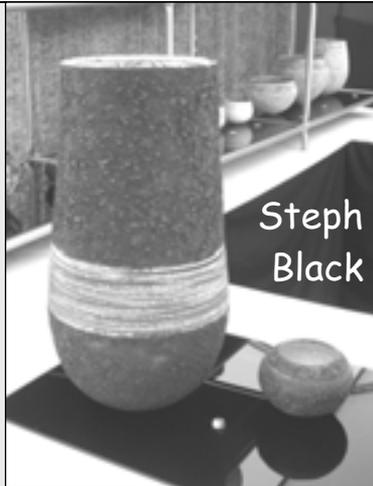


# Northern Potters Association

www.northern-potters.co.uk



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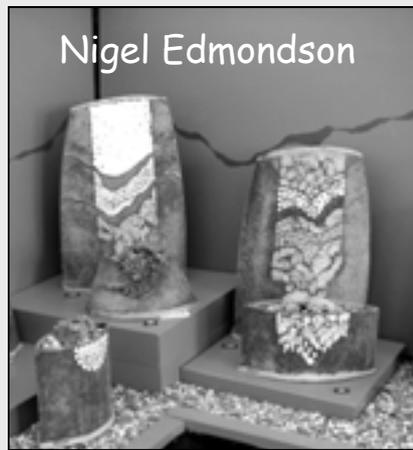


Penny  
Withers



Maggie Berkowitz

## Potfest in the Park



Nigel Edmondson



Dennis Kilgallon



Su Hudson



Dianne  
Cross

Membership update-p.3 NPA 30 events-pp.4&5 Tony Moore (USA) - pp.10-12

Issue August - September 08

**IN THIS  
ISSUE:**

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## Chat from the Chair



Can I say a big thank you to those retiring from the committee? It is only through the generosity of those members giving up their spare time that the NPA can flourish. Thanks go to Brian Holland for steering us through the past couple of years as Chair and for many years on the committee, enthusiastically promoting ceramics and the NPA. William Johnson is stepping down as treasurer and we must thank him for his careful stewardship of the accounts and it is thanks to him that we are financially in such a healthy position. Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg is stepping down from the role of membership secretary and has done a very efficient job in chasing up annual subscriptions and has kept the number of members consistently over 340. Helen Walsh has done a sterling job with the minutes and we thank her for filling the gap of secretary over the last year and look forward to her continued input on the committee.

Just when I thought I was in for a quieter life I end up being Chair of the NPA! Many of you who have met me know that I am passionate about ceramics and I look forward to continuing to raise the profile of the NPA and its members. I hope that we can strive to develop excellence in ceramics. We should be proud to call ourselves potters and continue to inform, educate and promote ceramics. I hope we will look at what we have been successful in and also look to what we might do in the future to promote the NPA. I don't believe in change for change's sake but I do think it is healthy to continue to evolve. I look forward to the future and to meeting and chatting with you. I would also like to welcome the new members of the committee and look forward to working with them.

The website should be up and running by the end of August and at the moment is still operating under the address as [www.northern-potters.co.uk](http://www.northern-potters.co.uk). More in the next newsletter.

It was good to see so many NPA members both at Rufford and Potfest in the Park. Both events were enjoyable. The Potfest in the Park is in such a lovely location and the atmosphere was wonderful with the jazz band playing in the background. Christine and Geoff Cox have done a great job in promoting this event and the potters I spoke to were enjoying the event. I thought the standard of pots on show was very high and it was refreshing to see many potters at the event for the first time; there was a good mix of ceramics. Having told myself that I was not going to buy a pot under any circumstances I promptly ignored my protestations and proudly walked back to my car with a couple of packages tucked under my arm.

## Editor's Comment

Firstly many thanks to all who have contributed articles, images and information for this issue, which has rather an international feel. Member Margaret Scorer writes from France on p.13 and US based sculptor Tony Moore discusses his approach to wood firing on pp.10-12. Tony's work is represented in international museum collections, including the Yorkshire Museum.



