

NEWSLETTER



SUMMER
2009

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Ray Scott and the Beginning of EAPA

Ben Brierley and Paul Young

Clay with Children

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

RAY SCOTT

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Ray Scott. Ray was a founder member of our Association, together with Alan Baxter. I will always remember his warmth, enthusiasm and helpful advice on the matter of kilns and materials on my venture into Raku.

SELECTED MEMBERS

Congratulations to Lola Swain and Jeremy Nichols on being elected as Selected Members and we look forward to their future contribution to Anglian Potters.

DAY EVENTS

The early season day events, Ben Brierley and Paul Young, were both well attended and most enjoyable. thanks go to Heather and Felicity, together with all who contributed in any way.

DAY EVENT EQUIPMENT

I am pleased to find that my 'column' is read by some! JJ Vincent has kindly responded to my appeal and has taken on the storage of our PA and projection equipment. No arm twisting needed – thanks, JJ.

EDITOR'S NOTES

It seems that in every issue we mourn the passing of an Anglian Potter member: this time we remember one without whom the Association would not exist. On pages 6, 7,8 and 9 former Chairpersons and Committee Members write with their own personal memories of Ray Scott.

I was persuaded to join the Association by my pottery teacher, Judy Ferrari, soon after it started. From the first, Ray and his wife Dorothy were really welcoming. Dorothy knew everyone, and cared about each and every member and their work. Ray was always ready to offer solutions to problems of firing, and the Raku days at his workshop in Newmarket were tremendous fun to a newcomer like me. (I remember, too, that Frank Logan, who worked at that time for Kentucky Fried Chicken, kept us all



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was very well attended, standing room only for the first time in memory! the committee was re-elected en bloc. the only contentious discussion involved the issue of Selected Membership and the concept of Selection. Following a lively discussion it was resolved to invite Selected Members who had not taken part in exhibitions or the affairs of the Association for three years, to state their intentions or re-apply for Selection.

Victor

PHOTOS WANTED!

If you are exhibiting in Anglian Potters shows this summer and winter, please send photos of your work **NOW** to Sally Macpherson, for a chance to be included in publicity posters, private view invitations and leaflets
e: sallymach2@aol.com

well supplied at lunch-time!)

After Ray and Dorothy retired to Ely, Ray took up painting and joined the Ely Art Society, which used to exhibit each year in Ely Cathedral. It was Dorothy who suggested to the then EAPA committee that it might be possible for us, too. Dorothy died in 1996, before our first exhibition in the Cathedral in the summer of 1997. Both she and Ray would have been delighted that we are returning there this June.

Carolyn

Cover: Paul Young's just-thrown spiral candlestick drying in the spring garden at Mundford in April.

(see pages 12-13)

Photo: Carolyn Postgate

SELECTION MEETING 2009

I was nervous. My first selection meeting! Not that I put any work in for peer review! Ooh no, I was just organising it! I think it all went fine: the key to the village hall and all seven members of the selection committee were there in time and the candidates found their way to the village hall. Slight technical glitch: I should have brought my laptop computer, because modern times don't stop for the Anglian Potters and the images requested as part of the application come on a CD-ROM. Next time! Anyway what I wanted to say is, we have two new selected members: Lola Swain and Jeremy Nichols. Congratulations to both of them and well done selection committee!

Anja Penger

REMEMBER YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE

due at the end of May. Send your cheque payable to *Anglian Potters* to Mary Wyatt, 68 Ranelagh Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7HY.

Fees for 2009/2010 are the same as the current year:

Individual member £27

Joint £45 (two members at the same address)

Institution/corporate £50

Student £10 (attending a full time ceramics course, proof of enrolment required)

CLARE PRIORY FAIR

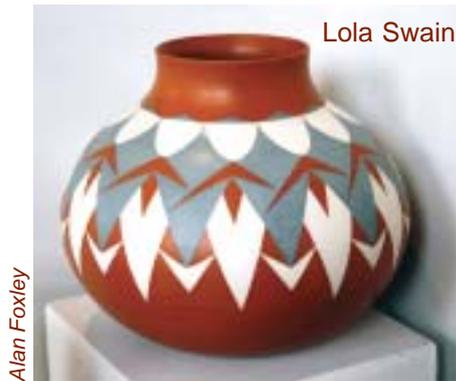
Clare Priory hosts a non-profit Craft Fair, organised by volunteers, on 11-12 July. The potter who usually wheel-throws pots with children can't make it this year, so if any member is interested in taking her place, please contact Bernard Rushton immediately! There is no charge for the pitch.

Open: 10am-6pm on Saturday
11am-5pm on Sunday

t: 01708 728974 m: 07767 610200
e: bernard.rushton@gmail.com

For further details
www.clarepriory.org.uk/CraftFair/entrance.php

Bernard Rushton



Lola Swain's work will be familiar to members from recent Anglian Potters' exhibitions in Cambridge. Her work is hand-built in earthenware clay using traditional coil methods.



