

Chat from the Chair

Well here we are heading into winter and war, strange times.

After the events in America it feels rather strange to be dealing with the rather more mundane issues of potters. However, life goes on and we have to look forward to happier times.

Planning for the festival goes on apace, and we have added Gwen Heeney to our list with the possibility of a large brick based hands on sculpture. We still have two more to confirm, so more of this in the next newsletter. Thanks to those of you who have completed the questionnaire, if you still haven't done it please get it back to me in the next week please, with the SAE I was hoping for a 100% return. More of this elsewhere.

Our committee needs new blood, and we were encouraged that over 30 of you expressed an interest in getting involved. Please give me a ring if you are prepared to give your organisation some time. Again more of this later. Enough for now, see you at the AGM in Manchester, and in the meantime, productive potting.

Pete Clough



Cromartie Kilns have been leading the way for fifty years with the robust quality and innovation in kiln design that will take you into the new millennium.

Cromartie Hobbycraft is the sole authorised Distributor of Duncan and Gare, the two top US Ranges of brush-on colours and glazes that are now recognised by professional potters for their superb technical quality.

Potter's Wheels and Machinery
Clays, Raw Materials, Tools, Colours and Glazes complete the picture putting Cromartie firmly at the centre of Ceramics

Send for our catalogues or come and browse and talk to our experts in our large showrooms.
Open Monday to Friday 9-5

The Cromartie Group,
Park Hall Road, Longton
Stoke on Trent, ST3 5AY
Tel. 01782 313947
01782 319435
Fax. 01782 599723
www.cromartie.co.uk
enquiries@cromartie.co.uk

**Deadline for the next issue is
November 20th 2001**

Editors Note

Many thanks to all those who contributed to this issue. Keep it coming the more the merrier. It has just dawned on me that the next issue will be the Christmas issue!!!! (Scary isn't it.) There's lots of articles and ads to interest you in this issue and the next issue will see the start of profiles of artists that are demonstrating at next years festival. Don't forget if you have any potters tips to pass on them send them to me. Also, I've been thinking about including book reviews: Would you be interested and if so would you be willing to send a book review for any books you've purchased recently? Contact me with your views on this or any other items you would like to see in YOUR newsletter.

Please note that Alison Boothroyd has moved—New address and telephone number on page 16.

I, along with all the other committee members are up for re-election at the AGM at Manchester in October. If you are interested in taking on the newsletter or indeed sharing the post, then please feel free to apply for the job. I will of course carry on if no one else wants it, but I'm all for a new injection of ideas to keep it interesting. If you are interested but would like more info on what the job entails, please feel free to contact me and I will gladly give you all the information you require. Of course this applies to any of the committee jobs, just contact the relevant committee member. Or if you just want to join the committee, see what we all do and then decide which (if any) post you would like to have a go at.

See you at the AGM

Regards

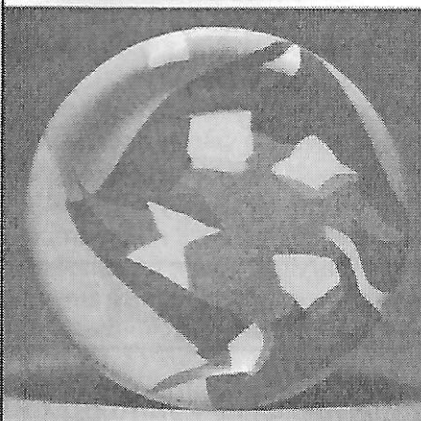
Judith



Jo Connell



Andrew Davidson



Sabina Teuteburg

ONE DAY MASTERCLASS

Plus **A.G.M.**

Saturday October 20th 2001

10 am to 4 pm

At Manchester Metropolitan University

The day will celebrate and promote the use of coloured clays.
(This master class is suitable for everyone whether a beginner or a master)

Jo Connell will be demonstrating her appliquéd, inlaid and moulded stoneware.

Andrew Davidson will be throwing his beautiful spirally mixed clay bowls and bottle forms.

Our slide lecturer is Sabina Teuteburg who uses a variety of inlay methods and jigger and jollying.

Tickets:

Members £12

Non Members £15

Students and unwaged £10
(proof required)

Further Information and tickets are available from
Su Hudson.

12 High Barn Road Middleton Manchester M24 1DT Tel/Fax: 0161
653 8232 Email: suhudson@planetmail.com

Please send a Cheque/Postal Order along with a S.A.E. for return of tickets
and map

It will be a day not to be missed so book NOW to guarantee a seat

**THIS IS ALSO YOUR AGM IF YOU WANT CHANGES TO YOUR
ORGANISATION YOU SHOULD BE THERE.**

CERAMICS in SOCIETY

www.ceramic-society.co.uk



on-line and in print!

the magazine for creative ceramics

2-year subscription (8 issues):
£33 for members of UK potters' associations

Phone 01392 430082



Important Note for members who would like to exhibit.

If members would like to show work in the exhibitions and can not get to the venue contact your nearest NPA committee member. They should be able to help by delivering the work with their own if exhibiting, or by passing on your name to the nearest exhibiting member who may be able to deliver their work as well as their own.

THE POTTERS CONNECTION LTD

WHETHER YOU ARE A COMPLETE BEGINNER OR A SEASONED PROFESSIONAL, WE CAN SUPPLY YOU WITH ALL YOUR POTTERY NEEDS AT THE BEST POSSIBLE PRICES, AND IF YOU CAN FIND THE SAME PRODUCTS FOR LESS ELSE WHERE WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO MATCH OR BEAT ANY QUOTED CATALOGUE PRICE.

AS A MEMBER OF THE NORTHERN POTTERS ASSOCIATION, WE WILL GIVE YOU A 5% DISCOUNT* (PRE-VAT) OFF OUR CATALOGUE PRICES.

WHY NOT TELEPHONE OR WRITE TO US AT THE ADDRESS BELOW FOR A COPY OF OUR MAIL ORDER CATALOGUE:

5% OFF!

THE Potters CONNECTION

THE POTTERS CONNECTION LTD
LONGTON MILL, ANCHOR ROAD, LONGTON,
STOKE, ST3 1JW
TEL (01782) 598729 FAX (01782) 593054
ALL MAJOR CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS ACCEPTED.

* 5% DISCOUNT DOES NOT APPLY TO WHEELS, MACHINERY, KILNS OR CARRIAGE CHARGES.

Questionnaire

Thanks to all of you who have returned the questionnaire from the last newsletter. I haven't had time to collate the results, but hope to do so for the next newsletter. As you can imagine it will be quite a task. Preliminary evidence shows that you are very positive about your committee and this newsletter, which is encouraging for the work we do. One problem which has shown up is the difficulty of getting work to selected shows, given that we have members from the Scottish Borders down to Sheffield on both sides of the Pennines. Our suggestion here is to use the members list and see if you can combine transport. Alternatively, get your work to the nearest committee member. For the Hartlepool show you could bring your work to the one day event and AGM in Manchester as all the committee will be there.

