

Anglian Potters Newsletter



SUMMER 2026



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Cover Photograph

Encaustic medieval-style tiles created by **Karen Slade** using terracotta and slip.

See page 28 for an account of Karen's Demonstration Day where members got hands-on experience of her process.

Photograph: Carolyn Postgate

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Chairman's Letter



Summer is here at last, and the season of ceramics shows has started in earnest. There seem to be shows every weekend, somewhere or other. If you are participating, I hope you have success. If you are a visitor, I hope you enjoy your day(s). Times are tough for everyone, especially for self-employed potters trying to make a living, so, if you can, please buy a pot! (I'm not doing shows this year, so this isn't a plea for me!) The cost of participating in the major shows is considerable, often hundreds of pounds, and if the participants don't sell, they won't go back, and if they don't, there won't be a show!

We will be showing at Emmanuel College Old Library this August, after a break of several years, so there is another opportunity to exhibit and view the work of your fellow Anglian Potters.

We had a good day at the AGM, with a very interesting talk and demo from Kate Reynolds, which will be written up for the next Newsletter. The Annual Report from the committee has been published on the website, but without the financial report. This was delayed, as there were a few issues we needed to resolve with our accountants. These have now been sorted, so information will be available soon. We are in a good position financially, but with the increased value of sales of clay (due partly to volume and partly to the increased prices from our supplier) and two Undercroft exhibitions in the same financial year, our turnover came perilously close to the threshold for VAT registration. This is something we need to avoid, as it would entail us charging VAT on everything (demos, clay, camp, exhibition sales, etc.), and would be a real problem for us to administrate as well as increasing our costs (and your prices at exhibitions). We had a discussion and vote at the AGM, and agreed that we would look at options to give us headroom. Clay sales make up over 30 per cent of our turnover, so we put in place an emergency measure to stop special orders of clay that isn't normally stocked, and to limit the frequency of sales of the maximum of ten bags to once a month per member (see full details on pages 6–7). We're sorry if this causes any inconvenience, but we had to do something as soon as we could. Richard Cranwell has been in discussions with our supplier, and it seems that we may be able to set up a scheme similar to our arrangement with Potclays, where members can purchase directly from the supplier, but still get the bulk discount rates we normally attract. More on this as soon as we have more details.

Camp is rapidly approaching, with quite a bit more to be done to get ready. We have fairly frequent working parties on site, doing maintenance work, and putting improvements in place, but can always do with more help. The core team has been working on the site for six years now, and we'd all like to step back a bit to pass on some of the work. If you have enjoyed camp in the past, or are going for the first time, please think about what you could do to help. If you are able to offer some other activities that could make more use of the site, please let us know. As with all AP activities, camp is run by volunteers, and new blood is needed to make sure it can long continue.

John Masterton



Photo: Karen Marshall

Barrels of fun at camp!

Editor's Notes



The sharp-eyed among you may have noticed the Newsletter looks a little different this issue. Not too different, I hope, but I have given it a bit of a facelift for the summer. I wanted to freshen it up a bit, make it look a little less cluttered, but still recognisably your Newsletter. I hope I've succeeded, but do please send any (constructive) criticism if anything really doesn't work., as I can make a few tweaks.

However it looks, I hope you all will find something of interest in this issue. There is an important update on how to buy clay in bulk through AP on page 6 – so do look at that if you are a regular bulk buyer or are thinking of placing an order. There is news and information about AP events both past and forthcoming, and two of our members Antoinette Hachler and Daniela Pasquini share their experiences of first-time exhibiting at an AP show – this spring at the Undercroft. Diane Silsby, Sarah Rooms Heaphy and Paula Armstrong describe what it has been like participating in some very different pottery events on pages 24, 26 and 32. Anja Penger walks us through the ins and outs of selling wholesale on page 16, Judith Annakie-Erikson shares what she learned about how to do traditional kintsugi on page 20, while Geoff Lee talks about developing colourful slips to survive in a vapour kiln on page 13. There are write-ups of two of our Mundford Demonstration Days on pages 18 and 28. An account of Kate Reynolds's demonstration at the AGM will feature in the Winter Newsletter.

As always, thank you to all contributors. It's wonderful to share in your experiences and expertise, see your work and hear about your successes – and even your failures, as there is always something to learn in the world of pottery. Please keep your submissions coming in. I can accept material at any time, but please note the copy date to make it into the winter issue is October 1. Happy potting, everyone.

Julia Bruce

Public Liability Insurance

Just a reminder that if members are taking part in events wholly organised by Anglian Potters, they are covered by our insurance. Members taking part in any event not organised by Anglian Potters will need to arrange their own Public Liability Insurance. This can be cheaply and easily arranged through the Craft Potters Association, which offers Public and Product Liability Insurance (PPLI). See craftpotters.com

AP Demo Days & Other Events

27th September 2026 – Tom Kemp Demo Day

Tom works with porcelain, throwing large vessels and “writing” on them usually with single brushstrokes. Over the years, he has developed a deep interest in writing as a graphical, physical, real-time manifestation of us trying to make something very precise and meaningful. He also teaches, particularly working with porcelain and developing throwing practice, such as throwing tall. You can follow Tom on Patreon for some excellent teaching videos and see his work at tomkemp.com



Photo: Tom Kemp

25th October 2026 – Ashley Howard Demo Day

Ashley Howard makes wheel-thrown and altered pieces that in many ways shouldn't work. His practice centres on the ritualistic and ceremonial vessel, exploring the relationships between people, spaces and ceramics as material. Trained at the Royal College of Art, he is known for a highly expressive approach to wheel-thrown work, fusing clays that don't traditionally combine and treating pieces as ongoing processes rather than finished objects. <https://www.ashleyhoward.co.uk/>
<https://www.instagram.com/ashleyhowardceramics/>



Photo: Ashley Howard

Rose Brettingham

Emmanuel College: Thursday 20th August to Saturday 29th August 2026. Open every day.

Set-up: Monday 17th, Tuesday 18th and Wednesday 19th, with a PV on Wednesday evening.

Take-down: Sunday 30th August.

Diss: Friday September 11th & Saturday September 12th 2026. To be held as part of the Norfolk Heritage Open Weeks in September. DesignerMakers21 (Diss) will feature the AP event for that weekend in their submissions for the local heritage events.

Ickworth: Saturday 31st October & Sunday 1st November 2026.

Set-up: Friday 30th or early Saturday 31st morning.

Take-down: Sunday 1st November evening or Monday 2nd.

I would like to stage a series of demonstrations (approx one hour in length) which would be wheel orientated and/or whatever volunteers would like to offer, along with “have a go” sessions (approx two hours long) based on hand building – i.e. pinch pots, coiling, sculpture.

Please indicate if you would be willing to help facilitate this, alongside having a stall.

All Saints' Church, Cambridge: Saturday 14th November to Sunday 6th December 2026.

Set-up: Wednesday 11th, Thursday 12th and Friday 13th November, with mulled wine and mince pies on Saturday morning.

Take-down: Monday 7th December. Please note there will be a solo cellist recital on December 6th.

There is a William Morris exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum being held late 2026 and into 2027 which the All Saints Church volunteers are hoping to collaborate with as the church has WM stained glass windows. They are looking into opening the church for talks and tours, which would be an added boost to footfall and facilitate advertising for the AP Christmas Exhibition.

Undercroft 2027: Proposed dates: Saturday 3rd April to Sunday 18th April

Set-up: Wednesday 31st March, Thursday 1st April, Friday 2nd April.

Take-down: Monday 19th April.

Please note, the council are not yet taking bookings for 2027, as they are waiting to hear whether there might be some building work in the Undercroft next year. If the Undercroft is therefore unavailable, I will investigate the possibility of using the nearby St Margaret's Church/gallery instead.

Andrea Morton

Clay in Clare

This will be the third year that Sue Eyre and Diana Kazemi have organised “Clay in Clare”, a hugely successful event which takes place at The Old Goods Shed, Clare Country Park, in September. This year Clay in Clare will run from Thursday, 10 September until Sunday, 13 September (10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.). Seventeen potters will be showing their work, some of whom have participated in previous years, and some new to the event.



Photo: Sue Eyre

Clare sur Mer?! Sue Eyre's jaunty fishermen will be among the work on show at this year's exhibition.



The Old Goods Shed is a wonderful exhibition venue, and the town of Clare has plenty of other attractions for anyone wishing to visit Clay in Clare. Sue and Diana would love to welcome Anglian Potters members and would also be very grateful if you could spread the word about the event. dianakazemi@hotmail.com

Diana Kazemi

Family Advice

Helen Humphreys offered some invaluable advice in a letter to her cousin Jen, who was about to embark on her very first pottery show. Helen shares her insights here.

Dear Jen

It was lovely to see you at RHS Hyde Hall. I'm not surprised that you're thinking of trying to sell some of your pots...it is the next step after you've given enough of them to family and friends. Not like baking where you can just eat what you make!

After 24+ years of making and selling I should be able to give you some tips. I started off with coil pots (still have quite a few in the garden) then discovered making faces and then flatware, which packs more easily than coil pots and is probably more useful!

To avoid getting stressed out with setting up at events, I set up my stand on a table at home and then record it... draw a quick pic so I can compare with previous events... poss OCD. I pack all the initial display pots and bits, cloths, etc. into boxes. That way nothing vital gets left at home! Then I pack 'back up' pots in other boxes that'll go under the table.

Pricing is always tricky! I think when you're starting out it's best not to over price as you need feedback and if the price is too high and you don't sell, you won't know if it's the price or the pots putting people off. I think it helps if the prices are visible, then people know if they can handle the pots or not.

I try to give people space to look at my stand quietly and take it all in, without making them feel they must interact with me. This comes from how I feel when I go to events and want to look at someone's work. I find I can't do that when someone is watching or talking to me. I have folding boards to 'hide' behind, but shelves or a screen would work...or just experiment with where to put yourself and see what happens.

You'll know about colours and arrangements from your exhibition experience at work. There are lots of other things I can suggest, just ask.

Let me know how it goes.

Love Helen xx

Clay Stores and Ordering

END OF VALENTINE LARGE SPECIAL ORDERS

The growth of AP membership, good performance at selling exhibitions and the successful operation of AP clay stores has pushed Anglian Potters Ltd. overall financial turnover to a point that could soon require us to register for VAT. This would place an intolerable burden on our finances, and the entirely volunteer support we rely on to run AP, and needs to be avoided at all costs. Therefore turnover must be reduced quickly. A very large part of that turnover is clay sales, particularly larger "Special Order" clay sales, which have grown over the past few years, partly due to the rapid increase in clay prices from our supplier.