Jeremy Nichols demonstrated his precisely-engineered techniques last May at the AGM (see Newsletter Autumn 2008) and has exhibited since then with Anglian Potters in Cambridge.

POTTERS IN THE CATHEDRAL

Selected Members Exhibition in Ely 6-21 June 2009

The Selected Members exhibition in Ely Cathedral opens on 6 June with a lunchtime reception from 12 noon. The exhibition is open daily from 10am-6pm (Sundays from 12 noon-4pm) until 21 June. Please come, look and support the Anglian Potters in the majestic environment of Ely Cathedral.

POSTCARD FROM CROATIA

I often send my pots travelling on an adventure and they like it in their well-padded boxes: this time to Varazdin in Croatia for the International Festival of the Postmodern Ceramics Exhibition: *Nature as Adventure*.

If I had been selected to put a pot in the exhibition I should have heard by the beginning of November and sent it by the end of that month. As I had not heard anything two months later, I decided to put my pot into a gallery instead. My husband said: "I bet you will get a letter tomorrow". I laughed, but he was right.

So I retrieved my pot to send it within a week to Croatia by carrier, "Not by post". This was extremely expensive, but by post was more reasonable. I decided not to bother and rang the organiser. The lady said: "Use the post. The carriers cause more problems". I also asked why I had not heard before of the date changes, but then her English



abandoned her; she murmured something about, "Work being done... difficulties...".

Anyway, the pot went on the journey. I also went away but before leaving I rang Croatia to see whether it had arrived. The lady could not tell: "There are so many pots" she said. After my return I rang again and it had arrived whole. It will be there for a couple of months. Then the whole pantomime will start again, only in reverse.

There are times when one is truly grateful for the Anglian Potters efficiency!

Words and pictures: Ursula Stroh-Rubens

DEMONSTRATION DAY WITH BEN BRIERLEY



spent one year as an artist in residence at Tettenhall College in Wolverhampton. Among his duties was the teaching of young students. He then went on to obtain an MA at the University of Wales in Cardiff. Here he mainly made functional porcelain ware. He learned to appreciate the use of a sketchbook in addition to 'sketching' his pots on the wheel. Currently Ben is working as technical tutor for 3D Design at Loughborough University.

He began throwing upside-down vessels very early in his career and has never given up this passion, as he demonstrated. To get the upside-down vessels, the thrown vessel is closed at the top and, after cutting it off the wheel, the base becomes the top of the vessel. With this technique one can make bowls, bottle-type pots and jugs as we could see during his practical demonstration. By throwing upside-down pots, the manipulation of the thrown vessel from a straight pot into a dancing bottle or jug, (Ben's 'signature' pots) is relatively easy at this point. Trapped air stabilises the pots to a certain extent. Applying a determined 'kick' with the hand causes the pot to lean over and immediately the impression of a dancing vessel is achieved. Looks sooo easy! I might try it myself. Having said, that Ben has at least

More than 120 people enjoyed an interesting AP demonstration day with Ben Brierley in February. Ben gave an in-depth insight into the basis of his inspiration and his motivations. The slide show started with pictures rather than pots: pictures painted by abstract expressionists, showing wild lines that represent motion and fluidity. Ben also paints with emulsion paint mixed with oxides usually used in ceramic glazes. In his painting he tries to achieve the same qualities in terms of motion and surface character that he wants to achieve with his pots. The connection of the pictures to his ceramic work becomes apparent when looking at the shapes and surfaces of his vessels. More about that later!

Ben had early contact with ceramics. Together with his mum

he used to buy second-hand functional ware from the Winchcombe pottery. The development of his current repertoire started with a ceramics and design diploma from Mid-Warwickshire College. The techniques he learned were initially restricted to hand-building and coiling of stoneware vessels. Subsequently Ben learned throwing on the wheel 'the old fashioned way': throw 50 cylinders of the same diameter and height from 50 balls of clay of the same weight. At the end of the day cut all cylinders in half and assess the profile. Repeat this program for three days. Sounds good and solid to me!

Having obtained a grant for studying 3D design (ceramics) Ben went to Wolverhampton University. After obtaining his degree Ben





10 years' experience in doing this!!! I should probably concentrate on getting my pots straight for the time being!

Ben started altering his pots early on in his career, for example by applying clamp-marks or thumb-marks to the rim of the vessel. Surface variation is an important component of his pots and directly links with his pictures, or those painted by abstract expressionists. To achieve the best basis for the intended surface variation on his pots, he has developed several clay bodies of his own, for example by adding molochite to porcelain.