Beyond that I'm not sure what we can do, any suggestions?

Finally if you haven't filled it in, please do so ASAP.

Website for Members.

We have our own NPA website at
www.northernpotters.org

If you wish to have your work shown on the site please send good quality photos and information plus your email address to Sue Hudson

We cannot show private addresses or telephone numbers on the site. We are frequently being asked by galleries for information about members work, and this is free publicity for you all. Don't delay, do it today!!!!

AGM and your committee.

I have to start with an apology. I didn't realise last year that according to our constitution committee members are elected for three years only, and then have to stand for re-election.

We didn't do that, and therefore at this AGM all current committee members are standing for re-election, and Co-optees, Alison Boothroyd, Francis Begany and Julie Miles are standing for election to the committee. We also need more members to join us to understudy particular jobs, and to help with the festival. Alison is now working fulltime, so Julie need help with exhibitions, Judith needs support with the newsletter, I am standing down next year after the festival, and to ensure continuity, PLEASE, you need to come forward NOW!!!

We meet around five times a year across the region, always on a Saturday, delicious bread and soup provided, and your traveling costs are covered. Without your support and involvement your Association cannot function, so it's up to you.

Pete Clough

Exhibitions

The next NPA exhibition will be our Christmas Selling Exhibition which will take place at Hartlepool Art Gallery between Friday 9th November into early January. It will be shared with Hartlepool Art Club, who have exhibited there for the past 53 years and who will show paintings. Therefore a limited amount of wall space will be available, there are some small covered boxes for small / fragile pieces and jewellery and plenty of plinths. Work will be replaced from stock as it is sold and we are looking for up to 15 pieces of work per member. Delivery of work will be from Saturday 27th October to Saturday 3rd November - Our One Day Event at Manchester is the weekend prior to this, so if you attending this event it will be possible to bring your work to this event and link up with others who are also delivering to Hartlepool, Alison and Julie will have room to take some work on a first come first served basis on the day. More precise details and submission forms to follow in the October newsletter.

The Preview for this event is on Friday 9th November from 7 pm to 9 pm. Everyone is welcome.

Can You Help ?

Any members local to this exhibition who are willing to help would be greatly appreciated. Helpers will be required for unpacking and repacking of work on selection day -

Sunday 4th November 10am - 3pm,

or at the preview - Friday 9th November 6.30pm - 9pm.

Anybody interested should contact:

Julie Miles - Tel: 01254 699652

Email: julie-miles@talk21.com

Urgent Message from Julie Miles

Can the person who left a message on Julie Miles's answer phone about helping with the Hartlepool exhibition please get back in touch as the telephone number was not taken down correctly.

Second hand books and magazines bought and sold.
Phone for wide ranging ceramic book list.

Magazines available include:

Ceramic Review
Ceramic Art & Perception
Ceramic Technical
Ceramics Monthly
Crafts
Craft Art International
Art Review
Artists Newsletter
Ceramics in Society

Free post and packing.

Kelsick Rd Ambleside Cumbria LA22 0B2
Tel:01539434045

10% Discount for NPA Members collecting
from gallery or Potfest

Dexterity

Dexterity

JUMPING IN AT THE DEEP END

- a first venture into the world of 'real' potters!

by Bryony Armstrong

Way back at the end of summer 2000, my three friends and I were still glowing from our successes at A Level Art & Design Ceramics. During this "we must be proper potters now" euphoria, someone mentioned 'Potfest' in Penrith, due to be held in August 2001, and gamely we thought "we can do that". First Linzi (Thomas) rang Geoff Cox, the Potfest organiser, to check we could enter - Geoff was very encouraging, suggesting we share stands to keep costs lower. So Linzi sent off our forms and that was it - we were committed to doing 'Potfest in the Pens'!

One of the best things at this time was being able to tell family, friends (in fact anyone I spoke to) that I had "work showing on the web", thanks to the Potfest website. However, despite this imminent fame (!), for some strange reason we all then took it easy for a while. In March it suddenly dawned on us that we actually needed to produce some work - 4 months isn't such a long time when making ceramics!

We also had to decide what we were each going to show. We had all produced quite disparate work over the last couple of years in order to fulfill the variety required for exams, but we acknowledged that 'real' potters have a style, a theme to their work, so we needed to find ours! With advice from our tutor and each other, we decided on our individual themes, mine being the organic coiled pots, resembling pumpkins/squashes/fruits, that seemed popular with other students and friends.

It was good having our 'team' and our tutors to discuss things and to boost each other when needed. There was so much to think about, and not just making pots. We knew we had a 6' table each at Potfest - but what to do about cloths, plinths, backdrops, prices, price labels, business cards, name plates, bags, float money,? It was all guesswork really. One of our main concerns was not to spend a lot of money beforehand (in case we didn't sell a thing!), so we kept things simple and begged favours where ever possible.

Finally the Thursday came when we set off from Leeds to go to set up at Penrith. We had all had up

and down moments in the previous few weeks, but were generally in excited good humour on the way. But oh! when we arrived. I went in firstand came out shaking, not wanting to go back in! The market was vast inside and the stands that had already set up were so impressive - real potters, with proper display stands with proper work on them.

As we set up that afternoon we watched, silently and with sinking hearts, the others around us setting up. What were we doing there? We felt as though we had just naively jumped in at the deep end - this was far too sophisticated for us. Our one trestle table each seemed a bit paltry, looking (to us) like jumble sale tables in the middle of an upmarket shop.

What then depressed me even further was the discovery that I was listed in the programme as Brenda, not Bryony, Armstrong and that I had Pat Armstrong's phone number! Geoff was apologetic and Pat very friendly, but it all added to the feeling that we didn't really belong there. Consequently we had a very subdued Thursday night, left the pub at 9.30p.m. and all went to bed early.

Friday - this was it, the real thing at last. I can't say I enjoyed the Friday at all. I had had no idea at all how stressful it could be to have people looking at and judging your work; some walking straight by with obviously no interest in it at all, others stopping to look briefly, and others really very interested.

All day I had a fixed smile in place, not knowing whether to look at people in case it scared them off, or whether I should be engaging them in conversation to get them interested. We started conducting experiments; sometimes big welcoming smiles and chatty comments, other times pretending to read a book. Did it make any difference to sales? I haven't a clue but it helped pass the time.

And timewhat a lot of it. Three whole days behind a table, sometimes sitting and sometimes standing just to add variety. We hardly dared leave the stand for tea or toilets in case we missed our 'big' sale (my first sale was actually on one of my very rare breaks!)

