



Newsletter



AUTUMN 2022

www.anglianpotters.org.uk

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



When I started to think about what to write for this issue of the Newsletter, my mind was focused on the hard work done by a great team of volunteers who have worked on our new potters camp site at Stoke Farm, and everyone getting ready to set off for our first camp. We have had to limit the numbers this year until we have a bit more experience with the site and its capacity but we do hope to run more firing workshops as and when, so there will still be opportunities to join in if you didn't make it to camp.

However, I'm afraid my mind has been diverted by the sad news of two of our members who have done so much to bring Anglian Potters alive. At the end of May we heard about the death of Alan Baxter, our member number 1 – who literally brought Anglian Potters (or East Anglian Potters Association) to life, back in 1983. Alan had lived in France for many years, but was still in contact and keen to hear about our activities.

And then in early July, the sad news came of the death of Peter Warren, who has done so much to develop our Newsletter into a full magazine about ceramics, not just reporting on our activities, but bringing information about the wider world of ceramics.

Peter spent much of his life working in education, and brought his enthusiasm for knowledge and helping others develop into everything he did for AP. Despite his developing Motor Neurone Disease, he carried on working as if nothing was wrong, and had almost completed this edition of the Newsletter. Carolyn Postgate (our previous editor, and continued support to Peter) has completed the task, and I hope you will see this issue as a tribute to all Peter has done. He was a great friend and colleague, and will be much missed.

You might notice that I mentioned the founding of EAPA in 1983, and the

arithmetically inclined of you will no doubt observe that next year is the 40th anniversary. We have been discussing how to commemorate this event, and have a few ideas, not yet fully developed. We still have quite a few of our original members with us, which I hope is a testament to us doing something right!

I normally write a bit more in these notes, but I'm lost for words this time, so will leave the space for more tributes from our members in memory of Alan and Peter.

John

ACTING EDITOR'S NOTES

After the very sad and unexpected death of Peter Warren, our much-esteemed Editor, I offered to step in to finish the edition that Peter had been working on right up to the day he was rushed to hospital, as I have a detailed knowledge of how he puts it together. My task was made a great deal easier as Peter had left all his files in excellent order, and had, in fact, set out many pages already.

I have tried to produce a Newsletter of which Peter would have been proud, using all the articles that he had already received and prepared.

In the years since Peter took over the Editor's job from me in Autumn 2014, he has improved the content of the Newsletter immeasurably and it now has an enviable reputation for excellence amongst the other potters' organisations around the country. His will be a hard act to follow. So many members have sent me reminiscences of Peter that he has four pages devoted to remembering him – something he would not have approved of himself, being such a modest and self-effacing man.

Another sad loss is that of our founder member, Alan Baxter. His widow, Patt, contacted me to invite all members who remember Alan to come to his memorial get-together in London – the invitation is on the opposite page; Patt is looking forward to seeing many old friends there. She will be putting together an article for us on Alan's early life as a potter, with reminiscences about the beginnings of Anglian Potters, which we will publish in a future edition.

I would like to thank Rachael Pedersen and Yule Edwards for their help in providing captions for the camp pages and for proof-reading this issue.

Carolyn

COVER

Elephant dish by Peter Warren, photographed outside his studio in July 2022 by Carolyn Postgate

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SEEKING AN EDITOR

Anglian Potters needs a Newsletter Editor. Here's an outline job description:

- * experience of editing and proof-reading
- * some knowledge of pots and potting
- * experience of Adobe InDesign for page-setting the Newsletter; (AP has a subscription to InDesign for the use of the Editor)
- * experience of Photoshop or photo editing software

Apart from collecting articles, page-setting and proof-reading, the Editor also:

- * creates & sends the finished PDF to our printer in Cambridge
- * sends the mailing list to the printer for mailing to members and advertisers
- * manages paid advertising
- * prepares the Membership List once a year to send to the printer

If you think this job would interest you, or if you need further information, please contact Carolyn Postgate

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ALAN BAXTER REMEMBERED

We are hosting a Memorial Get-Together
on

Saturday 24th September 2022

between 3 pm and 6.30 pm at

The Pub on the Park

19 Martello Street, London E8 3PE

We would love you to join us.

Patt, JohnB and Joey

The wish is to enjoy a social occasion with no formalities other than to raise a glass together at 6.00 pm as Alan would have wanted.

Accordingly there won't be speeches as such but we invite anyone who wishes to say something that reflects on their relationship with Alan, whether it be a story, memory or impression to share it with all the people Alan loved and cared for.

Getting there: The venue is only 50 metres from London Fields Overground station. If you are thinking of driving there is free parking in the immediate area.

FAREWELLS

We say goodbye to two other former members of Anglian Potters:

Pat Mangan, who lived to see her 100th birthday, died last month. Her husband, Jim, who will be remembered by many longer-term AP members with great fondness, died nine years ago. He was best known for his raku clocks, and was always a willing helper in setting up exhibitions and helping with the smooth running of events. Pat's funeral was on 11 August, and I spoke to her family, who said that they would be very happy to hear from potters who remember Jim and Pat. Contact their daughter Rae Stevens, email raestevens@btopenworld.com, or contact me and I will pass on any messages.

Judy Ferrari, who also died last month, was a much-respected pottery teacher and musician. She taught at the Country Centre in Cambridge in the 1980s for many years, as well as hosting workshops for children in her own studio at home.

ADAM MARSH AT THE AGM, 15 MAY 2022



Adam Marsh Photograph Andy Wright

Adam Marsh is one of our younger members but has already packed a lot into his career to date.

After finishing a degree in ceramics at the University of Wolverhampton in 2007 he quickly found himself, at the age of 21, apprenticed to Edmund de Waal at his London studio, followed by a two-and-a-half-year art residency at South Hill Park, Bracknell, where he met his wife-to-be.

They now live with their three young children in Suffolk, where Adam has a studio in which he works and teaches ceramics.

Although AP members will need no persuading as to the value of access to ceramics in schools, Adam is living proof of this as his first introduction to clay was by way of an inspiring new teacher who taught him GCSE Art. Adam quickly responded to hand-building and glazing, but hated throwing at first – which is an irony since his work since leaving university has been focused entirely on wheel-thrown work.

"It's the hardest thing I've ever done" he admits, and vowed never to touch a wheel again. However, the sight of it in the corner of the art room felt like a personal challenge and he kept returning to it and, "Having a go". "And I'm still having a go, really!" he laughs.

Adam describes himself as a "lazy thrower", which he clarifies to mean that he throws shapes quickly on the wheel

without worrying too much about their outer appearance and all the refinement is done later, at the turning stage.

His favourite clay to use is Audrey Blackman porcelain, for its whiteness and translucency when fired, and this is what he used for his demonstrations of a lidded jar and a flagon.

Taking a 3 kg ball of clay and centering it on the wheel, he explained that the first pull is a two-handed "grab", followed up by gentler pulls from the base. He throws comparatively wet. While the outside of a vessel may remain quite rudimentary, a lot of care is taken to smooth the inside profile. Calipers are then used to measure the inside rim, which will determine the size of the lid.

Although this may seem quite a relaxed approach to throwing, Adam actually makes a lot of notes, diagrams, and sketches, along with calculations and recorded results on shrinkage. "My wife calls it procrastination," he laughs.

Once a piece has reached the leather hard stage it is time for finishing and refining. Adam deliberately throws quite thickly so that he can carve deeply into the surface at this stage, which he describes in sculptural terms as the pot's shape and character 'revealing' themselves. A considerable amount of clay is removed, particularly at the base. He trims mostly by feel and experience, using a sharp-edged loop tool. A metal kidney is then used to smooth away all the throwing ridges, which gives the clean, contemporary profile for which his work is known.

Indebted to his training with de Waal, whom he still acknowledges as a major influence on his work, Adam prefers to throw a sequence of pieces at one go, which may be between ten and forty, depending on their size. He feels that this helps him to achieve a rhythm and uniformity to the throwing.

The second piece Adam showed us was a narrow-necked, handled flagon.

Taking another 3 kg of clay, he first pulled it to the desired height and then began to shape the belly of the jug. "A lot of this is about feel at this stage," he explains.

The neck was brought in and then pulled up again to give a narrow, elegant profile. The bottoms of Adam's jugs are left deliberately thick to allow for turning.

His usual method is to flip a pot upside down to work on this but, of course, the narrow neck of a flagon would be too fragile. So his solution is to use a turned, hollow former in which the top half of the flagon can sit comfortably while he trims the base.

Adam makes his handles in a two part plaster press mould. He used to pull them in the traditional way but felt they made his pots look too "craft based", when he was seeking a more industrial look. The moulded handles also have the advantage of creating a uniformity of design which unites a body of work in a group of pieces. The handle seams are trimmed and then the handle is attached while the clay is still flexible enough to achieve a snug fit to the pot.

One of the striking aspects of much of Adam's work is the surface patterning which almost has the appearance of fur or scales. This is achieved with a small, sharp-edged loop tool and it takes many hours to complete one pot. For it to be successful, the clay has to be at exactly the right stage of dryness: soft enough to be able to cut cleanly, but firm enough not to distort under the pressure.

The pleasingly tactile, dimpled surface ("Pots are there to be touched," says Adam) receives glaze in interesting ways which, together with the porcelain's translucency, is a visual pleasure. Adam finds this especially compelling on teacups, which, when held to the light, offer lovely contrasts in thickness. As ever, there is a delicate balance between the desire to increase the translucency by carving out more clay and having enough thickness so that it doesn't warp during firing.