Ben specialises in wood firing. He fires two anagama style wood fired kilns, one in Loughborough and one at Wysing Arts Centre near Cambridge. He fires 3-4 times a year, each time with about 400 pots in the kiln. Each firing takes three to five days in order to achieve the ash deposits and melts that he tries to achieve on his pots. Clearly wood firing is a team effort over such prolonged periods of time! The heat of the wood fired kiln (up to cone 15!) completes the appearance that Ben wants to achieve. The clay body becomes almost as soft as it was at the beginning of its metamorphosis into a ceramic vessel. 'Treacle' is the word Ben used. These effects are clearly visible in the big platters which are bent, almost following the shape of the kiln-arch, because they have been fired standing on their rim, leaning against the arch wall.

Ben uses glazes very sparingly. If he uses glaze he applies a white casting slip, black engobe or carbon-trap shino glazes, which can have stunning effects from a wood firing. The use of glaze is mainly restricted to the inside of vessels and rims of mugs to make them smooth and pleasant for the lips.

This demonstration day clearly



conveyed Ben's passion for clay, shapes, interesting surfaces and the experience of wood fired ceramics. If you haven't done so already, visit his webpage: www.ben-brierley-woodfired-ceramics.co.uk.

Words: Anja Penger

Pictures: Heather Graham, Carolyn Postgate



RAY SCOTT AND THE BEGINNING OF EAPA

Joyce Davison



Harvey Bradley

Alan Baxter writes:

Living here high in the Pyrenees on the French-Spanish border, I was surprised when my wife said to me, "It's for you, it's Victor Knibbs".

I was very sorry to hear from Victor of the death of Ray Scott, leading me to ponder about Ray, and the wonderful Dorothy, for the next several days. The contribution they unitedly volunteered was pivotal to every formative meeting of the young gathering of the then East Anglian Potters Association. Indeed Ray Scott was the primary inspiration for the forming of the society.

I had been to Stoke-on-Trent and was returning along the A14 to Ipswich when I deviated to Fordham to meet Ray for the first time at his small works unit. I had heard about his experiments with fast heat. He struck me instantly as a fellow north countryman with his strong accent and blunt speaking, but generous in conversation about St Helens in Lancashire and furnaces. All the while a kettle was boiling away, sitting on the top of what we all now know to be one of Ray's, Fordham Thermal Systems, fast fire Raku kilns, the smallest baby one. Ray explained to me that this tiny furnace would boil his kettle many times, making loads of tea before losing its heat. This was in the early eighties – truly rocket science at the time. The next couple of hours flashed by in chat about everything ceramic. Ray

wowed me with his new fast fire kiln, one thousand degrees centigrade in just four minutes. My eyes were glued to the pyrometer as it raced, jet propelled, to 1000 celsius, I could not believe what I was seeing. It was during this first meeting with Ray that I complained at the lack of any potters' group in the region other than The Suffolk Crafts Society, which was diluted with other Arts and Crafts. Unsympathetically, Ray suggested that I stopped grumbling about this and set about creating an association for potters in the region.

For the next week or so I pondered Ray's challenge, playing with possible names and geographic range for a new society. At the time I was a part-time lecturer at the Suffolk College, while working to build up my own pottery workshop just outside Ipswich, travelling with my ceramics mostly to West Germany. The name, though grand, that kept coming to the fore was East Anglian Potters Association. This name stuck with little competition and continued to be helpful. The next problem was who and where to meet. While Cambridge seemed obvious, it lay too far to the West, so, using a ruler, Thetford presented itself as the mathematical centre of Anglia. The Riverside Centre was picked by Patt, my wife, and me as a suitably-sized centre, if enough interest could be generated from the mounds of envelopes and

invitations strewn across our living room carpet.

I recall ringing Ray to update him upon the progress I was making and talking to Dorothy for the first time. She assured me that she and Ray would arrive early in Thetford to prepare a reception for my invited guests. My fingers were crossed for a good turnout. In no time the evening for the inaugural meeting was upon me and I had given little thought about what I would speak about to an invited audience. I gathered a heap of everything I could lay my hands on that was made from clay and fired, including tiles and a brick, the building block of much architecture. I managed to cobble together from many craft society constitutions a discussion framework document to start a debate about a possible future for a potters' society.

I arrived at Thetford not knowing if anybody had turned up, not knowing if there would be any interest. Worrying about this, I was having difficulty finding a place to park, quickly followed by having difficulty getting into the Riverside Centre which was blocked with groups of chattering people bustling their way into the meeting room, which I had, secretly and foolishly, feared would be too large. I had not prepared myself for this crush of enthusiasm. My delight was considerable when I saw Dorothy and Ray warmly welcoming everybody with a hot drink. All the

chairs were taken – only floor squatting space remained. This set the pattern for the future fantastic success of the now Anglian Potters: always a friendly and inviting group of people that meet regularly to share the world's oldest culture anew.

It's with a heavy heart that I, on behalf of all Anglian Potters, raise a glass to Ray Scott and his remarkable wife Dorothy and say 'thank you' for all their encouragement, their warmth and most of all their enduring appetite always to be there to ensure the solid future for potters in the region and wider afield. "Cheers" to them both, Ray and Dorothy Scott.