The problem was discussed at the AGM on Sunday 17 May and the steps we are reluctantly taking to reduce turnover were approved there. With immediate effect, we will limit all Special Orders to CLAY ONLY and to a maximum of five bags (62.5 kgs) per member. No slips or other liquid items.

The system of Special Orders has been in place for some years, allowing AP members to ask a clay store to add any clay other than the twelve "stock clays" normally available at our stores to the next regular order, provided that the member immediately collects and pays for that special order as soon as it arrives at the clay store. This system has now grown beyond its originally intended use and is why we now need to reduce it considerably.

To counter this loss we have started negotiations with Valentine Clays with a view to creating a generous discount purchasing scheme similar to our Potclays one (see details opposite) and hope to soon be able to offer all members a direct purchasing scheme from Valentine Clays that will replace the Special Orders purchasing process.

The number of bags of any one type of normal stock clay that any individual member can purchase from an AP clay store remains at ten but that standard will also

have to be restricted to ten bags in any one month and may have to be reviewed again as we see how sales go.

For the time being, those individual members who have been using the Special Orders process for larger quantities of clay will now have to observe the five bag limit and order larger quantities direct from Valentine Clays themselves.

The AP clay stores, and the volunteers that run them, were originally set up to provide all individual members with access to a good range of twelve stoneware, earthenware and porcelain clays at a discounted rate from Valentine Clays of Stoke-on-Trent. The discount is based on their 1000kg price, therefore whenever we place an order it must be for 1000kg or more. The cost of transport is split between the number of bags of clay ordered, thus providing another considerable saving to individual members over ordering direct from Valentines as a private individual.

All AP members should be aware that Anglian Potters Ltd. has a discount purchasing arrangement with Potclays of Stoke-on-Trent (see opposite). This applies to all products to be found on the Potclays website online shop, from all clay types and raw materials to glazes, tools, equipment and even kilns. The discounts are considerable. All orders must be placed through the AP Clay Store Coordinator (currently Richard Cranwell). They cannot be placed direct to Potclays. All orders are delivered direct to the purchaser. A similar process with Valentine Clays would obviously be a good replacement for all those members who were users of the revised Special Order process via our clay stores.

Full information about using this Potclays Virtual Clay Store can be found on the AP Website or by contacting Richard Cranwell at the details opposite.

Richard Cranwell

Left: Valentine Clays is a family-owned clay manufacturing and supply business that's been in operation in Stoke-on-Trent for almost 50 years.

Above right: A substantial Potclays delivery in Richard's garage. One tonne of clay is 80 bags – there's about half a tonne here.



Photo: Richard Cranwell

Potclays Discount Offer: The AP Virtual Clay Store

Under arrangements offered to us by Potclays of Stoke-on-Trent almost three years ago any individual Anglian Potters member may take advantage of any size of order at a discount (40% on clays and between 10% and 20% on raw materials, glazes, tools, wheels and even kilns).

To date more than 350 such orders have been placed by AP members using the process detailed in the panel.

The savings to AP members are significant. These discounts apply to all items shown on the Potclays online shop. To obtain these discounts all orders must be placed, in an email, to Richard Cranwell via what we are calling the "AP Virtual Clay Store".

Your order will be delivered to your door as a courier parcel delivery or a Royal Mail delivery. A scale of courier charges will apply, dependent on the weight of the order and the delivery location. Orders over 30kg will normally be delivered by lorry as a palletised kerbside delivery. (See the Delivery & Returns section of the Potclays website).

The process to follow for individual orders is outlined opposite.

Please note that the discounts are NOT available if you contact Potclays direct. You must follow the process described here and email orders to Richard.

Richard's contact details for the AP Virtual Clay Store are as follows:

Mobile: 07572 545690

Landline: 01480 404785

Email: richard@cancroft.net

POTCLAYS ORDERING PROCESS

- Only paid-up Anglian Potters members may purchase from Potclays in this way.
- View the Potclays Ltd website shop at: <https://www.potclays.co.uk/> and decide what products you would like to buy.
- Make a list of all the items including the name, reference number, weight/size and quantity required.
- Email that list to Richard Cranwell (see contact details below) and include your name, Anglian Potters member number, delivery address and a contact phone number.
- Richard will verify that you are a paid up Anglian Potters member and then pass the order to our dedicated contact at Potclays.
- You will receive an email from Potclays with a discounted (no obligation) quotation. The quotation will include cost, VAT and delivery for the items you have ordered.
- If you are happy with the order quotation reply to the dedicated contact on the number or email supplied confirming that you want to go ahead with the order.
- You will then receive an invoice with information on how to pay.
- Once the invoice is paid the items will be delivered to you.



Photo: Valentine Clays

Undercroft, Norwich

Our curators, Liz Chipchase and Tracey Parsons, created another visually outstanding display for our spring exhibition at the Undercroft, spending many hours organising the excellent array of pots from the members participating. The exhibition was perhaps quieter than previous years and after an initial buzz, footfall and sales dropped off. Total takings in the region of £1,800 were down on previous years. We designated a specific area to Paddy Dean, and her pots helped a great deal in supporting the takings. A generous donation from the sales in her name was made to Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Thank you all for your contributions, in pots, time and hard work.

Andrea Morton



Helen Humphreys

Photos: Andrea Morton, Trudy Staines



Diana Ng



Helen Farmer



Margaret Hope



Io Arnold



Paddy Dean



Ian Vance



Trudy Staines



Sarah Cannell



Phil Stearn



Rosita Matyniowa



Peter Deans



Judith Annakie-Erikson



Sheila Madder



Jeremy Clark



Ros Arrowsmith

First Impressions

TWO FIRST-TIMERS SHARE THEIR UNDERCROFT EXPERIENCES



Photos: Trudy Staines, Andrea Morton

Mud, Time and Attention: Reflections of a First-Time Exhibitor

As a first-time exhibitor, I found the exhibition both rewarding and thought-provoking. My perspective is shaped more by exhibiting, helping during installation and take-down, and conversations with visitors and fellow makers than by spending long periods stewarding the exhibition itself, but the experience gave me a valuable insight into both the practical and public-facing aspects of the event.

One of the most positive aspects was the diversity of work on display. It was encouraging to see such a wide range of approaches to clay brought together in one place, from functional ware through to more decorative and sculptural work. As a new member, I found myself repeatedly struck by the thought that every piece represented countless unseen hours spent in dialogue with the same material. There was something both inspiring and oddly comforting in seeing so many different responses emerge from mud, time and attention. The exhibition showcased the breadth of the membership and offered visitors many different points of entry into clay and its possibilities.

Equally, it made me reflect on the challenge of presenting such a broad range of work to an equally broad range of visitors. Some people arrive looking for a particular object, while others

come to browse, learn, or spend time with the work itself. Functional, decorative and more sculptural pieces can each invite different kinds of attention, and I found myself increasingly aware of the many ways a visitor might move through the exhibition: considering the practical qualities of one piece, the beauty of another, and the ideas, or questions raised by a third. Bringing these different experiences together within a single exhibition feels both one of its challenges and one of its strengths, and made me reflect on how space, placement and relationships between works shape not only what is seen, but how it is encountered.

Pacing on the opening night, I found myself caught by individual pieces that remained with me long after I moved on, and others where I found myself slipping into a more comparative mode of looking, particularly when encountering larger groupings of similar work. This was not a reflection of the quality of the pieces themselves – often quite the opposite – but it did make me reflect on how display can influence the way visitors distinguish, remember and ultimately decide if a piece resonates enough with them to take it home.

As a newer member, I was often encountering both the work and its maker for the first time. I occasionally found myself searching for maker information, and conversations with fellow exhibitors suggested that visitors were often curious to learn more

*Above: The Undercroft's exhibition space.
Left: An example of Daniela's work on show.*



about the people behind the work that had caught their attention. It made me aware of how valuable it is to support the moment when curiosity first arises, helping visitors move easily from a piece of work to the person behind it. I wondered whether there might be opportunities to make those connections more immediate and accessible, carrying their interest beyond the exhibition itself while still maintaining the collective spirit of the show.

One thing I particularly valued was meeting other makers. I was grateful for the generosity shown by several established members, particularly those who offered practical help and encouragement. At the same time, I occasionally found it difficult to know where I fitted within the wider group. Some of the most memorable encounters came with other first-time exhibitors. We seemed to find one another quite naturally, recognising a shared unfamiliarity before exchanging a word. Those conversations quickly became a source of encouragement and camaraderie. It made me wonder whether there might be opportunities to help first-time exhibitors connect more easily with longer-standing members, strengthening the sense of community that already exists within the organisation.

My First Anglian Potters Undercroft Exhibition



Photo: Antoinette Hachler

I recently took part in this year's Undercroft exhibition. Having only started making pots in 2022, this was my first-ever selling show!

Keen to support Anglian Potters (AP), I signed up to help on the first of three set-up days. I arrived a little late and missed the initial introductions, which was a shame. However, having attended last year's Potters Camp, it was wonderful to find some familiar faces to greet.

The atmosphere was very much "muck in and get on with it", assembling display units and painting pedestals, blocks, and panels. It was clear that this is a well-rehearsed operation with little talk but plenty of action. I am a big fan of this participatory approach.

Although I did not make it to the private view, picking up my unsold pots on the final day gave me opportunity to admire the beautiful display the team had created.

The unusually cold weather also formed part of many conversations throughout the exhibition. While this was naturally beyond anyone's control, it served as a reminder of how much atmosphere, comfort and seasonal conditions can shape the experience of an event, influencing not only visitor numbers but also the amount of time people are willing to spend with the work.

One of the lasting impressions I took away was that the exhibition serves several purposes at once. It is a place to buy work, certainly, but it is also an opportunity to encounter the breadth of the membership and the many different relationships people have developed with clay. As a first-time exhibitor, I found myself increasingly interested in how an exhibition can communicate not only individual pieces, but something of the community and shared commitment that sits behind them. In hindsight, I came to see the installation and take-down in a similar light; beyond the necessary practicalities, they offered their own opportunities for conversation, exchange and connection. For me, some of the most memorable moments came through encounters and discoveries that extended beyond the objects themselves.

Daniela Pasquini

HOW IT WORKS

For members who haven't participated yet, here is a quick guide to how the exhibition runs:

Low costs: Sellers pay a £25 entry fee and can submit up to 25 pots.

Fair commission: AP takes a 30% commission on sales. This is considerably less than commercial galleries, and the money goes straight back into supporting AP activities.

The space: The vast, below-ground gallery is divided into two sections. Behind the stalls, each exhibitor has a designated storage area. The team uses this stock to replenish the displays as items sell.

Shared duties: Every exhibitor helps with set-up, take-down, or invigilating. On drop-off and pick-up days, artwork is carefully checked against a master list.

