



Newsletter



SPRING 2021

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Welcome to the New Year with Anglian Potters. Let's hope that this will be a lot better than last year. I hope everyone has been keeping well, and clear of the effects of the virus. Even if you haven't caught it, it has still had a massive effect of everyone's wellbeing, which I'm sure will last for a long time. The ability to express yourself through working with clay has so many positive points, and I'm sure that it will help us to keep going.

Although the title is Spring, the deadline for the Newsletter is such that it's still winter at the end of January, although not the winter of old (I do remember)-very warm and wet at the moment. I'm trying to come out of hibernation and start to make again. It's been a while since I last made anything, or fired the kiln, but I usually find that when I get started again, my making has improved. So, fingers crossed, as I have a few orders to fulfil, and there is a hint that the summer of 2021 might see the return of some of the shows that were cancelled last year. Earth and Fire has been cancelled, as it was too early for the organisers to make commitments to the venue etc. Art in Clay is planned, although with a move from Hatfield House (the home of the show since it started 27 years ago) to Royal Windsor Racecourse. Pat Fuller is planning a return for the Pots and Food festival in September, and the various Potfests are also planned. So let's hope that some sort of normality can return this year, and that potters can start earning some much needed income again, and we can all share in the great atmosphere of the shows, and the interaction and connection between makers and customers.

Speaking of income, our online show team have done a magnificent job

again, with the pre-Christmas show that replaced All Saints' doing very well, sales well up towards the 'physical' show level, greatly increased over the takings from the spring and summer shows. The online publicity team have kept things moving along, posting on the various social media platforms every day, and enticing the customers in. Ian suggested that we carry on with a 'January sale', and most the exhibitors stayed onboard, offering 20% discount on all sales, and bringing in further much needed income. Unlike the normal shows, it's not possible to have all the exhibitors involved in setting up and running the show, so the work falls to a smaller group of people hunched over their computers and keeping things moving, often with no work of their own in the show. So many thanks to everyone involved for their dedication. The whole thing looks like, and works as, a very professional enterprise.

We should have been together at Mundford on the 17th January, for our first demo day of the year. As we couldn't do this, Trudy managed to persuade our demonstrator, Keith Brymer-Jones (him off the tele) to be virtually present, and Tracey Parsons did a magnificent job of setting up and running the Zoom facility, so around one hundred members could join in and see/hear Keith doing a grand job of making, talking about, and *almost* crying about, his passion for clay and pots. It was a great session, with lots of interaction with Keith, all run from his studio by his partner, Marj. (See pages 10-12) Keith has promised to be with us this time next year for a fun day at Mundford. There will be a bit of a challenge associated with this, but more of that later. We're looking around to see if we can find some more 'tech-savvy' demonstrators for further sessions.

The poor weather and 'lockdown' have put paid to further work at Stoke Farm, but we hope to be back to continue the build as soon as we can this year, and then open things up for some firings and workshops. There is still a lot to do, but I'm sure that the enthusiasm of everyone involved, and the usual AP 'can-do' attitude, will get us there before too long.

Hoping to see you all as soon as we can.

John Masterton

COVER

TONY ORVIS

LIDED JAR

ANGLIAN POTTERS

ON-LINE EXHIBITION

CONTENTS

Page 2	Anglian Potters Officers Chairman's Letter
Page 3	Editor's Notes Shelfies: Rosemarie Cooke
Page 4	Geoffrey Whiting
Page 5	Geoffrey Whiting and East Anglia
Page 8	The Famous Anglian Potters Christmas Exhibition
Page 10	An Audience With Keith Brymer Jones
Page 13	Anglian Potters Membership
Page 15	Members' Websites
Page 16	Glazing
Page 17	Angela Mellor AP Clay Stores
Page 18	Shelfies: Katherine Winfrey
Page 20	Shelfies: June Gentle
Page 21	Shelfies: Peter Deans Zoom Photo Training
Page 22	Shelfies: Joy Voisey From the Archives
Page 23	Feedback sessions on zoom
Page 26	David Cooke
Page 28	Stoke Farm Update
Page 31	Ceramic Helpline
Page 32	Diary Dates Membership Fees Advertising Rates Deadline



It is remarkable to see how, in adversity, people have reacted in positive ways to change. Our on-line exhibition; zoom conferences; on-line demonstrations and challenges set for members are just some of the examples adopted by Anglian Potters. Other potters' organisations are adopting activities on very similar lines. Indeed, even the format of the newsletter has needed to adapt to the times with museums and galleries closed and physical gatherings having been postponed, there have been very few 'physical' events on which to report. I am, therefore, grateful to members who have forwarded copy and pictures and particularly grateful to our two 'guest' writers: David Whiting and David Cooke. The latter will be well known to members as the son of Rosemarie and Arnold, both animal lovers in their own right. David Whiting, critic, writer and curator in the Visual Arts, has provided not only details about his father, Geoffrey's life as a potter, but has also written an insightful account of Geoffrey's fascination with East Anglia. 'Shelfies' have become a regular feature and some of the stories behind the pots are completely absorbing. June Gentle's trip to the CPA, for example, took me back to my first day in the ceramic department at Camberwell in September 1964. The tutor was Colin Pearson, and after the class, he took a group of us to view an exhibition of the work of Ian Auld at the CPA shop in Lowndes Court. With subscription payments imminent the committee members collated their thoughts on the topic of 'What members get for their money' and the results, which are most impressive, can be found on page 13. Even more impressive is the number of members who are involved in the various aspects of the services which are provided totally voluntarily.

Peter Warren

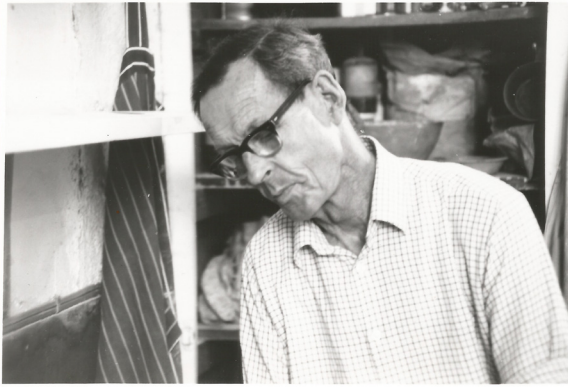
SHELFIES: ROSEMARIE COOKE



Top Shelf. Left to Right: Walter Keeler, Frank Logan; Walter Keeler

Bottom Shelf. Left to Right: Svend Bayer, Stefan Bang bottle (at back), Denby Studioware, 1967 wedding present-salt and pepper, Peter Arnold mug

GEOFFREY WHITING 1919-1988



Geoffrey Whiting c 1986

The panel on page three of the Winter Newsletter, regarding the street exhibition: *Making Useful Simple*, - Geoffrey Whiting ceramics, at the Stradling Gallery, Bristol, raised several comments from readers. There are a number of people who have warm memories of the Bristol Guild and Ken Stradling. One member remembers passing the gallery on his way to and from school and declares that his current desire to make pots, began outside that gallery about fifty years ago. Several people have shared reminiscences of meetings and conversations with Geoffrey Whiting. Another member recalls that Geoffrey spent some considerable time demonstrating spiral kneading for him at Geoffrey's Canterbury studio.

Andrew Watts, an excellent potter, of whom I am sure very few readers will have heard, ran the Lannock Pottery in Weston, North Hertfordshire, during the 1980's and 90's before being invited to be the curator of the twentieth century studio pottery collection at The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, a role he fulfilled superbly for a number of years. I once asked Andrew what had led him to be a potter and his answer was instant and to the point: 'Geoffrey Whiting. He was my teacher and my inspiration.'