Victor Knibbs writes:

East Anglian Potters Association dates to remember:

Ceramic Review 79 (January/February 1983) Ray Scott, together with Alan Baxter, put in an advert calling a meeting to found East Anglian Potters Association, now Anglian Potters.

Ceramic Review 81 (May/June 1983) Forming of Association announced. The foundation meeting was in Thetford on the evening of 11th March 1983. Ray was elected Treasurer and Dorothy, his wife, Membership Secretary.

The Sayvit Kiln

Ray Scott was the proprietor of Fordham Thermal Systems and Sayvit Kilns. Many members used his services and bought kilns and materials from him. His knowledge and skills were highly regarded, and he had a national and international reputation. He was a pioneer of ceramic fibre in the UK. He co-operated with Andrew Holden in developing and manufacturing the Sayvit Gas Kiln Kit used by many members and used every year at Potters' Camp. He wrote an article in Ceramic Review 68 (March/April 1981) entitled 'Lightweight Ceramic Fibre'. Ray hosted many Raku days at his premises at Newmarket.

Opposite page, left to right: Victor and Ray (in characteristic pose), at a sawdust firing in 1984; Ray and Frank Logan; Ray and Jim Mangan. Above: Raku day; Right: Ray's kiln in action

Harvey Bradley



Deborah Baynes writes:

I think my earliest memory of Ray Scott was at a Craft Potters Association camp in the mid to late 70s. At that time I had already put in a good few hours of wood fired Raku and was surprised to see this very calm chap producing Raku pots like rabbits from a hat, from his own design of top-loading gas kiln. This was made from the new wonder material, ceramic fibre, which at the time very few potters had any experience with. After chatting away to Ray and his wife Dorothy for some time I was so impressed with the kiln's performance that I bought one. I remember that their caravan was packed with these kilns and every sale gave them a bit more living space. I was pleased to renew their

acquaintance in 1983 when we formed EAPA.

Ray and Alan Baxter organised an ad in Ceramic Review inviting all interested East Anglian based potters to a meeting in Thetford with a view to forming an Association. I think around 70 attended and some volunteered to form a committee. Alan became Chairman, Ray was Treasurer and Dorothy was already taking Minutes, so an obvious choice for Secretary. I and several others also joined the Committee, although I can't remember in what capacities. With such a new organisation and various projects to get off the ground, Committee meetings were legendary in their length. We sometimes spent the whole of Sunday at Ray and Dorothy's

Harvey Bradley



house, gathered round their dining table. No matter how heated the discussion Ray was always the calm voice of reason and puffed away resolutely on his pipe. Dorothy kept us supplied with tea, coffee, biscuits and cake endlessly. We were very lucky to have had such a dedicated couple in the Association right from the start. Without their influence and hard work the Anglian Potters might not be the successful organisation it is today.

Joyce Davison writes:

I first met Ray Scott in 1984 when I joined the Association and subsequently bought the first of the 3 kilns he made for me over the years. At that time I had little experience of running a workshop and even less knowledge of the intricacies of controlling a firing. I was very hesitant about approaching all these apparently expert potters with my amateurish questions and for the most part kept quiet but with Ray there was never any need to feel

embarrassed. He guided me through the purchase of kiln, kiln furniture, cones, suggested firing schedules etc until I felt quite confident to undertake the first firing. From those humble beginnings I grew into a slightly more confident potter but have never forgotten his friendliness and kindness in helping me to get started.

I visited him many times after that and was always assured of a friendly welcome, a cup of tea, a solution to the current problem and, above all, a laugh and an account of his latest trade fair in England or abroad which always seemed to be full of fun. He was unfailingly good-humoured, helpful and a pleasure to visit.

Right: Ray with Alan and Patt Baxter firing one of Ray's kilns; Opposite page: Red-hot pots at a raku firing day at Ray's Studlands Park workshop



Joyce Davison



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Alan Foxley



Alan Foxley writes:

My memories of Ray go back to the very beginning of East Anglian Potters, when I was on the committee as Treasurer with him and his wife Dorothy. His interest and enthusiasm both in getting the Anglian Potters Association off the ground and his unbounded enthusiasm and interest in his kiln building was considerable. I enjoyed the many interesting stories and anecdotes he would recall whenever I visited him at his workshop.

I bought my kiln from Ray in the early eighties as a kit, one of his very early ones (which is still going strong) when he was based in Fordham. Whilst doing so I asked if it was possible to make the lid lift up on some sort of hinge as well as being able to be lifted off – no problem, and he eagerly set to and made the necessary fittings. (Kiln pictured above) Firing three times a week over many years, the hinged lid reduced the numbers of lid replacements and proved to be a good investment. Only since doing large pieces have I reverted back to the original lift-off lid.