Adam spent the second lockdown last year experimenting with glaze recipes in order to achieve a core palette of colours. He also tried mixing clays to add colour to the body itself, discovering that 50:50 proportions of terracotta to porcelain give a lovely soft greyish purple. We look forward to seeing this introduced into his range in the future.

For now Adam has his hands full with family life and teaching – which has increased so much since January that he is fully booked for the rest of this year and has a waiting list. Fortunately, he enjoys it and feels that his students' questions contribute to his own continued learning and feed into his ceramic practice. "It keeps me focused," he says.

Christine Pike, MA



Photographs: Christine Pike



Photographs: Andy Wright

PETER WARREN REMEMBERED



Peter at the wheel in his youth

I came to know Peter quite well over the last few years, working together on Newsletters at the start, and steering him through the finer points of working with Adobe InDesign later on. InDesign, which we use for producing the Newsletter, has an uncanny knack of throwing up new problems at every turn. Solving these problems for Peter taught me so much!

He was such a modest, yet extremely knowledgeable man; he researched and wrote wonderful articles on ceramics for the Newsletter. My only consolation is the fact that he has gone out on a high, before his health had deteriorated so much as to prevent him doing his job as Editor, which he enjoyed so much. He had already had to give up potting, which must have been a real wrench for him. He will be greatly missed by all his AP colleagues and friends, and I will certainly miss collaborating with him on the Newsletters.

Carolyn Postgate



Peter was such excellent company on so many occasions. I will cherish fond memories of him.

My plant stall at Open Studios this weekend is in aid of the MND Association – I will make sure it has plenty to sell.

Ian Vance



I am so sad to hear about Peter's passing. I was only conversing with him last week. He was one of the kindest, most modest

people I've had the pleasure to know. He encouraged me to write an article for this Newsletter and I'm so glad I did; his support was amazing. I'm glad I sent it to him before the deadline. It was a privilege to have known Peter and serve on the AP committee with him. His encouragement and support were greatly appreciated and I will always remember him fondly.

Trudy Staines



I mostly knew Peter through his work as Editor of the Anglian Potters Newsletter. I remember him bravely taking on this task from Carolyn Postgate when she stepped down from the role after many years. He embraced the steep learning curve of grappling with the software, logistics of pagination, and everything else that goes into creating a magazine, quite apart from the actual content.

He knew I was as passionate about writing as I am about sculpting and gently, but persistently, encouraged me to write articles for the magazine. Praise from Peter was a thing to treasure and made me want to try harder; to deliver pieces that would give him the least work to correct and to turn them around as quickly as possible. I shall miss his enthusiastic emails, and we shall all feel the loss of him as our editor and friend.

Christine Pike



Peter will be very sadly missed by all who knew him. He was an enthusiastic stalwart of the association, full of enthusiasm for ceramics and who altered a standard Newsletter to what it is today: a very professional magazine and one be proud of.

Over the years, we had many conversations and reminiscences, in particular about the potter Ian Godfrey whom he knew very well at Camberwell and whom I had taught at Tulse Hill Comprehensive School in South London in the mid-fifties. Sadly our paths hadn't crossed when we lived and taught in Stevenage, which we only discovered through Anglian Potters. We had many interesting conversations remembering people we had known in common.

His knowledge of and connections in the ceramic world were considerable, as evidenced in the Newsletter and talking to him. He brought to his work the skills and imagination of a very good potter with his beautifully designed and painted dishes.

Alan Foxley



Candlesticks made in earlier years



He was such a gentle person and was always ready to exchange news and views whenever I met him or replied to things from the magazine, which he compiled so well. It is a superb Newsletter and I look forward to reading it. I didn't know him very well, but I remember sitting with him when we had the auction for dear Dennis Coulden.

Brenda Green



Peter's widow, Daphne, tells the story of how Peter used to throw hundreds of little pig money pots for the children in his classes at school to embellish with ears, money slots and slip decoration, thereby learning new skills with clay.

It is with great sadness that I hear of Peter's death. The AP Newsletter has really blossomed under his editorship. He was brilliantly positive about my limited attempt to write something and I always enjoyed reading it.

Andrew Eastaugh



I first met Peter when he was selling his wares to raise funds for his church. We met on several occasions subsequently and at a certain point he recommended that I join Anglian Potters. We always talked pots, and I learned so much from Peter. He also encouraged me to apply for my first Potters Camp, and wrote a letter of introduction which gave me a foot in the door to work with the lovely Margaret Gardiner. He was very modest about his influence, but he has definitely been a pivotal person in my life.

Peter seemed to know everyone in the ceramics community. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of potters (he knew many of them personally), and ceramics through the ages. Peter was a natural teacher, and an encourager wherever he saw enthusiasm. I was lucky enough to spend many hours with him chatting about all things clay.

He was a devoted family man, and it speaks volumes about the man that he was, that, when he received his

diagnosis, his daughter, who was living in Derbyshire at the time, relocated her whole young family to be closer to him and Daphne.

I shall miss Peter terribly. He always denied it, but I know that meeting him was a transformative moment for me, and I will continue to be inspired by him, not just in pots, but in the way I try to live.

Liz Deeks



I was deeply saddened to hear of the death of Peter. I always found him positive and uplifting, despite his own ill health. He did an amazing job with the Newsletter to the end, improving it all the time and doing his best to fit everyone's news in. This helped enormously with raising the profile of the Anglian Potters and recording its development. I will miss him greatly.

May he RIP.

Angela Mellor



Thank you, Peter, for friendly conversations and encouragement. We both shared – but not without amusement – our enthusiasm for the treasures of old tile fragments and pieces of broken pottery stored in the attic of the V&A. Your ceramics reflect an eye

for detail; a quality appreciated also in the immaculate Newsletters we have received over the years.

Thank you, Peter. You will be much missed and remembered.

Penny Johnson



Peter will be sadly missed by all the Anglian Potters. His editing of the Newsletter revealed a generous and thoughtful approach to promoting the pottery cause! His contributions were well informed by his own accomplished making experience as well as by his excellent art school education at a time when art education was at its best period with a wealth of ceramics lecturers who were also well-respected practitioners!

Peter welcomed and encouraged contributions from the whole membership and particularly those just starting out on their pottery journeys. Always open minded and accepting of the many different approaches and attitudes to working in clay, he was determined to represent that diversity within the membership. Friendly and very approachable, Peter always looked for the positives which many members have benefitted from (especially at the meetings for selecting the 'selected members')

I shall deeply miss his encouragement and very supportive friendship.

Stephen Murfitt



I was sorry to hear of Peter's death, he has been such a friendly and helpful member of Anglian Potters and has done a really grand job on the Newsletter. It has got ever more interesting as he widened the scope of the Newsletter with articles about people and processes including, amongst others, Geoffrey Whiting, Richard Batterham and Burmantofts ceramics.

Writing an article for him was a pleasure, he was always enthusiastic about the content, and we often engaged in a series of emails about some point raised. (The article I wrote about the Magdalene Odundo exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum led to an exchange about the large staples visible on the back of one of Thomas Toft's pieces. How could such a clumsy looking repair process lead to a flawless surface appearance? Before long Peter had sent me a link to a film clip showing exactly how it is done.)

He had a charming and humorous way with words – on one occasion after



Peter and Daphne at their daughter Claire's wedding to Mariano in July 2020

emailing to say he might have to leave a piece until the next edition because the current edition was full he then realised he had space for it after all. This news was conveyed in an email saying, "I think I must have had too many wine gums at the weekend. I miscalculated the Newsletter space by a Green Line bus route." He refused to let me know what brand of wine gums he favoured.

Liz Chipchase



I have fond memories of the times that Peter and I shared amusing anecdotes from when we were both teachers.

My abiding memory of Peter, though, is from an Anglian Potters event at the Ickworth Wood Fair. There were about twenty of us exhibiting our work, some



of us demonstrating. There was always a group of the general public surrounding Peter as he diligently reproduced an illustration from a large botanical tome onto one of his lovely bowls. The visitors were transfixed as they watched Peter meticulously blending underglazes to get the right shade for each section of the amazing hand-drawn plant which flowed so naturally across the inner surface of the bowl.

Anton Todd



I have just opened the latest copy of Anglian Potters Newsletter, and there is the picture of Peter smiling at me, along with his Editor's Notes, as always, inclusive and comprehensive and looking to the future.

I find this loss deeply saddening, not only because of the qualities he brought to the Newsletter, but also because I had got to know Peter as a friend whilst discussing my contributions to the publication. During our online communications we shared our broader interests, as well as ceramics, individual

potters, those we knew and respected, or did not.

As former teachers we often talked about the achievements of students, some of whom had stayed in touch. Of particular note for Peter was Veronica Ryan, a nominee for the 2022 Turner Prize.

There were few benefits to the isolation some of us experienced during the worst period of Covid but, for me, getting to know Peter better was definitely a bonus.

He never complained to me about the condition that was increasingly restricting his life; maybe just a hint that he had an appointment at Addenbrooke's, and how wonderful those caring for him had been. Recent emails mentioned family visits and a new addition to the family, which gave him much pleasure.

I will miss Peter, but have ongoing memories of the meaningful thoughts and opinions we shared.

Ray Anker



Peter with his latest grandson, Leonardo Peter (Leo), born in 2022

My first memories of Peter were as a fellow potter at Ickworth Wood Fair. His stall looked fabulous, with beautifully made bowls decorated in colourful, intricate designs. The geometric and elephant patterns were my particular favourites. After retirement he devoted much time to the Newsletter and, as his health deteriorated, he just seemed to pour more energy and ideas into each edition.