I must tell you what a pleasure it was to be present at an AGM attended by plenty of enthusiastic members (not to mention the relief of having some new committee members to replace those retiring after all!). The day was also enhanced by 2 workshops and the opportunity to see the Preston NPA exhibition and pots from the Ismay Collection. See pages 6-7 for my report on Pete Clough's demonstration of making one of his 'blade forms' and the connections with his printmaking work. I found this all fascinating, as I have also, to a certain extent, explored the medium of print as well as ceramic. Unfortunately I was unable to stay on after the AGM for the afternoon workshop. Details of more NPA 30 events are to be found on pp.4-5. I was also very impressed with Potfest in the Park 2008. Images of members' work on show there are featured on the front and back covers.

Finally, please make sure you read the Membership update notice opposite!

## Retiring Chair's Report - Brian Holland



OOPS! May I apologise to all at the AGM for my faux pas? I seem to have got several timings wrong recently, I turned up to a colleague's leaving do a week early and today I took my van in for its M.O.T only to be phoned by the garage informing me that I had taken it a month too soon! However these mistakes fade into insignificance when compared to getting the date wrong for the AGM I was supposed to be chairing.

### The report I should have delivered:

I have had the privilege of serving as Chair for the NPA for the past three years, and I can honestly say that it has been an interesting, and worthwhile experience. It was also a challenging time for the committee. There were issues that threatened to divide us, and we had lost the focus of a festival. We had to find a way forward and find something positive for the membership.

It's a tribute to the committee members, each of them proficient in their respective roles, that, through often quite heated debate, we were able to end up singing from the same hymn sheet and work together on the way forward. So it was that we were able to plan our celebration events, vote through proposed developments to the newsletter and our web site, and agree on the provision of a yearly major event, at which any member will be entitled to submit work for exhibition and be guaranteed that some work will be selected, and at which there will be other events - talks etc - as at a festival but unlike our festivals will be open to the general public. These yearly events could also be the forum for an exchange programme with potters from other countries. (I have been in discussion with a group in France who hold an annual festival and have invited our participation).

Whilst all the above was occupying us, the exhibitions officer was still able to plan and promote a reputable exhibitions programme, the treasurer was able to efficiently to keep our fiscal matters safe, the membership secretary reside over a remarkable increase in membership, the newsletter editor produce an informative and friendly journal, and the secretary keep us all in touch with our decisions. Finally, I must thank the vice-chair for, without being asked, taking on board various aspects of organisation which otherwise would have over loaded the chair. And on top of this we had another OXO show.

The future looks good for the NPA, thanks to your committee, and I am looking forward to being just another active member. Happy making everybody.

## Complete Membership Update

**ALL members MUST complete the enclosed form to ensure your details are up-to-date PLEASE!!!**

## Inside This Issue

Exhibitions and Events including NPA 30	page 4,5
NPA Members' News	page 5
NPA 30 Pete Clough Demonstration	page 6,7
A Potter's Moll Writes	page 8,9
York Art Gallery	page 9
Tony Moore: Painting with fire	page 10-12
Margaret Scorer writes from France	page 13
Regions	page 15,16
New Books, Book Review	page 16
Welcome to New Members, Events Calendar	page 17
Potfest in the Pens 2008	page 20

## Deadline For Next Issue

All material for the **October - November issue** to be with Carol Metcalfe **by the 20th September**

Text and images can be e-mailed (carol.metcalfe@tesco.net), sent by CD or by long hand with photographs to Wintylow Farm Cottage, Brough Park, Catterick, Richmond, N. Yorks., DL10 7PL

**Please** ensure that images attached to emails **do not exceed 1MB** each otherwise my inbox is monopolised by just 1 or 2 contributors and others have their messages bounced back before I can do any thing about it!

# Exhibitions and Events - Barbara Wood

## Hornseys, the gallery, Ripon

Another exhibition opens at Hornseys, Ripon on 22 August. Featured members this time will be Hannah McAndrew, Chiu-I Wu, Michelle Freemantle and Stephen Plumstead. Original paintings by Richmond based artist Ed Kluz will explore imagery and symbolism of the Tudor period, and Hannah has developed her work to echo the Tudor theme.

## Potfest in the Pens: 8 – 10 August, 2008

Chris Mortimer has volunteered to coordinate the castle building on behalf of NPA, with help from any members we can persuade to join in. We are also offering general help to Chris & Geoff Cox, and I would like to thank those of you who have given a day or more to assist. The Potfest series of events has done a great deal to promote ceramics to the public, offering a range of opportunities from the Pens to the Park, and the open application to the Pens has provided a platform for many first timers to try out the selling and PR side of the business in a friendly, supportive environment.