He was always very approachable when problems arose and would spend a considerable amount of his time trying to sorting them out. Nothing seemed to daunt him – probably due to his engineering background. From my point of view, he was sorely missed when he retired.

Joyce Davison



Joyce Davison



Harvey and Barbara Bradley write:

We remember Dorothy as the welcoming face of the EAPA, especially to new members and as someone who pioneered the wonderful meals that are still a feature at AP events. We also seem to remember that Dorothy was keen to start our exhibitions at Ely Cathedral although she was not present by the time the first one got going. Ray sold me my first gas kiln which is still very much in use and played a supporting role at Raku events including an early one at his workshop in Fordham and later at the Southend Arts Festival.

Ray retired to Ely with his wife Dorothy and died there in March 2009. Representing Anglian Potters at his funeral were Victor Knibbs, Deborah Baynes, Des Clover, Jim Mangan, Angela Mellor, Frank Logan and Joyce Davison.

CERAMIC HELPLINE

Having a bit of bother that your supplier can't resolve?

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- Colin Saunders** – mould-making, slipware, transfers 01379 588278
- Victor Knibbs** – oxidised stoneware, electric kilns, modifying clay bodies 01480 214741
- Deborah Baynes** – raku, stoneware, earthenware (reduction & oxidised), salt glaze 01473 788300
- Beryl Hines** – general, earthenware, raku 01473 735437
- Usch Spettigue** – raw glazing/single firing 01473 787587
- Margaret Gardiner** – salt glaze 01279 654025
- Sonia Lewis** – high-fired ware including porcelain 01353 688316

If you are willing to give advice, and are willing to be added to this list, please contact the Editor.

MEMBERS' WEBSITES:

- www.angelamellor.com
- www.angelamellorgallery.com
- www.broadwayceramics.com
- www.cathydarcy.com
- www.ceramicsbuyanja.co.uk
- www.corbykilns.co.uk
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- www.secretceramics.co.uk
- www.susancupitt.co.uk

Contact the Editor if you want to add your site to this list.

Check out our website for the latest news:

www.anglianpotters.org.uk

(MORE THAN) TEN LITTLE INDIANS



they got stuck or needed help. The children have free use of my tool box and are encouraged to come up with a range of their own impressing tools. We have found good use for quite a few bits of broken toys!

I have also bought several specific books* that I have used for inspiration on the projects and techniques, but mostly I have tried to link our activities to the topics the children follow in their coursework each term (this is, I think, a fairly recently adopted system, whereby all the standard areas – literacy, numeracy, science etc – are centred on a specific topic). With years 1 and 2 we have for instance done Dinosaurs (you can see the range of approaches in the photo below),



animals (in the photo are some fish “sculptures” and duck dishes, but they also made dragons, owls, butterflies etc).



Not photographed, unfortunately, were some items from the “transportation” series, when the children produced some marvellously imaginative new carriers and more traditional aeroplanes and trucks.

Occasionally we would concentrate on making things as gifts; for Mothers’ Day, for instance, the younger ones made little flowery pots (some of them are in the photo on the next page), and among the

Having talked to a few AP friends who also take children’s classes, I thought it might be useful to share my experience and write a few words for the magazine...That, and a promise to the children that they would see their work in print in a REAL magazine!

A couple of years ago I volunteered to teach clay classes at my children’s primary school as part of their Wednesday afternoon extracurricular activities. The school was extremely supportive and with their backing we involved the PTFA which generously provided the funds for the purchase of a wonderful kiln. The school pays for basic stoneware clay they get cheaply from ESPO and for brush-on glazes that I order from Scarva. Following the structure already in place, and because of space constraints, I initially took two groups of 6-8 children each, one of KS1 children (4-7 yrs old) and one of KS2 (8-10). The sessions last an hour each. The children have shown an enthusiasm for clay that I find extremely uplifting, and demand for the classes has increased, so much so that we have had to ask not to re-apply in order to give a chance to all the children who would like to have a go. Last term for the first time I took a larger (19!) group of 4-6 years old children, but must admit that I found this size

quite a challenge, even with the help of two very patient and enthusiastic Teaching Assistants and occasionally a couple of keen 10 year olds from the previous class as extra helpers. Even so, I feel the children have enjoyed using clay in creative ways and have learned quite a lot about the medium and the process.

My intention is to let them “play” with clay as much as to teach them how to “make something” with clay. I normally start by challenging their ideas of what ceramic work IS – I find that introducing them to the work of contemporary makers, using photos from *Ceramic Review* and *Ceramic Monthly* always gets the conversation rolling. I also like to know they understand the basics of what clay is, the differences between plastic clay and fired ceramics, the basics of what a glaze is, how it can be applied and how it behaves when heated. They ALL love to listen to the magic fizzle of a bisque piece that has just been immersed in water, and even the 4 year olds relate well to the age of clay in terms of dinosaur periods!

