private Facebook page for the SW NPA members to join. This is a great safe place

to introduce yourselves, share any technical questions you may have or just join in with the chat. We would love for members to be able to link in with people in their immediate area.

Pat Amies and Hazel Higham are taking the lead on the Macclesfield pop up in the Autumn. If anyone would like to help Pat and Hazel with the organizing then please get in touch.

Best wishes, Juliet & Ceri



SW

Juliet Myers south-west@northern-potters.co.uk  NPAsouthwest  @northernpottersassociationSW

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

Regional News

On Saturday June 17th NE potters and guests attended our Meet the Makers event at The Python Gallery in Middlesbrough to open the NPA NE Summer Exhibition. It's a lovely exhibition, which has drawn enthusiastic response from the public. Representing the diverse work of sixteen Northern Potters, the show so impressed gallery curator Peter Hesleton, it is now extended until Friday August 11th 2023. Open on weekdays 10am till 4.30pm.



NE

We invite submissions for our winter selling show, also at the Python Gallery, which will run during the last two weeks of October and the first week in November 2023. Submission forms will be mailed out in due course, but we are looking for work which can be sold and replaced quickly from stock in order to respond to the gift buying season!

A small group of four from the co-ordinators group met with MIMA Curator Helen Welford in their study centre. We learned how the collection archives are being updated, and did some research of our own in preparation for a public event in October. More details of that, including the actual

NE Regional Co-ordinators Group: Carol Newmarch, Wendy Turner, Diane Nicholson, Helen Pickard, Jaime Westwood, etc.
north-east@northern-potters.co.uk  [NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast)  [@northernpottersassociationNE](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationNE)

Several NPA East members volunteered at the recent Potters Camp in Preston and more attended. It was very good to see so many people there and to put faces to names, we recruited new members as a result and hopefully they will join us at future events. There are some events planned but not finalised so please check your emails in the



E

date will be circulated soon, but we also have an event at MIMA on SUNDAY 3rd of September for NPA Members, to use the permanent ceramics collection as a starting point for creating drawings and artwork, to bring fresh inspiration to our own studio work. Get it in your diaries! It will be lovely to see you there.

We are delighted to welcome a new member to our NE co-ordinators group, Michelle Webb, who has taken up the key role of looking after the NE Social Media Accounts. Michelle has also started to conduct a series of interviews with NE based ceramicists. The first one with David Lawson you can read in this issue of NPA News. We would love to have additional members get involved, particularly those based in the northern end of the NE Region, who may have local knowledge of that area, so that we can increase our activity further north in 2024. Meanwhile In the Autumn we will be organising a members meeting at Sunderland University, at the National Glass Centre. It's a fairly central venue for our region so we can get together, talk pottery, and share our ideas of what activities we want to happen. Watch out for the date in our next news email and please come if you possibly can!

coming days/weeks.

The Ilkley group met last week at the Moss & Moor café and we had a nice chat amongst us. The topics included a review of Potters Camp and glazing.

The group meets regularly, and the next meeting is likely to be in September. All members are welcome.

Email Nadine at npachair@northern-potters.co.uk to be included in the WhatsApp group.

Lyn Clarke east@northern-potters.co.uk  [NPAEast](https://www.facebook.com/NPAEast)  [@northernpottersassociationEast](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociationEast)

Things continue to be very active here in the south-east. We had a fabulous event at Dovecot Gallery near Doncaster on the weekend of June 23/24th. What a good weekend that was! Thanks to Mike and Hilary for hosting us, what a wonderful setting. For a first event at this venue footfall was pretty good, next year will be better. By the time this goes out we will have had our day of talks by Paul Smith and Rachel Wood at the Eco Centre in Wirksworth (July 23rd). At this point I can only imagine how inspired we all will be by the end of the day.



SE

Many of our members have been very busy of late, and there is always something new and exciting popping up on our Instagram and Facebook pages. Do please tag us

#northernpottersassociationse for a follow and repost. Also, we have had more requests for us to disseminate news, requests and information around the group from members.

It's always great to hear what our members are up to. After all, it's what the NPA is about, sharing and helping and not being a lone potter.