Geoffrey Whiting, potter and watercolour artist, was born in Stocksfield, Northumberland into a Quaker family. He was an instinctive potter in as much that, as a boy, he began by digging up local clay and devising crude kilns in the garden. His formal training, however, was as an architect at Birmingham School of Architecture. The interruption of war meant that he was called up, as an officer, for service in India and Burma where he spent eight

years. In India he had the misfortune to witness the horrors of 'The Partition' which remained with him for the rest of his life, causing him to suffer long periods of depression which would, today undoubtedly be classed as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It was during his time in India that he came into contact with a family of three generations of potters, in a village

close to Delhi, who reawakened his interests in clay to such an extent that on his return to Britain in 1948, he did not return to architecture but, instead, became a 'self-taught potter', or as he described it: 'taught by the materials and the fire'. In India, his initiation had been with unglazed earthenware but, having established the first Avoncroft Pottery near Bromsgrove, in 1949, he moved to Hampton Lovett, Worcestershire in 1955, retaining the name 'Avoncroft' and specialised in high temperature stoneware and porcelain.

In the early 1970's, Geoffrey Whiting spent a short time establishing a training school for potters in Lesotho, before returning to England and moving his pottery operations to Canterbury to establish the St Augustine's Pottery, which was a part of a theological college attached to Kings' College, London.

Reviewing an exhibition of Whiting's work at the Peter Dingley Gallery, Stratford in 1986, W.A. (Bill) Ismay commented on Geoffrey's teapots as follows:

"The teapot is a form in which he has specialised, after re-examining the whole idea from the beginning. He is still experimenting with various designs, including slope-shouldered versions with raised seatings for the lids and variations of handle, but his standard teapot is flat shouldered with a deeply set, flush lid, an elevated spout, and a generous side handle, slightly elevated for the thumb but without being spurred: the end product, gradually

refined over the years without loss of vigour or spontaneity, is a pot supremely functional, feeling good in the hand, and good to look at."

Whiting's love of form seemed not only to come from nature but reflected his architectural background and the problems associated with buildings and engines. He had an early interest in all sorts of machinery, and particularly anything associated with steam. In the end product he wanted a sort of tension between the classical and the romantic, a balance between constriction and fluidity. Bernard Leach's forms were admired because he thought they were marvellous in their counterpoint of tension and relaxation.

Whiting was, of course, influenced by a Quaker background, Zen, and the traditions of Far Eastern pottery, but inspiration and influence also came from long held admiration for other aspects of art: for instance those landscape painters who recognised the importance of economy. John Sell Cotman's broad, almost abstract washes were a continual revelation to him and are reminiscent in his own watercolour paintings. In this regard, Geoffrey held Norfolk as a particular place of interest and enjoyment. The flat and austere landscape, in places punctuated only by a few wind-beaten trees and skeletal pylons, was one of the areas he loved most.

It is interesting that Geoffrey's wife, Anne, was a great great niece of Cotman.

While Geoffrey Whiting's pots might exude quietness and calm, another side to his work is quite dramatic. Producing the finest oriental glazes: tenmokus, celadons, ash glazes and chuns, requires the building of specialist kilns which should be fired by hand. Geoffrey's passion for engines and steam began early, producing small garden kilns. The kiln at Avoncroft was



Stoneware teapot c 1980

a coal and wood kiln which was fired only five or six times during the year but was always a memorable event and an anxious time for the potter and his family. The kiln has been described as a fire-breathing monster to be regarded with both awe and misgiving and requiring all night manning. This demanding and unpredictable method was for him essential: naked flame was a basic motivation. In an article written for 'Pottery Quarterly', Whiting wrote:

"I have many times lost my eyebrows and forelock with solid fuel kilns, and once had myself mildly on fire: but I would not lightly exchange the heat and toil for the dial reading and knob-twirling of modern efficient methods. One summer night we fired through a violent thunderstorm. The yard flooded and began to discharge its load into the firing-well, threatening to drown all the fuel. Two assistants managed to keep me bailed out while, splashing about, I continued to fire. Then all the lights went out..... The whole atmosphere was an inferno of bursts of flame and sparks, black smoke, steam, the crash of thunder, the crackle of blazing wood, the cut and flicker of lightning and the roar of hail on the temporary tin roof. It was a dramatic scene indeed. What a night! Yet, somehow, we enjoyed the holocaust and it was a good firing."

Bernard Leach, and Hamada, were, of course, greatly admired by Whiting and there is a story of Bernard Leach visiting Avoncroft Pottery and, on leaving his car, he walked to the kiln, removed his hat and gave the kiln an enormous bow.

Geoffrey Whiting was a perfectionist and, at best his pots were 'Not too bad' or 'quite good', so sceptical was he about his own work. He was also deeply critical of other makers, even, on one occasion, during the 1950's, whilst serving on an exhibition selection panel, rejecting two Bernard Leach pots on the grounds that the pots were too weak. As David Whiting said of his father's views on such matters; "A good pot is a good pot, a bad pot is a bad pot no matter who its maker." (It appears that this did not harm their relationship).

Peter Warren

Sources:

Ismay, W.A. 1986. Geoffrey Whiting-Potter, Ceramic Review 100 pp26-28

Whiting, David, 1989, Geoffrey Whiting. A Personal View. Ceramic Review, 120 pp25-27

GEOFFREY WHITING AND EAST ANGLIA



Geoffrey Whiting: The Norfolk Broads, 1980

Geoffrey Whiting may have developed as a potter in India and in the English Midlands, and spent his latter working years in Kent, but much of my father's artistic debt was to the East Anglian landscape too, particularly that of Norfolk. As well as Constable, he was a deep admirer of John Sell Cotman, the great Norwich painter. Coincidentally he married a relation of Cotman's, and my parents spent a great deal of time in this part of the world from the early 1950s onwards. Like my mother, brought up on Suffolk's river Deben, Geoff was instinctively drawn to the watery places, to coast, estuary and marshland. These were regions where they bird-watched, and which he drew and painted, many years before he found similar areas within reach of his base in Canterbury. What particularly drew him was the flatness of course, from the Fens of Cambridgeshire to the Norfolk Broads. It is a land of sky, an asceticism of place that appealed to my father's own sense of understatement, his particular abstraction of form, both in his watercolours and his pots. As Margaret Drabble wrote of the fenland of John Clare; "the humbler one's conception of beauty, the more likely one is to find it", and it was out of this type of aesthetic that Geoff's work naturally grew, just as he was deeply affected by parallel concepts of modest beauty in Japanese visual culture and philosophy. This was filtered into what Walter Keeler called "the particular

Englishness" of his work, where decoration and glazing too were deeply informed by his perception of the native countryside, its coloration and its shapes, both in the natural and the man-made.

The starker East Anglian horizon throws form into greater relief, whether we are talking about sentinel groupings of trees or its field gateways and broken fencing, its pylons and the moving clouds. These things fascinated Geoff, who distilled them into his own kind of simplicity and quietude, with deep watercolour washes and richly temperate glazes.

My father was to have his very last holiday in Norfolk, just a few months before he died. We visited the old haunts, like Cley and Blakeney. Staying in Ludham, we went back to St Benet's Abbey, which he had so often painted since the 1940s. The ruin of a medieval gatehouse later occupied by a 19th century drainage mill, it encapsulated my father's brand of romanticism, a beguiling isolated place touched by later technology too. This reflected his own broader appreciation of industrial history, and of material and process in pottery. He loved the frisson where nature and the human-imprint met, and of course this encapsulates the basis of working with clay and fire.

*David Whiting,
January 2021*

All Photographs: David Whiting

GEOFFREY WHITING, CONTINUED



Avoncroft Pottery c 1968



Porcelain bottle, 1987



Geoffrey Whiting throwing c 1987



Pots waiting to be fired, Avoncroft Pottery c 1968



Building the kiln at Avoncroft Pottery, Hampton Lovett, 1955



Small porcelain bowl, 1987; small slipware jug c 1952; Stoneware jug c 1970



Porcelain teapot 1987



Geoffrey Whiting: Salhouse, Norfolk, 1982

THE FAMOUS ANGLIAN POTTERS CHRISTMAS EXHIBITION

For over 30 years we have held a Christmas Exhibition in Cambridge – in the library at Lion Yard and then at All Saints' Church. The event has always differed from our other exhibitions – marked by the extreme cold in Jesus Lane in years gone by before they fixed the heating; by the presence of our Charity Christmas Tree and by the general sense of occasion that the season brings.