I have, with each class, tried to introduce a variety of techniques, starting from simple pinch pots to slab projects, but attempted to let them be fairly free to choose what to do and how, offering help if/when



older group there were for instance a coiled cup and saucer, slab pots and slab decorative plaques.

What I find very interesting is the narrative that accompanies the making, which to me stresses how manipulating clay is essentially a very creative game...and not only for children!

After introducing the basic techniques and given them the opportunity to produce items to proudly take home with them, I have involved the children from each group in a project for a sculptural piece to be installed in a tucked-away area of the school's garden.

Having talked about the history and significance of totem poles in the American Indian tradition, we have looked into the symbolism of different animals in traditional totem poles and the children were encouraged to choose an image that either they felt represented them or that they felt a particular affinity with, so that we could produce a totem pole for the clay club. They then made cylinders using a template for size and 4" pipe sections for formers, and went on to produce a whole range of images (we have a few "monsters", a monkey, bull, eagles, parrots, butterflies, owls, snow tigers, pigs, horses, a dolphin...). One of the parents has volunteered materials and labour to install a couple of posts onto which we will slide and secure the sections during the summer fete planned for June. The children have all enjoyed the project and are very excited at the

prospect of an official unveiling ceremony...and I am extremely proud of them and their work!

So, although the effort involved in preparing and firing goes way beyond the couple of hours I am actually with the children, I am

finding it an extremely enjoyable experience. ...And who knows, maybe some of these children will be AP members in a not-so-distant future?

Words and pictures: Roberta Bateman

* Books I have found useful:

- ◆ **Clay projects for children** – Monica Krumbach - A&C Black
- ◆ **Exploring clay with children** – Chris Utley and Mal Magson - A&C Black
- ◆ **Clay in the primary school** – Peter Clough - A&C Black
- ◆ **Ceramics for kids** – May Ellis – Larks Books
- ◆ **The Kids 'n Clay Ceramics book** – Kevin Nierman, Elaine Arima – Tricycle Press

Our Clay Club Rules (compiled with input from the children):

1. No touching other people's work without permission
2. No eating clay or drinking glazes – no sucking thumbs, poking noses, rubbing eyes etc
3. Always score and slip before trying to attach bits
4. Air pockets are #1 enemy in work
5. Dust is #1 enemy in the work area
6. Never use the same brush for different glazes
7. Always sponge bottoms after glazing
8. Never criticise other people's work
9. Never be upset if the result is not what you expected!
10. HAVE FUN!

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Email: lkextruders@yahoo.co.uk (Dies can be made to your own spec)

PAUL YOUNG AT MUNDFORD



Paul Young's influences are instantly recognisable. As a maker of decorative and functional slipware, he takes his inspiration mostly from seventeenth century pew figures and Staffordshire chimney pieces, with some European folk art and a smattering of Oriental design thrown in for good measure. Paul, in fact, has a formidable knowledge of the history of decorative ceramics and can name-check styles and individual makers with startling speed and ease. We were first treated to a slide show of a recent project Paul was involved with to build a wood fired bottle kiln for Clay Art at Denbigh. Described as looking like 'a cross between a mosque and railway architecture' and being half the size of the industrial kilns which once studded the Welsh hillsides, it apparently performed beautifully and a raw firing was achieved in around nine hours, with pots being sold straight from the kiln as they were still cooling down!

Other pictures gave a tantalizing glimpse of Paul's studio and gallery, which is a disused waiting room on a Victorian railway station on the site of the Battle of Bosworth. A body of enthusiasts now runs steam trains along the track and the surrounding tourist attractions ensure a steady stream of visitors to Paul's picturesque workplace. This can pose its own problems, however and he admits to resorting to locking the door and pulling down the blinds when there is detailed slip trailing to be done.

Having trained at Chesterfield College, his love of slipware was born early when he was taken to see the collection in the Potteries Museum in Stoke on Trent. "Even now, it makes me want to weep every time I see it", he says. His passion for the homely warmth of style and the bright colour palette of these pieces is an inspiration in a period when slipware seems to have largely fallen out of general favour.

For the demonstration Paul first threw a candlestick, a flat base, and a bowl shape on the wheel. One surprise was to learn that he uses a 50:50 ratio of white earthenware to grogged stoneware for his pieces, rather than earthenware alone. He biscuit fires to 1100°C and glaze fires to 1120°C for best results.

For his first example, Paul showed us his slip trailing technique on a large bowl. For the slip he uses terracotta with manganese oxide added "until it looks right". It fires to a rich dark brown to black. Considerable care was taken to make sure the bowl was centred on the wheel from the start because, as he explained;

"You only get one chance with slipware – if you make a mistake, you have to bin it!"