And the tension. I hardly breathed all day long, wondering whether people would buy something - some of them picked up a piece and discussed it, then stood looking at it for a bit. I knew they were thinking whether to buy it or not - my mind tried desperately to will theirs to say 'yes'. They went off to "have a think about it" but it was such a huge place, with over 200 potters, I soon realised that either they would be back in 2 long hours, or they might just find something they preferred on the way round. "Why didn't you choose mine?" I wanted to ask, "Is it the price, the colour, the size,..... is it me?".

Then as the weekend passed and we gradually started to sell pieces, we began to feel that we did belong, that maybe we were legitimate potters after all, just a little bit greener than the rest. When I sold one of my very large pots on the Sunday, I felt elated - absolutely thrilled that a complete stranger has chosen to spend so much of their money on one of my pots, just because they liked it. My friends cheered for me because they appreciated what a moment it was, and then the other potters around us joined in!

It was then that it struck me particularly just how fantastic it had been being with the other potters there, especially those on the stands next to ours with whom we had shared so much. I had only met them 3 days ago and yet now they felt like mates, so friendly and supportive. Together we had experienced the quiet patches, the thrill of selling, had watched and met many of the visitors (/ characters!) to Potfest, and had a lot of laughs along the way.

And this I think is the key to doing an event like Potfest. What I have really appreciated from the whole experience is that feeling of belonging, of being accepted both by the 'real' potters and by the public. Now that first step has been taken I feel excited about the future and confident enough to plan for more selling/exhibiting.

So, it did seem like a jump in the deep end at first but, now it is done, I learnt from it and even managed to enjoy it. And next time I know to get rid of the fixed smile, relax and chat a bit more, and even enjoy a few tea breaks!

Opportunities

Ropewalk Contemporary Art and Craft opened its doors in April 2000. Situated in part of a former Rope Factory in North Lincolnshire, in the shadow of the Humber Bridge the Grade II listed building holds two galleries, artist's studios and workspace. The Ropewalk is run by artists co-operative, none of who are potters! We are looking to commission someone to design and make a limited edition mug to sell on the premises. The design would have to incorporate references to the 200 years of rope making in the building. If you are interested please contact Sally Ward on 01652 660 380 on Wednesdays or Thursdays to discuss fee and quantities.

The Craft Pottery Charitable Trust Annual call for Applications. The closing date for grants from the Trust for 2002 is December 15th 2001 (decision by March). Guidelines for making an application are available from Liz Gale, Trustee and Secretary to the Trust, Taplands Farm Cottage, Webbs Green, Soberton, Southampton SO32 3PY. Please send a SAE.

*Awards are made to persons in ceramics.

*The benefit should apply as widely as possible.

*For the preparation of books, travel, film, conference attendance and organisation, and other ceramic projects.

THREE DAY MASTERCLASS IN ANAGAMA FIRING With BRIAN HOLLAND The Rufford Anagama kiln will be fired again in October of this year. The firing will begin at 8.00 am on Saturday 20 October and go on until 12.00 midnight on Sunday 21 October. Packing of the kiln will commence at 10.00 am on Friday 19 October. Fee **£25.00** up to four pieces of your own work included in the firing and take part in as many four hour firing sessions as you wish over the two day firing. Brian Holland, who has been involved in firing the Rufford Kiln on a number of occasions, will be able to take you through the aesthetics and practicalities of Anagama firing. Enquiries to Rufford Gallery, Rufford Country Park, Nr. Ollerton, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 9DF Tel: Peter Dworok 01623 822 944 ext. 204

20th & 21st October— Childrens Fair, 17th & 18th November— Makers Fair, 15th & 16th December—Xmas Fair at The Old Market Event Centre at Granary Wharf Leeds. Price for each Fair is £100 but if you book more than one you get 20% discount on 2nd and 3rd. £50 deposit required with booking Contact Len Davies or Kevin Scott on 0113 244 2020 for more details.



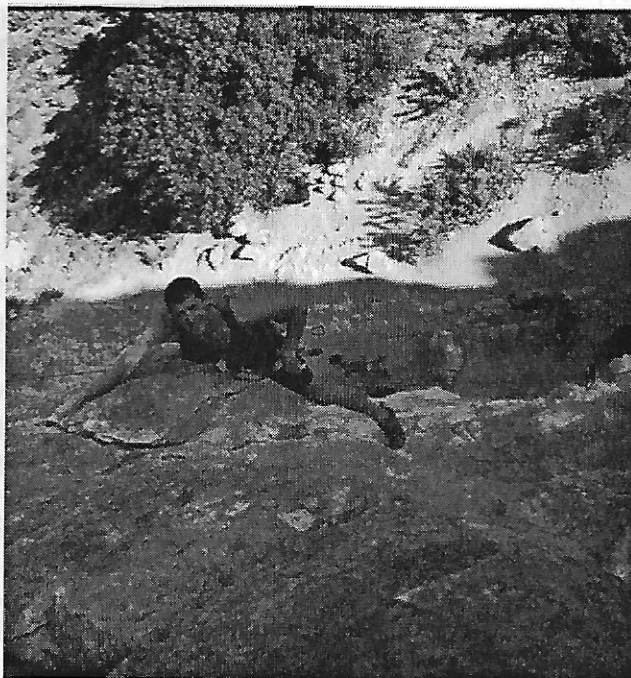
My profile starts it seems, in a similar way to a lot of the previous articles with Judith tracking me up and down the pens of Pottfest before finally cornering me and extracting a promise (in ever such a nice way) that I will write something. I wish I was a super self-publicist longing for any

opportunity to rattle on about my talents and philosophies, but I'm afraid I approach the thought of writing anything with nothing short of dread. I can spend a day fretting over a 100 word 'Artists Statement' for an exhibition, and have had to evolve one so general that it doesn't matter what I exhibit as long as it's made of clay.