In a Proustian moment, the aroma of mulled wine evokes memories of the Church with our bright lights bringing a sparkle to an otherwise dark, winter-enfolded space, the cars slushing along the road outside and the sound of the adjacent pedestrian crossing signal seeping in through the doors.

This year none of that was going to happen – even if we had been able to arrange a socially-distanced traffic system for visitors, we could not have invited the team to set up the show – gatherings of such numbers were illegal. And in any case, who wants to go to a pottery show where you can't pick up the pots?

So we resumed use of the online exhibition site that had been set up for the Autumn show and, as usual, invited all members to participate. Not only to sell their own work but also to make decorations for our Charity Tree which was to be there in virtual hyperspace.

69 members eventually took part and produced, as always, an amazing array of work from teapots to wall sculpture, bird houses to candleholders, angels to badgers, clocks and plates and lots more. New tree decorations were sent in and listed in great numbers, many of them looking very elegant and they sold very well.

I went one day to the lock-up at Barnham, where all the stands and lights are kept, to search for the box of Christmas Tree decorations from prior years – I knew it was a big box but had no idea where it was. Those familiar with the lock-up will know it's a single garage packed very, very, full with all the kit. I had to move out many of the stands and crates but luckily, although it was at the back, it was on top of its pile of boxes and could be extracted with some difficulty. Once at home it was clear that it was filled with a mass of random pieces – hundreds of them. We had already decided that we needed to put them in sets so that the cost of

postage would be reasonable, so I set to and sorted. Enough work had multiple pieces to make some 18 lots that were photographed as sets and in place on a tree to go onto the website.

We sent out our press release and some images to 40 organisations, websites and potentially interested parties. We had positive responses from many – the CPA, the other regional potters associations, Clay Craft magazine, and the Potclays newsletter, I did an interview with Cambridge105 radio station and we blasted Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with posts. These started as general information and images but moved on to individual ones about each exhibitor. We sent to our mailing list, our members list and even our lapsed members list.

The results were excellent, we sold over twice the amount of pieces compared to the Autumn Exhibition: 218 items for a grand total of £8,600 with all but 15 of the potters selling at least one item (some sold a lot more...)

The main audience for our wares is still our mailing list and AP members and friends of members. However we did sell to locations well away from East Anglia but it is difficult to see where they heard about the show.

Our chosen charity, the Motor Neurone Disease Association, received £750 from us as a result of the sales of decorations. That's more than we would usually take at our physical show and a result of selling sets at a higher price than the odd star or bauble at £2.

The finances are interesting. The physical exhibition has costs of about £3,000 (printing posters, venue charges, transport of stands, expenses for invigilators, advertising, credit card charges etc) which is paid for by setting a commission on sales of 33% and charging an entry fee, to give us a break-even result on sales of £10k to £12k

The online version is quite different with total costs being 90% lower. We now have 100% of sales attracting credit card charges plus the cost of the website and the new domain and some promoted posts on Facebook and Instagram, but none of the other expenses. So, no entry fee and only 10% commission.

We have learned that the online show can work and be very productive

Our third show worked better than the previous ones – who knows why.

There is a lot of effort in making it all work, but it's different from the panic of setting up the usual shows.

Our mailing list is a critical resource – about 50 new people signed up to the list during the 4 weeks of the show and it now has some 800 email addresses.

We all need better photographs of our work, which is why we set up the Zoom photo-training sessions to try and help – see page 22.

As usual this is a team effort and I would like to thank Claire Knight for making all the posters, Celia Greenaway for settling up all the payments, Ruth Fairhead for organising the social media push, Tracey Parsons for editing videos, and the eight members of the social media team who managed the postings every day during the run: Jo and Mark Judd-Cooper; Zena Tooze; Claire Folkes; Sue Eyre; Jason Root; Sheila Maddier; Dawn Isaac.

Our January Sale – 20% discount off all items – should now be complete. We don't know if this works but there's only one way to find out.

Technical Information

For those interested, the AP Exhibitions website is built on the Squarespace platform - version 7.1

We use a Gallery page for the home page where each picture captioned with the exhibitors name and linked to their page

The individual pages are nested in two folders which give pull-down menus in the main navigation (two so that the pull-down is not too long). Each potter's page is in "Store 2" format with an added text section for their Biography

We added SEO information to each page to give more information for search engines and customised the emails that are sent to buyers when orders come in and when they are fulfilled.

We had to add some custom code to suppress a bug that cropped up when we listed multiple versions of the same item (e.g. different colours). The product page bug allowed a buyer to select any quantity when multiple versions were added.

The custom colour of the banner is our AP Exhibition brand colour: Web #8898aa

We registered a new domain name and created a new custom short URL (bit.ly/APshowonline).

Ian Vance



Richard Cramwell



Rob Bibby



Alejandra Solache



Ray Anker



Roz Roden



Pat Armstrong



Rob Rutterford



Julie O'Sullivan



Peter Deans



Martin George



Stephanie Carlton



Rosemarie Cooke

AN AUDIENCE WITH KEITH BRYMER JONES



On Sunday 17th January, 90+ members of Anglian Potters were treated to a two-hour-long live Zoom demonstration by Keith Brymer Jones during which he told us about his 37-year career in the ceramics industry, demonstrated throwing some of the shapes that have been significant in his development as a potter and answered questions from the audience. The demonstration was interspersed with various lessons on the history of porcelain and the development of the ceramics industry in Stoke.

After finishing school in 1983 Keith started work as a clay boy at Harefield Pottery, having advertised for a job in Ceramic Review. His early responsibilities included making the tea and shovelling ten tons of raw clay a fortnight into a hopper for mixing. Other tasks included balling up around 1000 balls of clay a day, for others to throw, and the unenviable task of holding ware boards full of pots while the enormous oil-fired trolley kiln was packed; a job that could take around 4 hours.

Harefield proprietors Robert Hudson and Alan Pett were hard taskmasters and when Keith asked when he could start throwing pots, Alan told him it would be “in five or six years”. As it turned out it took Keith about 3½ years’ practice as a clay boy, balling up and throwing 100

balls of clay a day, before he was deemed good enough to make pieces for the Harefield shop.

Keith used his Ratcliffe wheel and KBJ stoneware, a very plastic stoneware clay with a high kaolin content, for the demonstration, making the point that the clay must be in perfect condition in order to throw successfully.

The first shape he demonstrated was a bonsai pot. Harefield produced 3 sizes of these that were glaze fired one inside the other.

As a production potter it was essential that the shape of every piece was identical, with an even wall thickness throughout the pot to ensure even heat distribution and

glaze response in the firing. After centring, opening and coning up Keith explained that at this point he finished the rims, which wouldn’t have any further attention during the remaining throwing, shaping and finishing. To meet Alan’s exacting standards the angle of the transitions from the foot into the body and the body to rim were critical. Keith explained that being able to visualise ‘the shape the pot would become’ and not having ‘too much meat’ in the rim or the base, was the key to throwing pots of an acceptable standard. To achieve the final shape the bonsai pots were all turned and a foot-ring was trimmed into the base. During his time at Harefield Keith threw 10,000 – 12,000 bonsai pots over a period of about 18 months.

Having mastered the bonsai pots Alan allowed Keith to progress to more complex forms. It was about a year before

he mastered a simple jug shape, with the correct transition from body to rim, before they were deemed good enough.