Smooth wrap-up: At the end of the event, participants collect unsold work, and payments are deposited directly into exhibitors' bank accounts.

A spurred-to-action success

I highly appreciated AP's advice to print business cards and upload a potter's profile to the website. Taking part in the exhibition definitely spurred me into action. I wasn't sure what to expect sales-wise, so I was pleasantly surprised to discover that one-third of my pots had sold! If you haven't exhibited yet, I highly recommend getting involved next time. It is a brilliant, supportive experience!

Antoinette Hachler

Hyde Hall



Photos: Ian Vance

This year marked the tenth anniversary of our show at the wonderful Royal Horticultural Garden at Hyde Hall in Essex. Back in 2015 the events team at the garden contacted us to see if we would be interested in exhibiting there and, because we had no shows in Essex, we said "Of course!" At that time they had a lounge in a traditional timbered barn and a marquee next to the restaurant available for organisations to use. We went for the marquee as it had better light. So the first event that we did was in May 2016. It was successful, but the marquee was a bit dour in appearance and one year we had a massive thunderstorm, which was exciting! Little did we know then that the RHS had grand plans to improve the accommodation and the restaurant at the top of the hill. They commissioned one of the leading UK architectural practices – Cullinan Studio – to do a masterplan and the detailed designs of "Hilltop". This complex consists of a restaurant, a display hall, toilets and education facilities. The display area is truly spectacular with a high vaulted structure and lots of light, surrounded by patio and deck areas and adjacent to their famous dry garden. When the new hall became available we were the first organisation to use it in 2019 and have continued to



do so each year since. It is very convenient next to the restaurant and the loos, but it is at the top of the hill, as the name implies, and walking back up after taking the car back down to the car park is a fair hike! We can fit in about 22 tables and there is electricity to use all across the floor and walls.

On a busy weekend the garden attracts over 3,000 visitors a day, if the weather looks set fair, and most of these find their way up to see us on top of the hill at some point or another. In recent years the RHS has designated the May Bank Holiday as a "Craft Weekend" and they have another commercial show in marquees near the entrance and car park. This encourages visitors who are interested in craft to choose this particular weekend to come. Some of our members choose to use this facility instead of exhibiting with us – we each tell everyone we talk to about the

other part of the show. So, lots of pots, a delightful display hall, a nationally famous garden and plenty of punters! What's not to like! Looking forward to doing it all again next year and many thanks to all the AP members who take part and to the Exhibitions team with Andrea Morton for organising it all.

Ian Vance



Top: AP members all set up in Hilltop Hall.
Centre: One of Ian's pots basking in the sunshine in the Dry Garden.
Left: The old marquee.

Salt and Soda



Gas cylinders waiting in line!

Much fun was had at the spring salt and soda firing at Jerry's place in Shotley. Although it was a little chilly and damp everyone stuck it out and we had a great kiln opening and tea party to celebrate Paddy Dean's life the following Friday.

Nicki Darrell

This was my first salt/soda firing, so I was very grateful for the welcome and instruction from Nicki, Stephen and Liz. When I took the plunge to exhibit at Anglian Potters, Hyde Hall, some years ago, Paddy came round to introduce herself and talk to me, before anyone else. Very happy memories of then and the firing.

Ann Hebdon



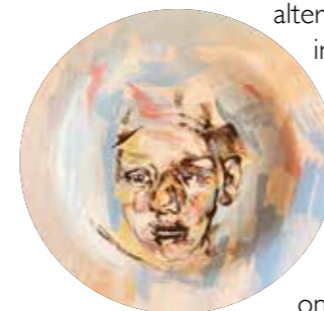
Clockwise from top left: Salt kiln fire box; vapour from the salt kiln; Liz Lewis measuring out salt; Some ceramic tributes to Paddy by Helen Humphreys, Liz Chipchase and Viv Burns, fresh out of the kilns; Ann Hebdon and Stephen Meek salting the kiln.

Photos: Ann Hebdon, Anne Milnes, Tracey Iutt, Julia Bruce

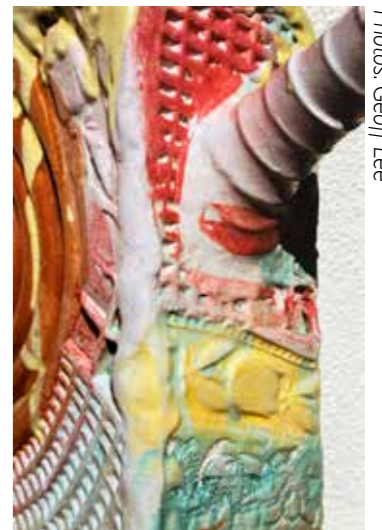
Reactive Slips and Glazes

My current research is concerned with potential relationships between drawing and ceramics. The most recent focus has been on the benefits of surface and texture – ceramic materiality as opposed to a sheet of white cartridge paper. Much of the time has been spent in concocting reactive slips and glazes in the hope of producing interesting combinations of colour and texture. As pure experiment I've also tried alternative liquids when mixing ingredients: bleach, vinegar and Dettol (no significant changes or benefits evident there). Illustration 1 (left) is a straightforward brush drawing with slips. The intention is to enhance this once I've identified suitable glazes.

Illustration 2 (right) is a collage combining these slips, drawing, screen prints and ceramic fragments. These slips have been used on a variety of bodies ranging from Earthstone Original to crank and fired in oxidation, reduction, wood, smoke and raku



kilns. At the recent Shotley salt firing I took several pieces with a range of brightly coloured slips. These were chosen for colour rather than texture as I didn't want to risk any of the crusty slip surfaces splintering onto other people's work. The usual salt colour palette tends towards the subdued, blues, browns, black, green (plus orange of course) but my slips survived the firing with colour intensity intact. Illustration 3 (right). This could be something of a breakthrough as brighter colours seem to disappear up the chimney in a salt firing. Up to this point my approach has tended to be spontaneous, but something more analytical is now being called for. I suspect that the barium and lithium slips offer most promise, and if there are interesting developments, I will share them with you.



Photos: Geoff Lee

Geoff Lee



Chris Sharp
07730 595967
apotterseengineer@gmail.com
www.apotterseengineer.co.uk

Custom slip moulds

Kiln & wheel servicing and repair

Trimming and carving tools

I'm Chris, a mechanical engineer turned potter's engineer. I've been helping my partner at Weston Cottage Pottery on her ceramics journey in recent years and am now offering my technical services to the wider community. Whether it's support with your kiln/wheel, supplying high-quality tools, designing and supplying custom slip moulds or anything else you need, I'm here to help!

Slip moulds

Either designed to your specification or my designs are available to purchase.

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Kenninghall Ceramics Show

Kenninghall Community Pottery delivered an ambitious week-long show: LIT - stories' light>fire;wild} at the Arts Centre in Wymondham 19-24th May. It followed on from GRIT, a successful first show for the fledgling studio in 2025.

The pottery opened in 2024 following closure of Wensum Lodge Adult Education Centre in Norwich. A group of disappointed potters took on the lease of a small commercial pottery at Kenninghall. Under the stewardship of Studio Director Dawny Christien it has grown into a dynamic and thriving artistic community. On display were selected ceramic works from members, students and associates, including five Anglian Potters. The community of around 40 practitioners showcased the exciting mix of styles and techniques practised at Kenninghall. It is clear from the diversity and high quality of the exhibits that the ethos of the studio encourages ambition, experimentation and collaboration.

The work was imaginatively and skilfully curated by sculptor Dr Andrea Hannon. An antique table full of mugs made by members raised the funds to pay for the venue promising a variety of exhibits to suit all tastes.

Visitors were led on a journey through space and time celebrating the versatility of the medium. First came precision-turned geometric forms; left unglazed these appeared both modern and antique. They were complemented by the recreation of a medieval

gotch, a large ale jug used by bellringers during the 17th century at Hinderclay parish church. Inspired by the rare original, now stored in Moyses Hall Museum, the 21st-century copy substitutes the names of ancient ringers carved into the gotch with the names of the current ringers, and will replace the original in the church.

Photos: Chris Whiting



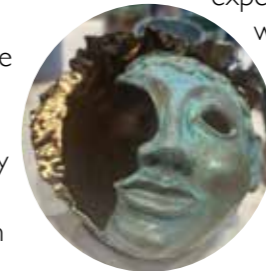
Karen Calton's reproduction gotch.



Andy Gladman's unglazed work, Clare Stringer's spiky pot and Caroline Whiting's gilded mask.

More unglazed work showed vessels of layered black and white clays and innovative Japanese influenced bowls. A selection of glazed pieces derived inspiration from organic and skeletal forms. Imaginative figurative art both in sculpture and as decoration included evocative traditional and abstract figures and forms, from a mythical Roman god to a tattooed punk. Meanwhile finely thrown double-walled vessels, etched golden lustre bowls, bright pots bristling with spikes or in experimental glaze combinations sat alongside practical thrown and hand-built tableware in a wide variety of styles.

The studio facilitates members' experimentation, whether with shapes and techniques or surface



decoration. Commercial glazes and underglazes are used, but members have experimented and developed their own glazes, some of which have become studio favourites.

On the walls around the exhibition descriptions of the creative processes added to visitors' understanding of the pieces on show. The sketches, photographs and personal testimonies revealed a vibrant community of likeminded artists and makers.

Caroline and Chris Whiting

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STUDIO LINE
MADE IN BRITAIN
BY MILTON BRIDGE

Speedball

Clay College Graduate Show

Clay College Stoke was founded in 2017 by Lisa Hammond MBE and Kevin Millward, with the mission to teach practical pottery skills to an international standard and aims to protect and contribute to the renowned status of British studio ceramics. Their Graduate Showcase 2026, featuring 14 emerging makers at the forefront of the next wave of ceramics in the UK, opens at the historic heritage site at Middleport Pottery, Stoke on 18 July. A specially curated capsule collection, on show and to buy, runs at The Department Store, Brixton 31st July to 2nd August 2026.

Clay College Graduate Showcase
Featuring 14 Emerging Makers

Opening Weekend
July 18-19
Middleport Pottery
Stoke-on-Trent
Sat-Sun
11-4pm

London Show
July 31 - August 2
The Department Store
Brixton
Fri-Sat 10-5pm
Sun 10-4pm

www.claycollegestoke.co.uk

Selling Wholesale

A POTTER'S VIEW

Have you ever wondered about selling your work wholesale? Having spent the last eight years as a wholesale trader, I thought I'd share some of my experiences in the hope members might find it useful. In this article, I will explain:

- what selling wholesale actually means
- how you get started
- what are the benefits
- what the negatives.

