

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2011



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www.anglianpotters.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

DAY EVENTS

It was good to see the last two events at Mundford so well attended, with both being enjoyed by all. Your Committee has decided that members who also contribute food items need not pay for their lunch. They will still be entitled to claim costs in excess of the lunch costs.

SELECTED MEMBERS

Congratulations to Madelaine Murphy on being accepted as a Selected Member. I look forward to seeing her work in future exhibitions.

DOLBY GALLERY, OUNDLE



The Private View at this Selected Members' exhibition was well attended. Nineteen members' work was well displayed in this charming small Gallery. A wide range of styles and scales of work created a very interesting show. I saw some red dots appearing within minutes of the opening.

EDITOR'S NOTES

We have reports from two terrific demonstration days in this issue – these events are hugely popular with members, and are often a great surprise to the demonstrators themselves, faced with supportive and very enthusiastic audiences of around 100 people! There is a real buzz at these events, which are a great opportunity to meet old friends, make new ones, and exchange potting ideas. If you have never yet come along to one, make a note of the next date, 11 September, and come to watch Lisa Hammond demonstrating.

If you need tips on production potting, look no further than the article on Mark Griffiths, who fulfilled large orders for RSPB, Oxfam and the National Trust, and Alice Garland's recent experience supplying the Conran shops. It is good to know that AP members Colin Saunders and Jerry Finlayson lent Alice



FUTURE PROGRAMME

I am most encouraged to see such a full and varied programme planned for 2011. We have two Day Events, Potters' Camp, Emmanuel Summer Exhibition, Ickworth Wood Fair, a Selected Members Exhibition at the Appleyard Gallery in Holt and All Saints', Cambridge, Winter Exhibition. I understand that our members will be at the Newmarket Art and Design Show, Art in Action, Art on the Prom and Art in Clay.

I look forward to seeing many of you at some or all of these events.

Victor



a helping hand.

One of the great strengths of Anglian Potters is the willingness of members to share their expertise with others: the 'Bling Weekend' was an invaluable chance for some to tap into Helen Martino's long experience of working with enamels and lustres.

Carolyn

Cover: Teapot by Richard Godfrey with rubber handle fastened with clay rivets. Photo: Carolyn Postgate

ANGLIAN POTTERS NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2011

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Carolyn Postgate

Jonah catches the whale

ANNUAL SELECTION



This year Madelaine Murphy was appointed as a Selected Member.

Madelaine lives and works in Leigh-on-Sea, qualified in Ceramics from the Crawford College of Art in Ireland and completed her MA in Sculptural Ceramics at the University of Wales.

She has worked and exhibited in raku for over ten years, exploring the glaze surfaces on a range of both functional and figurative work. This Estuary Pot *Beach Hut* is inspired by the Thames Estuary, where she lives, and Japanese teabowls.

Congratulations to our new Selected Member and many thanks to the Selection Committee!

Anja Penger-Onyett

Selected Members Secretary

DOLBY GALLERY

The Selected Members' exhibition at the Dolby Gallery, Oundle, opened on 6 May. Here are a few photographs from the show, taken by Margaret Gardiner.



HELP REQUIRED!

We need a volunteer to undertake the catering on the demonstration day, Sunday 11 Sept, as I will be away. If no-one volunteers, it will have to be a 'Bring your own lunch' session! Please contact me if you can help:
bm.green19@btinternet.com
01206 271019

Brenda Green



RICHARD GODFREY AT MUNDFORD

To begin with I must admit to some muddle in my mind over the three G's – the two Godfreys and the one Gregory. (But even Richard himself, during the talk said he'd once used this confusion of names to his advantage.)

However, the particular G we experienced at Mundford could, in future, never be confused with any other! Who else could possess his degree of energy, enthusiasm and a kind of elfin mischievousness? And at the age of sixty-one!

Ever since college days in Bristol, Richard seemed determined to dispense with dogma, myth, and unnecessary accepted knowledge and, through clear thinking, to establish his own way of working. It is this clarity of thought I so admire.

Some of us might take a troublesome car into the garage and describe its symptoms as, "... sometimes making odd noises. I hear them more at night – but perhaps that's because I'm tired ..." Meanwhile the mechanic is hardly listening, his mind being inside the clutch-housing, visualising the worn linings. In the same way Richard seemed to see inside glazes and understand the forces at work. He described one glaze ingredient as being "hungry for silica". Such characteristics he was able to work *with*.

Similarly, his knowledge of clay bodies was penetrating. In future I will not assume that clay left in balls prior to throwing – whether covered or not – is "improving" as it waits. He would insist

on the re-working of the clay even if use had been delayed for what seemed a very short while.

Perhaps now would be a good time to look at the finished work itself.

I've often found that there is a surprising contradiction between the artist as a person and the nature of his or her work. For instance J. M. W. Turner, whose paintings are often described as sublime, was called by a contemporary "a grubby little man."