## NPA 30

### Preston

The exhibition at Preston has now finished – it was well received, but there weren't many visitors. It is a lovely light, open, versatile space, with a good range of plinths available, so it was possible to show the work to its best advantage. Unfortunately, very few people turned up to see it! Participants must appreciate that it's up to you to publicise it and invite people. NPA has a tiny mailing list, picked up from various events throughout the country, so we can't rely on that to raise an audience.

Anne Haworth kindly wrote and distributed a press release, which was picked up by the local press, and they even sent a photographer to snap the workshop event, but the main route for publicising the exhibition should be via the contacts and mailing lists of all the exhibitors.

The atmosphere at Preston was very welcoming – Dave Harper and Geoff Wilcock from UCLAN offered practical assistance throughout – and made regular cups of tea and coffee (with biscuits!). Local members helped setting up and dismantling the exhibition, and invigilated during the exhibition – without them we could not have run this event, so a big 'thank you' to all involved.

The Ismay pots were displayed in two glass cabinets on the first floor, from where there was also an excellent view of the members' exhibition. 30 pots was just the right number to show a wide range of styles and techniques, with a little information about some of them researched and prepared by Helen Walsh of York Museums Trust. These same pots will be shown at the other two venues so if you didn't see them at Preston you will have two more chances to do so.

### York

The closing date for York has passed, and the selection of pieces to be included will take place shortly. Please ensure that you send the piece/s selected! One or two substitutions were made at Preston, and while there was room to accommodate the changes there, the space at York is much more limited and work will be



**NPA 30**  
**YORK**

**Exhibitions**  
To celebrate 30 years of promoting pots and potters, the NPA is exhibiting 30 pots by Northern Potters from the W A Ismay collection courtesy of York Museums Trust (Yorkshire Museum).  
In addition, there will be an open exhibition of work by current NPA members

**Workshop Events**  
Thursday 28 August  
10am - 12.30pm Dawn Ridsdel  
Working with bone china  
1.30pm - 4pm Stephen Plumstead  
Hand building techniques  
Friday, 29 August  
10am - 12.30pm Jill Ford  
Slip casting & decorative techniques  
1.30pm - 4pm Stephen Plumstead  
Throwing  
Cost: NPA members - £12 day ticket  
non-members - £12 per session

**Booking essential**  
To book a place, contact  
barbara.wood@ukanline.co.uk  
01759 318146

Exhibitions run 26 August - 12 September 2008

chosen with this in mind.

Local members will be asked to invigilate the exhibition, as at Preston, so please contact Andrea Cundell or me if you are willing and able to help out.

The private view will be on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August, 6pm – 8.30pm**, after the second day of workshops there. The exhibition will be open to the public from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, from Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September.

A good mix of workshops has been arranged (see separate ad for full details), and we hope they will be well supported by members. The members' price of only £12 per day, for 2 sessions, is certainly good value. Please contact me to book a place.

## Rufford

I am anticipating a high number of entrants for the Rufford exhibition. Several people have said they will apply for this venue, when they haven't applied for the others, so please get your applications to me in good time. As before, send up to 6 high resolution images of the actual pieces you would like to exhibit, including the dimensions of the work. The closing date is 25<sup>th</sup> August.

The exhibition will run from 22 September to 19 October, and is open 7 days a week, from 10.30am to 5pm.

## NPA Members' News

### Exhibition details from Carolyn Corfield

**Philip Bastow Gallery 'Meet the Artists' Open Day, Reeth, Swaledale.**

10am - 8pm. Saturday 13th. September 2008.

Exhibition of contemporary art ( Paintings, glass, metal and ceramic sculpture.)

Features work by NPA members, Carolyn Corfield and Sally Wade.

Exhibition runs 17th. August to 30th September 2008. Free access.

### NEST 'A Brush with the Media'

6th. September to 1st October 2008.

Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes, North Yorks.

Theme inspired by the organiser finding a birds nest in her garden besom.

Work by 45 Artists.