Some galleries, as well as department stores and larger organisations, such as the RSPCA, RSPB, RHS and National Trust, buy craft products for their shops on a wholesale basis – although the latter organisations are far too big for me with my one-woman enterprise... The price you can get for your work is roughly your selling price, divided by 2.4. This will result in the same selling price with 50% for the gallery and 0.4% for the VAT the vendor might have to pay. If that sounds a lot, remember that galleries and shops need to pay rent, staff, advertising, etc. Although I admit that I never quite got why I had to cover the 0.4% VAT, which the gallery has to pay. Heyho!

Don't undercut your wholesale galleries, it is not good if customers can buy the same item cheaper off your website. The gallery won't re-order! I'll say a bit more about pricing further on...

I started my wholesale journey in 2018, relatively naively I would say. I booked a small stall at the British Craft Trade Fair in Harrogate. There was plenty of good advice upfront on the website, which I tried to follow, and off I went in good spirits and high hopes. The stall was quite expensive, the venue relatively posh with carpet on the floor and a shell scheme with name plaques above every stall. It certainly looked the part!

The first person visiting my stall told me my prices were too high. He couldn't possibly sell my work in his gallery with the mark-up he would have to put on it! Off to a good start then! Thankfully, my neighbours told me that this chap was notorious for his remarks and I shouldn't worry. This is an important lesson: listen to your neighbours/fellow craftspeople. They are all in the same boat and they probably have much more experience!

I think I went away with two orders, which is good, considering that one of the points the organisers made very clear was that you might not get orders on your first outing because people want to see whether you come back and are consistent with your work

Collecting gallery contacts/business cards is probably as important as getting orders. And the effort doesn't

finish after the show. Keeping in contact with galleries, whether they have ordered or not, is really important. They do need reminding that you exist.



Photos: Anja Penger

My stall at the BCTF in 2021. I was lucky in that the person next to me had to cancel, so I could spread out a bit, which is why it looks a bit sparse.

I went back the following year and picked up more orders from both new and existing galleries. The event was cancelled in 2020 owing to Covid, but I went back in 2021, which proved my busiest year in terms of orders. Unfortunately, the organisers of the BCTF in Harrogate gave up their business after the 2021 show, so a team of craftspeople got together with the organiser of an Art/Craft show in the cattle pens in Skipton, and they founded an "alternative" craft trade show. Artisan Made has now been going for four years, and I have attended three shows. This venue is not posh and the stalls are not expensive. The most important thing is the presentation of the work, which is the artists' responsibility. And above all the cooperation among the artists and the active involvement of the participants in inviting galleries, etc.



The cattle pens in Skipton are the polar opposite to the posh stands in Harrogate!

While they can be useful, you do not have to attend a craft trade fair to start selling wholesale. You can identify galleries and find their contact details by simple searches on the internet. Email is the preferred method of contact. Telephone calls during opening hours can be disrupting and turning up unannounced with samples of your work is rarely a successful approach. Have a look at the gallery/shop and see whether your work would suit the general display. For instance, I have a range called "Ocean" because of the blue/green glazes I use and the textured appearance of the work. These always appeal in galleries near the coast with lots of tourist footfall.



This small, straight-sided vase in my "Ocean" range is a best-seller.

I also take a collection of different coloured poppy seed heads, again to give an idea of the variety and a possible display in a gallery environment.

You need to show the wholesale prices; you can indicate the RRP, but most people are able to work that out (times 2.4) although providing it can be helpful to a potential buyer. Consider whether you want to have a minimum order. I don't have one because I think galleries need to test whether the work sells in their shop.

In general, there are two main periods, when galleries are likely to place orders, in March/April when gallery owners are thinking about their summer display, and from September onwards for Christmas. My galleries tend to order at any time and especially for the Christmas orders. I do send out reminders, so they do not order last minute.



If you want to go down the wholesale route, you have to decide what kind of work you want to offer. I think it needs to be easy and reliable to produce over and over again. You might find yourself making mugs for two weeks, because you have a large order to fulfil. Be realistic with your lead time. Do not put yourself under too much pressure. Gallery owners are aware that hand-made takes time.

Pricing is probably the most difficult part of the whole enterprise. You need to be aware of your cost price – the actual cost of making the piece: materials, firing, packaging and posting (it's amazing how much time it takes to pack ceramics securely!), rent on the premises, insurance, etc. and last, but by no means least, your time/work. It's vital to **give yourself a salary**.

According to a seminar I listened to, 10% on top of the cost price is the minimum top-up for the wholesale price, 20% is better; I am aiming for 30%. Multiply this by 2.4 and you should get your selling price and thus the RRP.

My best-sellers by volume are small, straight vases. This is surely to do with the price point. Interestingly enough the poppy seed heads are in second place. They are more expensive, but they also have an artistic value, ergo they can be sold for more money. Third place: mugs. Every potter knows that, probably...



Above and below left, poppy seed heads and mugs come second and third in Anja's best-sellers list.

What are the advantages of selling wholesale? I like the fact that I know what I have to make when I go into the workshop. I like the feeling of being productive. The fact that my work is in various galleries spreads the word. People recognise my work from galleries they visited whilst on holiday! I also get orders from people who have seen my work in a gallery. Importantly, you get paid upfront which gives a bit more of a reliable income.

Disadvantages are that you might find yourself relentlessly making dozens of the same piece and packing parcels for days. There is also a constant follow-up and getting in touch with your galleries, which can be a bit of an admin struggle.

Over the years I have made a number of very good contacts with galleries all over the country, and I am still enjoying making work to order. For me going down the wholesale route has been the right choice.

Anja Penger

Rob & Debbie Rivett



DEMONSTRATION DAY MUNDFORD 22.02.26

At our February meeting we were treated to a talk and demonstration by Rob and Debbie Rivett. Rob kicked everything off by telling us how he went to school with the son of Jim Keeling, the founder of Whichford pottery, where he now works, and became fascinated with clay as he played in the pottery workshop.

A while later, when he was working at a BMW garage (and not enjoying it) a potter friend brought his van to be repaired. They got chatting and his friend then encouraged Rob to have a go at pottery. Taking the plunge, Rob took up an apprenticeship where he did jobs like hoovering, and cleaning and tidying the studio. In his spare time he'd have a go at throwing without firing anything. He loved it, and now, nineteen years later, he's making big architectural terracotta pots at Whichford, based in Shipston-on-Stour, between Oxford and Stratford. He described how very different these huge pots are from his own work. Throwing big, he explained, requires different skills from throwing normal sizes! In developing his own work, Rob concentrated first on using coloured glazes, as both he and wife Debbie liked them for their own house. But over the years as their collaboration developed, the work also changed. Today, they work in porcelain, with Rob doing the throwing and Debbie the decoration. Their studio is in the cellar under the kitchen with Rob throwing in the evenings trying to produce as much as possible – up to 80 pots a day – for Debbie to decorate. They sell their pottery mainly at fairs and through galleries.

Rob went on to demonstrate some of the shapes he often throws. He keeps the walls of cylinders slightly thick, collars in, and then shapes using a throwing stick to belly out. He keeps the walls a bit thicker at the base to support the top half, and then tries to go as thin as he can as he enjoys the translucency. He keeps a bit more thickness at the top so as to not deform the shape. He emphasised how one must be really patient and never yank the clay – be gentle.

Rob explained how he is always mindful that every process is done with a view to the next process along. The first pull prepares the clay for the second pull, and so forth, always thinking ahead. He looks at the curve of the shoulder to determine if he'd like the rim to have a shape like a bud or a bloom, a flower or a stem. It can be hard to assess the quantity of clay needed to lift the neck and have enough clay for a second bubble on the gourd

shapes, which need longer necks to have enough clay to belly out a second time. Sometimes he uses a heat gun to firm the pot a little, then collars the cylinder to create the shape he has in mind. Rob gets rid of any minor imperfections at the turning stage rather than trying too hard while throwing.



Above and below: Rob wedges the porcelain to "wake it up", uses a throwing stick and rib to create the form and a blowtorch to dry and stabilise the piece when shaping.



Rob then demonstrated the making of a two part pot. He threw the base first leaving the rim flat. He dried it off a little with his torch, then threw the top, carefully measuring the diameter to match the lower half.



Above and below: Rob ensures the diameter of the two halves is the same, scores and slips the edges and places the top on the bottom before wiring it off and continuing the shape the form.



Photos: Carolyn Postgate, Julia Bruce

Once the two halves had firmed up with the help of the blowtorch, he scored and slipped both edges before flipping the top part onto the base. If the circumference is slightly off, the resulting "ledge" is smoothed onto the surface to create a stronger bond. He then continued to throw and shape the top of the pot. The thicker base gets thinned during turning, which he does on a chuck. Although they are not always practical, Rob likes really narrow bases, which aesthetically balance the narrower necks, some of which are shaped to resemble buds or seedheads.

Once dried to leather hard, the pot becomes Debbie's for decoration. Debbie studied fine arts to Master's level and was a painter/decorator at Whichford. She enjoys decorating three-dimensional surfaces and is inspired by fields, hedgerows and grasses. She has settled on just shades of blue for her decoration, with yellow or red for flower head details.



Above: Debbie mixes the coloured slip on a board then applies with a hake brush in gestural sweeps to create the background. She carves into this with tools such as combs and ribs.

Debbie mixes 10% Scarva Teal stain to clay slip on a board and leaves it to dry off a little, controlling the level of water with the brush. She uses hake brushes in different sizes and softness levels – rocking the brush to get different marks. She starts from the base up, building the background with energetic movements that create gestural marks, which add to the dynamism of the decoration, working with whatever mark she makes. She combines painting with sgraffito, splattering and stamping techniques, often using unconventional tools, such as broken combs, children's stamps and sponges. She has her favourite brushes for different purposes and different colours, often using brushes in different ways, such as just the tip for dots, or trailing them for lines.



Above: Debbie uses a simple round sponge to apply circles of coloured slip to the pot surface. She then carves into these shapes to give the impression of petals. Later she adds colour, and sometimes carves back further.

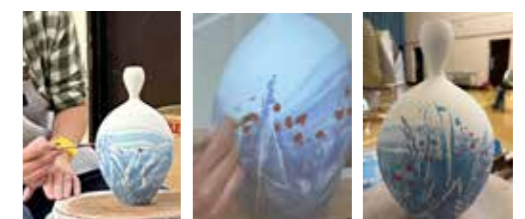
Debbie's brushwork is quite considered: bigger movements for taller grasses, smaller for undergrowth, while splatters represent bugs, mist and seeds. She also leaves empty areas/negative spaces for contrast. Debbie finishes the designs with more intentional painting of grasses using her sketchbook for reference.



Left: The finished decorated pot with a page from Debbie's sketchbook that she uses for final details of grasses and other plants.