With easy, fluid movements, a banded design swiftly took shape, together with a central motif of a tree. Paul recommends forward thinking and planning before making the first mark, so that you have an image of the completed design in your head. The tools he uses to create his decoration are remarkably basic: an ancient slip trailer covered in gaffer tape, and a chopstick for pulling beads of slip into stylised flower shapes.

The main attraction of the day was to watch Paul build one of his iconic candlesticks. These are elaborate, stylised 'trees', with handles sprouting leaves and small



birds perched in the branches. As he built up the various elements we could see what a time-consuming process this is, requiring a very steady hand and a lot of patience, although Paul says he really enjoys the assemblage aspect of his work. Again, very few tools are employed, just the fingers and a clever little implement for roughing the clay surface prior to the attachment of another piece, which he made from a length of dowel with several pins glued into the end.

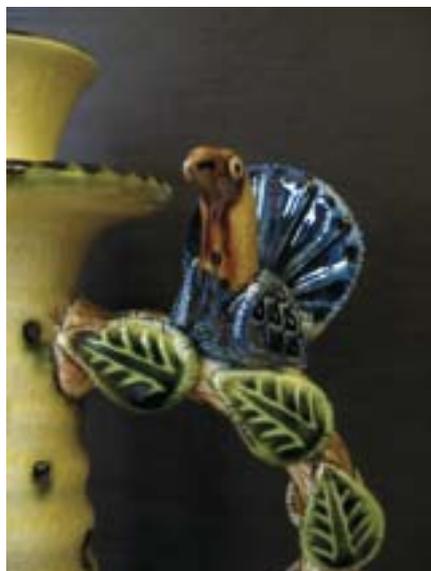
The handles are placed slightly offset to compensate for a degree of 'unwinding' that the candlestick

will undergo in the kiln, and to avoid cracking. Having been thrown as a solid piece, and with the additional sprigs and decoration, each piece requires up to two weeks drying time before it can be fired.

These days Paul uses earthenware glazes on his decorative pieces, rather than slips, having been "seduced by the colour palette". He also notes that the fluidity of glaze offers him more creative scope and reliable results in an electric firing, which is crucial given the public demand for his work. Reluctantly, Paul has left wood firing behind for the present, as the high losses from each firing were too great a risk to be able to continue with and some compromise between artistic vision and commercial realities has had to be achieved.

One final thing to note – and one which will cheer the hearts of ceramics tutors everywhere – is Paul's continued emphasis on the importance of sketching. He has kept up the practice since his student days and still spends at least an hour a day on the activity. He believes it is fundamentally important to a potter's development and can be a source of inspiration down the years. However, he advises that, rather like the diaries of a notable politician, you should probably selectively edit out any embarrassing bits before submitting them as part of your next retrospective show!

*Words: Christine Pike
Pictures: Heather Graham, Carolyn Postgate, Christine Pike*



SPICED BEAN AND PEPPER PATTIES

By special request, Phyllis Bradford sent in her popular recipe for vegetarian patties, enjoyed at a recent demonstration day at Mundford.

Ingredients for 30 patties

- 1 410 gram tin of chickpeas
- 1 330 gram tin of broad beans
- 1 red pepper
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon flaked almonds
- 1 tablespoon tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon olive oil plus more for frying
- 1 tablespoon plain flour
- Fenugreek to taste
- Garlic, salt, pepper to taste
- Ginger or other spices, eg Cajun
- Crushed cumin and coriander seeds or use ready ground, or curry paste

Method

- Deseed and chop the pepper into small cubes and fry until soft.
- Liquidise or thoroughly mash the drained chickpeas and broad beans. (If you prefer a nuttier texture do not produce a completely smooth paste).
- Add the tomato puree and oil, then the seasoning and spices to taste, to the bean paste. Stir thoroughly.
- Add the sesame seeds, breadcrumbs, almonds and fried pepper to the mix, again stirring thoroughly.
- Form the mix into balls about 3cm (1.25 inches) across. Roll the balls in the plain flour before flattening them into patties. Fry on both sides in hot olive oil until slightly crisp and brown.



Phyllis with Daniela Stief

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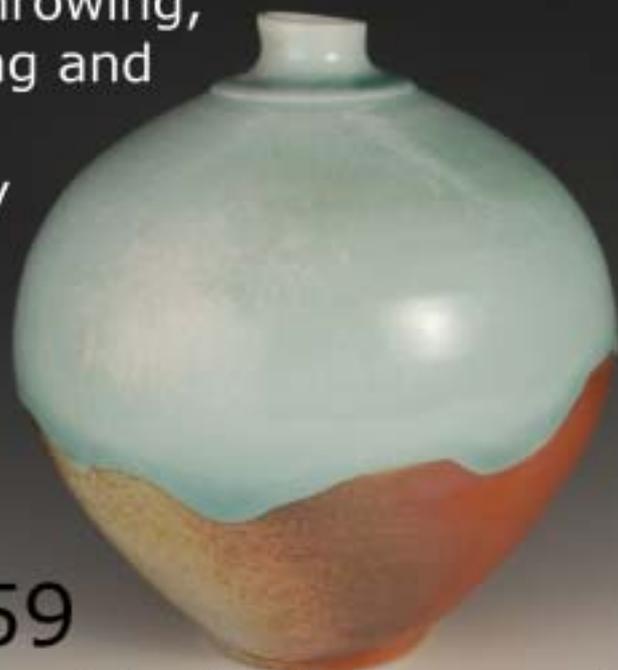
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Participating AP members:

Rob Bibby, Woodnewton Pottery – weekends 1 and 2

Dawn Isaac, 2 Barrowden Road, Ketton – weekends 1 and 2

Katherine Winfrey, Old Butcher's Shop, Barnack – weekends 2 & 3

www.rutlandopenstudios.co.uk



ANTARCTIC IMAGES

Angella Mellor Gallery

Exhibition 11 July-1 August

An exhibition of translucent bone china ceramics by Angela Mellor, satellite images of glaciers and sea ice by Peter Fretwell and Andrew Fleming, photographs of ice and icebergs by Steven Roberts, kiln formed glass by Ana Robinson and Marion Hewitt, silver by Rebecca Hill.

Open: Wed-Sunday 10.30am-5pm

www.angelamellorgallery.com



EARTH MATTERS

New work by Michael Carlo and Ursula Stroh-Rubens, prints by Chrissy Norman and Sally Freer

The Crooked House Gallery 7 High Street, Lavenham CO10 9PR

Exhibition opened in April and May, and continues into June

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CAMBRIDGE OPEN STUDIOS

Four weekends in July. Many AP members take part. For details see:

www.camopenstudios.co.uk/cp.php

POTTERS' CAMP

I've been asked to run another printmaking workshop at this year's potters' camp and am happy to do so. In addition to the screen printing as demonstrated previously, I'm thinking of introducing a couple of other techniques. Rather than use my images and screens I thought that anyone who might be interested could send me some images of their own which might be the basis for some work. If you send me images, preferably about 7 by 5 inches, I will make them into transparencies which could be used to apply images to the clay surface. Send any image, portraits, plants, patterns etc, the more variety the better. The more contrast, the sharper the results will be. This is low tech stuff, a few chemicals, an image and, hopefully, some sunshine. You can send by post or by email, both addresses are in the members' list. Any queries on this and do get in touch.

Geoff Lee

ANGLIAN POTTERS

SUMMER SOCIAL

Saturday 1st August
Wades Mill Barn, Wades Lane,
Shotley, Suffolk IG9 1EG
(Jerry's place)



Chris George

This year's summer social will once again take place during potters camp: an evening of good food, fun and live music again. Everyone is welcome but if you are not attending Potters Camp, try to get to Wades Mill Barn by 7pm as we will be aiming to eat at about 7.30pm – the campers get a bit hungry and start mobbing the kitchen if we feed them any later. Please bring a plate, chair and contribution to the food/drink.

Sally Macpherson

ADVANCE NOTICE!

Our demonstrator on September 13th will be Jennifer Hall and the booking form will be in your next newsletter. If, however, you would like to book earlier than that please contact Felicity Hoyle on 01842 828343 or email flicka.h@tesco.net. Remember to let her know if you are willing to offer food or help with lunch.

JENNIFER HALL

Jennifer studied at Cardiff Institute of Higher Education under the guidance of Michael Casson, Peter Starkey and Geoffrey Swindell. It was whilst doing her BA Degree at Cardiff that she discovered a passion for throwing functional earthenware pottery. After graduating in 1994, she worked as a thrower and decorator for two years at Gwili Pottery in Carmarthenshire before moving to Buckinghamshire to set up her own pottery in 1997.



Jennifer now produces a wide range of pieces using red earthenware clay decorated with a combination of slips which are dipped, trailed and sgraffitoed. These processes provide a surface that displays the richness and fluidity of the honey and green non-toxic lead glazes. The forms of the pots are inspired by their function and the making process itself. Elements from vessels of clay and metal both ancient and modern influence the shapes of the objects.



Chris George

DIARY DATES 2009:

Selected Members:

6-21 June, Ely Cathedral

Summer Show:

18-31 August, Cambridge

Potters Camp:

29 July-2 August, Shotley

Jennifer Hall:

13 September, Mundford

Ickworth Wood Fair:

10-11 October, Ickworth House

Selected Members:

18 Oct-22 Nov, Norwich

Wendy Lawrence:

25 October, Mundford

Christmas Show:

14 Nov-13 Dec, Cambridge

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Ordinary £27 (half year £15)

Joint £45 for two people at the same address – half year £25

Institution £50 for a college or workshop – half year £27 (details on application to the Membership Secretary)

Student £10 for full-time students of ceramics – proof of status is required

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