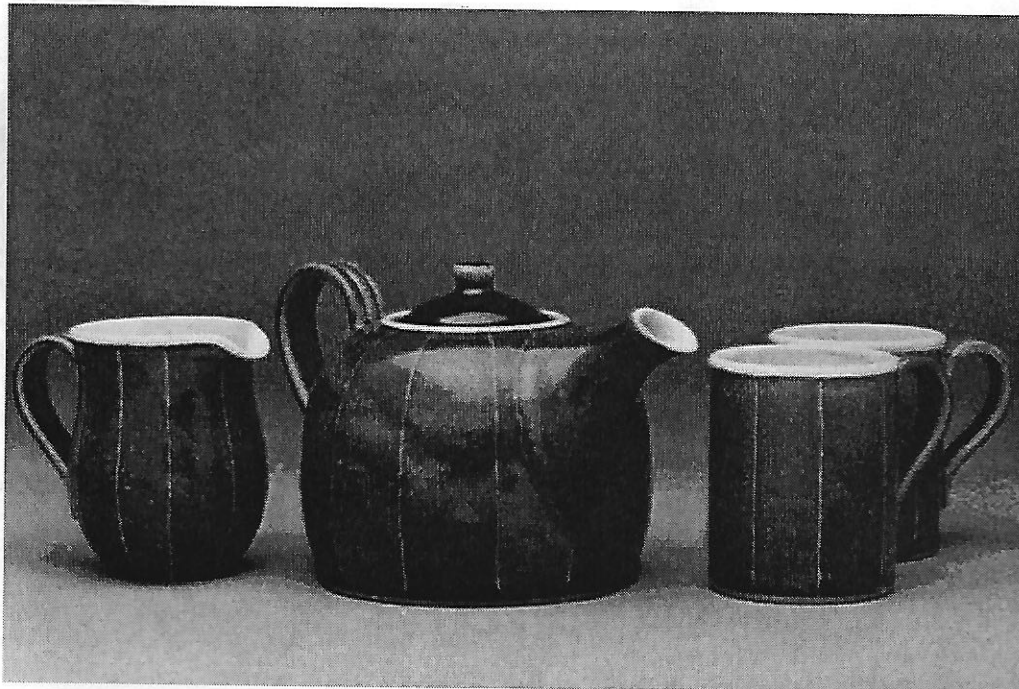
When reading other peoples articles I do feel guilty that I'm not as keen as others seem, clay is not the love of my life. It could have been but rock-climbing reached me first. After doing a degree in Chemical Engineering at UMIST ('oh that must be why your glazes are so nice', to which I answer yes because its simpler that way) I became a full-time climber, getting a variety of jobs in the winter to fund myself, or signing-on (absolutely shocking, sponging waster).

During an enforced lay off due to a broken ankle I went to pottery class, I can't remember now if it was for any other reason than because my girlfriend went and had made some very lovely ashtrays ('they're not ashtrays, they're cheese boards!'). As soon as I went on the wheel I thought, this is what I want to do. If only I'd gone to computing classes instead I'd have saved myself a lot of hassle and probably be thinking of early retirement by now.

When unemployment became a hanging offence in the late 80's my wife Judy (as she was by now) who also climbed, took a teaching job and we moved to Keighley. After a couple of years of odd jobs and more pottery classes I bought a small kiln and a wheel, converted the living room of our 2 up, 2 down into a studio and called myself a professional potter. I taught myself to mix glazes, fire



David Abbey

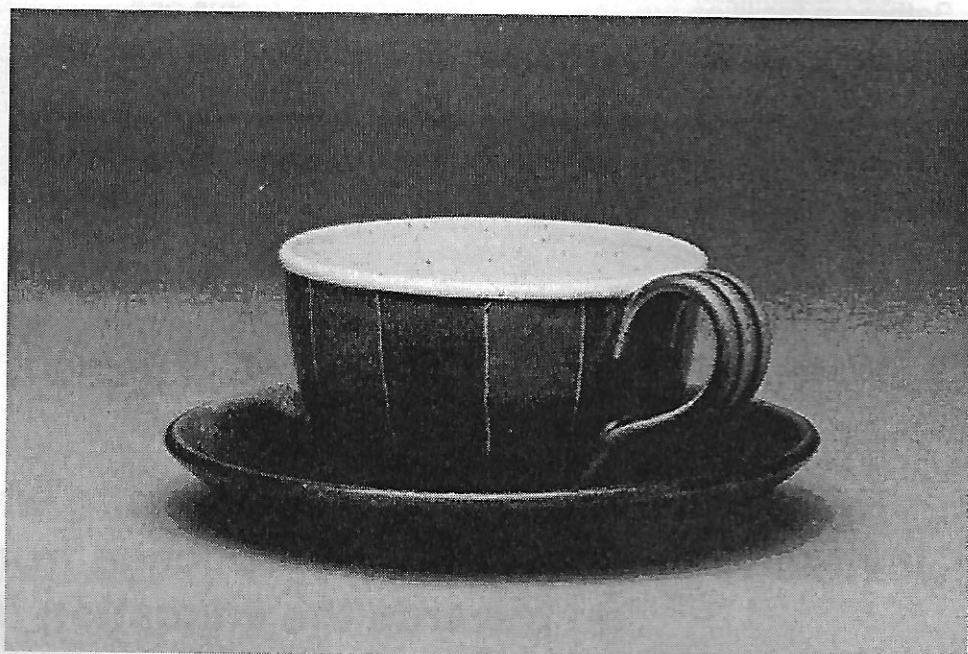


a kiln etc by reading probably every ceramics book that existed at the time. I knew the work of every studio potter living and dead and bored my wife stupid. I started with a range of surprise, surprise blue domestic ware of what I can only imagine was of dubious quality and worse design, but it did sell, and I blundered on regardless. With the help of an Uncle-in-law (lucky brick

industry connection) and my father (plumber extraordinaire) I built a 12 cubic foot gas kiln in the outhouse and started to develop the heather coloured range that I still make today. Being self-taught I lacked confidence in my work and progressed slowly through local shops, NPA exhibitions to galleries etc and have only recently started to be really happy when I open the kiln door (maybe being not totally depressed would be nearer the mark).

Every now and again I flirt with decoration and after making some terrible pot with splurges on it remember that my strength lies in creating strong forms which need simple enhancement. I have a range of overlapping glazes which, when working at their best have subtle variations in colour and texture, and am currently utilising these to develop a range of bigger one off pieces. It would be nice to do shows without 'does it pour', 'does it hold a pint', 'I can't get my nose in that mug', but on the other hand it does keep you going when customers come back having enjoyed using your pieces everyday.

Eighteen months ago we moved, and now have a bit more room although I still have my studio in the house (I'm used to the comfort now). The kiln did not enjoy the move and paid me back with a few months of technical difficulties. During the resulting frustration and lack of cash I decided to look after our 2-year old daughter instead of paying a childminder, so I am currently a part-time potter. When she goes to school I shall emerge like a butterfly from a cocoon with a new body of work, shed my mantle as the Victor Meldrew of ceramics, give up climbing and devote myself to work. Maybe.



further information on the

Bi-Annual Festival



Northern Potters
Association



12th/13th/14th July
2002
at

Bretton Hall

**Gordon Cook, Dorothy Feiblemann, Geoffrey Fuller,
Morgan Hall, Gwen Heaney and Takeshi Yasuda
confirmed so far**

**There will be no parallel programming
The main lecture theatre holds 250+**

Accommodation:

Set in the 500 acre landscape there are 150 single bed rooms (doubles on request). Situated in three storey hostels each room is well equipped with its own washbasin. Bathroom facilities are shared by landings of 5 rooms and each landing has its own kitchenette. There are a further 366 self catering, en-suite rooms at the nearby Manygates. All at the very reasonable cost of £14 per night per person. If you fancy camping there are excellent camping facilities down the road.