He was very good at coaxing articles out of people, as well as plugging the gaps himself and, under his editorship, the Newsletter went from strength to strength. What a fantastic legacy for us all to remember him by, but we should also remember him for the courtesy,

fair-mindedness, and generosity of spirit with which he approached this and every undertaking for Anglian Potters. He will be sorely missed.

Nicki Darrell



I find it difficult to process my feelings. The news of Peter's death was a shock. He appears to have been working on the next issue of the AP Newsletter until just before his passing and maybe that gives us comfort – knowing that he was being creative to the end.

Those closer to him know the story of his illness. However, from a distance, he represented a figure of permanence – a friendly presence always available to be sent emails and share thoughts with. Speaking for myself we had a few things in common. We both had experience of editing the AP newsletter, we both



studied at Hornsey College of Art (only a year or two apart). Most of all we were on the same 'wavelength'. He was a 'brother' on the same ceramics journey and though we only met occasionally there was always something to talk about.

I share with all those who knew him more closely and hope you may gain peace in celebrating Peter's productive life.

Harvey Bradley



Elephant plate at All Saints' in 2017

A BIT OF A FIX AT MUNDFORD

For quite some time, Anglian Potters had had a plan to install a permanent, rather large, projection screen high on the main wall of Mundford Village Hall. This would provide the ever-increasing size of audience with a decent view of the live demonstration events being conducted below, in this sizeable hall. After a fair amount of planning, we settled upon Sunday, 27 January 2019 (the day of the AGM) as 'Erection Day'.

A frighteningly-tall scaffold was quickly erected by a comprehensive band of helpful members, but very soon after, it was announced that the AGM was about to start. Almost everyone disappeared into the meeting room next door. Nevertheless, work continued with a handful of keen, non-committee members.

After lots of measuring, drilling, banging and preparations, we were ready for the main event – the hoisting and fixing of the 4-metre-wide screen into place, some 6 metres off the ground. This critical part of the operation could only be achieved by two fearless souls working aloft. But by that time, the appetite amongst the gang to work at such a height had clearly evaporated somewhat.

Just when the operation looked to be doomed to failure, in walked Peter Warren, who was taking a coffee break from the committee meeting next door.

He was asked jokingly if he fancied working at the top of this huge scaffold.

Without hesitation, he replied, "No problem! As long as I get to wear that yellow hard hat and I can get back to the AGM meeting in half an hour!"

Peter was the hero of the day – a cheerful and key factor in the success of the whole operation.

Thank you Peter – Rest in Peace.

JJ Vincent



On top of the world – Peter wears the yellow hard hat



Peter and JJ hoist the new screen into place



Anton and JJ with the new screen – job done!

ALAN BAXTER REMEMBERED

Peter writes: I make no apology for reproducing the article below which was originally written for an EAPA newsletter in 1990 and reproduced as an archive feature in the winter 2020 edition. In writing about Ray Scott, Alan Baxter, who died at the beginning of May, described the beginning of Anglian Potters.

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

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

I had been to Stoke-on-Trent and was returning along the A14 to Ipswich when I deviated to Fordham to meet Ray for the first time at his small works unit. I had heard about his experiments with fast heat. He struck me instantly as a fellow north countryman with his strong accent and his blunt speaking, but generous in conversation about St Helens in Lancashire and furnaces. All the while a kettle was boiling away, sitting on top of what we now know to be one of Ray's Fordham Thermal Systems, fast fire Raku kilns, the smallest baby one. Ray explained to me that this tiny furnace would boil his kettle many times, making loads of tea before losing heat. This was in the early eighties – truly rocket science at the time. The next couple of hours flashed by in chat about everything ceramic. Ray wowed me with his new fast fire kiln, one thousand degrees centigrade in just four minutes. My eyes were glued to the pyrometer as it raced, jet propelled, to 1000° Celsius. I could not believe what I was seeing. It was during this first meeting with Ray that I complained at the lack of any potters' group in the region other than The Suffolk Crafts Society, which was diluted with other arts and crafts.

Unsympathetically, Ray suggested that I stopped grumbling about this and set about creating an association for potters in the region.

For the next week or so I pondered Ray's challenge, playing with possible names and geographic range for a new society. At the time I was part-time lecturer at

the Suffolk College, while working to build my own pottery workshop just outside Ipswich, travelling with my ceramics mostly to West Germany. The name, though grand, that kept coming to the fore was East Anglian Potters Association. This name stuck with little competition and continued to be helpful. The next problem was who and where to meet. While Cambridge seemed obvious, it lay too far to the west so, using a ruler, Thetford presented itself as the mathematical centre of Anglia. The Riverside Centre was picked by Patt, my wife, and me as a suitably-sized centre, if enough interest could be generated from the mounds of envelopes and invitations strewn across our living room carpet.

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

I arrived at Thetford not knowing if anybody had turned up, nor knowing if there would be any interest. Worrying about this, I was having difficulty in finding a place to park, quickly followed by having difficulty in getting into the Riverside Centre which was blocked with groups of chattering people bustling their way into the meeting room, which I had, secretly and foolishly, feared would be too large. I had not prepared myself for this crush of enthusiasm. My delight was considerable when I saw Dorothy and Ray warmly welcoming everybody with a hot drink. All the chairs were taken – only floor squatting space remained. This set the pattern for the future fantastic success of the, now, Anglian Potters: always a friendly and inviting group of people who meet regularly to share the world's oldest culture anew. It's with a heavy heart that I, on behalf of Anglian Potters, raise a

glass to Ray Scott and his remarkable wife Dorothy and say, "Thank you" for all their warmth and most of all their enduring appetite always to be there to ensure the solid future for potters in the region and wider afield. "Cheers" to them both: Ray and Dorothy Scott.

Alan Baxter



Following on from the news of Alan Baxter's death this May, many AP members wrote to Peter Warren with their reminiscences. I remember vividly seeing Alan demonstrate the making of one of his iconic landscape vessels in Aldeburgh in the 1980s. I had recently returned to the UK after years in Iraq working as an archaeologist, specialising in pottery (ranging from 3000 BCE to 800 BCE). To learn more about making pottery, I took up classes at the Country Centre in Cambridge with Judy Ferrari, an inspiring teacher (who has also died recently). She it was who persuaded me to go to Alan's demonstration, and visit one of the early East Anglian Potters Association exhibitions – I joined at once! Thanks to Alan, I have enjoyed many years of friendships and hard work in many different committee roles but always learning new things.

Carolyn Postgate



I was very saddened to hear about Alan's death recently. In 1982, as both my children were now at school, I felt it was time for me to start potting. Alan was the first person I turned to when I looked for pottery courses, close to where I lived. He was from Leek, in Staffordshire, and his impressive landscape pots exuded nostalgia for the moorlands. His palette of earthy colours was both subtle and powerful. I found

his pots deeply moving.

And so I attended a few weekends at his house in Somersham, near Ipswich, and he taught me the basics: how to throw and use metal oxides, amongst other things. Very generous with his advice, he did not keep his experience, techniques and recipes jealously, as some people do. He was a real teacher and his aim was to share and pass on his enthusiasm for ceramics. Both he and Patt were very hospitable.

During one of those weekends, he said to me he was planning to create, for people like myself, a kind of society of potter artists whose role would be to pass on and perpetuate the craft, with talks and demonstrations, as well as hands-on experience and opportunities to exhibit. And so was born East Anglian Potters Association. I was delighted and joined as soon as I could, and have been a member ever since.

Alan was an inspiration for me and many other budding potters, and he will not be forgotten. Thank you, Alan.

Pascale Penfold



I potted twice weekly at The White House Pottery in Somersham (near Ipswich) with Alan for many years. I can't remember the exact years, but from about 1996, or thereabouts, until he and Patt moved to France.

I have so many happy memories of my time there, and made some of my best ever pots with Alan's generous-spirited guidance. Their studio was a haven of tranquility and creativity, whilst also being the cleanest pottery studio I have ever been in! New members were taught at the outset how it was run, and everyone respected the 'clean-up' rules because they loved being there.

As well as helping me to improve my throwing, I learned a lot about glazes and firing from Alan. When I exhibited my pots for the first time, Alan helped me sort and price them. I remember asking him about a rather dumpy blue bowl, and with a wide grin he said, "That one's a stay-at-home pot, Fiona!"

Alan was always so kind and encouraging, generous with his time, and had a very clear vision of what constituted fine pottery. We often talked about the interface between art and craft, and how important it was that the craft of the potter did not die out. This was years before the rise of The Great Pottery Throw Down or Facebook

pottery groups, and he used to worry that throwing was not being taught in many art colleges at that time.

On one occasion, I made a lamp-base from two large pots joined together, using three different clays to create a spiral effect. When I went to collect it, Alan explained how during the glaze firing it had broken into many small pieces – but he had stuck it all back together for me. His words about this have stayed with me, "If you had seen it broken, in your mind's eye it would always be a broken pot. But now you can see just how beautiful it is". It must have taken him hours and hours to glue it carefully all back together, and to me this represents so much about him: what a very kind, thoughtful and generous person he was.

I am so grateful that I knew Alan and Patt for those years. We visited them in France (on our honeymoon!) but sadly through the busy-ness of the following years lost touch. However, my memories of Alan and all that he taught me about pottery, live on.