Keith then demonstrated throwing a jug using 2 ½ lbs clay. He explained that when throwing 500 identical pieces it’s all about placing the clay and getting the form in the right proportions. The speed of the wheel is incredibly important. For 6 months at Harefield, Keith threw this shape and Alan would come along with his ruler and chop them in half and say they were wrong because the accent of the neck of the jug and the shoulder was wrong and it took him another 6 months to get it right.

To achieve the really fluent shape, Keith threw with a wooden rib on the outside and a sponge on a stick inside to finish it off, again without touching the rim since the first coning up. He left enough clay in the rim for pulling up a generous pouring lip which, he explained, should point to the 7 o’clock position for a good pour. Keith described the jug as one of the most frustrating shapes he’s had in his career.

Keith had been at Harefield for about 8/9 years, when Robert and Alan decided to move to Scotland with their Tartan Ware range. A remote studio in the Highlands didn’t appeal to Keith so it was at this point he set up his own studio in Highgate. Initially he was making for small independent shops, but his production throwing experience meant



that he was able to throw thousands of pots, which were short runs for the larger department stores, for them to create seasonal collections which suited the nature of the retail market at that time. This grew and grew until he was supplying the likes of Habitat, Monsoon Home, Calvin Klein and Laura Ashley. Keith's largest order ever was one for 16,000 pieces of the Brooks breakfast range, for Habitat. At this time, he had 5/6 people working with him but he was the only thrower, starting work at 5am, throwing 300-400 pieces before the team arrived at 9am to support him by making tea, bringing lunch, preparing the clay, etc.

During this time Keith was throwing about 1000 pieces a day. It was a constant production line. He had 2 kilns (Kilns and Furnaces 1965 and 1953) for the bisque firings, that he still uses today and for glaze firing he commandeered the kilns of all his potter friends in north London. He did move on to buy his own massive electric kiln, that took 400-500 pieces.

However, the seasonal nature of this work meant that the business was somewhat boom and bust. After making thousands upon thousands of pieces he would come to the end of a contract and be scrabbling around looking for more work. Keith was now looking for something more stable in its aesthetic, less seasonal and with more longevity and this was when he had the idea for his 'Word' range which he said was ironic given that he is dyslexic. He explained that his dyslexia led him to love the shape of words and he found an old typesetting factory that was open 24hrs a day that could quickly turn out magnesium plates for him within hours.

First of all, he needed to create a set of shapes for the range, starting with a mug shape that was unique to him. Looking for inspiration he glanced down from his wheel and saw his slop bucket and that became the mug shape that endures today; its simple shape and clean lines were the perfect background on which to print the words.

Starting with 18ozs of clay, Keith then threw his classic bucket mug in 1¼ minutes. He cut it in half to show us the completely even thickness of the walls which, he explained, stops any warping and ensures even firing throughout the piece.

The range proved incredibly popular and is the range made in China today.

Keith throws the prototypes for his pieces in his UK studio, on the same wheel he was using for the demonstration. They are bisqued here and sent to China where his team in the studio block and case the shape from plaster, and make the piece ready for mass production in the family run factory. He talked enthusiastically about the incredibly pure Chinese porcelain which is highly plastic and dries out to an incredibly hard, compounded consistency. The flat ware is press moulded and other pieces are slip cast, with everything being hand finished. The ware is all raw fired (to 1300oC), which is possible due to the porcelain's high silica content, which means it fluxes well with the glaze. Keith visits the factory in China frequently and is reassured that the ceramic industry in China is very well controlled and mindful of the wellbeing of the workforce. He told us how he is very close to both the factory owners and the workforce, who are all very dear to him and on his visits, he eats, sleeps and drinks with them, like one of the family.

Keith has an ambition to start producing in Stoke on Trent, which would require the raw porcelain to be imported from China. Even though this is by no means straightforward and there are many obstacles along the way, this remains his ultimate goal.

In his final demonstration Keith showed us turning a cup to reveal the perfect profile within the thrown shape. For this he moved across to his Shimpo Whisper E, on which he had a large leather-hard chuck that's been on the wheel for about 6 months.



He centred the leather hard cup on the chuck, gently pressing down on the base to fix it. With the wheel turning at quite a pace, he turned the base and sides using a home-made turning tool. He finished off the cup by burnishing the foot ring with his little finger, explaining that the consistent wall thickness of the thrown pots means he doesn't have to worry about going through the pot when





turning. Throughout the morning we had all been wondering about how easily Keith is moved to tears and it was at this point that he welled up (just managing to hold it together), as he explained how, when you pick up a turned pot that is lighter than you expect, it can be quite emotional. This, he said, is testament to how well a pot has been made, this is when you know that the potter has carefully considered the placement of the clay.

Both during and after the demonstration Keith answered some of the many questions put forward by members:

Q. Why do you burnish with your finger?

A. Because I can't be bothered to pick up a piece of plastic or leather. However, when production throwing this takes your skin off.

Q. Do you fire your chucks?

A. No. I throw the chuck, let it go leather hard, cover it up and it will last for ages.

Q. Do you make your own turning tools?

A. Yes, I've always made my own tools. I make them from the steel strapping from brick pallets, as we did at Harefield.

Q. Do you still get the same satisfaction from throwing something new, today?

A. Yes...it comes back to the batches... the satisfaction of throwing a batch of consistent pieces.

Q. Why did you turn to China to outsource your production?

A. The quality of the clay itself and the

thousands of years' expertise there. The raw porcelain is arguably the best in the world.

Q. Do you still ball up your own clay?

A. Yes, I do, I prefer to ball up my own clay because I then know what it's going to be like.

Q. How do you get your letters coloured in to be so pristine?

A. The stamps are quite deep. The deeper you go with colour the more susceptible the colour is to flux in that trench. It's the amount of colour you inlay into the stamp and I'm very contained at how I get rid of the excess colour. In China the workers are a master at it. It's all about practice and knowing the particular material you're working with.

Q. How much clay do you start with for a large mug, a cereal bowl and a plate?

A. A large bucket mug is 18 ozs, a bowl - 1 ½ lb and a side plate - 2 ¼ lbs.

Q. From someone who is not very tall or strong, do you have any tips for throwing big, without using too much juice?

A. The art is to centre it in sections. Shove the clay on the wheel, throw the top section first, centre that and as you bring it down that piece is centred. Then you grab another lump and add it, so you're not getting the resistance of the whole lump of clay at the same time. You centre each section so by the time you get to the last piece the whole lump is centred.

Q. Have you ever done any more experimental, abstract, conceptual type of work? What was the outcome? Do you ever go more left field in your work?

A. No, because I haven't had the time and coming from a production throwing background, you ball up your clay and just get on with it. To make conceptual pieces and individual one-off pieces doesn't necessarily take more time but it takes more time to consider what you make. Recently I just haven't had the head space. I would love to make a collection of pieces with a particular concept.

I have however made an installation, but that was actually based on production throwing. I was asked to do an installation for the celebration of the work of Spode in Stoke on Trent, a couple of years ago. I dedicated myself to making a beaker for every single man, woman and child that had

worked in Spode from the 1900s. It was 2336 pieces. I created a design to go around each beaker from a mish-mash of all the Spode designs throughout the years and numbered each beaker. We represented the whole thing with a soundscape. It was a wonderful thing, a lovely project to work on.

Q. Can you tell us about your routine during lockdown, how your days are going?

A. Fortunately we're holed up in the studio and it's been wonderful to have some time to create different pieces of work. I'm working on a hand-made range at the moment. It's been really nice to have clay as a companion to work with throughout these times. It's been a wonderful release for me to work with clay during this lockdown. Clay has always seen me through really challenging times. I'm experimenting and exploring my passion.

Keith wanted to end the day on an entertaining note, so Lunatractors, an amazing folk duo, played us out with two songs from their new album – The Missing Star and a traditional clog dance.