**Watch this space for more news of demonstrators, lecturers,
prices etc.**

**There will also be a silent auction to which everyone is
invited to donate a bowl - proceeds from the auction will
go towards the education fund.**

What's On

Raku Symposium 6th October 2001 (*a symposium to discuss the current status of Raku examining the history, aesthetics, associated myths and future of raku*). Illustrated talks and discussion presented by Rick Hirsch, Gabi Dewald and Michael Robinson, chaired by David Jones. Fees are £35 (con. £25) per person which includes tea and coffee and a buffet lunch) at Rufford Craft Centre, Rufford Country Park near Ollerton, Newark, Nottinghamshire. NG22 9DF. Tel: 01623 822 944

Japan until 28th Oct (*a major exhibition of ceramics calligraphy and textiles celebrating Japan Year*) Rufford Craft Centre Tel: 01623 822 944

Moving In 6th Nov. to 1st Jan. (*unpack a Christmas exhibition at Rufford*) Rufford Craft Centre Tel: 01623 822 944

Paint a Pot Sunday Oct 14th, Sat 1st Dec and Sun 2nd Dec (*choose a pot from a selection of pre-fired forms, that include tiles, mugs, jugs, vases and teapots and decorate in your own individual style. This activity is suitable for children as well as adults cost vary from £3 to £16*). Rufford Craft Centre Tel: 01623 822 944

Decorative Forms until 25th October an exhibition of *John Calver's Ceramics* at Stokoe House Ceramics Gallery, Market Place, Alston, Cumbria Tel: 01434 382 137

CPA Events:

Ming Ceramics, a slide talk by Jessica Harrison-Hall Sat 10th Nov. 2pm in the Sackler Room at the British Museum, Great Russell St., London. CPA members £6, Non Members £9, Full-time Students £3 Contact Elizabeth Smith Tel/Fax: 01398 331 442 Booking Essential.

Many a Slip, slide talk by Richard Phethean Sat 3rd Nov. at the University of Westminster, 309 Regent St, London Prices as above. Contact Don Hudson Tel: 020 8553 3236 Booking Essential.

Wavelength, an exhibition by Martin Smith at Ruthin Craft Centre until 4th November at Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, Denbighshire, North Wales. LL15 1BB Tel: 01824 704 774

Peugeot Design Awards 2001 Exhibition until 11th November at MAC, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham B12 9QH Tel: 0121 440 4221


Desert Light, an exhibition by Richard Boswell and Peter Swanson until 10th November at The Wellbeloved Gallery, 28 Easton Street, Portland, Dorset. DT5 1BT Tel: 01305 824 302

Saki, Whisky, Schnapps Cups, an installation by Sebastian Blackie until March 2002 at Birmingham City Museum. All the cups are for sale at the end for £10 ea.

5% DISCOUNT

to members of Northern Potters Association

Please quote membership number when ordering



Ceramic materials and equipment to meet all your requirements

PotteryCrafts LTD

HEAD OFFICE
Campbell Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4ET
Tel: 01782 745000 Fax: 01782 746000
sales@potterycrafts.co.uk

<http://www.potterycrafts.co.uk>

LONDON NORTH Kings Yard Pottery, Talbot Road Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1HW Tel: 01923 770127 Fax: 01923 896202	LONDON CENTRAL 8-10 Ingate Place Battersea, London SW8 3NS Tel: 020 7720 0050 Fax: 020 7627 8290
--	---

GHS CERAMICS LIMITED

Morley Leeds

We are a northern based supplier of ceramic materials and products, operating from premises situated within 1 mile of the M62, junction 28.

Within our expanding range of items ready for immediate collection, or early dispatch are:

- Clays from the main producers in Stoke on Trent
- Glazes, colours, frits, oxides, raw materials
- Kiln furniture and refractories including insulation bricks, ceramic fibre products, castables
- A wide selection of quality tools
- Kilns and Potters wheels at competitive prices

NORTHERN AGENTS FOR POTCLAYS

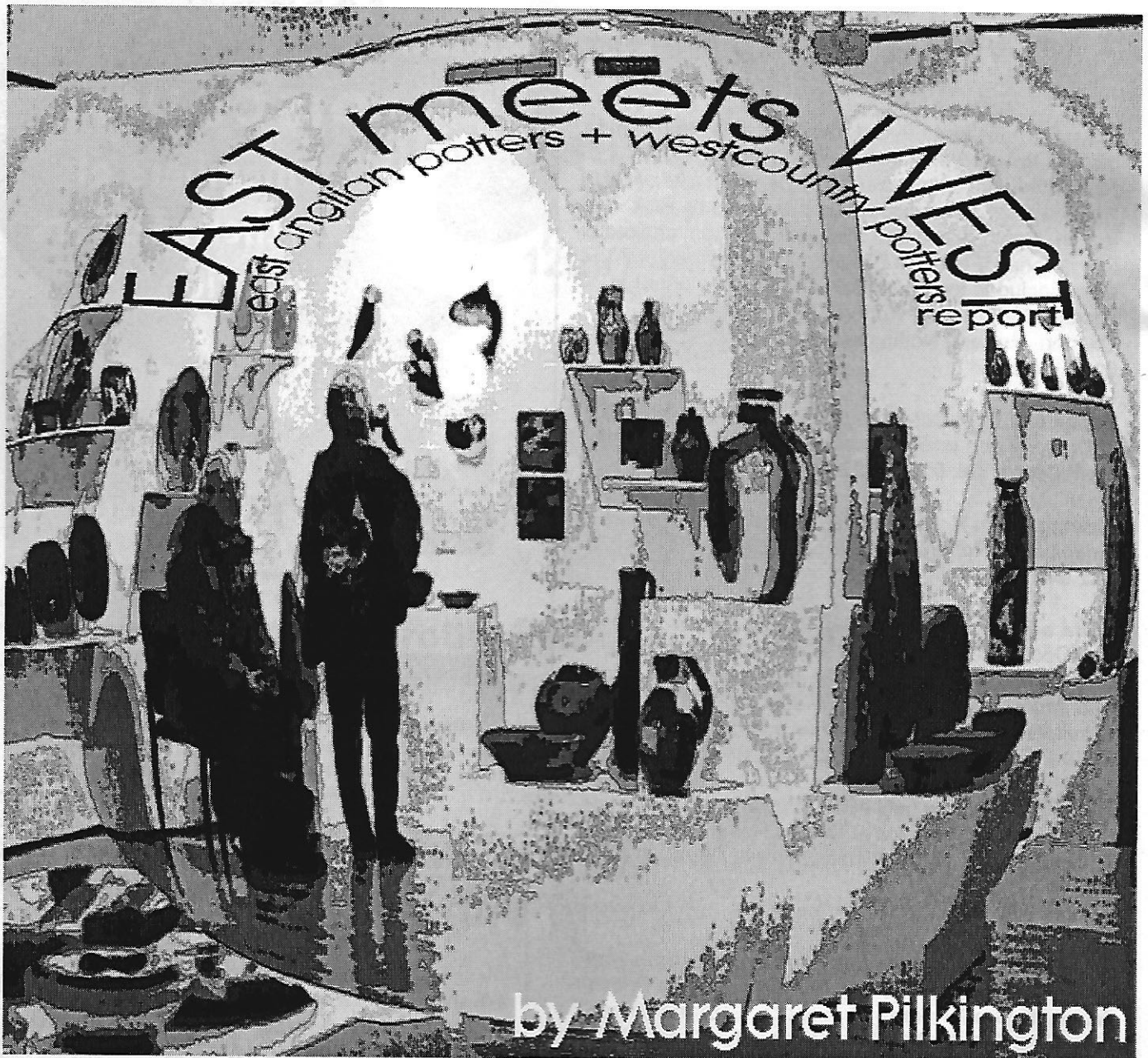
Please telephone or fax to receive our current price list or alternatively call into our Sales Office.