Debbie's larger pieces can take a considerable time to complete, while smaller items, such as mugs and beakers, are often decorated in around fifteen minutes. She finds it very difficult to know when to stop! Often she continues with more sgraffito and cuts into the design to achieve depth. Sometimes she adds another layer of teal slip to create an effect of "fog flowers".

On a smaller bone-dry pot, Debbie demonstrated a more watercolour style. She used a 3% stain and a much more watery slip mixed on a plastic lid instead of a bat to avoid it drying or thickening. On these drier pots she starts with a soft hake brush to create light background, washes, building up layers to indicate mountains and sky, then uses a comb to add light to the landscape. She adds foreground detail of grasses using brushes and 10% slip, and further sgraffito marks.



Debbie applies thin background, washes then adds foreground detail.

Red poppies are added with initial splatters of red-stained slip, then Debbie goes back in on some with a fine brush to define and bring forward the flower detail. Finally, Debbie may add more sgraffito to create further light and depth.

Rob and Debbie provided a fascinating insight into their collaborative practice, sharing both technical expertise and artistic inspiration. Members left with plenty of new ideas to explore, from Rob's thoughtful throwing techniques to Debbie's expressive approach to surface decoration.

Robi Bateman

If it's Broke, Fix it

LEARNING THE ANCIENT ART OF KINTSUGI

In April 2026, I went to Canada for a kintsugi course led by expert Marie-Do Hyman-Boneu and hosted by my Toronto-based ceramicist friend Loren Kaplan.

During the three-day workshop, Marie-Do showed a group of seven eager ceramicists the intricate and meditative process of kintsugi – the centuries-old Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gilded lacquer. Kintsugi literally means “joining with gold”. We covered the four steps of affixing, filling, lacquering and gilding our broken pottery. Each step required curing time in a damp box before moving on to the next stage.

Depending on the number of breaks, gaps and missing shards, the process of filling can require several applications to completely cover the scars of the assembled ceramic. In our workshop, we only applied one layer each of *jinoko* and *tonoko* (powdered clay-type materials) and black lacquer.

The making process is slow, mindful, methodical and precise. Periods of quiet meditative activity, when one could hear a pin drop, were occasionally interrupted by an audible gasp for air following a disturbingly prolonged breath-holding moment.

The shared experience of gaining new knowledge with a diverse group of potters contributed positively to an atmosphere of creativity and community.

Below is a short summary with photographs of the process we followed. There are many stages with long periods of drying and curing between them. Making lacquer using traditional methods is an involved process and curing can take several months. Modern methods and materials can speed up the process, but on this course we were stuck as closely as we could to the traditional ways.

Breaking our pots

Before



After



Photos: Judith Annakie-Erikson

In order to fix it, I had to break a piece first! My working piece was a porcelain bowl from my sample box. I was surprised not to feel a gut-wrenching pain from deliberately breaking a well-thrown pot.

Assembling the pieces



- Mix raw lacquer (made from the Urushi tree) with a pre-prepared flour and water mixture to create the glue.
- Apply along the broken edges, assemble the pieces and hold together with masking tape.

Making the filler (Sabi)



- Gently remove the excess glue with a circular blade.
- Make a paste by mixing *jinoko* (powdered clay) with lacquer.
- Fill the scars and chipped areas of the ceramic with the paste.
- After it has cured, scrape away the excess with the blade and wet sand.
- Make another paste with lacquer and *tonoko* (finer powdered clay) and apply to scars.



- Wet sand the scars after curing in a damp box.

Lacquers



- Apply a thin line of black lacquer on the scars with a thin brush, and cure in a damp box.
- Lightly sand with sandpaper and a little water.
- Repeat the process if needed allowing it to cure in a damp box between each step.
- Tidy the lines with a craft knife.

Gilding



- Apply red lacquer in a thin layer over all the black lines.
- Sprinkle the scar with metallic powder – we used bronze powder.
- Lightly burnish the gilded line with a soft brush.
- Leave to cure in a damp box for at least 48 hours.
- Rinse off excess powder and wash in soapy water.

The final piece



I chose to gild only two of the red lacquer lines.

To see more lacquerware and kintsugi, visit:
Urushi Now: Contemporary Japanese Lacquer
V&A, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 2RL
Japan, Room 45, The Toshiba Gallery
Until 30 April 2027. Free entry.

Lacquer painting to kintsugi: a convergence of artistic skills

Born in Toulouse, France, Marie-Do Hyman-Boneu is a multidisciplinary artist who creates art with lacquer and has transferred those skills to kintsugi.

In 1999, unfulfilled by their careers in advertising and yearning for a more adventurous life of travel and creativity, Marie-Do and her Canadian photography agent husband travelled from Paris to Hanoi where Marie-Do soon became apprenticed to a lacquer artist. She quickly began experimenting with lacquer in her first studio, taking lessons with different masters.



Marie-Do (front) with Loren Kaplan.

“Choosing lacquer as a means of expression means setting limits that must be overcome.”

After four years in Hanoi, the couple moved to Canada, where Marie-Do co-founded Art Studio La Muse with Chantal Leblanc to teach, create and exhibit. Then, desiring to develop her lacquer art, she and her husband decided to start life over once again; this time in Vientiane, the capital of Laos.

From 2010, Marie-Do began exhibiting her artwork in Vientiane, Toronto and Siem Reap, where she was invited in August 2018 to participate in the Asia Lacquer Exchange Programme.

Her introduction to kintsugi came in the same year from curiosity in the technique, which at that time was gaining wider popularity. She was taught the art in Chiang-Mai, Thailand by Professor Sumanatsya Voharn. She found that her many years of lacquer experience accelerated her learning. She continued practising her new skill upon her return to Laos, where she added kintsugi to her menu of workshops.

In a world where synthetic materials and quick results are gaining the upper hand, Marie-Do is proud to have acquired a rare artistic knowledge rooted in tradition going back a thousand years. As she says:

“Vegetable lacquer is alive, rare and almost eternal.”

After 23 years of living abroad, teaching and making art in Hanoi, Toronto and Vientiane, Marie-Do is now leaving her idyllic lakeside Laotian studio to return to France. La Sève in Saint-Antonin-Noble-Val will be her fourth studio opening. In her now recognisable and endearing tone, calmly and confidently, she says: “I kind of know what it is to rebuild.”

(Ref: www.mdolacquer.com)

Judith Annakie-Erikson



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Valentine Bistro Porcelain

Valentine Clays has developed a pioneering porcelain clay that combines exceptional wheel performance with impressive strength and durability. Bistro Porcelain is 38 per cent stronger than other porcelain products offered by Valentine Clays and can be re-thrown repeatedly.

A level of alumina in the clay's formulation provides added structure and stability during throwing and increased resistance to thermal shock throughout the making and firing process. Hannah Ault, CEO of Valentine Clays, said: "We designed Bistro Porcelain in close collaboration with artisan makers to create a porcelain clay that delivers both performance and elegance. It offers exceptional strength and chip resistance ... is smooth, stable, and very responsive, offering an approachable throwing experience even for potters who have never felt confident using porcelain before."

Bistro Porcelain offers experienced porcelain makers the freedom to push artistic boundaries, even when the need for finesse and resilience in the toughest kitchen conditions is required.

The smooth workability and high re-usability of Bistro Porcelain creates less waste in the studio, while full vitrification at 1190°C supports lower firing

temperatures than other traditional porcelain clays, qualities that confer significant sustainability benefits. Bistro Porcelain follows the recent launch of LoStone, a pioneering low-fire stoneware introduced last year as part of the company's strategy to support innovation and growth across the artisan ceramics sector.

Alongside an active programme of research and development, Valentine Clays has also invested in a new online retail facility at www.valentineclays.co.uk to offer clients a seamless order service, backed up with the reassurance of dedicated customer support and advice.



Photo: Valentine Clays

Part of the Bistro Porcelain manufacturing process at Valentine Clay's factory in Stoke-on-Trent.



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Find out more online
valentineclays.co.uk



Clay at Cley

MY FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION

My name is Diane Silsby, my pottery business, Diane Marie Ceramics, is at my home in Overstrand. This spring I held my very first solo exhibition and thought I'd share with you some of my story about how I got to this point.

Born in a working class town in South Yorkshire, clay has always been in my life. Our home in Swinton was a few minutes' walk away from Pottery Ponds, formerly the site of Rockingham Pottery. Clay was available in abundance and transportation was via canals, perfect for heavy loads, hence the pottery industry thrived here until the early 19th century. One of the remaining buildings from that era is Waterloo Kiln – as kids we'd dare each other to enter the dark scary building, which by then had become a massive bat roost.



The long-abandoned Waterloo Kiln, now home to bats!

But my real passion for clay began at school, in Swinton Comprehensive's pottery department. Back then, ceramics was not seen as a possible career for me and I was encouraged down a more "useful" path, which led to 34 years working in the care industry.

At sixteen I moved to Norfolk to work as a nanny. In 1981 I joined the NHS on The Allies Ward, Cromer Hospital working in various roles within Norfolk hospitals and the community. Then, a few years ago following a life-changing bereavement, I took early retirement and began to rebuild my life. My late husband had given me a kick wheel – it came out of hibernation, I took several courses, and potting began.

My first teacher, Peter Harding, of Suffolk Stoneware, was a great potter and teacher. He inspired me and helped me with my confidence, encouraging me to join Anglian Potters. When I began my pottery life I thought throwing was the be all and end all, but one day I was just squeezing some gathered up blobs of clay together and glancing down at it, I could see it looking like a very simple figure of a seal, so I went with it. My love for sculpting grew from that moment on. At an AP

demonstration day I had a pivotal moment watching the amazing Brendan Hesmondhalgh sculpting a greyhound. Two years later I fulfilled a dream by attending one of his courses and then a further one in 2024. Last year I enjoyed a four-day portrait sculpting course with Luke Shephard. Although I don't think human portraiture is for me at the moment, I would highly recommend his course. Learning his technique was invaluable as I can adapt it to the animal world to a certain degree, although it could be tricky trying to use callipers to measure a lion's cheek bones!

Over the years, and learning from such courses, my confidence and competence has grown. I've exhibited with Anglian Potters, at Open Studio events and at an art exhibition in aid of Nicky's Foundation, but for a long time the big dream has been to hold a solo exhibition. This finally came to fruition this spring at the Norfolk Wildlife Trust Cley Visitor Centre: 22nd April to 5th May.