Finally, we had a glimpse of Keith's 'wall of inspiration', a vast collection of ceramics that he's accumulated over the years that have inspired him. He showed us a Sue Paraskeva bowl, a Rich Miller mug, some of his own early sgraffito ware and a cup and saucer made by builder Nigel from the first series of The Great Pottery Throwdown.

All in all, it was an excellent morning that was a welcome reprieve from the isolation of lockdown for us all.

Keith set the members a challenge-to make a teapot, the quintessential challenge for any potter-a perfectly formed, functioning teapot. It can be thrown, coiled or slab built as long as it works and looks beautiful and interesting.

Hopefully Keith can admire our efforts at a live demonstration day at Mundford next year.

Celia Greenaway

ROCK GLAZES UNEARTHED



Matthew Blakely

ROCK GLAZES UNEARTHED

by Matthew Blakely

This book is intended as a guide to help those who wish to develop their own glazes from rocks, clays and ashes that they have collected. It introduces glaze theory and geology for potters, and includes practical sections on designing, developing, and understanding glaze tests.

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OUT NOW

ANGLIAN POTTERS

MEMBERSHIP

Given that subscriptions are due (please find enclosed sheet) now is probably an appropriate time to remind members regarding what they get for their money.

Anglian Potters is an association with a great sense of comradeship, full of lively, experienced and friendly potters. We are meeting in virtual space whilst the various occasions where we would normally meet are closed.

Selling Exhibitions and fairs

Invitations to apply for places in three major selling exhibitions per year. In normal times exhibitions of members' work are held at the Undercroft, Norwich, during the spring period; Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in August, and at All Saint's Church, Cambridge at Christmas. This year we created a new e-commerce website where on-Line exhibitions have replaced the physical shows.

Invitations to participate in exhibitions and fairs at Hyde Hall, Chelmsford, Walberswick, Suffolk, Ickworth Park, nr Bury St Edmunds, and at other events and galleries across the region.

Insurance

Public Liability Insurance for members taking part in events wholly organised by Anglian Potters.

Clay Stores

Four substantial clay stores throughout the region, currently Cantley, Norfolk; March, Cambridgeshire; Ardleigh, Essex; and Stowmarket, Suffolk; providing an inexpensive source of Valentine clays.

Newsletter

A newsletter published four times during the year.

Resource Centre

A purpose-built resource area near Stowmarket in the heart of Suffolk for workshops, potters' camps and, specific kiln firings. The activities will be expanded as we bring area into regular use.

Demonstration Days

Regular Demonstration days at Mundford featuring professional ceramicists who provide whole day experiences. During lockdown we have started to produce such demonstrations on-line.

Advice

Expert advice on specific areas of study from the Helpline.

Social Media

Social Media connections via our managed FaceBook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

Zoom Meetings

Zoom meetings for both critique/feedback and catch-up sessions.

Website

A first-class website for the dissemination of information regarding events; a showcase for all members to display their work; for sale/wanted column; news items, links to other sources and a newsletter archive.

It is important to note that whilst members are provided with opportunities to participate in exhibitions and fairs and to attend demonstrations, these are 'break even/small profit events and members who profit from such events are not subsidised by the rest of the membership. Funding for the newsletter, website, zoom, and investment in the kiln site, is taken from the subscriptions.

Finally, it would be remiss not to underline the fact that all the above services are operated by volunteers without whom Anglian Potters could not function. Thank you, Volunteers.

Editor on behalf of AP Committee

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FORGOTTEN HOW TO LOG-IN TO THE ANGLIAN POTTERS WEBSITE?

Here is what you do.

Go to:

anglianpotters.or.uk

then click Members Log-in (last item on the menu).

Dialogue boxes will appear. In the user name box, write 'member' and your membership number without a space between: **member5391**. Then add your chosen password.

Click 'Log In'.

Job done.

GLAZING

In my visits to Tracey Parsons Zoom meetings it has been evident that several of our members have attended pottery courses where ready made glazes are used. Mixing glazes from scratch and firing often don't form part of the course, so there is little understanding of even the basics. This particularly seems true of those who have been keen enough to buy themselves a kiln and now work on their own. Reading pottery books on glazes can prove more daunting than helpful, so here is my attempt to clarify some of the mystique surrounding the subject.

Think of making and firing glazes as similar to cooking a cake. You use the basic ingredients of flour, eggs, sugar and fat mixed together to the right consistency and, after 'firing' them for the correct length of time and at the appropriate temperature, they become a tasty cake. Alternatively if you don't feel confident you can buy a cake mix and just add an egg. Whichever method you use you don't need to know the chemical formula, unless you are Mr Kipling and need to reproduce exact replicas by the thousands!

By understanding just a few basic ingredients, the proportions they need to be mixed in and the different 'cooking' temperatures for a stoneware or an earthenware glaze, the process of making a simple glaze is not much different to baking.

WHAT IS GLAZE?

A problem with a lot of books on glazes is the terminology. Many of the essentials of a glaze are described with different names or even symbols. In simple terms the 3 basic components and their function in a glaze are set out below.

1) SILICA

2) ALUMINA

3) FLUXES

Starting with SILICA, the main part of any glaze is a glass and silica is generally thought of as the 'glass-maker'. In stoneware glazes it makes up around 65% of the mix and for earthenware around 45%. It melts at about 1750°C. Flint and quartz are common silica-containing materials used in glazes

Next ALUMINA is used to create structure in a glaze, controlling its fluidity and stopping it running off the pot onto the kiln shelf. It can be thought of as a 'Stiffener' in the glaze. Around 12% is commonly used, more in a matt glaze and less in a crystalline glaze, and it melts at around 2020°C.

Of course, both silica & alumina melt at too high a temperature for our clays or kilns and this is where FLUXES come in to lower the glaze melting temperature. Although there are about eight minerals used by potters as fluxes, only four are commonly used, with whiting (a form of

calcium) being the most common. Most fluxes are mixtures (compounds) and to describe each of their functions needs a lot more space than available here, but as well as contributing to the melt, they may also be chosen and used in different quantities to favour a particular surface, colour, opacity, texture or even to act as a secondary flux to fine tune a glaze. An example of this would be the mineral Dolomite.

Back to our cake mix analogy, and something that may give you confidence to try making your own stoneware glazes:

Feldspar Potash, Feldspar Soda, Nepheline Syenite, & Cornish Stone can all be thought of as the pottery equivalent of cake ingredients. They all contain silica and elements that act as a flux. The Feldspars make a runny glaze when fired to cone 9 (1280°C), Cornish Stone is higher in silica so fires a little higher while Nepheline Syenite in contrast has more flux in the form of sodium and therefore melts lower.

Each one of them will make a simple, but workable glaze, by adding the equivalent of an egg, which in this case is whiting in the proportion of 85%- 15%. Starting here, the possibilities are endless. Earthenware glazes have similar basic elements, but have more complex side effects that there is no space to consider here.

Make a classic Victoria sponge – equal quantities of 4 eggs, SR flour, sugar and butter by weight. Or a packet of Mary Baker, the choice is yours!

Ray Auker

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ANGELA MELLOR



Dear Peter,

I've just had some exciting news. My latest sculptural work "Unfurled Light" is now being shown at the Fullercraft Museum, Brockton, MA, as part of the touring paperclay exhibition "Particle & Wave". You can see a virtual tour of the exhibition at: Particle And Wave (matterport.com)

I am also pleased to say that they used my image to advertise the exhibition on their website. www.fullercraft.org.

Angela Mellor



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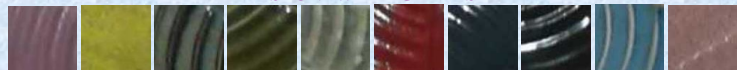
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SHELFIES: KATHERINE WINFREY



The house is full and just about every surface is covered. My mother, who needs to hold on to furniture to get around, dreads visiting me. I really should stop collecting ceramics but.

Here is one of the many shelves (actually the top of a bookcase) of my treasures.