HOURS: Monday - Thursday 8.00 - 4.30

Friday 8.00 - 4.00

Tel: 0113 252 7144 Fax: 0113 253 1527

Units 9-10, Tingley Bar Ind. Est.
Morley, Leeds, LS27 0HE



by Margaret Pilkington

SENSE OF ADVENTURE

The very first time I visited the Westcountry was on a Youth Hostelling trip in the 1960's. I was studying fine art at Hornsey in London, my sister was still living at home in Yorkshire. It would be our first big grown-up adventure together. I assembled all the necessary maps and transport information, planned the itinerary and made the Hostel bookings. I even took one bit of advice from the YHA handbook and wrote to 'an old ferryman who rowed people across a river mouth', booking his services several weeks in advance of our visit! He seemed quite amused to have had so much notice of our arrival and chuckled as he rowed us from one bank to the other. Nevertheless, all my detailed research paid off and the trip was a great success.

So why am I telling you all this? Well, I was reminded of that holiday this week as I planned a visit from Sidmouth in South East Devon where I now live, to The Burton Art Gallery and Museum, Bideford, North Devon where the major exhibition 'East Meets West' is being held. There were many parallels between this adventure and the first one I mentioned. The planning had to be just as

meticulous, since neither myself nor husband are car drivers, but bus timetables and my original Ordnance Survey maps, together with town street plans told me it should be easy-peasy, a two-bus journey changing at Exeter. The amused ferryman was replaced by the bemused gallery attendant and bus enquiry office girl as I rang to make absolutely sure the Foot and Mouth restrictions had not affected their opening schedule, or the bus route. Not as ridiculous as it may sound when I tell you our movements around Sidmouth had already been restricted for a fortnight by blocked access to the riverside walk and cycleway from our street to the centre of town shops.

On arrival at Bideford, we disembarked from the bus and our feet followed precisely the streets of the town plan that was now firmly fixed in our minds' eye, yet the feel of the place was a surprise to our senses and Burton Art Gallery nothing like we expected; some information you simply cannot get from maps and plans. Ceramics are like towns in that respect, no photograph or diagram can prepare you fully for the real thing ~ exhibits in 'East Meets West' were no exception.

Although I would have liked to have attended the opening of the exhibition and met the creators of the works, I

decided I would probably get more out of the show by quietly communing with the pots on another day. Thus, armed with notebook and camera plus identification in case I would be allowed to take photos, I entered the gallery and began my adventure proper.

The exhibition was confined to a very comfortable rectangular space situated between the street side gallery, which houses the permanent collection, and the coffee shop, which overlooks Victoria Park. Lit only by artificial light, there was a feeling to this exhibition of being in an inner sanctum, nothing to distract from the enjoyment of these cherished objects. Having cleared up the question of taking photos as soon as I'd arrived I felt free to spend my time unhurriedly absorbing the ambience of each makers work in turn and making a record, a copy of which I can at least donate to WPA for their archive.

My first reaction as I entered this gallery was that it was not a very big exhibition ~ but as my mum always said, "Good stuff goes in little room." How true that is and how big an exhibition 'East Meets West' turned out to be. I counted thirty-six makers from the notes I made (18 East Anglian, 18 Westcountry) and without having actually counted the number of exhibits, I estimate each maker had an average of seven pots displayed. The over all effect was one of harmony, spaciousness and light, no mean feat of achievement given the great variety of temperaments, styles and sizes of the works.

Taking my Youth Hostelling comparison one stage further: being in the room with all those characterful ceramics was like enjoying the good company of travellers relaxing in a hostel common room after their individual, tiring but exhilarating journeys. Each having their own tales to tell, each regaling the other with experiences that had moulded their personalities. As with the hostellers interacting in groups, each one setting off the next with another tale of wild adventure, so it was with the juxtaposition of the groups of pots displayed. The heavy was set against the light weight, polychrome against monochrome, rough against smooth, translucence against opacity, commercial refined glaze against earthy happenstance from a wood fired kiln, geometric against free painterly decoration, reduction against oxidation. For me the sparks of enjoyment were flying as I took in the scene with all my senses, remembering common experiences from my own experimental making sessions; smells and sounds filled my mind as the pots talked between themselves and to me.

Body language played its part, too, since exhibits were set at varying levels. Some looked you straight in the eye, no messing, no choice. Above an individual's eye level the pots became votive objects, below that level visitors were free to choose their own postures of engagement. Amongst the exhibits themselves there was some very subtle posturing. I was particularly taken with Ian Gregory's dog in the identity-parade of Mariette Rennie's work ~ an unlikely suspect who blended in by a mirroring of stance when looked at from certain angles, adding a frisson to the line-up. Isn't it animal behaviourists who tell us that is what humans do during interactivity. An audience of bewitched, smooth, smoked pebble forms by Westcountry member, Briget Arnold, sat attentively at the foot of Alan Foxley's great life-hardened standing stone as it told its story from East Anglia.

There was a sense of music and dancing from the opposite corner of the room where Helen Martino's quartet of vessels were holding a lively improv session on a high shelf,

dancing and gyrating to the tunes of fine lines and broad brush strokes on their decorated surfaces. Another musical suggestion I felt from that area of the room was from Susan Tutton's globe-like golden vessels. With their embossed metallic look I felt deep sonorous notes of temple bells had been rung on them calling Pascale Penfold's primitive-organism-like pieces to meditation. Each one caught in contemplative trance on the plateau below.