Fiona Colvile-Bradley

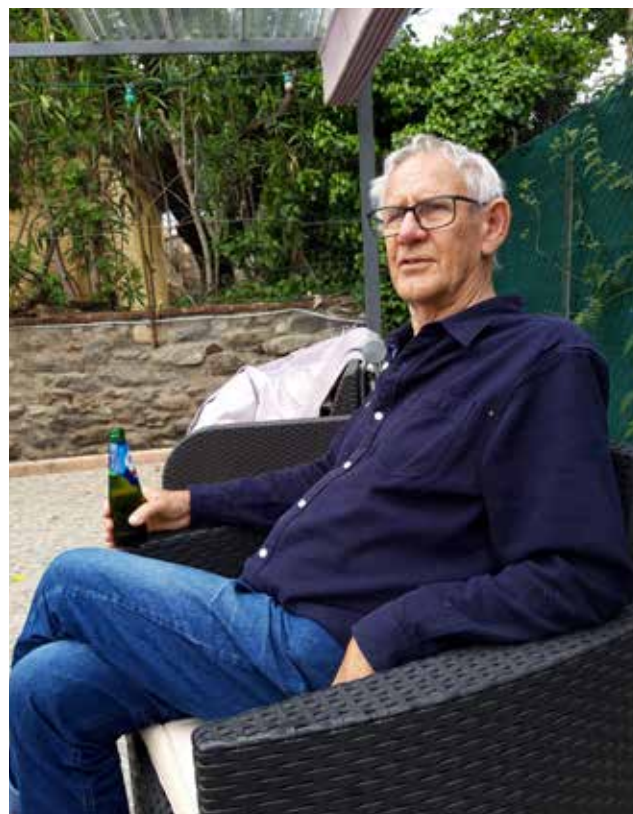


I did not join the association right at the beginning, I became a member a little while later but I was on the committee for a while in the fairly early days. There was a small group who started the ball rolling all those years ago but I'm not sure exactly who was involved.

When I joined the committee Alan was the Chairman and it was his drive and vision which pulled the society forward, ably assisted by Peter Friend, who was I believe the secretary, and Ray Scott, the kiln maker and his lovely wife Dorothy.

Alan was a great Chairman, he was always friendly and encouraging. He was a skilled potter and teacher and did have the teacher's knack of getting the best out of people.

Beryl Hines



Please express my sadness to Patt.

I am one of the original 139 members and owe a lot to Alan for giving me the opportunity to meet other potters and show my work. Alan gave me numerous pieces of advice and always expressed himself in a reassuring way.

His name will live as AP lives.

Maurice Young



It was with much sadness that I read about Alan's passing.

My name is Tony Carter and I was part of those early steps of potters meeting at Alan's house and pottery at Somersham just outside Ipswich, now so long ago.

They were exciting times as no one knew how the organisation was going to grow but Alan and I would talk of all things pottery. I lost contact with the organisation as my own pottery grew and took all my time, but I have recently re-joined and am very impressed with the excellent Newsletter and news of other potters.

Alan used to bring his students to my pottery to see what design and production was like and talk to me about exporting worldwide. I am sure Alan's influence will live long in the memory of all of his students and friends.

Tony Carter

SOME LESSONS LEARNED IN CERAMICS: CRYSTALLINE GLAZES



Different results with the same glaze

Rules and limits are not the same

As a beginner in an adult education class, I was firmly told not to join a moulded handle to a thrown mug. So I did. And it worked, inasmuch as it survived firing in one piece. The mug was still a heavy beginner's effort. After a couple of years of asking myself why my teacher had given me this rule, I concluded that there wasn't just one way that would work, as opposed to other methods that would fail. She was trying to grade the likelihood of success and push me to the method most likely to work.

Potters have been pursuing crystalline glazes for about 140 years. This has led to some guidelines being accepted and published repeatedly but I believe these 'rules' are just what worked for the person offering them up. I need to find out what works for me. I accept that there are limits. It's obvious when I have crossed them because the pot blows up or the glaze crawls off. Finding a limit to what my kiln, my glazes and my clay bodies can do is not going to be where the limit is for anybody else. I don't want to play safe, inside another person's rules. I need to cross the line to find out where the limits are for me, in my kiln.

The perspective twist trick

I find a problem only looks like a problem when I am standing in the wrong place and a shift in perspective usually resolves things. If I can't manage that, then more research and reading around the subject helps.

Control vs acceptance

Crystals seem to grow when a narrow set of parameters are just right. If I hope to build on a previous good result, I need to replicate exactly what I put in the last glaze. Materials have to be evenly mixed using a hand blender (no lumps of material left at the bottom of the tub). I ensure the balance of water to dry materials is similar to last time by weighing a measured volume to check the specific density. I adjust the glaze thickness by flocculating with a solution of Epsom Salts. I brush glaze onto the pot in a standard manner and I fire using my kiln controller to keep the firing

schedule the same.



Before firing

And then I open the kiln.



Kiln opening

At this point I have no control and must move to acceptance. Often half the load will need further work in the form of grinding, etching or refiring. Or some pots may be complete failures. Any little

aspect could be a signpost to a future path.

If I weren't capable of switching from controlling every aspect to accepting tamely what I am given, I would not be able to carry on with these glazes.

Mitigation vs avoidance when facing risks

I love the word 'mitigate'. The insurance world taught it to me, where it means to understand the hazards which may follow from the risks you are taking and to take steps to minimize the possible damage. Avoidance means to understand where the risks are and stay away from them. Avoidance isn't good for a stubborn person like me. Although mitigating does mean I make a lot of glaze catchers and risers and I know quite a bit about patching up kiln damage.

Invest seriously in your own development

Geoff Lee gave a talk at Mundford. The story of his development was one of repeated analysis of where his skills were, where he wanted to be and what training or research could bridge that gap. He invested heavily in time and energy to bridge that gap and move forward.

When I first became interested in making my own glazes, I tried really hard to learn about glaze chemistry from highly regarded books but it didn't click until I invested in a course with Matt Katz. He doesn't think it's the student's fault for not understanding, but the tutor's fault for not finding a way to explain it. After Matt's course, I specialized in crystalline glazes and did a lot of development on my own. There were still some aspects that were not turning out well for me, so I then did specialized glaze courses with Jose Mariscal during lockdown.

What can I pass on to you from what I've learned?

This recipe and method may get you crystals. I have found they are addictive, so am I being kind? Well if you just read this and don't put it into practice, your kiln furniture will be fine. Otherwise I can make no promises.

I adapted this recipe from the late Lasse Östman to use UK materials. You can see the original on the website Glazy.org, it's recipe 3788. You can check www.glazy.org to see how similar the analysis is and if you support Glazy you can get the tools to do this sort of substitution easily yourself.

Materials	(100%)
Flint	37.50
Nepheline Syenite	20.40
Lithium Carbonate	06.90
Barium Carbonate	04.10
Dolomite	04.10
Hymod AT ball clay	09.50
Zinc Oxide	17.50
Metallic Oxides % of the above materials	
Titanium Dioxide	03.00
Yellow Iron Oxide	01.00

To measure this precisely I use scales that go down to 2 decimal places. They are available online. This recipe contains no frit. I don't imagine you would have the right frit on your shelf if you don't already have a use for it. It works with or without the yellow iron oxide, or try a variant with 0.5% tin and 0.2% cobalt oxide instead. It's a glaze that doesn't absolutely need to be on a porcelain clay body. If you use it on something with more iron, the background may take on a different colour.

You don't absolutely have to calcine your zinc, but I do calcine mine to remove the moisture it has picked up from the atmosphere. When I put it through a kitchen sieve and fire to just 700°C, it's amazing how much it shrinks as the water is driven off. This is just one example of control. If I can't get zinc at a consistent dampness, I will make it dry. I can't do the same with flint, as the moisture is supposed to be there, it's stopping it becoming airborne and giving you silicosis. I just have to put up with that. Calcining china clay and ball clay is interesting, though. It can give you another material to play with. If half of the ball clay in the above is from a calcined batch, it can reduce crawling.

If I mixed this glaze up and take 100ml and put it on scales, the scale readout is 150g. This shows the specific gravity I use is 1.5. Brush three coats on to your test tile, fire it propped at an angle on a kiln prop, resting on a catcher or scrap of pot that you don't care about. It will probably run like this, but will certainly behave differently if fired flat. A simple firing schedule in Celsius is:

Stage 1: 0° to 1275° in 8½ hours, (a rate of 150° degrees per hour.)

Stage 2: 1275° to 1275° (Hold at top temperature for seven minutes, just to be sure the glaze on the whole load has melted.)

Stage 3: 1275° to 1110° (Drop the temperature to the crystal growing zone. Timing here depends on your kiln insulation, around 40 minutes.)



Failure



Inner depths

Stage 4: 1110° to 1110° (Hold for 2½ hours)

Stage 5: Stop

This is just one set of options. Almost all of this can be tweaked and it could still



Ready for firing



grow crystals for you, or it might not. At this point I am switching back into acceptance.

Additional Reading

Free glaze chemistry resources

Podcast – For Flux Sake

YouTube – John Britt – playlist
free online glaze course. An
astounding level of thought
goes into each episode

Websites – free tools

www.glazy.org – see also the
YouTube tutorials to get the
best out of this. The help page
also has a detailed listing of
glaze test methods and how to
carry them out.

www.digitalfire.com –
Comprehensive reference
source.

Individual courses – maybe one
of these is the right teacher for
you.

www.suemcleodceramics.com
www.ceramicmaterialsworkshop.com

www.mariscal-ceramics.com
www.bertthepotter.com

Ruth Gillett

Photographs by Ruth Gillett



TEA (*WITHOUT CEREMONY!*) WITH HAMADA SHINSAKU 濱田晋作



Pascale with Hamada Shinsaku

There aren't many advantages in being in a lockdown, but one is definitely the opportunity to look inwards and put one's life in order; well, at least one can start this process with a good tidying up in the studio! So, one morning, as I glanced at the shelves to be sorted out, my gaze fell upon a small object, sitting amongst old pots of mine, and all my good intentions instantly vanished in a Proustian madeleine moment...