Being a member of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust I was aware they had an exhibition space in the gallery at the Cley Visitor Centre. When I enquired about details I was pleasantly surprised at how reasonably priced it was for a two-week exhibition: £50 and 20% commission from sales, and artists don't necessarily need to be present, I had permission to set up a little workspace in the corner of the gallery and also was able to take my dog along, which people seemed to like. I was there each weekend and the Bank Holiday Monday. The gallery is also a viewing area for the Trust's reserve; it's a beautiful setting. The drawback is the gallery's position and lack of advertising. The gallery is a thatched building behind and up a few steps to the right of the visitor centre, so not visible unless you really look for it. Advertising is very subtle, as are the signs within the main centre directing the way to the gallery. I was able to put small flyers on each table in the café and two A4 posters in the main building, but even so, only a small fraction of visitors to the centre came to the gallery. Consequently, footfall was pretty low despite the café and car park being extremely well attended.

A small business called Cley Spy who sell binoculars and associated products have a tiny outlet within the gallery, and it was good to have someone else around to chat with. They have been present at the centre for nine years and apparently footfall to the gallery has always been an issue. Despite this, my sales were OK, and there have been positive knock-on benefits, including an invitation to join a local event, Hempstead Art Exhibition. In addition, an organisation called The Natural World Art Society contacted me after seeing my Facebook advert for the exhibition, inviting me to join them, as they didn't

currently have a 3D artist and felt my work would fit in well. Their aim is to generate a better appreciation and understanding of the natural world through art, and in October they will have an exhibit in The Forum in Norwich.

Feedback from visitors has been very encouraging, especially comments about how my sculptures capture the essence of the animal, because this is what I strive to do with every piece.



Photos: Diane Silsby

Diane always strives to imbue her sculptures with the essence of her animal subjects.

My sculptures and larger handbuilt pots are made using either Ashraf Hannah, Earthstone Handbuilt or crank clays. For throwing I use mainly Earthstone original, but have enjoyed trying porcelain, so far only for small vessels and decorative pieces. For most sculptures I use an oxide wash, 50% magnesium dioxide and 50% copper oxide, then underglaze colours over that. For the seals I use a different combination of oxides: equal amounts of black iron oxide and manganese dioxide and half those amounts of copper and cobalt, gives a dark grey wash. If it's a seal pup I wash the oxide back well and leave it at that, adult seals have the oxide wash and then I lightly sponge on a much weaker solution to achieve more subtle mottled tones of grey all over.



Regarding glazing, I use a combination of home-made and ready-made glazes. Application varies from dipping and brushing to spraying for larger pieces. Spraying isn't straightforward, I have a small compressor, spray guns, an industrial extraction fan and small spray booth, and of course a breathing mask and eye protection. The results so far are really positive with endless possibilities!



Diane uses a range of commercial and home-made glazes in her work.

The natural world continues to inspire me; animals and birds of the British Isles are favourites for sculpting. Being on the Norfolk coast it's a privilege to be able to watch seals posing all over the place. I take lots of photos to use for reference and love trying to capture their expressions.

Another big dream is to go on a safari sculpting course with Nick Macman – cheetahs are another favourite! Maybe in a year or so's time.



One of Diane's best commissions was for a pangolin, which was quite a challenge: all those scales!!

My studio has a gallery displaying my work, and visitors are very welcome by arrangement. Because I don't use moulds every item is individually hand-made from scratch.

I also offer basic lessons in throwing or handbuilding for one to two people.

dianeburton@btinternet.com

Diane Silsby

CAL & Fresh Air Sculpture

A YEAR OF FIRSTS

While for me 2025 was a year of progression, 2026 has been a year for firsts. Late in 2024 I was awarded a Developing Your Creative Practice grant from Arts Council England. Early 2025 was an intense learning curve, spent developing larger scale sculptures, mentored by Kyra Cane, attending plaster workshops with Nick Brooks, and working with a new clay to help with structure. Now, in 2026, all this has come together.

Ceramic Art London

My new sculptures were shown in 2025 at Potfest Compton Verney, at which I was encouraged to apply for CAL – Ceramic Art London – by a few aspirational makers, which was an amazing compliment. So with my professional photographs taken, I took the plunge! Fast-forward to this year and most of 2026 has been spent head down in the studio, intensely developing more works to complement the 2025 sculptures. Everything about this show has been daunting, but I felt it important to offer a range of work in various sizes to sit within a quite compact exhibition space. I have been making for many years, but I suddenly felt ready to present this deeply personal work about my journeys along coastal walks, encompassing nods to our endangered coastline, erosion, destruction and the battle between man and nature. How this work was shown was so important.

Photos: Sarah Rooms Heaphy



Above: Setting up at CAL was quite a job! Below: a montage of Sarah's smaller pieces.

Final planning included two weeks of mock set-ups, a professional photography shoot in Rugby with the fabulous Paul Lapsley, ordering packaging and business cards, cataloguing all the work to include prices and dimensions, packing in stackable boxes, testing the car pack, and finally ordering a high-sided trolley to get the larger work, in padded wadding, from the loading bay up to the exhibition hall. AND READY!!



Sarah's display showcased a variety of work in a range of sizes.

Thursday's logistics included a pre-booked thirty-minute offload time into the basement of Olympia, with CAL trolley helpers on hand. Set up was by 6 p.m. followed by store packaging and back-up work in the 1m x 1m square allocated store area, then ready for the private view from 6.30–9.00 in the evening. Quite a day!

What followed was three intense days of chatting to the public, selling, catching up with other makers, and then more chatting to collectors, galleries, visiting artists, architects and interior designers. Friday's ticketed sales were a sellout, and it didn't let up until Sunday afternoon, when things finally became a little more relaxed.

My close ceramics neighbours were Jane Cox, an established maker of domestic earthenware; Moira Goodall, with her beautiful smoked vessels, so elegantly displayed; Cleo Mussi, mosaic designer extraordinaire, famous for her humorous wall pieces and TV appearance on *The Great Pottery Throwdown*; Chris Keenan, as elegantly presented as his ceramics, and Jane Shepherd with her impressive sculptural totems. Further along the row were Barry Stedman and Lise Herud Braten, with Peter Beard nearby.

In the brief time we got to walk around, a few of my highlights were Claire Ireland, Simone Krug-Springsguth, Nancy Main, Patricia Shone, Sue Mundy, Jane Cairn, Alison Coaten, Emily Stubbs, Marek Pitera, Diane Griffin, Sharon Griffin, Elaine Sheppard Bolt and Dan Kelly. But there were many, many more amazing makers.

And before we knew it, Sunday evening arrived and it was time to take down. The CPA collective was very well organised and had thought of every possible problem or issue that might arise, making the event as smooth as possible for a first timer. What a joy to exhibit with this team of people, who managed to get around and introduce themselves to all the makers, a lovely touch.

Fresh Air Sculpture

The Monday following CAL involved a quick unload of the car and a repack with three large sculptures to be delivered to the Fresh Air Sculpture exhibition at Quenington Old Rectory, Gloucestershire. It was to be their last one, ending a 34-year run of Contemporary Art in a Beautiful English Garden.



Three of Sarah's large sculptures arranged at the exhibition's entrance.

When applying many months before, I didn't know I would be exhibiting and setting up so close to CAL – an intense five-day period!

Three hours down the road, and I arrived in this quaint English village to see the gates leading to the Old Rectory and gardens. Stephanie Cushing, the curator, was there to meet me and discuss how to present the three sculptures, which we decided to show together, against a backdrop of a rich green hedge close to the entrance for all to see.



The entire grounds were full of sculpture. Here, colourful glass forms are reflected in the water.

Early set-up allows the curation of the catalogue and professional photography in-situ to be actioned, and siting the pieces took time. Both "Calm Winds" and "Tides" were designed with metal stabilising rods, which were staked into the ground, but the work still has a sense of balance – a critical feature. To level and stabilise them on the grass, allowing space for people to look around them as well as view them from above was important to me.

My work was set at the entrance, in the more formal part of the garden, but on walking through the archway, the garden opens to the back of the house, and then further over the bridge on the other side of the stream another meadow. All the grounds were full of sculpture, ranging in size from smaller works set into flowerbeds, to impressive seven-foot-tall metal curves. I was delighted to the full range of works on the preview evening of Friday 12 June.

I am truly lucky to have been chosen for this last event at one of the most magical English garden locations I have ever visited.

Sarah Rooms Heaphy

<https://sarahroomsheaphyceramics.com>
[@roomsheaphyceramics](https://www.instagram.com/roomsheaphyceramics)



Karen Slade

DEMONSTRATION DAY MUNDFORD 22.03.26



Making the tiles

Karen has wooden moulds to make her tiles. These are shaped to be narrower underneath to provide an 11° bevel. She uses Valentine's grogged terracotta (12% shrinkage) which she wires from the block and drops a couple of times to wedge roughly, then presses into the mould wiring off the top flush with the frame.



Karen presses the clay into the square mould then wires off the top to create a flat surface, which can then be smoothed.

The tile is banged out of the mould, which is then allowed to dry before using again. To impress the decoration to be filled with slip, wood blocks carved with patterns in reverse (lime wood is a favourite) are placed face down on the tile and hit with a mallet, paying special attention to the edges and corners.



The tile is banged out of the mould and a carved wooden block impressed onto the surface.



A wooden block and a tile impressed from it. Tools of the trade: moulds, a mallet and carved wooden blocks.

An alternative method for creating tiles is to roll out clay using battens, turn the clay on its board and cloth so as not to introduce distortion, then place the carved wood block face down, hammer, then cut round the block. The tile is then slid onto paper, then onto plasterboard and allowed to dry. The tile should be moved to new paper and plasterboard the next day.

Applying the slip

Karen uses a slip horn – a cow's horn with the tip cut off and a section of goose feather inserted into it to control the flow. Karen uses Hyplas ball clay, adding water to the dry clay. In medieval times tile makers would have used white earthenware. Using the horn, slip is poured into the stamped impression on the tile and is left to dry for a while.



Above top: Karen pours white slip into the impressed pattern using a traditional cow's horn with a goose feather spout.

Above bottom: Filled tiles ready for scraping back.

Scraping the tiles

Always wear a mask for this job – Karen recommended the P3 mask from Screwfix. Her favourite tools for scraping are a flexible metal kidney (using the rounded edge), a soft brush and an edge tool. Scraping needs to be done when the slip has dried to exactly the right consistency. The impression in the tile is very shallow – only a few millimetres deep, so scraping back is a very slow job and needs to be done carefully so as not to remove the pattern itself.



Karen carefully scraped back the slip using a metal rib. Other tools that can be used include spoons and edge tools.

Glazing and firing

The tiles are bisqued to 1150°C then a clear honey glaze is poured on rather than dipping the tiles, as this fills all the microgaps in the surface better. They are glaze fired to 1060°C. Karen uses Bullers pyrometric rings to test if vitrification temperature has been reached.