We now have a month off (sic) until a whole raft of events in August and September, please add these to your diaries. Pop-Up to Pottery Summer fair, Stocksbridge (20th August) applications still open. The group raku day in Rotherham (26th August), always a popular event. Art in the Gardens in Sheffield (2nd-3rd September). Then a new event for us, a combined art and pottery exhibition in conjunction with The Pennine Artists as part of Sheffield Industrial Heritage week (9th-17th September). Art at the House, Huddersfield (23rd-24th September). This will also be the venue for our next south-east group meeting. Finally, for now, Cromford Ceramics Fair, at Cromford Mills, Matlock (8th October).

And that just about sums it up.

All the best, Nog and Wendy.

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

Home Pottery - How green do we think we are? – Graham Northing

I have had this piece on the back-burner now for quite some time, in fact since the Greta Thunberg and Ade Adeptian climate documentaries were on the TV in 2021. It has been tinkered and toyed with and over the last few months with the cost of fuel and power going up so I decided to re-visit it. A big moment was when I was in India with the anangama firing group in February and looked at seven tonnes of wood going up the chimney! And having flown out there just to do it. I can tell you, the hippocrisy of my situation was not lost on me, what was I doing? Another re-write followed. Then at the recent Potters Camp there was a talk on waste and reusability in ceramics by Sara Howard (Circular Ceramics) and it's this excellent talk that has finally decided me to send this piece in.

I'm hopeful that the vast majority of us potters and crafters are environmentally aware, and are to a greater or lesser extent 'green'. Even if this is with a very broad brush attitude and with a small 'g'. But is our hobby/profession as green as we think or would like it to be? Could the suppliers and manufacturers do better? Could we do better?

Materials. A quick look at any pottery supplies website will give you a vast range of products and materials, including cost, use, and formula, but very rarely anything about country of origin. How many of the products that we use have been shipped half way around the world? I feel that we should be given this information so that we have the option of using a more locally sourced equivalent product. Even if this would mean us slightly adjusting our favourite glaze mixes, or choosing a more local clay body. Is it something we should consider?

For me, I would much rather use a clay dug up in Nottinghamshire rather than one imported from Nebraska (or some-such), even if it did mean a change in making. A quick look on the Valentines web site for stoneware clay gave some origin information on one out of twenty clays listed. This said that it 'contains Shropshire and South Staffordshire fire clays'. Is this the bulk of the clay body? I take it the rest is from somewhere else. But what? From where? Other manufacturers were similarly opaque in their material listings.

The same argument should be advanced for all the other products we use, from oxides to tile cutters.

I think it would be good if manufacturers labelled their product with a country of origin. Or at the very least in the case of blended products where the majority ingredient has come from. At least then we could take a view.

Firing. This is possibly a bit more controversial. I appreciate that potters get very attached to a firing style and that some effects can only be attained through certain firing processes. However, from a purely environmental outlook, CO2 emissions and all that, how do we justify gas and wood firing?

I know that even electric firing has a certain amount of carbon footprint, depending on the source of the power generation, but it is more definable and has more chance of being from a sustainable production process like wind or solar.



Wood firing has its sustainability issues with where the fuel comes from and the type of wood used. The age of the tree when felled is the biggest issue with how sustainable the process is. The use of fast grown softwoods like pallet wood and scrap packaging is surely the worst fuel in this respect. And the big issue is the subsequent release of greenhouse gasses upon burning.

As for gas this is surely, by far, the least sustainable and the most environmentally damaging heat source that is commonly used. How can we be in anyway green and gas fire?

Product. We all have our favourite style or type of ceramic object. From earthenware to porcelain and everywhere in between. Should we pay more attention to our firing temperatures from a purely environmental point of view, whatever heat source we use? Take the humble coffee mug for example. If we could (with skill and determination) achieve the same result and finish by firing at lower earthenware rather than higher stoneware temperatures why should we not do it? Or at the very least consider it as an option.

Please, this is written as a discussion piece not a manifesto, I have no axe to grind. If you see me at a show or event I really like a friendly chat and a debate, I'm not at all keen on arguments.

All the very best, Nog (Armpits Pottery)



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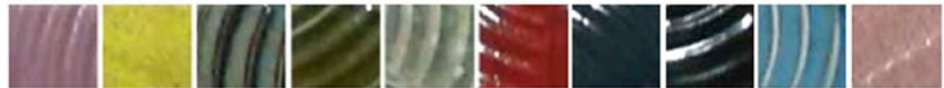
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