The small object in question was a set of two pyrometric cones, commonly used by many traditional potters. However, this one is very special, as it was given to me by Hamada Shinsaku himself during our visit to Mashiko (with my sister-in-law, Akiko,



as guide and interpreter) in April 2008. The fusible white clay is set in a hand-made base where the fingerprints are visible. Now, holding it in my hand, it all came back to me: the small town, home to hundreds of potters, the warm spring sunshine, the smell of wood burning, the cherry blossom, and of course the charming presence of Shinsaku, second son of Shoji and father of Tomoo, of the illustrious Hamada dynasty of Japanese potters.

After studying industrial art at Waseda University in Tokyo, Shinsaku came to Mashiko in 1930 to work with his father. Together they visited the Leach Pottery in St Ives and went to the US lecturing about Tōgei (ceramic art). Shinsaku has since travelled extensively and held numerous exhibitions worldwide. He lives next to his father's Sankōkan Museum, a collection of 'handcrafted art by ordinary people', of which he was the director, until he handed the torch to his son ten years ago.

The place, usually heaving with people, was very quiet at the time of our visit, and so it was such a privilege to be taken by Shinsaku himself around his property, his workshops, and magnificent 8-chamber Noborigama (or climbing kiln), which he fires in spring and autumn, to avoid extreme temperatures. Right by the kiln, which was being packed with row upon row of pots, he plucked a set of used cones and handed it to me with a smile. And then we saw decanting tanks for vitreous clay slips, neatly piled stacks of wood, and of course, lines of bowls drying in the sun...

In his workshop, he sat spontaneously at his wheel and threw a couple of bowls in front of us, using a stick to propel the wheel, just like his father Shoji used to do. Like him too, Shinsaku does not sign his work, but his *yunomi* (tea bowl) comes with its own original box that has the description of the article and Shinsaku's seal inside the lid. Although he follows his father's technique and tradition, and even uses the same glazes, his style is more sober and minimalist; it shows a vigorous elegance and is the epitome of *Mingei* (Japanese folk art). Later, sitting together on our heels on rice *tatami*, we sipped hot *matcha* tea out of *yunomi* made by Shinsaku's own hands, and talked about *Sakura* (cherry blossom).

Considering his incredible international fame, Shinsaku came across as a very reserved person, softly spoken, but with a palpable presence. I since have regretted many times not asking more questions, taking notes and more photos, but the spiritual tranquillity of the place was intimidating and made me feel we were intruding on something sacred. So, I did not come away with a notebook full of technical data but with something like an emotional experience.

Tragically, most of what we saw then was damaged or destroyed by the violent earthquake which caused a terrific tsunami and the death of over 25,000 people in March 2011. Most of the 300 or so studios suffered in some way, with many losing their hand-built kilns and precious stock of pottery. Hamada's own 20-meter-long kiln was smashed with a few thousand pieces inside. In the workshop, Tomoo recalled that his work was, "Falling off the shelves like rain from above". In the museum, about 500 priceless pieces were shattered, including antiques and iconic pots by Hamada Shoji and Bernard Leach.

But, like a phoenix, Mashiko rose from the ashes, and only two months later, most studios reopened for the famous annual Spring Fair to sell salvaged unbroken pots and fresh new work.

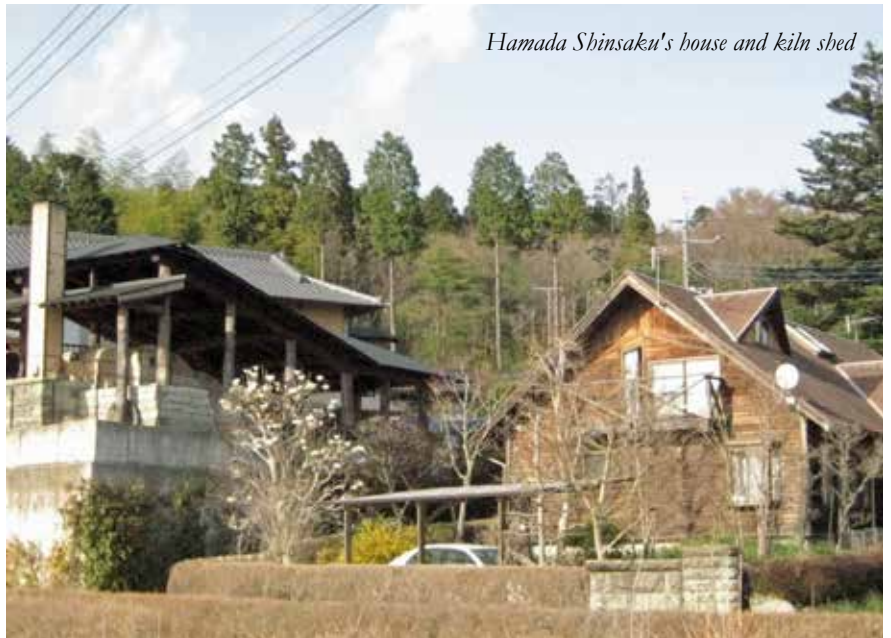
Today, at the age of 93, Shinsaku is one of Japan's living national treasures. He still contributes to Mashiko's tradition of folk functional ware, but Hamada Tomoo's work is branching away from that of his father and grandfather. Its effect is vibrant and *recherché*, with repetitive patterns and enamel decoration. It is losing its functionality and becoming purely decorative. The Hamada dynasty lives on!

What an incredible privilege it was to meet an

exceptional man such as Hamada Shinsaku, and what an amazing journey I have re-lived, with memories conjured up by such a humble object!

Pascale Penfold

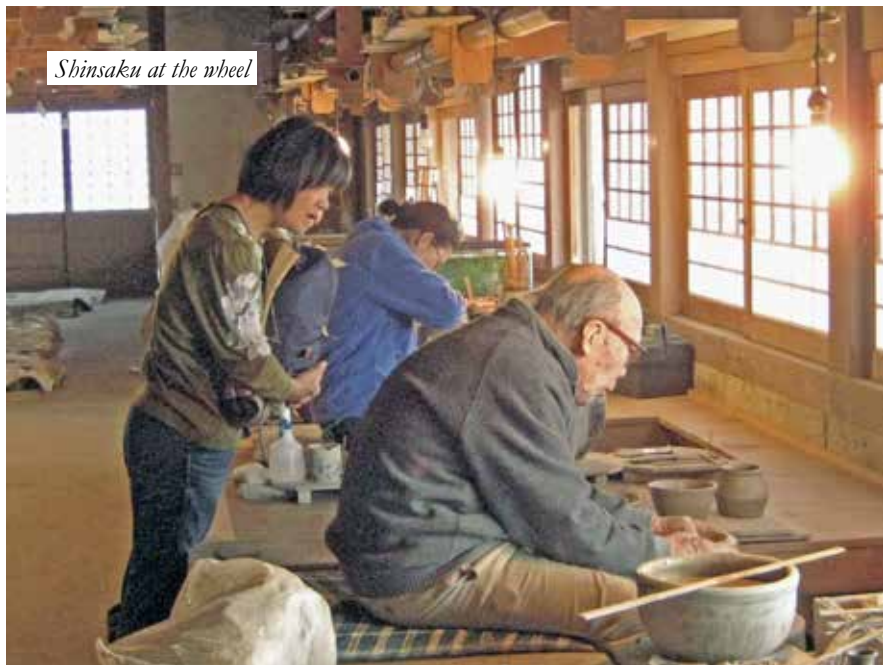
Sankokan Museum



Hamada Shinsaku's house and kiln shed



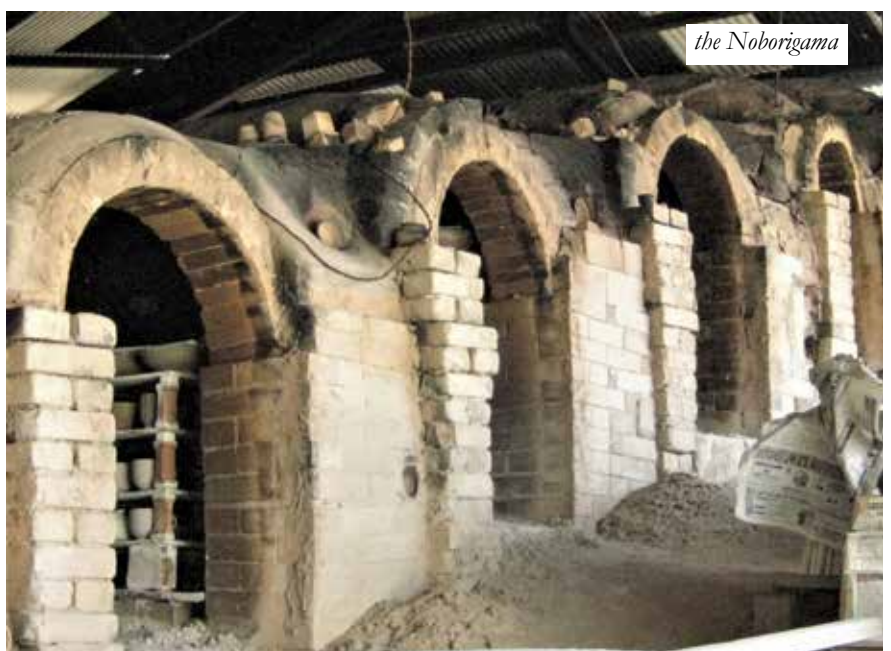
Slip decanters



Shinsaku at the wheel



At the Noborigama



the Noborigama

THE CHAMPION OF THE EARTH – PART 2

A mixed-media case study

Suddenly, at last, it was time to fix the carcase of the Bird of Paradise to Sir David's head.