Other tiles

Larger tiles were made to decorate walls, and decorative mosaic interlocking tiles of varying shapes were also made. These tiles were much thicker than the square floor tiles, sometimes two inches thick, with underside edges bevelled in the same way as the square tiles. Templates for these tiles could have been made of lead, wood or leather.

The afternoon ended with a popular hands-on session: Karen had made a selection of small tiles already filled with slip and ready for scraping back. There were enough for everyone to have a go and discover that this stage of preparation of encaustic tiles is really very skilled and demands intense concentration!



Above: Members enjoying the challenge of scraping the tiles. Below: A selection of Karen's finished tiles in traditional designs.



Karen was an excellent speaker, full of enthusiasm for her craft and happy to share with us all her expertise and hard-won experience.

Carolyn Postgate

A packed room at Mundford was treated to a very lively demonstration day from Karen Slade on 22nd March.

Karen, from Beeston, Nottingham, trained in illustration at Brighton. She began her interest in the medieval 30 years ago as a re-enactor at Kentwell Hall. She played the character Kate, a Tudor miniature painter, and gave live demonstrations in costume at the Hall. At Kentwell others were making pots and firing them in an updraft



A wood-fired Tudor kiln at Kentwell Hall.

kiln, using glazed rings in the kiln near the spyhole, which were removed on a stick to test if the glaze had matured.

Karen developed an interest in medieval tiles, and working at home in her basement studio, she began experimenting with making them. There is no record of how the tiles were made in medieval times, so a lot of guesswork was involved.

However, with experience, Karen developed her present method for making encaustic tiles. She uses terracotta clay and makes the tiles one inch thick, and six inches square, with bevelled edges. This bevelled shape has many advantages: it helps even drying, allows plenty of space for keying the tiles into the background cement while the tile faces fit closely together, and allows tiles to balance evenly back-to-back (like a house of cards) for kiln firing.

Some of Karen's tiles stacked back-to-back in a downdraft kiln where they would have been fired for 12 hours up to 1000°C.



The tiles are decorated by impressing the clay with a pattern carved from a wooden block. The impressed design is then filled with a paler coloured slip and dried to leather hard. The slip is then scraped back to reveal the image. Finally, the tiles are bisqued, glazed and fired. Karen walked us through this process and then gave us the opportunity to try part of it ourselves.

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From Fenstanton to Firenze

EXHIBITING AT THE FLORENCE BIENNALE

Photos: Paula Armstrong



Last October I found myself standing in the Fortezza da Basso in Florence, watching a woman's face light up as she peered inside one of my sculptures. "Guarda d'entro!" I'd learnt to say – Look inside! – and that moment, watching recognition and delight cross a stranger's face in a language we barely shared, was worth every hour of preparation, every piece of paperwork, and every carefully packed peanut. Let me tell you about it – the making, the logistics, the people, and what I'd say to any of you thinking about applying.

Why Florence? Why now?

The Florence Biennale is one of the largest international exhibitions of contemporary art and design in the world, bringing together over 550 artists from across the globe for ten days at the Fortezza da Basso. The theme for 2025 was Light and Darkness – and when I read that, I thought: that's exactly what I make. My work has always been concerned with duality: inside/outside, hidden/visible, strong/fragile, the self we show versus the self we protect. So submitting felt less like a stretch and more like an invitation to bring the work to exactly the right stage.

Making the Work

I took six sculptures – all from my "Potential Inside" collection: *Looking Back*, *Inner Growth*, *Inclusions*, *Ring Promise*, *Earth & Sky*, and *Insidious*. Every one of them was made specifically for the Biennale.

I wanted to present a cohesive set that spoke together, with pieces at different scales but unified by an earthy, almost sand-and-sea aesthetic: browns, sand tones, white, and touches of turquoise. I was thinking about the palette of the natural world – the same world the collection draws from – but pushing it towards something that felt considered and international rather than studio-casual.

Technically, these were challenging pieces to make. I combined raku clay with porcelain, two clay bodies that behave very differently and require careful management through building, drying and firing. There were moments when the material simply didn't want to cooperate – and

I've learnt, over nearly thirty years, that those moments are the ones to pay attention to. Clay isn't something you just control. It has its own will and voice. I feel sometimes persistence is useful, but it's flexibility that allows both the piece and the maker to evolve.

One thing I notice people sometimes assume is that showing internationally requires you to make work differently, to somehow translate your practice for another culture or audience. For me, that isn't true. I draw from nature – its patterns, textures and structures are a language we all share, wherever we come from. My work abstracts these familiar forms into something that feels recognisable yet universal, and at the Biennale I was struck again and again by how similarly people from different cultures responded – the same instinctive understanding of growth, protection, transformation. The questions the work asks, about identity and hidden potential, don't need translating.

The practical reality (The bit no one tells you)

I'll be honest: the logistics of getting ceramic sculptures from Cambridgeshire to Florence are not for the faint-hearted. Packing came first. I boxed each sculpture individually, then calculated the crate dimensions I'd need to hold all six safely. The key, I've learnt over the years, is no movement. Pack until nothing rattles, and you're usually fine. Packing peanuts are unglamorous but they do the job.

Customs is where it gets complicated post-Brexit. I had to obtain an EORI number and work through customs documentation – this sounds daunting, and it is the first time, but the Biennale uses a specialist courier who guides you through the whole process. Use them. Don't try to go it alone.

The display itself had a small drama on arrival: the base plinth I'd planned the whole installation around didn't turn up with the rest. The sculptures looked fine on the individual plinths – but not quite right. The base arrived on day two, so I dismantled everything and rebuilt the display from scratch. The final result was more striking and cohesive than it would have been without the drama, which I suppose is very ceramics.



Being there

The Fortezza da Basso is enormous, and the scale of the exhibition is genuinely staggering – over 550 artists, dozens of countries, every medium imaginable. Highlights beyond my own stand included Tim Burton's installation, which was extraordinary, and the chance to walk through rooms of work that had nothing whatsoever to do with clay and be genuinely moved by it.

Being in a mixed fine art context mattered to me. I approach clay as a sculptor and artist rather than as a maker of functional ware or traditional pottery. At an event like this, that framing is simply understood – you're an artist showing work, full stop. That's a particular kind of freedom.



The ceramic community

I met several other ceramic artists during the Biennale. Sharon Bastin's animal sculptures with mixed media elements were wonderful – full of life and narrative. Judith Unger's large vessel forms, adorned with figures and gold, were commanding and strange in the best way. And Littlewolf Ceramics had vessel forms of such refined simplicity that I kept going back to look at them.

What struck me was how differently we all use the same material. If you've ever felt that ceramics is a niche, the Biennale will disabuse you of that quickly.

The conversations that stayed with me

One of the unexpected gifts of the exhibition was the conversations – with visitors, with other artists, across languages and contexts. One visitor spent a long time with my work, asking about the individual meanings of each piece, why I'd chosen specific forms and inclusions. I loved it – and it reminded me of something I believe deeply: my inspiration forms the first chapter of each sculpture's story, but the viewer writes the next one. Everyone brings their own perspective, shaped by memory and experience, and that dialogue is endlessly fascinating. That conversation also made me realise I should share the contextual detail behind each piece far more widely. The story matters as much as the object. I also met the artist Cicada Ioanna, who works at the intersection of nature and technology. She was drawn to the organic, non-traditionally-beautiful quality of my forms – the fact that tension is held deliberately, that the work asks questions rather than simply pleasing. We're still in touch and exploring ideas around a potential collaboration.

And then there was the simple joy of "Guarda d'entro!" – those three words, and the way people's faces changed when they looked inside and found a whole decorated world they hadn't expected.

What it gave me

It gave me profile – since returning, I've received multiple exhibition invitations. It gave me conversations that are still unfolding. And it gave me ten days in Florence with my family, which I'd be lying if I said wasn't also extraordinary.

What it didn't give me was sales. The Florence Biennale is not a selling exhibition, and it's important to go in clear about that. So what do you want from it?

Should you apply?

If you're considering it, here's what I'd say: approach it as an investment, not a transaction. Ask yourself what you want the experience to achieve for you and your work. Is it profile? International

connections? The particular kind of clarity that comes from seeing your work in a new context? Those things are real, and for the right maker at the right moment, they're worth the investment – not just financially (budget carefully; costs add up), but in time, preparation, and emotional energy.

If the answer to "what do I want from this?" is honest and specific, you'll know whether it's the right step for you. For me, it was. Watching that visitor's face as the inside of the sculpture came into focus – that told me everything I needed to know.



Paula at the Biennale.

Paula Armstrong

Paula Armstrong is a ceramic sculptor, educator, and studio member of the Craft Potters Association, based in Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire. Her work has been shown internationally, including at the Florence Biennale and Spazio SV in Venice. Find her at parmstrongceramics.co.uk or [@paula.armstrong2](https://www.instagram.com/paula.armstrong2) on Instagram.

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Exploring Crystalline Glazes

by **Diane Creber**

Crystalline glazes are known for producing exciting works reminiscent of floating galaxies, frosty windows, rare gemstones and delicate flowers. Until recently, however, few potters worked with this elusive medium. Now, with new advances in materials and digital processors,

amazing results can be achieved without the problems usually associated with these glazes, such as excessive glaze run-off and unpredictable crystal growth.

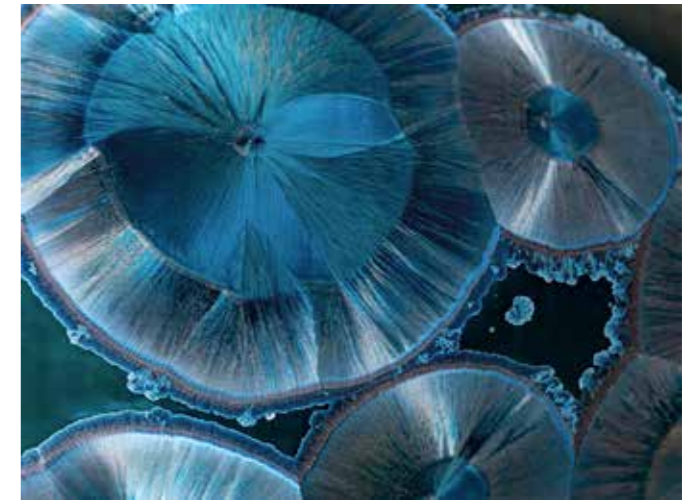
Diane Creber's first crystal pottery book, *Crystalline Glazes*, which came out in 1997, was very much an introductory book to this complex method of glazing. This volume is also available from Herbert Press where it remains part of the *Ceramics Handbook* series.

Exploring Crystalline Glazes covers the depths and complexities of crystal glazing. Everything from the most suitable clays to use to the unique firing techniques of potters around the world is described.