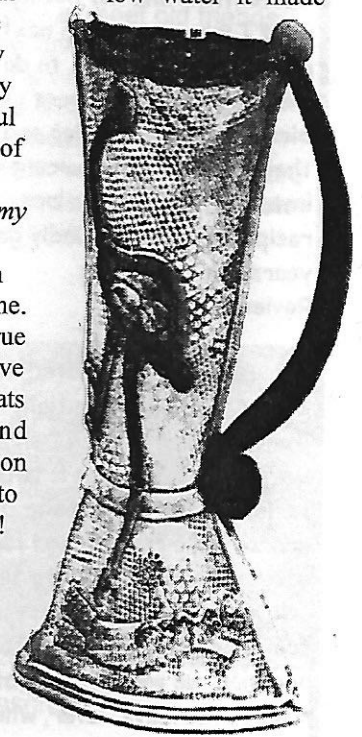
LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Amongst the potters exhibiting, there were ones whose work I seem to have known for ever, through the pages of Ceramic Review. John Leach and Svend Bayer both having been demonstrators from my earliest days of attending Northern Potters' Camps. Now, after three years of being a Westcountry member, I am beginning to get to know work of others from that association. Generally potters from the East Anglian region were the least familiar to me. Perhaps unfairly on the previously mentioned groups, I found some of my most lasting impressions came from the East section of the exhibition. Was it the element of surprise in viewing unfamiliar work? Certainly, I think this may have been one factor: or maybe an image or working technique struck other deeper chords within me.

Even more subconsciously than I realised, the gawky ostrich-like birds adorning Sue Bruce's tall jugs may have connected the whole visit with my Youth Hostelling memories and given me the peg on which to hang this report. These birds reminded me of a strange, gangling, clanking contraption we encountered at Bigbury-on-Sea ... I don't suppose it exists any more! For a few coppers, you could take a ride across from the mainland to Burgh island; it was really designed to be used at times of high tide when the connecting causeway was under water. It was a scaffolding tower on wheels with some sort of engine. It had a passenger platform on top with a striped canvas canopy over ~ if I remember correctly. When the tide was high this seemed a perfectly logical form of transport, but at low water it made the most bizarre spectacle trundling over a very flat sandy beach as a fun ride for holiday makers. I felt the same delightful chuckle factor at first sight of Sue's long legged birds.

*So, the chords of my being had been struck, my visit to Bideford had been an adventure, time to go home. Though if I had really been in true *hostelling mode* I could have jumped aboard one of the boats leaving Bideford Quay and travelled in Michael Palin fashion with a cargo of ball clay to Spain ... Another time perhaps! (Thanks to 'Bideford Buzz' for that shipping info! Amazing what you find in newsletters.)*

Margaret Pilkington /
March 2001



FIRED BY ENTHUSIASM!

Like many other potters, I came to ceramics through the back door of day classes, where I was given a good grounding by a very patient Northern potter, for I was not a very quick learner. Before I set up on my own, I was advised to do line blends etc. of glazes, and so I bought a book which I tried to follow. However, the book I chose was so complicated that I was discouraged at an early stage and confined my glaze research to trying recipes from books, Ceramic Review and, latterly, the Internet.

I did glaze experimentation from these sources in odd spurts, rarely being rewarded with the promised results of "copper red", "holly green", and certainly never achieving "nickel pink" or "manganese purple". Many hours of testing from Internet recipes came to naught last year, so I was ripe and ready when I came upon Greg Daly's "Glazes and Glazing Techniques" earlier this year, full of photos of rich colours of test tiles, and opening chapters about glaze chemistry which even I, more or less, could understand.

Then followed much thinking, mixing, rolling and painting of test tiles, beginning by following Greg Daly's instructions and not having much idea what I was going to do next. It takes ages, I have to admit, to do it all, but eventually the line, cross and tri-axial-blends begin to develop and take on their own lives: my current line of investigation is a development of a recipe John Calver kindly gave some years ago in Ceramic Review.

Another potter admitted to the same kind of terror as I initially felt when confronted with Greg Daly's instructions, so when it became clearer to me, I rang her and she came over and we did a cross-blend together, each glazing test tiles to fire in our own kilns. It proved a very companionable activity, except, on that occasion, we were in a bit of a rush. A few days' later, whilst my tests

were still cooling in the kiln, there was an excited phone call from my friend, "More, please! When can we do it again? I'VE GOT A NICKEL PINK!" (Needless to say, mine didn't come out so pink.)

So, my hitherto unspoken idea of forming a small Glaze Group is born. We would love a few other NPA members to join us: I'm quite happy to plan what we do, at least in the initial stages, and I can offer a reasonable amount of space for up to half a dozen of us and the use of extremely accurate scales. What I can't offer is great understanding of glaze technology, but perhaps someone else can. The only restriction is that we fire to Orton cone 9-10: if your temperature is different, you could still contact me and I could put you in touch with any one else who contacts me and you can do your own thing. Our group will meet after Christmas at a mutually agreeable time. If you would like to join us in an exciting journey, please contact me soon!

What you will need:-

- * Lots of 2" square biscuited test tiles
- + some bigger ones (damaged bisuited plates will do)
- * "Glazes and Glazing Techniques" by Greg Daly, A&C Black-and read some of it.
- * A high-firing oxide pencil for writing on your tests.

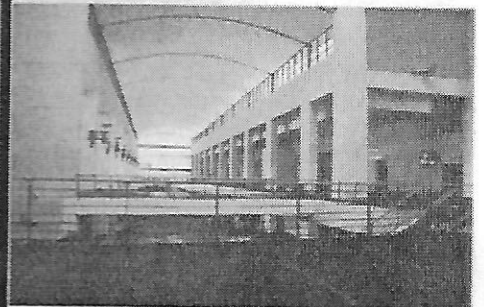
Michèle Beverley,
Ashville Farm House,
Main Street,
Rufforth,
YORK YO23 3QF

Tel. 01904 738123
e-mail beverleys@rufforth.fsnet.co.uk

National Council on Education for Ceramic Art
35th Annual Conference March 28th to 31st 2001 held at Charlotte, North Carolina, USA



N.C.E.C.A. is a non profit organising body for not only the teaching profession in ceramics but for independent potters and ceramic artists together with students and all those interested in ceramics as a legitimate artistic medium. It is essentially a U.S. body with a growing international membership including a representation of serious collectors of ceramics.



The conference is held annually at different locations across the U.S.A. with attendance of up to 4000. This year there were many from the southern local area which has a strong potter tradition, and also from right across the U.S.A. The numbers from overseas was small due possibly to the travel costs.