Steel rods were bent and fashioned in such a way as to form the bird's basic leg shape. These were plugged into specially formed recesses in both the bird and the famous presenter's head. When this was all fixed with builder's anchor resin, these simple, but strong support members were very robust, but certainly did not yet resemble bird's feet and claws.

Some *in-situ* welding was required in order to fabricate the skeletal claws. A flame-proof heat shield material was draped over the great man's haircut as sparks started to fly.

Fashioning these components was a very time-consuming trial-and-error process, slightly similar to the work of a blacksmith, only less beautiful than their very skilled work. Some slightly awkward angle grinding was required to turn the somewhat ugly welds into a reasonable set of joints.

With the steel rods forming the skeleton, it was time to add the flesh in the form of Milliput resin putty. The putty is formed into shape much like a sticky sort of clay. In about three hours the modelling material sets rock-hard and is able to be carved, sanded and further textured to render finer detail.



Leg & feet modelling



Carving of claw details

At this point, I wanted more ostentatious bling on the already noisy, brash bird to further contrast with the calm

and measured delivery of Sir David's informative piece to camera. I decided to 'gild the lily', as it were. The bird's breast and underwing areas were treated with a couple of coats of traditional gesso, as a foundation for a fine veneer of patinated metal leaf. These treated areas were then protected from future oxidation with shellac varnish, as used in French-polishing.



Gesso ground applied prior to metal leaf application



Variegated metal leaf application begins

During the earlier sculpting process, I had pierced as many holes as I could fit in the back of the still-soft-clay bird. I did not have an exact plan for how it would work, but I imagined that the bulk of the 'feathers/strands' would be planted in the form of bundles, rather than singly – that would have been even more OCD!

I was keen to use as much recycled material as possible for the sculpture, to reflect my subject's rightful distaste of waste.

Looking around I am sorry to say that I found we got through a lot of supermarket plastic milk containers. However, these would be perfect for making the upper, white, tail feathers. A discarded yellow builders' plastic bucket was also upcycled to provide the

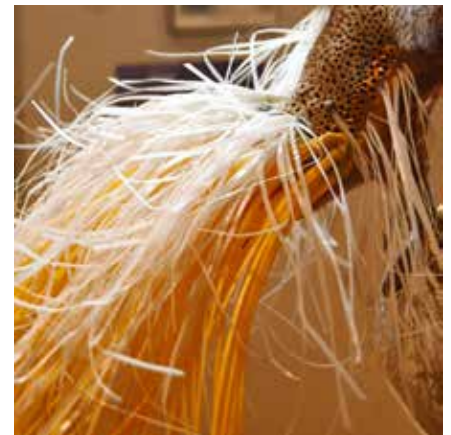
lower strands of plumage. I set about painstakingly cutting and shredding.

In the event, the stiffer, coarser yellow plastic was implanted individually into the ready-made 'pores' on the bird's lower back, whilst the finer, white filaments, provided by the former milk cartons, were bound into little bundles using fine wire smeared with resin adhesive. The numerous bundles were then set into the pre-formed holes and fixed with the same 5-minute epoxy adhesive.

In a process not too dissimilar to wig-making, the best part of a week was spent creating this bird's abundant plumage, before then trying my hand at being an ornithological hairdresser, to produce a sort of 'Paradise Mullet'.



Plumage implant bundles, fabricated from shredded plastic milk bottles and plastic bucket



Implanting of plumage is now well under way

If you would like to see further (and more detailed) photographs, plus find out where this sculpture might make its next home, perhaps you would like to follow my Facebook page for regular updates: www.facebook.com/JJVincentUK

* Many thanks to the wonderful dedication and hard work that Peter Warren invested as Editor of Anglian Potters Newsletter. Thank you, Peter, for the encouragement and opportunity to present my recent articles for publication – RIP Peter

JJ Vincent



The final composition is complete – hooray! Sir David Attenborough adorned with the raucous Greater Bird of Paradise

POTFEST BY THE LAKE

Compton Verney June 2022

Peter charmed me into writing about my visit to the 2nd Potfest by the Lake. I must confess I find it a bit of a daunting task but here goes. The journey from Norfolk to Compton Verney was mostly without any hiccups apart from my sat nav that needs updating; for several miles I was not sure if I was going in the right direction. I followed the sign for Kettering, as that was the only place I recognised, although I had no idea if it was in the right direction as according to the sat nav I was due to arrive in seven hours; eventually the sat nav recognised where I was. I really should think about updating it.

I arrived on the Friday bright and early and full of enthusiasm. The weather was ideal for ambling around the ceramic show. Parking was stewarded and well organised with a shuttle bus for those who find the walk too difficult. I chose to walk carefully, avoiding the sheep poo along the way.

The backdrop of Compton Verney is stunning, especially in the sunshine with its lake, set in 120 acres of beautiful grounds and with the splendid Grade 1 listed house, which serves as a restaurant and hosts exhibitions – also clean accessible toilets. There were a few food vendors but probably not enough as the restaurant was booked up; perhaps this will be addressed for next year's event.

There were large sun canopies with tables and chairs where you could sit and relax, which was very welcoming. This also happened to be the first Potfest I'd ever attended, and I wasn't disappointed.

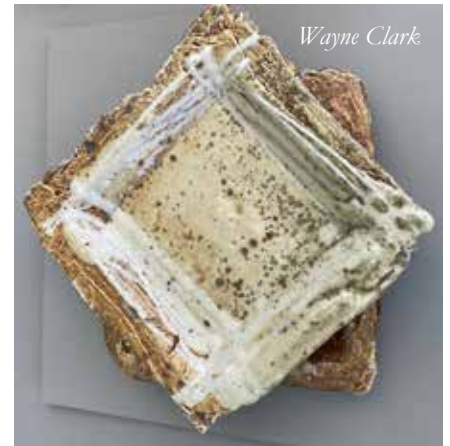
The quality of the ceramics on show was stunning. I caught up with many of the potters who have previously demonstrated for us in Mundford including Rob Parr, Richard Heeley, Ben Brierley, Jon Barrett-Danes, Matthew Blakely and Nicholas Marsh, to name

but a few. I was also able to make a few modest purchases. Wendy Lawrence, Steve Booton and Simon Griffiths, who I have booked to demonstrate for us later this year and into 2023, were eager to know more about AP and what to expect when they visit us. Dates are on the back page of this Newsletter.

It was lovely catching up with potters I'd not seen in a while – in particular Peter Hayes, who I initially booked to demonstrate in 2020 when I visited him in Bath with my grandsons but the date was cancelled due to the pandemic. Unfortunately Peter hasn't been to his beloved India since before the pandemic; India is where he makes his bronzes and he is hoping to spend this winter out there. I've not given up the idea of him demonstrating for us in the future and with the help of his son we just might pull it off one day.

When I visit shows I am always on the lookout for potential demonstrators; this was easier in the past: at Earth and Fire, Rufford and Art in Clay, Hatfield they always put on a good program of demonstrators and speakers, which provided me with a great source of inspirational talent that I could access. Unfortunately Potfest by the Lake does not run such programmes; undeterred, I chat to the potters, some of whom are aware of the outstanding reputation AP has and are eager to engage. Ellen Rijdsdorp from Holland is one such potter who is eager to demonstrate for AP – this will take careful planning and will coincide with her attending Art in Clay, Farnham.

Other potters included Sharon Griffin, who is a figurative artist and works in both ceramics and fine art painting, using the human form to represent internal



Wayne Clark

struggles of love, loss, displacement, vulnerability and strength. I found her work very moving.

James Hake is a potter I have admired since I first came across him a few years ago: his forms and glazes are rich in colour and depth. I particularly like the way he fires his work on its side and the glaze almost runs off the pot.

Wayne Clark makes both functional and sculptural wood-fired ceramics, from coffee cups to large seats and stand-alone sculptural pieces: a very talented potter.

Charlie Collier is a very accomplished thrower who learnt his skills at Whichford Pottery in the Cotswolds and was then invited by Svend Bayer to join the Kigbeare Project. He moved there in 2020 and makes his functional pots for the home and garden.

These are just a few of the potters I hope to invite to AP demonstration days in the future.

This is one show to put in your diaries for next year.

Trudy Staines (Events Organiser)

Photos: Trudy Staines



Simon Griffiths



Wendy Lawrence



Steve Booton



Ellen Rijdsdorp



Peter Hayes



Benjamin Beckett



Charlie Collier



Julian Jardine



Benjamin Beckett



Sharon Griffin



MAKING WHEELHEAD BATTS

Why make pottery wheelhead throwing batts when you can buy them? Well, the simple answer is that I cannot buy the equivalent of the ones that I make. This journey began when I watched a potter on YouTube throw plates and dishes that did not require 'wiring off', a process that, in my opinion, results in too much clay being used and having to be recycled. It also does away with 'turning the base' which is time-consuming and a little tricky on a large plate or dish. I do find a turned base and foot attractive but, as you can see, I can create a delicate detail on the bottom edge of a pot during the throwing.