Going from left to right on the back row we start with Ratty made by my friend Roz Herrin. In my opinion she is one of the finest British potters you've never heard of. She trained as a graphic designer and has the magical gift of being able to draw anything and everything. She did work for a potter in the Lake District and also at the Jersey Pottery but then fell in love and moved to Paris and has remained in France ever since. She rediscovered her love for ceramics in the late 80s and I met her in 1990 in La Borne when I went there to work for Eric Astoul and she had just started working in the Atelier Bottani-

Dechaud. We have remained great friends ever since and she has settled in La Borne. She makes wonderful stoneware domestic ware and plant pots but also channels her wild imagination into modelling. As the French would say, "elle délire bien". She works alongside her husband, Dominique Garet, and they have a three-chambered

crossdraft wood kiln, a woodfiring Sèvres kiln used for salting and a cloche gas kiln for domestic ware. Ratty was fired in the chamber kiln and likes to dress up. For autumn he has a beanie hat to keep his ears warm and is looking forward to wearing his Father Christmas coat in December. Also fired in that kiln is Milo, or Snowy as we know him, Tintin's canine friend. Roz has had various themes for her work

over the years including Alice in Wonderland, Winnie the Pooh and graphic novels of Tintin and Asterix. The latter seemed a really risky choice to me as I'm sure the publishers have big legal teams who are hot on copyright issues but she could not stop herself. She even exhibited a Snowy but, with a nod to Magritte's 'ceci n'est as une pipe', called it 'ceci n'est pas Milo'; and, so far so good. This year's theme is shoes so she's on safer ground.

Next to Ratty is a sheep tree by Paul Young. He's another good friend. A fellow earthenware potter who I first met at Art in Clay over 20 years ago. Resting its snout on the base is a salt glazed pig's head. This was made by Dominique Garet and is really a coat hook. Dominique is one of the most skilled throwers I know and makes beautiful big woodfired plant pots but also has a great sense of humour and makes ceramic human heads which are then attached to boiler suit bodies and lurk around the garden. He is also happy to spend hours on twiddles such as puzzle jugs and this clothes hook. If you 'google image' Roz and Dominique you will find some lovely pots.

I don't know if you remember the demonstration given by Christine





Hester Smith but it really was tremendous. She brought her extruder down from Dumfries and Galloway and opened up a whole new world of working with clay, using tools and producing pots. I was so impressed by the way her mini cutting harp was like an extension of her arm and how she boldly launched into drawing a swimming woman. This extruded leopard vase is by her, bought at a Potfest in the Park. Her stand is always a joy and her entries for the competition always inventive, beautifully made and funny. She always wins one of the prizes.

At the end, next to Milo, are the Dancers, a piece by the Dutch artist Eva Eisenloeffel (1917-2011) who had a home and workshop just outside of La Borne. I think they might have been fired in Eric Astoul's anagama kiln and are standing on a local floor tile. I love how they are sculpted and their movement. Moving to the front row, first on the left is a fox by Blandine Anderson. I've never met Blandine but know her work from the Pink Foot Gallery in Cley. I've managed to persuade my mother to give me a couple of her pieces for my birthday and this was this year's present, bought directly

from her during lockdown. I love the narrative in this piece. In fact I love narrative full stop.

I only ever meant to buy one owl by the Japanese potter Fumihiro Fuyushiba but he keeps modelling different expressions, bringing them to Potfest in the Park and I just can't resist. They are a wonderful combination of artistry and engineering for they all turn upside-down, rest on their eyebrows and beak and become a drinking vessel. Fumi comes to do both the Cumbrian Potfests every year. He ships his work over and flies in with his wife and a few more pots in their cases. I know I would have cracked and bought another owl this year if he had been able to come over. Four is such a strange number after all. Five would make a better display or even half a dozen. . . .

I both love and am amazed by the fact that Fumi wants to return to the UK every summer. In the last few years I find myself becoming increasingly disappointed by and despairing of this country's attitude to the rest of the world. I have to seek comfort in the fact that lovely ceramists like Fumi and all the continental potters still chose to come back year after year to show us what they make and see what we are all up to. I truly

hope this can continue. We can all only benefit from this exchange.

Back to the pots. Just lurking at the back of the owls is another animal coat hook. This time a cat modelled by Roz Herrin and an example of their blue and white gas fired glazes. The cat adds an Owl and the Pussy Cat vibe to this area and I know Milo or his pal the blue dog made by Norfolk potter Jane Bygrave will keep the cat in check if it starts eying up the owls for culinary purposes.

A small seaside section to finish off with. First a lovely hermit crab mermaid by my all-time favourite earthenware potter Marie Pierre Meheust. I adore her work and only wish I had the chance to see more of it and add to my collection. It is always deliciously humorous, beautifully made and a unique view of the world. I somehow feel that any house with a piece of Marie Pierre's work in it has a better chance of being a happy home. Do 'google image' her for a real treat.

Lastly is a mermaid by Jane Bygrave, bought last October. I've been made very aware this year that I live in a landlocked county and must find tastes of the sea wherever I can. Ceramics to the rescue as always.

Karberine Winfrey

SHELFIES: JUNE GENTLE



This started as a simple 'Shelfie' but I blame our Covid lifestyle and age for it becoming a biographical ramble down memory lane.

Over the years we potters cannot resist collecting pots. We collect pots from potters that we admire; who have taught us something, or whose work is associated with our lives through travel or events.

This Shelfie exercise has taken me through my time as a potter and my obsession with ceramics. Looking through these clay pieces I see they are my visual diary. I realise that each piece has a story connecting with people and places that I have known throughout my life. The stories return again afresh and I see how they record my journey

with clay.

Clay Stories

My earliest piece was bought from the Craftsman Potters shop in Marshall Street, London. The shop was a wonderland to me but prices seemed high, so a small ash glazed pot by Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie seemed a bargain and excited my interest in ash glazes. At home I started burning, washing and sieving wood ash from our fruit trees.

My interest in ash glazes was stimulated by Eric James Melon's pots on which he drew stories with oxides. They also appealed as I had become interested in life drawing classes. I attended one of his workshops in Derby and bought one of his plaques of the twelve days of Christmas – (ladies dancing).

He also used one of my pots (a cylinder) to illustrate his brushwork and glazing - much to my delight. Eric's friend Bill Ismay, whose collection of modern studio pottery had completely taken over his terrace house and is now in the York museum, called in.

My interest in figurative work also led me to the Raku work of two Suffolk Crafts potters, both greatly humorous - 'Eve's Apple' and 'Pigs might Fly'.

I really love the simple porcelain figure by Jude Jelfs – a present from a daughter.

My deep admiration for fine Stoneware pottery first led me into making pots. The work of David Leach and two

Norfolk potters, Thomas Plowman and Peter Lane represented to me the best of studio pottery at that time.

I met David Walters who set up the Particular Pottery in Norfolk. He was an amazing production porcelain thrower, so much enthusiasm and vitality, using all his skills to make a viable business. He returned to his native South Africa more recently to set up another pottery where we visited him, still so full of energy. A little porcelain jug reminds me of him.

I suspect all potters are lured into some side turnings in their search for expression. I had always enjoyed the Ceramic Review magazine which always featured new ideas. Paper Clay was one such idea. On a workshop weekend in

Cambridge we were shown how to mix clay slurry with toilet rolls and Napisan. Unfortunately it was a particularly wet weekend and it proved impossible to dry the clay outside on bats. Cue lots of slop! I enjoyed the possibility of thinness and flexibility which paper clay offered, but it was for me a sculptural tool. I visited a potter in Docking who was using it and couldn't resist the piece "Waiting for the Wave" which was both skillful and humorous.

Two small pots represent our trips to Europe in our



SHELFIES: PETER DEANS

campervan. Space was at a premium.