'Evolving Legacies'

There were six demonstrators *Tre Arenz*, showing sculptural slab work and decorated wall panels, *Susan Stephenson* whose made slab work and large sculptural forms (professor with very complicated explanations of



the origins and construction of her work), *Sergei Isupov* a young ex-Russian doing slab work of animal forms in porcelain who worked at high speed and played to the audience, *Cynthia Pringle* a very experienced local artist showing how to make and decorate functional objects on the wheel, she had a very good repartee with the audience, *Sandi Pierantozzi* an ex-graphic designer whose skills have been adapted to making household objects with a very modern look (fascinating skills of precision and methodical construction in slab work and very good at explaining the process as she went along) and finally *Peter Pinnell* the most experienced and skilled potter of the group, the result he achieved throwing porcelain were very attractive. He was very good at explaining the various processes of construction of fairly complicated forms and passed on tips and how he made tools for specific reasons. There were nineteen discussions over the two day programme so it was not possible for an individual to cover them all. This is I suppose inevitable but could have been extended to a later timetable to allow more people to broaden their interests. It does also indicate the breadth of experience that N.C.E.C.A wishes to make available to all participants during the conference. Those interested in particular areas of ceramics can meet others of a like mind and discuss experiences and ideas.

There were several miscellaneous events which included a silent auction in support of NCECA



endowment fund for which all participants were invited to donate a cup or mug, this made an excellent display of small pieces of work which were then sold by way of a silent auction to the highest bidder. There were also over one hundred trade stands and the conference also provided an opportunity for many colleges across the country to advertise both long and short term courses.

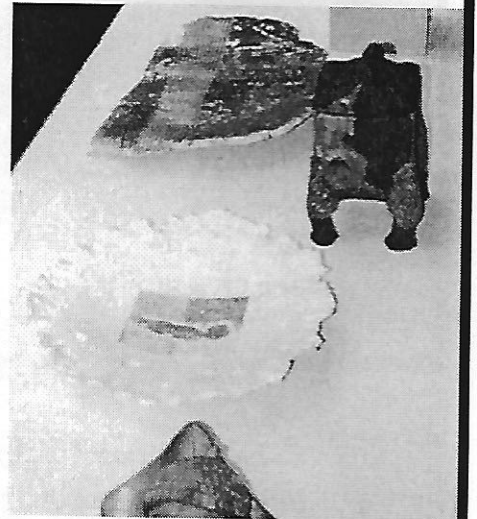
A very interesting difference was the Slide Forum where graduate and international students were invited to register and deliver a 15 minute slide presentation of their work. This opportunity was very sought after to enable students to bring their work to the notice of Board Members of NCECA, generate dialogue and help strengthen their reputation across school and regional boundaries.

There was a very good selected exhibition of students work which was of a very high standard although it should be mentioned that most of the colleges are privately funded with no shortage of resources.



Continuous presentation of a century of ceramics through video and film footage from all parts of the world including USA, Canada, Japan and the UK was very efficiently handled with precise timing for the start of each film so there were no excuses for missing the one you wanted to see.

In conclusion it was a very long way to go, a lot of travelling time and for me personally my first visit to USA to experience the BIG event. Although expensive because hotels and food were extra the economies of scale certainly are one answer to a successful event. The annual fees were £112 but there was a very full attendance by the members (day passes were available). Attendees were all issued with name badges that had highly visible names allowing a good way of meeting others without having to say who you were or guessing the name of others.



There was much opportunity and plenty of space to meet old friends and gain new ones especially as Americans are very friendly and anxious to do all they can to be helpful. The title of the event was especially well chosen as potters are always keen to discuss their secrets and pass them on to others without question.



William Johnson

Your Committee

Chair

Pete Clough
8 Southville Terrace
Harrogate
Yorkshire HG1 3HH
Tel: 01423 567 716
Email: pot.clough@virginnet.co.uk

Membership

Brian Holland
16 High Street
Whitwell
Worksop
Nottinghamshire S80 4QU
Tel: 01909 724 781
Email: brian-holland@lineone.net

Newsletter Editor

Judith Quinn
9 Greenwood Avenue
Ashton-under-Lyne
Lancashire OL6 8RE
Tel/Fax: 0161 339 5670
Email: judiquinn@talk21.com

Secretary

Sheila Spencer
Wood Edge
Hollin Moor Lane
Thurgoland
Sheffield
South Yorkshire S30 7AX
Tel: 0114 288 5830

Honorary Treasurer

William Johnson
Orchard House
Marston Lane
Moor Monkton
York YO5 8JL
Tel: 01904 738 541
Email: wjohnson@northernpotters.fsnet.co.uk

Exhibition Coordinators

Alison Boothroyd
The Stables
Hornby's Close
West End
Kilham
East Yorkshire, YO25 4RR
Tel: 01262 420 608

Julie Miles
2 Winnipeg Close
Lannack
Blackburn
Lancashire BB2 7DX
Tel: 01254 699 652
Email: julie-miles@talk21.com

Website

Francis Begany
4 Paul Row
Summit
Littleborough
Lancashire OL15 9QG
Tel: 01706 378 725

Publicity

Su Hudson
12 High Barn Road
Middleton
Manchester
M24 1DT
Tel/Fax: 0161 653 8232
Email: suhudson@planetmail.com

Education

Barbara Heyward
Skirt Bank
Nether Sifton
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
YO7 2LL
Tel 01609 883 317

General

Caroline Till
21 Hamilton Way
Acomb York
North Yorkshire
YO2 4LE
Tel: 01904 794 171

Members Ads

Wanted: Bricks and Burners for a gas kiln, or an old electric kiln that can be converted. Please Contact Joan Chan 0151 526 2641

For Sale: Kilns and Furnaces Front Loading Kiln interior measures 12" x 12" x 12" never used £500 o.n.o. Tel: 01663 733 990

For Rent: Large pottery workshop in south Lake district, in a converted barn it has been a successful pottery for over 20 years, suit one to 3 people. Separate throwing room, glazing/kiln room, decorating room, display room & biscuit store. Three phase electricity, industrial size Rawden pug mill, electric wheel, 3 electric kilns 5cf to 14cf with electronic controller, compressor, water wash spray booth and complete equipment and stock of materials for making earthenware pottery with lustre decoration. £80 per week. Phone Tobias Harrison 015395 31231.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the Northern Potters Association.

Only listing may be reproduced without the permission of the editor.

Advertising in NPA News

Small Adverts: free to members
£10 to Non-members

Boxed Adverts: whole page £100
half page £50
quarter page £25
eighth page £12.50

Repeat Adverts: Six consecutive inclusions for the price of four