In response to the YouTube potter I eventually sourced some 6mm Lion oil-tempered hardboard. I have a small, good-quality, bench-top bandsaw, fitted with a 6mm blade and in the first instance I cut the batt by hand. In combination with a battmate I have successfully thrown dishes that have released without cracking or splitting. As



battmate is expensive I have sourced a much cheaper alternative, which is a UCare PVA Chamois.



I found that with a large amount of clay, whilst centring, the hardboard batt

would slide off centre and so I looked at wheelheads made specifically to sit a throwing batt in, with no holes in the centre to accommodate a metal pin.



I was able to upgrade and buy a wheelhead from the company that had manufactured my pottery wheel. This now required a batt that was a perfect circle and was the driving force behind making a jig to use on my bandsaw.



The recess on my wheelhead is 9mm and so I made a 3mm plastic batt to fit underneath my 6mm Lion oil-tempered hardboard. These have been replaced by batts made from 9mm Extreme Mediate Tricoya MDF which has amazing properties.



Plates/dishes can be thrown without the need to 'wire off' and the batts remain flat and smooth.

To make the jig I used 9mm Plywood, PDF for the strip that runs in the groove on the bed of the bandsaw and a spare piece of wood to act as a stop when pushing the plywood into the saw blade.

Having made the jig, feed it into the bandsaw to create the saw slot. At 90 degrees to the end of the saw-slot draw a



line. This is the centre line that the screw is positioned and which is the centre of the batt you wish to cut. My batts are cut square, diagonals are drawn to mark the centre where I drill a shallow 2mm diameter hole to locate the board on the protruding screw. Place it on the bandsaw, push in until the stop is reached, then rotate and cut the circular batt. Job done :-)

Philip Wilks

Photographs, Philip Wilks





AP CLAY STORES

Clay from Valentine, Staffs: an inexpensive source of clay for members. Sold in 12.5 kg bags. Paper clay can be ordered by request, as can any Valentine or Scarva clays. Please contact Denise, Nicki, Chris/Barbara, or Rebecca/Dominic.

STONEWARE

Firing 1150°C-1280°C

Special Fleck	£5.95
ES5 Original	£13.40
White B17C grogged	£7.80
ES40 Handbuilding	£17.35
ES50 Crank	£10.75
V9G Dark	£5.85

EARTHENWARE

Red (1080°C-1160°C)	£4.70
White (1060°C-1150°C)	£11.70

PORCELAIN

Firing 1220°C-1280°C

P2 Porcelain	£13.15
Royale Porcelain	£17.90
Porcelain Grogged	£18.70
Audrey Blackman	£19.65

March, Cambridgeshire

Denise Brown

Grange Farm, Whittlesey Road
Benwick, March, Cambs PE15 0XU
07949 442772
info@denisebrown ceramics.co.uk

Norfolk

Diana Ng

The New House, (3rd house on the right),
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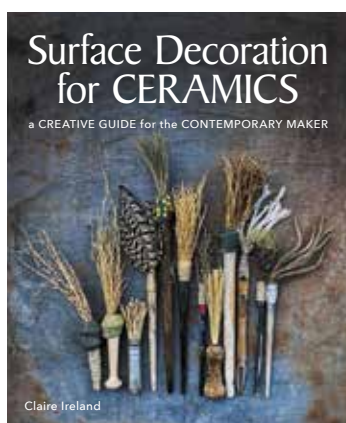
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SURFACE DECORATION FOR CERAMICS

by Claire Ireland
The Crowood Press
ISBN: 978-0-7198-4153-8
£20.00

This practical and beautiful book covers a wide range of inventive, decorative techniques and encourages the maker to be adventurous and experimental. With so many ideas and clear, practical instructions, this book is an essential reference for makers of all levels, with the potential to inspire a new creative body of work and the opportunity to build a repertoire of decorating skills. Over thirty individual makers have generously share their discoveries, ideas and decorative experiments; it is supported by over 450 lavish photos illustrating the techniques and ideas covered. Claire Ireland has spent two years developing and researching a variety of decorative techniques for this creative guide and made over 500 tests tiles and samples, exploring the potential for each method. Claire is a dedicated hand builder and revels in how ideas develop out of the process of making and experimenting with materials and techniques. She is a professional member of the Craft Potters Association and the Society of Designer Craftsmen.

For further information contact: Claire Ireland
www.claireirelandceramics.com claireirelanduk@yahoo.co.uk



ANGLIAN POTTERS AT WALBERSWICK



Photograph: Andrew Eastaugh

The long last weekend of July saw 26 AP members in and around the village hall for a selling show. Now in our 12th year, we combined our skills to sell and party, visit family, stay for a week, have a morning swim and mix with the rich and famous. Keira Knightley called in and treated herself, along with Emma Freud, who adds to her collection each year.

Generally, we had a good visitor turnout from all around the world, with pots going to Australia, America, Europe and the Walberswick Bridge club! A lady from Penrith was most impressed and compared our show very favourably to Pots in the Pens and Pots in the Park. Overall, although visitor numbers were down, we had comparable takings, beating the £8000

target; our 'Everyone a Winner' Tombola paid for the hall rental and expenses.

Special thanks go to Val Rutterford for manning the kitchen, to Lori Cudmore the Tombola Queen, to Andrew Eastaugh, physiotherapist keeping me mobile and to all the rest of the potters who made the show look fantastic.

As a swimmer passed by he asked why there were no Catholics in the exhibition – obviously the cold water had fiddled his spelling.*

Rob Rutterford

*the swimmer read Anglian as Anglican!



Photograph: Andy Wright

Andy Wright at AGM, Mundford



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CAMP 22 – THE INAUGURAL CAMP AT STOKE FARM



After five fun-filled days, the whole camp came together for a group photo

	AM	PM	EVENING
WEDNESDAY	ARRIVAL PUT UP TENTS CAMP INTRO HEALTH + SAFETY LUNCH	SHINO TALK GLAZING INSIDE RAKU TALK 4 PM THROWING + HANDBUILDING ARENE OPS!!	EGG CUP CHALLENGE Introduced by ANDY WRIGHT
THURSDAY	GLAZE TALK Gas reduction + wood glazing THROWING + HANDBUILDING	Complete glazing WOODING + PACKING WOOD KILNS THROWING GAF KILNS 2pm THROWING DEMO RAY RUCKER	EGG CUP CHALLENGE CRAFT AIDS THROWING GAMES
FRIDAY	9am Bush Day opening THROWING WOOD + GAS KILNS THROWING DEMO PACKING DEMO 12pm RAKU SESSIONS	THROWING KILNS DEMO HANDBUILDING VIV BURNS 2pm FRANK LOGAN Claymats Demo 4pm	PIZZA EVENING POTTERY CHALLENGE
SATURDAY	9am Bush Day opening BARREL FIRING ANDY WRIGHT 10am	1 & 2 THROWING SESSIONS ALL BRINGING RAKU AT 3pm PREPARATION FOR CAMP FEAST	CAMP FEAST
SUNDAY	9am Bush Day opening PACK UP TENTS DISMANTLE RACKS PACK UP REST OF CAMP	LUNCH KILN OPENINGS	Thank you to everyone who made Camp happy this year

Never a dull moment!



Photographs by:
Ruth Bowman,
Stephen Cheek,
Susan Cupitt,
Cathy D'Arcy,
Nicki Darrell, Liz
Deeks, Andrew
Eastaugh, Jo
Gearing, Liz
Lewis, Paul Ostro,
Jeremy Peake,
Rachael Pedersen,
Roz Roden, Jason
Root, Trudy
Staines, Andy
Wright



Martin's safety talk on raku firing

Camping in the apple orchards – wasps quite friendly!



Everyone together for evening meals

DAY 2

Dom loading the wood kiln – it was a tough job!

Rachael Ped's bowl



Pots glazed and ready for gas firing

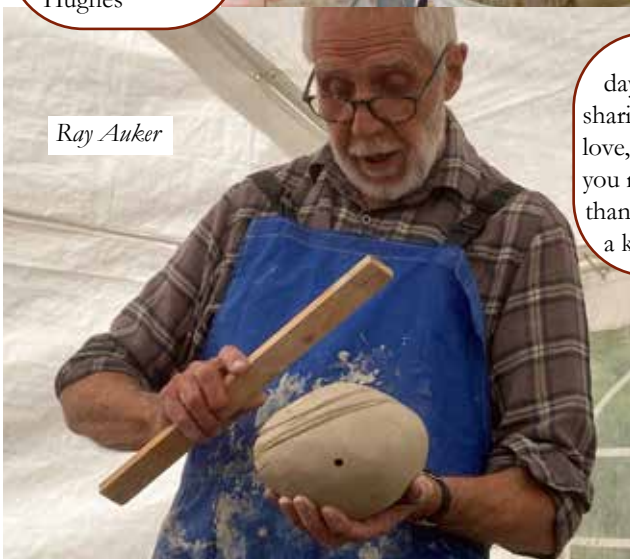


Glazing pots – hoping for those reduction reds!

"Five glorious days learning so much with kind, supportive, inspirational, skilled and entertaining people." ~ Steph Hughes



Ray Auker

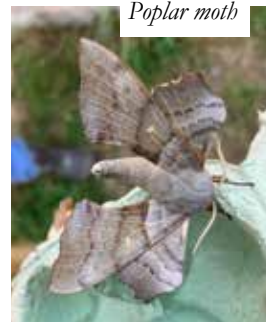


"A wonderful few days with wonderful people all sharing/learning/doing what they love, and it's always satisfying when you manage to squeeze more pots than you ever thought possible into a kiln" ~ Rose Brettingham.