One evening in a village not far from the channel crossing we wandered along the quiet residential streets and found ourselves looking into a simple front window filled with amazing crystalline glazed pots. We entered and were shown around by the potter whose work was beautifully made, and bought two plates. The potter was a very enthusiastic non-english speaking young man, but It seemed that he had just constructed his kiln and was more interested in talking about that and the vagaries of crystalline glazes, than selling anything.

In northern Spain I couldn't resist the tiny pair of bootees inspired by the canvas dancing shoes of local history, from a village potter. He had a wonderful display of unglazed ware which was made by layering coloured grogged clay -agateware. With so many colour combinations it was like trying to choose a chocolate from a box.

It seems to me that clay is so elemental that it can speak to us in so many forms, a basic commodity for all time.

June Gentle

1. (left to right)

Lidded pot , David Leach.

Striding figure porcelain JG

'Looking for the wave ' Paper clay

Eve,s apple (FW)raku

Plaque- One of the 12 Ladies Dancing,
Eric James Mellon

'Pigs might Fly' ? Ursula Stroh-Rubens

Dish, Nicki Darrell

Porcelain figure, Jude Jelfs

Small pot, Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie
(b1895) ash glaze.

2. (left to right)

Porcelain jug, David Walters

Crystalline glaze dish, French village
potter

Blue pot, Frank Logan

Pair of bootees, village potter northern
Spain

Green Porcelain bowl, Peter Lane

Lidded pot JG

Tall stoneware Jar, Thomas Plowman

Small pot, Ruthanne Tudball

Pot (JG)decorated by Eric James Mellon



From left David Frith slab pot. Ruthanne Tudball Tea Pot. Margaret Frith bowl. Peter Deans Jug.

My MRD-LX1. On O2. Harvey Bradley stylized porcelain dove. Alain Fichot crystalline glazed oval Vase (French Potter). Tony Pugh Vase. Above my father Austen Deans painting of Little Mount Peel near my home in New Zealand.

ZOOM PHOTO-TRAINING SESSION

As a relatively new member of Anglian Potters, I had only met a few others at the Cambridge shows, so I was looking forward to at least seeing, if not talking to, some more members. I had not participated in this type of event before, so I was looking forward to that, too.

I've always found taking pictures of my work hard. Like everybody else, I've taken lots of pictures of faces, landscapes, buildings and so on, but capturing the feel of a pot in a single shot is another matter, especially using my phone camera.

Sarah's seminar hit the spot. She took us through the phone camera features, which was enlightening to say the least. Phone cameras are much more sophisticated than I, and most people probably, realise. Sarah took us through the process of getting the best from the image, which techniques work well and which equipment can be useful. As always, it was over too quickly, but there was lots to take in anyway. The notes from the session are great, and summarise so clearly what was a lot of information.

I was going to attend the second session as well, but at the last minute I was obliged to miss it unfortunately. Once again the notes are really useful, thank you.

John Hannington



I think that during this lockdown, many of our potters will have been sending copy for the A.P. Newsletter. However last week I spent time clearing up my workshop. I took a good look at the pots I have amassed over the years and realized that so many have a story attached to them. So hence the photo of the two headed pot.

In 1998 the week long National Ceramic Exhibition of Nigeria was held in Kaduna, northern Nigeria. On the last day of the exhibition a young man arrived from the far north carrying a plastic bag containing three ceramic pieces of work. Asked why he hadn't arrived earlier he said:- "I am sorry. The elephants came through our village and trampled down some telegraph poles. It was found that the copper wires had been taken. The police were told that the jewellery makers were to blame. As no one would admit to the theft, the village was cordoned off, no one could leave until the culprits were found. That is why I am late. Please show my work." We did and I bought two of the works made by Jide Ayadele. The two headed piece of a Fulani girl. The Fulani's are nomadic herdsman of the southern sahel. This piece shows the girl holding a covered calabash, hiding her attributes but after marriage the "lid is off" showing her husband all and revealing the truth. The piece is twelve inches tall. Perhaps others may have a "POT with a STORY"

Joy Voisey

Katherine WINFREY

AGM Sunday, 19th May, 2013. Mundford.

I own a tall, blue, salt glazed jug made by Mike Casson. It has a 'combed' decoration from top to bottom on either side and was produced by Mike's, deftly, running his fingers downwards through the slipglaze, using his wrist to produce a slight lateral movement on their way down the pot. The technique is very simple and extremely effective. When I throw a 'run' of pots, I apply a small amount of water from my wheel tray to the ware board and spread it across the board in just such a manner: a near perfect replica of a Mike Casson decoration. When, however, I attempt to apply such a decoration to a pot, inhibition takes over preventing my making any progress. It is almost as though the pot is too precious to spoil.

Watching Kate Winfrey produce her decorated ware, it appears that she has no inhibition whilst working. Slip decoration lends itself to spontaneity and Kate applies slip with both brush and trailer with an apparent economy of effort and dexterity of movement. The bodies of painted animals: hares, foxes, chickens, and birds are overdrawn with sgraffito or fine trailed lines often using legs, tails, wings or ears, stretching backwards or forwards, to enhance a feeling of movement around the form of the pot. A simple eye of jewelled black dot on white slip adds expression to the creatures. Lettering, too, in the form of simple adages, are trailed on to the pots with the same fluency. For my own part I would have to plan the lettering very carefully and apply it using my 'very best handwriting' but rendering the results to be laboured and stagnant in contrast to Kate's lively, almost dancing, decoration. Katherine used a pre made paper template to identify, precisely, the areas of her plate designated for specific decoration. "Such areas should not be left to chance" she informed us. Within the apparent improvisation, immediacy and manual dexterity, therefore, there is evidence of a lengthy grounding in her craft. That which appears simple in its application is, in fact, the product of a good deal of application over a number of years. Mike Casson's command of decoration was undoubtedly born out of similar undertakings.

Peter Warren

See page 32

RACHEL PEDERSON



During lockdown I had to stop teaching pottery lessons, and I was suddenly left with lots of spare time and the feeling that I could finally do something for me. With that in mind, I decided to go 'big' and see what I could make. I noticed that the roads and parks had much less litter in them thanks to the takeaways being closed, and my mind drifted to the seas and I wondered if our being in lockdown was finally releasing nature more, giving it a breather.

Rachael Pederson

FEEDBACK SESSIONS ON ZOOM

Get feedback and help each other with your work.

We had a great kick-off to discuss how we could run the Zoom Feedback Group. This group is in addition to the fortnightly general catch-up Zoom calls.

We decided that rather than a critique group, it will be a session where we can talk about the work we're making, as well as our making processes, to receive feedback, ideas, support, advice and encouragement. In my case, I had a kind offer of the loan of some equipment.

The sessions will run every 4 weeks so as not to clash with the fortnightly A.P. Zoom catch-up meetings.

Any member is welcome to attend any meeting, regardless of whether they have missed any, or all, of the previous meetings.

You should bring:

Photos of anything you are working on that you want the group to think about and or, the pieces themselves to hold up to camera. You don't have to bring a piece if you just want to participate in the discussion.

A photo or link to a ceramic piece online that we could discuss. The idea is for us to learn about highly-regarded potters and ceramic artists and their work as well as developing our own practice.

We will talk about as many of our own projects as we can fit in, plus at least one 'famous' pot. Any items we don't have time to talk about will be saved for a future meeting.

Meetings will last 1-1.5 hours.