Or there was Sir Joshua Reynolds, a man although dedicated to advancing the professional standing of artists nevertheless, for reasons known only to himself, used untried materials on his canvasses which badly discoloured as a result. So it was not altogether surprising for me to find that the incisive mind that cut so cleanly through the problems of making, glazing and firing should lose its sharpness when assessing the finished objects themselves. I'm certain that many at Mundford will totally disagree with my views but I found the ceramics mannered, two-dimensional, and the decoration distant and cold – despite the heat of the colours.

But if there is disagreement over the *work* I'm certain there will be none over the *demonstration*. It was without doubt the most generous, open and enjoyable demonstration I've experienced.

At no point did Richard preach 'how to make Godfrey pots'. Instead he sought genuinely to open our eyes to the possibilities of quite basic techniques. For instance, a hole cut in a cardboard box, or the use of a *knee*, seemed to make the whole business of plaster moulds redundant.

He was generous too in



Heather Graham



Carolyn Postgate

acknowledging a great debt to the American John Glick. I wondered for a minute if in promoting the 'Glick Sticks' and the advantages of 'cut' rather than 'rolled' slabs he wasn't in effect declaring rolling-pins (and slab-rollers!) redundant. But for him it was always 'horses for courses'. His was *a* way, not *the* way – and anyway not everyone is prepared to knock up the large block of clay needed when using these cutting sticks.

So, from laying out the slabs (on an asbestos substitute called masterboard) and through the forming processes, he reached the stage of joining.

One of pottery's lost techniques is press-moulding and, before modern slip-casting, it would have been used for making pieces such as the large jugs for Victorian bedrooms. Two press-moulded halves would be joined vertically. Richard, using this technique to make a teapot, dwelt in detail on the art of joining.

Important factors were the consistency of the slip (like Hellmann's mayonnaise – applied via a squeeze sauce bottle); the avoidance of 'messing' with the joint once made; and the importance of a pin-hole to ease the pressure of trapped air.

The forming and joining processes were a joy to watch, and for many it must have been a new experience to see

kidneys used with such delicacy.

In what seemed like a bonus, Richard demonstrated throwing. He chose not to embark on the spectacular but, again, there was a grace in the directness of his technique – and its sheer speed! During the day Richard joked that his audience might well drop off to sleep. I'm absolutely certain not one of us even began to nod!

The day was so full that, in these few lines, I'm certain I've missed recording much of interest – yet I'm aware I've managed to find space for my own hobby horses! However, I will defend this as I see our association as a professional body, and have tried to write accordingly.

Colin Saunders

Heather Graham



knee in action

Heather Graham



measuring a lid

Heather Graham



component parts of a teapot

Heather Graham



kidney work on the hole in the cardboard box

Heather Graham



blow dry

Heather Graham



the perfect join

David Moore



hands on

RICHARD'S RECIPES

GLAZE:

Lead Bisilicate 60 (or 70 if you want more flow)
 Calcium Borate frit 10
 Feldspar (either) 10
 China Clay 8
 Flint 5
 Whiting 2

BASIC SLIP:

Puraflo Blu Ball Clay 70
 China Clay 30



Carolyn Postgate



Carolyn Postgate

'Glick Sticks' & 'The Beverley Sisters'

Below: extruder in action;
 below right: Richard's extruder construction diagram



David Moore

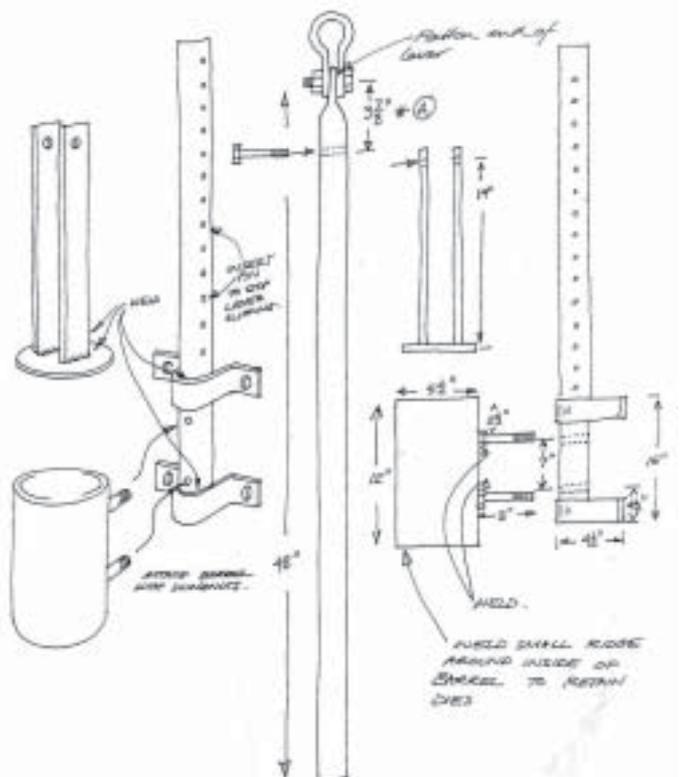
batting the fire alarm in the kitchen



Carolyn Postgate



Heather Graham



WHO ARE THEY?