Rose loading the wood kiln



Poplar moth



"I loved being at Potters Camp! So many nice talented people. All friendly and welcoming. The food was very good, catering for everyone." ~ Martin Kerr



Curry Night – with our wonderful camp cooks



DAY 3

Margaret Gardiner



Frank Logan demonstrating obvara, or Baltic raku, an Eastern European firing technique. The hot pot (1650°C) is taken out of the kiln, quickly immersed in a fermented liquid (water, flour, yeast, and sugar) then dunked in water.



Viv Burns



Raku



"The opportunity to spend five days in a field, learning many firing techniques with a group of likeminded potters sounded too good to be true – but it wasn't! I learned so much from the generous attendees who were only too happy to explain things and share knowledge. It really inspired me to be a better potter and try new things." ~ Jason Root



Firing the ovens for Pizza Night



DAY 4

Loaded gas kiln



Preparing pots for barrel firing



"I was a Potters Camp Newbie and I wasn't sure what to expect. I was blown away by the friendliness and generosity of the potters at Stoke Farm. It's a brilliantly organised event and if they run again, I'll be back"! ~ Gill

Judging the egg cups



"Wow what a triumph for the organisers, it was an amazing, exhausting and, at times, overwhelming experience. The Grown-up potters were generous with their time, tools and wisdom and I've come home with new friends and a warm and fuzzy feeling." ~ Jo Gearing



Steph on fire safety duty



Stoking the wood kiln with willow from local cricket bat maker



Camp Feast, with music, Morris dancing and flamenco from Andrea





DAY 5

Unloading the barrels



Paul cooking egg and bacon rolls on the ash burner for breakfast, a great way to start the day



Trudy Staines and Frank Logan picking raffle winners



Andrea wins a raffle prize!



A lovely wood firing



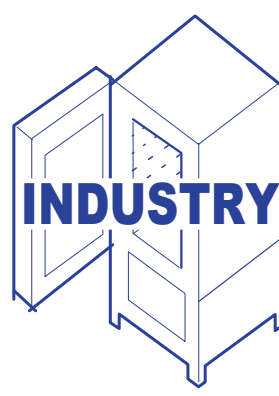
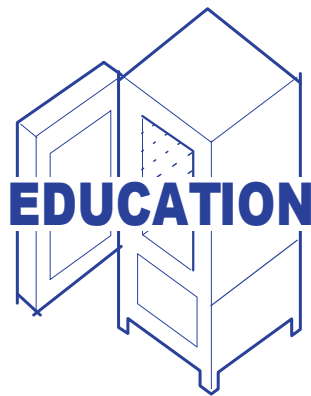
Glorious raku display

Lost at Camp: over the period of camp Andy Wright lost two kilograms which could, of course, prove to be a trip hazard. We asked him, "If we found them could we just throw them in the hedge?" He looked blank and mumbled "All right".
PS The loss of this weight was definitely not attributed to the wonderful caterers. Their efforts were much appreciated. ~ Andy Wright





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Editor

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Wenger Electric kiln 240volt 1 phase (internal measurements 15"w x 18"d x 27"h – £400, including: Stafford controller ST312 + thermocouple, 5 whole shelves, 5 half shelves, stilts

IPCO studio 3000 Electric kiln programmer – £100 including: controller & thermocouple, multi-programme, multi-stage degrees per hour ramp rate with soak.

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Judith Annakie-Eriksen uses pinching, coil building and wheel-thrown techniques to create simple forms inspired by Scandinavian design.



Lucy Fowler's pottery is hand-built using porcelain, paper clay and white stoneware. She uses her own glazes, and her work is influenced by the farm where she lives, the plants, grasses and trees near Bradwell-on-Sea.



Sandra Hall's work is inspired by Alice in Wonderland and mediaeval book illustrations. Her creations in stoneware are quirky – dragons, the Green Man, witches.



Jacquelyn Cade-Bowyer's hand-built porcelain and stoneware paper clay creations are highly intricate and showcase her passion for flowers and gardening.



Ann Hebden's hand-thrown porcelain vessels and gold lustre tiles are inspired by the Harwich coastline, her love of sailing and fifteenth-century illuminated manuscripts.

COMMERCIAL STAINS AND GLAZES – HOW SAFE ARE THEY?

Most potters probably use commercial stains and glazes to some extent – how else can you get those bright reds and yellows with the sale of raw cadmium oxide banned? The paperwork to buy uranium oxide makes selling and shipping a pot to the EU seem trivial by comparison. But how safe are they, both in the studio and, for functional pieces, to the end user?

The short answer is, we don't really know. If you look at the manufacturer's website and the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for the product, they may, at best, give you an indication of the materials used, but not enough specific information for you to make your own risk assessment.

Safe to Use?

Generally, the main hazard when dealing with glazes is silica dust, and if you have good studio practices to keep dust under control then that will generally sort out everything else. Obviously if you use ready-mixed glazes, or the type that you add water to the container the glaze is shipped in, dust management is a lot easier.

The manufacturer may give specific usage instructions, which it makes sense to follow. Also, the SDS will give hazard information but two things must be considered when looking at the SDS: first, the one document covers everything from potters with 500g of a glaze to a large-scale manufacturer using tons of the stuff, and you need to take your level of exposure into consideration when reading the SDS; secondly, different manufacturers take different approaches to the SDS – some are very detailed and include every possible hazard, whilst others give next-to-no information about the product and any possible hazards.

I have seen some US manufactured glazes include some substances (generally biocides) that are banned in the EU and UK due to being a health hazard, but although possibly illegal the risk to the potter is small, due to their low concentration in the glaze, and the limited time most potters spend with their hands in the glaze bucket. So this is not really a matter of concern to us.

A good thing that comes from the US is ACMI certification. The ACMI is an organisation that certifies a wide range of art materials for being safe to use, and they currently have two levels of certification: AP says that the product



doesn't have enough of any substance to give acute or chronic health problems; and CL says that it does contain toxic materials, but the product is safe to use if the instructions are followed. Many ceramic materials manufactured in, or being sold into, the USA will have obtained certification. Of course, you can't tell if the lack of certification means that the product has been submitted for testing and failed, or if it just has not been submitted for testing.

Food Safe?

If you make pots for use with food or drink, then you'll want to avoid any harm to your customers. The requirements here are not the same as in the studio, though.

Some may say that their products are free of lead, and quote the lead and cadmium leaching standard, as if to say that that makes them food safe and legal. But people have had acute toxicity from antimony and copper glazes, and other materials such as cobalt and manganese can cause problems with long term exposure – i.e. over many years. You want your customers to remember many years' usage of your mug because of its beauty, not because it poisoned them.

Glaze manufacturers also tend to forget about the generic legislation on food contact materials, that makes it illegal to sell anything for use with food and drink that will make it toxic, or change properties such as colour, taste, smell, or texture. So no crumbly matt cobalt glazes that give pretty flecks of blue in the diner's mash, takes out their fillings when they bite on them, and contribute in the longer term to organ failure.

But why won't the glaze and stain manufacturers certify their products as being food safe, you may be asking yourself? For two basic reasons. First, they have no control over how you will use their product, or your making and



firing processes, which may be radically different from what they envisaged. Secondly, in any product manufacturing (for that is what your pottery-making is), it is a long-established principle that responsibility for the product ultimately lies with the manufacturer, i.e. you, and not the component supplier, i.e. the glaze manufacturer.

If the manufacturer gives the ingredients, either in the SDS or the product description, this can be helpful. Often, they won't give quantities, but you can choose to avoid glazes that contain potentially toxic components.

Of course, the composition of the fired glaze is not the same as the raw materials, so the ACMI certification won't apply to the fired glaze. It is likely that the AP certificate means that the product will be food safe. However, there are a number of potentially toxic substances that are in a non-toxic compound in the unfired glaze, but this transforms to a leachable, toxic form in the fired glaze, for instance cobalt oxide or manganese carbonate. Lead is another example of this – lead bisilicate is carefully engineered to be safe to use in the studio, but this safety is not carried through to the fired glaze, which may leach lead.

Can you send a pot off to be tested? Well yes, but change the glaze, the clay or the firing schedule and you should really send it off to be tested again. Also, test houses doing leaching tests are set up to test for the substances with quantified leaching limits, lead and cadmium in the UK (for which they'll charge you anything from about £20 each). They aren't set up to test for anything else you may be concerned about, and you wouldn't be able to afford their charges to set up a one-off test for you. And even if they could, would you have the knowledge to be able to decide what leaching level is safe?

Practically speaking, there are two options open to you. First, for those glazes and stains that do list their ingredients, you can decide to use just those that don't have anything potentially toxic in them, assuming you know which materials are on that list. Secondly, and this is the most practical route for most potters, you can subject your pots to both the lemon and the vinegar test for glaze stability (as often one will react with the glaze but not the other). If there is no sign of any degradation of the glaze in either test, then it is probably safe to use in food contact areas on your work.

Summing Up

Commercial products are great if you don't want to spend the time, or don't have the knowledge, to mix your own glazes. But, to a greater or lesser extent, you have inadequate information to make a fully-informed decision on their safety either in the studio or for use on functional ware. The good thing, though, is that if used sensibly they are unlikely to cause many problems – the manufacturers realise that if their customers end up in hospital, they are unlikely to place repeat orders!

Tim Thornton

CERAMIC HELPLINE

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

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

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Photograph: Christine Pike

Helena Mecrow at AGM, Mundford

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Maureen Baker at AGM, Mundford



Photograph: Christine Pike

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Rebecca Appleby

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Wendy Lawrence

Mundford
27 November

Simon Griffiths

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15 January 2023

Steve Booton

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