Hope everyone is doing well

Tracey Parsons

Dates:

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Apr 18 2021 02:3

Meeting ID: 840 5651 2672

Passcode: 223281

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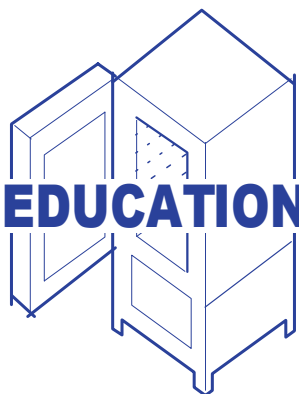
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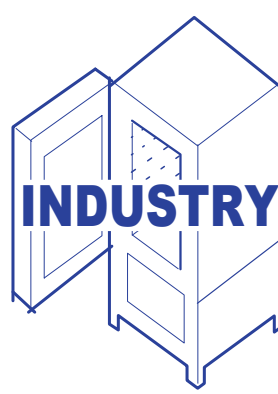
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Jenny Durant

DAVID COOKE



Angle grinding a steel horse

I use a range of clay hand building techniques to create my pieces. I usually start with a slab of clay that is a bit thicker in the middle and bend it over. I will then puff out the middle from the inside, and let it firm up a bit. This will become the body of the piece. I then use slabs and coils to create the legs and wings etc.

I grew up in Ramsey near Peterborough with ready access to clay, thanks to my dear old mum, the legendary Rosemarie Cooke. My school at Ramsey also had a fantastic ceramics department, and it is sad that clay workshops have now disappeared almost entirely from schools and colleges.

I moved to Yorkshire in 1989, and graduated from Leeds Metropolitan University with a degree in 3D design in 1992, but it was really, my mum, and also my dad, Arnold (a keen thrower at that time) who helped to shape my early ceramics career. After graduating from University, I gained a great deal from being in shared studios in Leeds in the 90s at East Street Arts. I later moved to Sculpture Lounge, Holmfirth around 2006 and was fortunate to work alongside fellow animal sculptor Brendan Hesmondhalgh. I enjoy talking to others about their work (in all artistic disciplines, not just ceramics), and watching the way that others express themselves, or tackle technical problems in ways that I might not have considered. I have always worked in many different

media and it is a great way to gain new skills that can help to take your work in new directions. I currently have a studio at Holmbridge that I share with my wife Joanne Cooke who is also a professional ceramic animal maker, specializing in canine commissions.

Sculpture is, and always has been an integral part of who I am. Whether it was the Lego creations that I made aged 5five, or the board games and puzzles that I designed in my teens, there is just some mental muscle within me that needs to be flexed, and I have always felt the need shape and create. I am drawn to animals because of the fantastic diversity of shapes, poses and textures, and there are so many ways that you can approach each animal subject. It was initially reptiles and invertebrates that I was drawn to for subject matter, but I have been increasingly drawn to birds and mammals. I usually have plenty of pieces in production, and in recent years I have tended to work with metal during the winter months as I find that my studio is too cold for clay at this time of year. I am currently working on a large 'Owl Man' in steel and resin. This is a commission for The Sculpture Park at Churt, Surrey, and will eventually be cast in bronze.

When creating a ceramic piece, I work with slabs of clay, and use anything that is to hand, to prop the pieces upright until they are firm enough to begin the next stage. Wooden tools and a

serrated metal kidney are used to carve the detail, and fabric patterns or resin stamps to create texture. I always take the stoneware firing in my electric kiln to 1235 C, and I use the Earthstone range of clays (mainly ES50 and ES40). The glazing is simply a wash of metal oxides into the detail, and then body stains for colour with a thin layer of clear glaze to seal the surface. I quite often use other materials to join pieces together, for example birds' legs are created in steel or bronze and attached with resin. Bases and stands are often fabricated in steel or oak. From a technical perspective I was always proud of my hand-built life-size reptiles like the Galapagos Tortoises, but my favourite piece is usually the piece that I am currently working on. For the past ten years I have been casting and working with bronze, and I would like to try to combine the two media, utilizing the strengths of each in one piece. Before I got into bronze casting, I would often experiment with various ceramic textures and printed patterns, and that is something that I would like to return to this year and create some abstract ceramic pieces with bronze elements. Only one of my art/craft shows/events went ahead as planned in 2020, and so my ambitions, like every other maker, are currently at the mercy of global events. If anything goes ahead as planned in 2021..... It will be a bonus!

David Cooke

Photographs: David Cooke



Making a Marabou Stork



Modelling a Orangutan



John Dory Fish



Galapagos Tortoise



Goniatite



Bronze Owl



Abstract Owl



The day before the November lockdown, a small team (Stephen, Paddy, Jerry and Liz Lewis) painted the glaze shed inside and out to waterproof it all and also to help it merge into the landscape. Paint was donated by Jerry from his seemingly endless supply of useful items. Five weeks later, as restrictions eased again, a somewhat larger group assembled at Stoke Farm. Nicki brought more skew and arch bricks, donated by Sutton Pottery and Ray Auker's old

electric kiln, which he has donated to be converted into a raku kiln. These items were moved into storage and the rest of the site tidied up. We cleared more space under cover for Helen Humphries' small gas kiln, another kind donation by her to our new kiln site. A second team, consisting of Martin George, his son Chris, Liz Chipchase and assorted helpful neighbours, was meanwhile undertaking the tricky job of extracting Helen's kiln from her back garden in Waterbeach.

On their arrival at Stoke Farm, we all helped to lift the kiln into its new resting place, a much easier task as we had a lot more space in which to manoeuvre. Once the kiln was in place we covered everything we could and put the site to bed for the winter. Getting Chris's van off the field was tricky, but with lots of willing helpers to push, we got it back on the track again. The only 'casualty' was Teresa, who ended up sprayed with mud from head to toe for her efforts! At the time of writing we are still in lockdown and who knows what the future will bring. However, if and when lockdown eases and the waterlogged field dries out, we hope to start work on the site again. Sadly, it will not be practical to run Potters' Camp there this year, but keep your fingers crossed for the summer of 2022.

Hopefully this summer (2021) there will be opportunities for working parties to continue developing the site and some kiln building and firing workshops along the lines of previous years. We also have the mammoth task of moving the camp paraphernalia - glaze shed contents, buckets of glaze, marquees, tables and chairs crockery, cutlery etc - from Jerry's place.

Thank you to everyone who have given their time and labour to help get the site up and running this year. Whether you dropped in for a few hours or have been turning up regularly week after week whatever the weather, we couldn't have got this far without you. Thank you also to the people who have donated kilns, bricks and other materials - it is all helping us to ensure that we get a really good facility for potters to use for years to come.

Nicki Darrell

Photographs Liz Lewis



GAS KILN'S JOURNEY FROM WATERBEACH TO STOKE FARM



Photograph: Martin George

It's a new gas kiln (Generously donated by Helen Humphrys) It was a bit of a mission getting it into Chris George's Van but we managed it, and Jerry's ingenuity + 4 long stout poles made placing it easy with 8 pairs of hands and appropriate muscles. Camp is getting to look good. My first time at the new venue and I was really impressed. The new Glaze emporium is a palace, and very spacious. There may even be a chance of finding things now. The Camp team have made a great job of the site as I am told it was a mass of tree stumps when they started, but now it looks so good that it would be easy to overlook all the hard work that has realised the place. Well done everyone who has helped.

Martin George



Photograph: Nicki Darrell



Photograph Nicki Darrell



Photograph: Martin George



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Selected Members to contact:

Alan Foxley: handbuilding, reduction firing 01799 522631

Deborah Baynes: raku, salt glaze, stoneware, earthenware (reduction & oxidised) 01473 788300

Usch Spettigue: raw glazing/ single firing 01473 787587

Margaret Gardiner: salt/soda firing 01279 654025

John Masterton: reduction, porcelain, kilns etc. 01279 723229

Angela Mellor: bone china paperclay and slipcasting 01353 666675

Beryl Hines: general Raku and earthenware 01394 386280

Stephen Murfitt: All things Raku 01487 711478

Moira Goodall: low fired sawdust/ smoke firing and burnishing
e: moira.goodall@gmail.com

Madelaine Hanman Murphy: Throwing with porcelain, commercial glazes. 07545 375246

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

Margaret Gardiner



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Katherine Winfrey

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DEADLINE FOR THE SUMMER 2021

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1 MAY 2021

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