Have you ever cast your eyes down the Anglian Potters membership list and come to the Woodbridge Art Club and wondered who they were and just how many of them there are? Well, for those of you who are not privy to that information let me spill the beans.

The Art Club was formed in the early 70s and managed to lease its own property on the water front, adjacent to the Tide Mill at Woodbridge: a truly beautiful part of the town with outstanding views of the river. The aims of the Club were to promote and encourage amateur artists and to date that is what it is still doing. The membership is capped at 200. Now before anyone gets hold of the wrong end of the stick and thinks that the AP membership is supporting an extra 200 people under the banner of an institutional membership, hold your horses and I shall explain.

The Woodbridge Art Club has 3 main sections, namely the artists/painters, the lace makers and the good old potters who number a mere 28 souls. It is this section that joined the East Anglian Potters Association when the EAPA was in its infancy and has supported it ever since. Of these 28 potters about 12 are regularly producing work. At the last count at least 4 are members of the AP in their own right. A hard core of 3 regularly go to the Potters' amp with one or two others joining in from time to time. Again, with the aims of the art club in mind, other members of the potters' section are encouraged to attend the Anglian Potters demonstrations in order to improve their work.

To become a potter at the Art Club it's the old catch 22 situation – you cannot join unless you have already done pottery before. The reason is simple. The Art Club has very limited resources: one kiln, one wheel, limited storage space for work to dry etc. and limited space for buckets of glaze, all of which have to live in harmony with the

other club activities. Also, when the potters pot, (Club reserves Mondays for pottery from dawn to well after dusk), they want to get on with their own work and not have to stop and give instruction to someone else every two minutes. The Club does not profess to be a teaching establishment although it does run its own internal courses from time to time, almost exclusively for painters.

So if you find yourselves in Woodbridge, come and visit us and see our own little pottery section. The potters will be there, as I said, on Mondays (except Bank Holidays) but the Club's exhibition is open from 10am-6pm at weekends and PHs from Easter until mid September and weekends 10am-4pm during November. The pottery varies from the sublime to the ridiculous and from the naive to the professional! One of our members who is not far short of 90 still produces beautiful and elegant pinch pots. The Club only uses stoneware materials because it eliminates the inevitable mixing of clays, glazes and firing temperatures, however well marked everything is.

As a bonus, during the exhibition times the Club displays about 100-120 paintings and a table top of lace: it saves the non-potters from getting too bored!

I think the beans have been well and truly spilt.

Andy Wright



'Witch' Hazel Murray and work by members of the Woodbridge Art Club



THE 'BLING' WEEKEND

Gold, Lustre and Enamelling Workshop with Helen Martino

2nd & 3rd April

Cathy D'Arcy kindly offered to open her home for two days to different groups of Anglian Potters eager to learn about the mysteries of lustre ware. The venue was well prepared for the unreliable English weather with a marquee and tables. A constant supply of tea and coffee, lunch contributed by all participants, and cakes for tea were all available. Susan Cupitt gave generously of her time in helping to organise the event.

The day began with Helen Martino producing various coloured enamel transfer papers, metal leaf papers and a leaflet full of very useful information about the various techniques we would be tackling. Looking at these was somewhat daunting, and when various examples were passed around with explanations and appreciative "oohs" and "aahs", the realisation of what lay ahead became even more confusing.

With a short, but very comprehensive demo from Helen, we were soon feeling more confident and began "freeing" ourselves and cutting and tearing the various enamel transfer papers. Those doing lettering often forgot to reverse the writing, whilst others showed a preference for a particular colour (black!). The ease of using the transfer papers helped to dispel any worries and became very absorbing, to such a point that I think we would all have continued doing this for some time. But it was time to move on.

Helen gave another demo about applying various lustres from gold to pearly lustre colours, with great emphasis on health and safety issues. She presented each technique in such a way that made it look so easy and encouraged experimentation. The fumes from these lustres were quite overpowering at times, but due to a timely breeze these were quickly reduced. A silence fell over the group as everyone concentrated on applying their various designs and marks, taking care not to get them everywhere except on the pottery.

It was hard to down tools and stop for lunch. Exchange of ideas, various exhibitions coming up, and Potters' Camp were all discussed as we enjoyed our much appreciated food and drink.