The various ingredients used in crystal glazes are covered and their effects on the pots. How to apply the glazes and fire the pots in both oxidised and reduced atmospheres is explained in detail. Various firing cycles that produce different crystal finishes are explained by Diane and the included potters.

A variety of potters' works is shown with potters explaining the methods they use, demonstrating how crystalline glazing has been extended and unique crystal pots developed.

Maurice Young




Exploring Crystalline Glazes by Diane Creber | The New Ceramics Series | Pub: Herbert Press, 2026 | Paperback | 192pp | £25.00 | ISBN: 9781789943931

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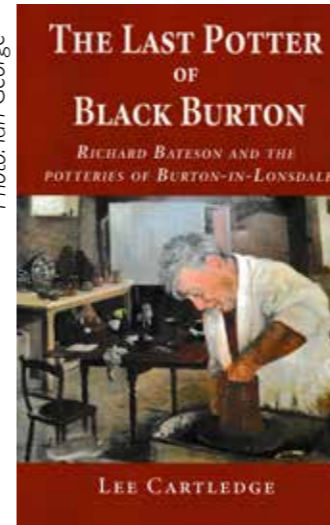
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Photo: Ian George



The Last Potter of Black Burton

by Lee Cartledge

Perhaps 30 years ago I bought some bowls on holiday in North Yorkshire. Idly turning one over recently I wondered if the pottery named on the base still existed. So started an enjoyable trip down a fascinating rabbit hole.

Bentham Pottery does still exist and Lee Cartledge who runs it still makes the range of domestic ware developed by his mother Kathy before him. Browsing their website benthampottery.com my curiosity was piqued by their history and links to the pottery traditions of the area. Lee is an accomplished maker in his own right and his Brexit Mug has made it into the V&A collection. That story appears on the Bentham Pottery website and is worth a read.

Lee's other claim to fame is as author of *The Last Potter of Black Burton*, a book about Richard Bateson and the potteries of Burton-in-Lonsdale, self published with the help of Bateson's grandson. Richard Bateson was already an old man when, in 1977, he wandered into Bentham Pottery and asked if he could throw a pot to show his grandchildren what he used to do. Lee's slightly sceptical mother agreed and was quickly in awe of his skill and efficiency at the wheel. Bateson subsequently became a frequent visitor and passed on many of his skills and techniques. Lee was then in his teens and not much interested. Ten years later and looking for a dissertation topic he chose to research Bateson and the local pottery heritage. This work forms the basis of the book with a later epilogue and appendices including further research. I was fascinated to read about the scale of the potteries in the period before World War II. Burton-in-Lonsdale was blessed with earthenware, stoneware and coal deposits plus a river. The coincidence of these necessities in one place and their ease of excavation gave rise to five working potteries. Much of the production was given over to jam jars and bottles for the brewing industry, in addition to traditional pots for domestic and farming life. These were complex businesses and the book paints a compelling picture of the dangers and lighter moments of a hard-working way of life.

Bateson was taken out of school at age 13 to work with his father, initially to operate the jam jar machine, which was the least skilled of the production processes. From there he progressed quickly to "taking-off" and then to throwing, working up the weights of clay. By 17, he had mastered the whole production range, including the dreaded six-gallon bottle requiring 66lbs of clay. His

The Last Potter of Black Burton by Lee Cartledge | Pub: The Choir Press, 2021 | Paperback | 100pp | £6.99 | ISBN: 978-1789631838

father Harry was able to throw 120 six-gallon bottles in a day. The two master throwers would between them use 12 to 18 tons of clay a week feeding three kilns large enough to fire 3000 one-gallon bottles at a time. All this clay had to be dug and processed during the winter for the year ahead. The pottery had its own horses for delivery and even grew willow and made baskets for the cider jar casings.



Robert Bateson throwing at the Stockbridge (formerly Waterside) Pottery around 1940

A principal customer was Guinness for stout bottles. Technology and fashion moved on, however. Glass bottles and jars replaced ceramic. The potteries closed steadily between the wars, and although a few more-gifted potters tried to bring new methods and transition to more refined domestic wares, none could make a lasting success of it. But Richard Bateson had a stroke of luck. The Central School of Arts and Crafts evacuated from London to the Lake District during the war, but needed a place for ceramics students to make and fire their work. As well as providing the necessary facilities, Bateson proved an able teacher. When, after the war, they needed a new tutor in London, Bateson was invited to teach at "Central" and so began a second career. Bateson taught many of the post-war generation of studio potters, linking them back to the traditions and methods of the country potters that otherwise might easily have been lost.

Although I felt the epilogue and appendices could have been integrated with the main text, I found Cartledge's book an easy and engaging read. His insights as a working potter himself, and his family association with Bateson, bring a warmth and shrewd understanding that a pure historian would have lacked. It is a fascinating cultural and industrial history as well as a personal history of a remarkable potter working through a turbulent period. I would definitely recommend the book if you are interested in the industrial heritage of your craft. If you want to make a time-delay water-bomb from clay to prank your workmates then the section "Larking about" will be indispensable.

The Last Potter of Black Burton is available on Amazon.

Ian George



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Ceramic Helpline

Alan Foxley: handbuilding: pinch, coil, slab; reduction firing
t: 01799 522631 e: foxleyalan1@gmail.com

Usch Spettigue: raw glazing, single firing
t: 01473 787587 e: usch@spettigue.com

Margaret Gardiner: salt & soda firing
t: 01279 654025 e: info@maggygardiner.com

John Masterton: reduction, porcelain, kilns
t: 01279 723229 e: john@johnmasterton.co.uk

Angela Mellor: bone china, paper clay, slip casting
t: 01353 666675 e: angela@angelamellor.com

Moira Goodall: handbuilding, burnishing, smoke firing
e: moira.goodall@gmail.com

Phil Arthur: throwing, handbuilding, sgraffito, earthenware, honey glazes
e: philarthur1951@btinternet.com

Helen Humphreys: handbuilding, firing electric kilns
e: helenhpottery@gmail.com

Sheila Madder: mould-making, slip casting, coloured porcelain
e: sheila_madder@hotmail.co.uk, IG: sheilamadder
FB: Sheila Madder Ceramics

Caroline Chouler-Tissier: experimental and narrative development
t. 07906678393
e: chouletissier@icloud.com, IG: carolinechouletissier

If any member is willing to give advice and would like to be added to this list, please contact the Editor.

anglianpotters@gmail.com

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Members' Websites

I haven't had many responses to my deletion of defunct web addresses on this list, and I wonder if now that people's details are so readily available on our website and elsewhere, how useful this feature actually is. It was introduced many years ago, and I think perhaps we no longer need it and could use the space for more useful things. If you have any thoughts on this, whether or not we should keep it, or anything we might replace it with, please do drop me a line - anglianpotters@gmail.com.

Julia Bruce, Editor

- www.amandabanham.com
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Beautifully shaped and decorated porcelain vases by Rob and Debbie Rivett. See page 18.

Forthcoming Events

Celebrating Ceramics

10–12 July 2026

Waterperry Gardens, near
Wheatley, Oxford OX33 1LA

www.celebratingceramics.co.uk

Potfest Haughley Park

7–9 August 2026

Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 3JY

potfest.co.uk/visit/potfest-suffolk

Clay in Clare

10–13 September 2026

The Old Goods Shed,
Clare, Suffolk.

Independent Ceramics Market, London

13 September 2026

Copeland Park & Bussey Building,
133 Copeland Road London,
SE15 3SN

Potfest in the Pens

30 October–1 November 2026

Melton Mowbray Market, Melton
Mowbray, England, LE13 1JY

potfest.co.uk/visit/potfest-in-the-pens-melton-mowbray/

Oxford Ceramics Fair

31 October–1 November 2026

St Edward's School, Main Campus
Woodstock Road Oxford, England,
OX2 7NN

oxfordceramicsfair.com

Art in Clay Farnham

14–15 November 2026

The Maltings, Bridge Square
Farnham, England, GU9 7QR

www.artinclayfarnham.co.uk

For details of even more ceramics
events and shows visit:

www.thisthingwithceramics.co.uk

AP Clay Stores

Our clays are sourced from Valentine Clays, Stoke-on-Trent: an inexpensive source of clay for members. They are sold in 12.5kg bags.

Please contact members listed below to confirm availability and arrange pickup during office hours. Ideally, pay by card/cheque. We don't accept cash.

You must quote your AP membership number as this is required to reference your purchase.

PLEASE SEE THE ARTICLE ON P6 ABOUT CHANGES TO SPECIAL ORDERING TO OUR CLAY STORES.

Essex: Chris & Barbara Bullock

Kingswood, Dedham Road,
Ardleigh CO7 7QB

Please note we have cancelled our
landline. You can contact us on:
07412 953399

mother.hen@e-chickens.com

Norfolk: Diana Ng

The New House (3rd house on the
right), Smee Lane (via Church Road),
Great Plumstead, Norwich NR13 5AX
07516 503016 TEXT ONLY, PLEASE.
diana@ngpottery.com

STONEWARE Firing 1150°C–1280°C

Special Fleck	£ 7.80
ES5 Original	£16.35
B17C grogged	£10.25
ES40 Handbuilding	£20.50
ES50 Crank	£13.55
V9G	£ 7.82

EARTHENWARE

Standard Red Terracotta (1080°C–1160°C)	£ 6.10
ES130 White Earthenware (1060°C–1150°C)	£15.65

PORCELAIN Firing 1220°C–1240°C

P2 Porcelain	£16.95
Royale Porcelain	£21.05
Porcelain Grogged	£21.85
Audrey Blackman	£23.05

Cambridgeshire: Denise Brown

Grange Farm, Whittlesey Road
Benwick, March PE15 0XU
07949 442772

info@denisebrown ceramics.co.uk

Suffolk: Rebecca & Dominic Upson

Stoke Farm, Battisford,
Stowmarket IP14 2NA
07939 170700

apclaystoresuffolk@gmail.com

Diary Dates

Potters' Camp

Stoke Farm, Suffolk.

29 July–2 August 2026

Emmanuel College

20–29 August 2026

Diss

11–12 September 2026

Tom Kemp – Demo Day

Mundford, Sunday 27 Sept. 2026

Ickworth

31 October–1 November 2026

Ashley Howard – Demo Day

Mundford, Sunday 25 Oct. 2026

All Saints' Church, Cambridge

14 November–6 December 2026

Membership Fees

Single £35 – half year* £20

Joint £60 for two people at the same
address – half year* £35

Institution £60 for a college or
workshop – half year* £35 (details
from the Membership Secretary)

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

*Half year rates only for new

members

Advertising Rates

Price: per issue, three issues a year

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Summer Issue 1 June

Winter Issue 1 October

Please supply text in Word or in
the body of an email. Images to be
supplied as high-res .jpg, .tif, .pdf

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