Soon we were being shown how to mix and apply enamel powders. This proved to be a real challenge for some of us because it required some control with a paint brush. The ease of producing lovely sweeping brush strokes by some potters could only be envied as others struggled to come to terms with it. Lastly we were shown how to apply the gold, silver and copper leaf to finished ware.

It soon emerged that various techniques were being combined, and many people were really beginning to experiment more and more, being prepared to see what effects might be achieved. This, of course, is the great thing about this sort of occasion. We did not see any of the finished work then and there, as we took our work away to fire in our own kilns, but hopefully some of it may appear at one of the Anglian Potters shows.

The end of a very enjoyable and informative day came too quickly, and happy, tired potters made their way home with minds ticking over about all that had been learned and possible ideas for future work.

A very BIG thank you to Helen for giving her time to share her knowledge and experience with us, for making it look so easy, and her genuine interest and encouragement.

For anyone who has not attended any of these AP occasions I can strongly urge you to do so. Not only do you have the opportunity to learn new techniques and try them out, but you get the chance to work alongside fellow potters.

Words: Juliet Gorman. Pictures: Rosella Schembri and Juliet Gorman





Juliet Gorman



some finished work



Juliet Gorman



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PEER REVIEW OR NOT?

Do you think a fresh pair of eyes could give you a new perspective on your work? If the answer is yes, how about having your work informally reviewed by some of the more experienced members of the Anglian Potters?

This is exactly what I decided to do as I have little experience in creating ceramics and I am hesitant to put my work into exhibitions. I have still not been brave enough to put my work on show at a members' meeting with my name on it!

Informal reviews are about giving critical analysis on a piece of work highlighting its strengths, the less successful elements and giving reasoned arguments for the observations. It is an opportunity to discuss these points in a supportive environment and explore how to refine them. Advice is wide ranging, from technical expertise to researching other artists with complementary inspiration. They are not about giving personal opinions on someone's work such as, "I like the colour" or, "Isn't it horrible". These types of comments relate to personal taste and although valid in their own right do not support the artist in developing their ideas further.

I decided that I would get the most out of this meeting if I took examples of the good, the bad and the downright ugly that showed the progression of my ideas. I had been developing a concept over the last few months but I felt I had lost my way a bit as there were so many ideas and I was missing the mark

somehow. I wanted a baseline of where my work currently stood and wanted to explore the possibilities of where it could go.

Why did I take my mistakes? It gave me the best feedback.

The panel pulled out a positive aspect of the piece which I had not seen. I was too close to it and could only see that it had not worked. Discussing the comments with the panel helped to clarify what elements I did like and I plan to research my ideas further and incorporate my findings into my next pieces.

The feedback on the good piece was confidence-building. I was worried that the quality of my work was not good enough for an exhibition. I realised that the piece itself was technically proficient and with growing experience this would only get better. Discussing the different elements of the piece has generated more paths that I can explore to develop the work further.

What did I get out of this meeting? Renewed focus and excitement in my work. I have a clearer understanding of where the work is at the moment and possible avenues to explore.

So where do I go from here? I don't know, but I will put my name against my work the next time I put it on show at a members' meeting!



What would I tell others? It is a great thing to do. Have a go, you will come out with a different perspective.

If you are interested, give Anja Penger a call to find out when the next informal review will be held.

Karrie Langdon

ANSWERS TO QUIZ:

- a: Capped b: Implant c: Missing
- d: Tooth on edge e: Bridge
- f: Wisdom g: Blue
- h: Tooth on a plate i: Tooth-e-peg
- j: Milk k: Sweet l: Crown m: Brace

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A SUFFOLK POTTER'S TALE

I studied ceramics at Camberwell College of Art and graduated in 2000 with a BA in ceramics. I then worked for a pottery supplies company, which enabled me to try out new techniques but I began to feel frustrated that I wasn't producing my own work. I came back to Suffolk and converted the old garage at my mother's house into a workshop. I couldn't pot full time, so to earn money I started working with a group of gardeners. It was a perfect combination. I began to love the gardening, learning a new skill, doing physically exhausting work and being outside, then on rainy days and weekends I worked on new pieces in my workshop. My work is hand built using sheets of paper porcelain which I make from a mixture of raw materials. I mix the clay into a slop, then pour it onto plaster bats. Once it is semi-dry I wedge the clay, then roll it into sheets. The recipe was given to me at college when I started experimenting using different clays to make vessels as thin as possible. This then developed into making delicate but functional pieces which I decorate using underglazes and oxides. I started supplying a couple of galleries in Suffolk, then was lured back to London and took on a small studio in the East End, carrying on supplying the Suffolk galleries and then a gallery in East London. After a couple of years I realised that I wasn't happy living in London and yearned for the Suffolk countryside and the sea, so once again

moved back. I returned to Suffolk in 2009 to my neglected workshop. I was now supplying about 10 galleries nationwide, I had a website, and I was managing to balance my gardening with ceramics, sending out small orders to galleries and taking part in various fairs.

Early last year the Conran shop contacted me to ask if I would consider supplying them and to send them my wholesale prices. I wrote back thanking them for their interest and explained that I was an independent potter working on my own, producing small orders and that I might not be able to produce enough for them. I had no reply and forgot all about it. A few months later they contacted me again saying that they wanted to sell a new range of handmade British ceramics and that they would like to meet me and see my work. I was very flattered and decided I would go to hear exactly what they were wanting.

I went to London with a selection of my wares, also with advice and stories from friends and other craftspeople who have dealt with large companies and who have been exploited by them. So I was on my guard. In fact the meeting was very relaxed, they agreed to all my terms, pricing etc., and we agreed on



the pieces they were interested in. I asked roughly the quantity they would want to order. They thought no more than a hundred of each piece, which I felt was a very reasonable number that I could easily manage to make in five months. They chose three patterns and a fourth pattern that I would make exclusively for the Conran shop.

Confident that I could complete the order for them I went home and waited for their confirmation. I made a start on the order but in quite a relaxed manner. It was two months later in October when I received confirmation and three separate orders: one for the London shop, one for Paris, and another for Japan. Realisation dawned! The total order was for 2,500 pieces, the first to be completed by January, the other two by February. The first order for Japan was the largest. Having already started on the order I realised how much more work per day I would have to do in

JERRY'S SLAB ROLLER

The design has been refined from the prototype mentioned in Alice Garland's article.

They are now finished and ready.

Each slab roller weighs 17kg and costs £550, collected from Jerry.

Contact Jerry on 01473 788423 or email jerry@essexsteam.co.uk

To see the unique adjustment system in operation watch the video demonstration of the slab roller at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIopq1ufqcA>

Lever 1 adjusts the thickness of the slab across the whole width
Lever 2 locks the thickness adjustment
Lever 3 provides an adjustable end stop for accurate repeat thickness slabs
Lever 4 is the winding handle to drive the board and clay under the roller
Can roll slabs between 2mm and 25mm finished thickness (dependent on clay type)

Usable table size
750mm x 450mm

Overall size
900mm x 550mm
ex handle



order to complete on time. This filled me with dread and panic. I suddenly wasn't feeling very confident anymore.

My brother, who is more business-minded than me, advised me to approach the order in a more methodical way, and he set up a time-and-motion spreadsheet on my computer. It

displayed my full order and calculated how much work I would have to complete per day in order to fulfil the order. Every time I finished a piece I would add it to the time sheet. This was brilliant, and helped a lot. It kept me constantly up to date with where I was with my order.

I started to make a lot more pieces but began to create a backlog of unfired work. I needed more firing space! Transporting my work to another kiln, which I did consider, would be too risky: I couldn't afford to lose any pieces. As my kiln was already on its last legs I knew that I would need to replace it sometime soon. I contacted the Conran shop and explained my predicament and, to my amazement,



me which enabled me to more than double my production. I was delighted and so grateful to him. He also put me in touch with Jerry Finlayson who happened to be working on a prototype for a slab roller and was looking for a guinea pig to try out his new contraption. I had always rolled out my clay by hand which is very time consuming. I took the slab roller home and was able to roll out very even thin sheets in one roll. This was fantastic. I was also able to delegate work to someone else, which let me get on with decorating my pieces.

I was now producing double the work and realised I wouldn't have been able to finish the order without the help. As well as help from a couple of friends I got my mother churning-out blank plates for me: I also put her in charge of packing. I hadn't realised how much packaging I would need, how expensive it would be and how long it would take to wrap up and



they agreed to an advance payment for my order. So I was able to invest in a lovely new Rohde kiln, and also I was able to pay for someone to help me a couple of days a week.

Having always worked on my own, and enjoyed it, I had been quite reluctant for anybody to help me with my work, but after a month into the order I realised I needed help and advice on how I could speed up production. I spoke to many local potters and finally was put in touch with Colin Saunders who agreed to meet me and help in any way he could. I asked if he could advise me on how I could produce more of my plates. He immediately came up with a solution and went away to make six moulds for

box 2,500 pieces. I was working ten-hour days for seven days a week and was exhausted! I only just completed the first order on time for Japan and delivered it to a freight company in Southend. It would take 6 weeks to get to Japan.

I still had 2 orders to complete in a month. Conran extended the deadline and gave me an extra month. I completed the order on 23rd March. I feel very privileged to have been given this challenging opportunity. It has been a huge learning curve and confidence-builder as well as being financially rewarding, which is a great bonus for any craftsperson!

Alice Garland

MEMBERS' WEBSITES:

www.angelamellor.com
www.brendagreenart.co.uk
www.broadwayceramics.com
www.cathydarcy.com
www.ceramicsbuyanja.co.uk
www.corbykilns.co.uk
www.chrisrumsey.co.uk
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www.patsouthwood.co.uk
www.potterycourses.com
www.potterycourses.net
www.richardbaxter.co.uk
www.robbibbyceramics.co.uk
www.roceramics.co.uk
www.rockwellpottery.com
www.rowanhumberstone.co.uk
www.sculpturelounge.com
www.secretceramics.co.uk
www.stephenmurfitt.co.uk
www.susancupitt.co.uk
www.suffolkstoneware.co.uk

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

www.anglianpotters.org.uk



MARK GRIFFITHS AT MUNDFORD



Heather Graham

It was a packed audience that showed up for Sunday's demonstration at Mundford and after Victor's usual introduction we were soon away in a world of huge pots (well, I know huge is a relative term....but 36" diameter and 4-5 feet tall is huge for a thrown pot, at least in my humble opinion...).

Mark started off by gathering information on the make-up of the audience: how many experienced potters, how many backseat potters, how many earn a living from full time potting? Well, not many of the latter, as we know. Having ascertained that only one amongst us had no experience at all, (and it turned out to be the gorgeous

Adam George, who was promptly forgiven, since he wasn't quite one year old yet!) he told us that he is not involved in 'Ceramics', but that he has been a flower pot maker for the past 25 years.

BACKGROUND

He told us how he started as an apprentice after leaving school in the mid-70s under three different potters, and how with the help of a New Craftsman grant awarded by the Crafts Advisory Committee he built his first kiln and set up a studio in

1975 – it was the time of the 'stoneware brown pot': as long as it was handmade and brown, it would sell, so that's what he made.

By the 80s he'd moved to Shropshire, bought a former school that he was trying to renovate, had three children and a heavy mortgage and he was quite desperate: galleries went out of business and it was impossible to sell. Then out of the blue came an enquiry from the RSPB: could he make some bird feeders for them to sell? And would he mind making 60 thousand of them?

That was the turning point for Mark: that contract paid off his £35,000 mortgage and allowed him the kind of

repetition practice that would allow him years later to produce much larger-scale work. In the meantime he took whatever work he could find, and was commissioned by Oxfam to make the first flower pots for their catalogues; then came the National Trust, to whom he was introduced by a friend, Simon Dorrell, an artist who'd collaborated with the NT on landscape designs and who commissioned the first BIG pots.

This is what he has enjoyed doing for most of his working life, and we watched several slides of his amazing production which can now be admired in the famous gardens of, among others, Powys Castle and Hampton Court. At some point he had to employ 3 people to work with him on big commissions, and the photos he showed us demonstrated that although 'big' can be a very personal concept, when Mark says big he means BIG!

One example was a commission for 480 pots for a 7 acre garden... and they were 28" pots! These were made in sections, starting with a base of 25lb of clay, and adding maybe 6 or 7 thrown collars of up to 30lb each. They were throwing one tonne of clay a day... Mark reflected with sadness that over the years he had trained some very fine throwers, but often their skill was wasted as they could only find jobs unrelated to clay once they left him.

Mark started doing wood firings in 1995 and as he had bought some woodland with the proceeds of some of the bigger commissions, he is now self sufficient in that respect, but still recognizes that wood firing is another tool in the making process, and doesn't find it relaxing! About 10 years ago he finally moved to stoneware, as the strain of throwing on that scale forced him to stop the production of big pots.



Carolyn Postgate



Carolyn Postgate

Heather Graham



Harvey Bradley



Heather Graham



Heather Graham



Heather Graham



Heather Graham



Heather Graham



CURRENT PRODUCTION

We saw several inspiring images of Mark's current fine stoneware – wood-fired functional ware with the confident look that obvious skill produces – whilst he talked us through his techniques and recipes; we discovered that the characteristic red iron foot for instance is produced using some sandy red clay from a brook outside his workshop, which he also uses for his brushwork. Of course it's a big leap from big flowerpots to small-scale brushwork, and Mark told us that although he loves brushwork he feels he's still experimenting with it. He generally uses a resist over a Hakame slip, then glazes over with a Nuka glaze (see recipes on page 16).

He showed us several slides documenting the building of his new wood kiln and we had a very interesting discussion over the construction design criteria, although Mark confessed there were no drawings for the kiln, they just "made it up as they went along"! 12 tonnes of firebricks later, his new 80 cu ft downdraught kiln was ready, with its special swivel door from the USA to save the elbow from burning against it

when feeding it with wood. During the demonstration Mark led us through the various steps of making first a simple cylinder, then the pitcher/jug (which was used also to demonstrate how Mark attaches the handle) and finally a bulbous bottle, made of two bowls joined in the middle. This was also later used to show us one of Mark's decorative features, with a thin coil of clay that is rolled and stamped in various ways, (also a 'trick' to create a 'ledge' for the glaze). After the usual great spread co-ordinated brilliantly by Brenda and her team of helpers, we were treated to an amusing duet between Mark and our Liz Lewis in the making of a large platter, which Mark does in two sections, with a base (36"!)

being thrown first, and a ring applied later for the sides; this technique was demonstrated also in the making of an oval dish. During his demo Mark touched on the themes of selling one's work, and the importance of preserving one's health through good ergonomics. He explained how coming from a tradition of making big flower pots has informed his current production, especially, (ironically in my opinion, given how I find most of us struggling in the opposite direction), the difficulties in going down in size! By tea and cake time we were all buzzing with inspiration to go home and have a go, since in Mark's words, "Confidence is all you need, and you get confidence by knowing you have done it before!"

I am sure all present at Mark's demonstration will agree that it was a most enjoyable day, and join me in thanking him for his generosity in sharing his experience with us.

Robi Bateman

Carolyn Postgate



MARK'S RECIPES

NUKA GLAZE:

Ash 50

Feldspar 60

Quartz 40

You will have to play around with this glaze by adding or subtracting the proportions in order to get the desired finish.

HAKAME SLIP:

50 Malachite (200 mesh)

50 H.V.A.R. ball clay.

CLAY RECIPE:

50 kg Hyplas 71

25 kg Hyplas AT

5 kg Corderite

5 kg Silica sand

China clay 6 kg + 3% Fe for the stoneware body



Heather Graham

details of glazes



Heather Graham

RUTHANNE TUDBALL VISIT

On Saturday 5 March I joined a joint CPA/Anglian Potters visit to Ruthanne Tudball's studio in the back of Norfolk's beyond. Once the technology was working, Ruthanne gave us a very short slide introduction to her studio and kiln as they have evolved over time, finishing with the kiln, which we then went out to inspect. The kilns had evolved in a number of ways. They had become larger and more comfortable to load, always gas fired but the current kiln allows wood to be added to aid reduction. Whilst she initially tried all sorts of sources of soda and means of adding it, she now uses only bicarbonate of soda and sprays it in with water as a saturated solution.

The kiln was designed using lego bricks posted back and forth between her and Joe Finch. In addition to the dual fuel fireboxes it also has a clever dual exit flue arrangement that allows her to balance the heat from front to back in the kiln, simply by moving two dampers. The base is formed of hollow concrete blocks with a layer of blanket insulation over them. Then in fire-brick, the two opposing fireboxes are built with the exit flues down the centre. The gas goes in at the bottom of the fireboxes and the wood goes in above, sitting on kiln-prop fire-bars. Finally the chamber itself is built of a single skin of HTI bricks insulated with 2" of ceramic fibre. The roof is a sprung arch of HTI bricks. She was told that silicon carbide shelves would crack because the water she sprays in would attack them so she uses the standard heavy shelves. She has also experimented with various coatings on the inside of the bricks and has always regretted it!

Ruthanne fires six times a year. Because she single-fires (rather than biscuit firing), the first 600° are very slow over night. She then gives an oxidizing soak at around 800° to ensure any carbonaceous material is burnt out. Then reduction can start. She tests for reduction by putting a piece of wood into the kiln. If it bursts into flames then the atmosphere is oxidizing. If it chars but only burns once removed then the atmosphere is reducing. No need for thick black smoke and flames. Soda is introduced in a neutral atmosphere but the water creates its own reduction. Ruthanne uses cones and a thermocouple but also gauges the





colour temperature by eye.

Ruthanne gave us a throwing demonstration. She mixes her own clay in a Soldner clay mixer and pugs it in her Vengo de-airing pug mill. The clay includes ball clays, china clay, spodumene and sand. She still wedges the clay before throwing on a momentum wheel. After damaging her right hand she now throws predominantly left-handed with the wheel turning clockwise. Her clay is fairly soft but she adds no further water in throwing, only a bit of slip. She made a teapot, a dancing bottle and a 'not-square' bowl for us. Because she uses so little water, the clay is almost as firm when she has finished as it was when she started. This allows her to assemble her teapots immediately. Many of her forms are thrown quite thick but then shaved down using one of a variety of cheese cutters. The wire she uses is twisty so that the cut surface has tracks left in it.

Decoration relies largely on the action of the soda on the form and its cut surfaces. An ash glaze inside, a tan slip outside and maybe some accents in glaze or another slip, and that's it.



Ruthanne comes across as a resourceful potter. She has made many of her own tools and has developed her own working methods and style. The range of her work has expanded slowly but each piece is distinctively hers. She doesn't make other people's pots.

Words: Ian George. Pictures: Liz Chipchase



MEMBERS' EXHIBITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

JOHN PEEL CENTRE, STOWMARKET CHRISTMAS FAIR 2011

The John Peel Arts Centre is situated just off the main shopping street and is being developed as a varied arts venue. It is a key tourist attraction and will be promoted over the next few years as part of the town rejuvenation project.

There is a Christmas fair (dates to be announced) and the Anglian Potters have been invited to be a part of the festivities. If you would be interested in exhibiting at this event please contact Karrie Langdon at karrie.langdon@live.co.uk or call me on 01394 412114

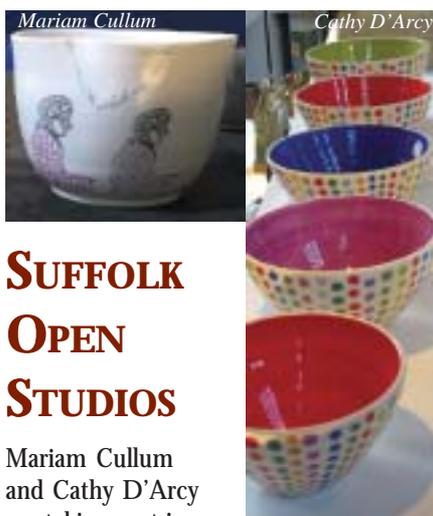
PETERBOROUGH ARTISTS' OPEN STUDIOS

AP members are exhibiting in Peterborough Artists' Open Studios in June. Denise Brown is showcasing coast-inspired stoneware vessels, alongside three other potters, with garden raku demonstrations. Jane Sanders is exhibiting ceramic jewellery and Delft-style tiles, beads with traditional and raku glaze firings and raku brooches. For more details see www.paos.org.uk



Denise Brown

Jane Sanders



Mariam Cullum

Cathy D'Arcy

SUFFOLK OPEN STUDIOS

Mariam Cullum and Cathy D'Arcy are taking part in Suffolk Open Studios on the weekends of 11-2, 18-19, 25-26 June at Poplar Farm House, 2 The Street, Holywell Row, Bury St Edmunds IP28 8LS.

For more details see www.suffolkopenstudios.co.uk

CERAMIC HELPLINE

Members to contact:

Alan Foxley: handbuilding, reduction firing
01799 522631

Colin Saunders: mould-making, transfers, slipcasting
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, porcelain
01353 688316

Angela Mellor: bone china paperclay and slipcasting
01353 666675

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

*Artists are warmly invited
to apply for a new show!*

ART UNEQUALLED

A new event to showcase superb art work.

at The Maltings, Ely

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enquiries@sallydunham.co.uk



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Carolyn Genders

26 – 30 June

Pattern, colour, texture and line – fine drawing in clay

Joanna Veevers

8 – 10 July

Exploring porcelain – throwing and hand-building

Jack Doherty

12 – 15 August

Japanese ceramics – exploring form

Shozo Michikawa

12 – 26 August

Creating impact with wheel-thrown ceramics

Duncan Hooson

26 – 29 August

Hand built domestic ceramics with modelled details

Anna Lambert

9 – 12 September



Carolyn Genders

West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ
reception@westdean.org.uk www.westdean.org.uk/college 0844 4994408

QUIZ: NAME THOSE TEETH!

Andy Wright of Woodbridge Art Club has sent in a little brainteaser – enjoy!



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Over the last 2 years, we have been re-designing the entire kiln range to improve reliability, durability, and efficiency. Following the successful **New Hobby** and **New Top-Loading** ranges, our latest innovation is the **Tube Supported Element** found in our front loading kilns. Tube Elements are not embedded in the kiln wall, which means more heat gets into the kiln, vastly increasing efficiency.

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www.brickhouseceramics.co.uk

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Please contact Chris Rumsey
t: 01636 813802 m: 07789 742383
e: rumsey68@hotmail.com

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Contact Jennie
t: 01480 394947 or
e: Jennie@alied.co.uk

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e: info@buttsgreenpottery.co.uk

DIARY DATES 2011

**AGM: Beryl Hines &
Margaret Gardiner**

22 May, Mundford

Potters' Camp:
27-31 July, Shotley

Summer Show:
16-31 August
Emmanuel College, Cambridge

Lisa Hammond:
11 September, Mundford
www.lisahammond-pottery.co.uk

Ostinelli and Priest:
23 October, Mundford
www.ostinellipriest.co.uk

Selected Members' Exhibition:
29 October-12 November
Appleyard Gallery, Holt
www.theappleyardgallery.co.uk

Christmas Show:
12 November-11 December
All Saints' Church, 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 ceramics
students – proof of status is required

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Contact Carolyn Postgate, Editor
e: carolyn@clara.co.uk t: 01954 211033

**DEADLINE FOR THE
AUTUMN NEWSLETTER:**

1 AUGUST 2011

**FOR PUBLICATION BY:
1 SEPTEMBER 2011**

Wymondham arts centre
www.wymondhamartscentre.com
Becket's Chapel
Church Street, Wymondham
NR18 0PH

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