**'Ivy's Nest' by Carolyn Corfield**  
is mounted on pear wood and ivy roots.



### From Syl Macro:

Stokoe House Ceramics Gallery

Market Place

Alston

Cumbria

CA9 3HS

Tel 01434 382137

**Open daily 10.00 till 5.00**

### Exhibition at Stokoe House Ceramics Gallery

**12th July - 7th September 2008**

**"LIVING WITH STONEWARE"**

Mugs, jugs, bowls, dishes, platters and so much more: a collection of colourful , decorated pots which work well in the kitchen and look good on display  
by JOHN CALVER

**13th September - 2nd November 2008**

**"CHRYSTALINE"**

Porcelain with Chrystaline glaze uniting both art and science into dazzling ceramic forms.  
by RICHARD BIDEAU

### Also from Carolyn, a last chance to see:

**'Animal Kingdom'**, Ormesby Hall, Middlesbrough, TS7 9AF.

Annual Summer Show by the Roseberry Ceramic Group based at Nature's World.

Runs until Sunday 10th. August. Open Saturdays and Sundays 2pm - 5pm. Free to National Trust members.

# NPA 30 - Preston Demonstration by Pete Clough

Pete Clough's work is inspired by landscapes, though not related to specific locations.



1. Stack 2 slabs and trim together to get them exactly equal. Cut a slope on the side edges for the joins, using a wire wrapped around a notched wooden block.

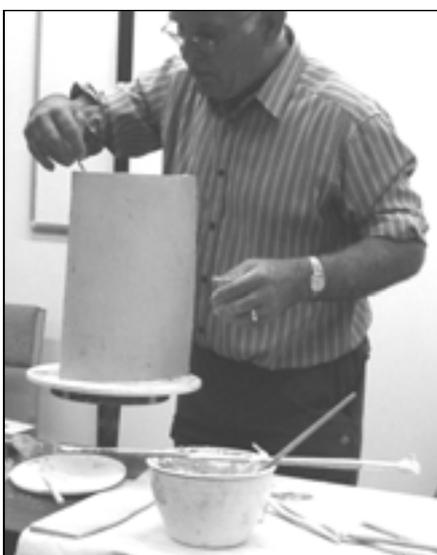


2. Lay the pieces in a former. Add slip and a coil at the base.

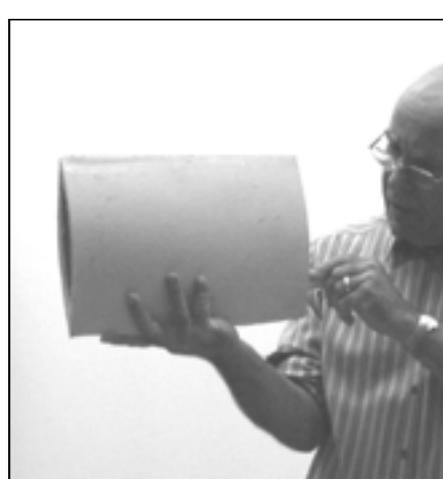
3. Stand the pieces up together and squeeze the joins.



4. Work the joined edges with needles mounted in a cork, then with a wooden tool.



5. Use a long stick to smooth the inside, then brush with slip and add a coil.



6. Beat the coil with the stick to exclude air.



7. Stand the pot on the base slab, score and cut to shape. Score and slip the base and the bottom edge of the pot and join. Lift the whole pot and tap down. Cross hatch the join with the needles tool, and then smooth with a wooden tool. On the inside use a wooden tool and then a brush.



8. Wrap the pot in polythene and leave over night. When it is firm leather hard, surform the joins. Look 'past the form not at it' to judge the outline. Scrape the whole surface to refine the form, beating with a wooden spoon to adjust. Surform the top edge, then sponge the whole surface. Surform and sponge the bottom edge.



9. Adding wings:- score and slip the area then add soft clay.



10. Leave for an hour then use a small surform with handle to shape the extensions. Trim the top and bottom of them with a knife.



11. Brush on a thick slip of porcelain and 80-mesh molochite to add texture to the surface.



12. When this is dry enough, draw into the surface with sharp tools. Raw glaze the inside at this stage.



13. & 14. Apply black stained slip & sponge back. This stage is similar to printmaking techniques.



15. The textures are highlighted



16. Add more coloured slips (porcelain plus 5% or 10% stain) and sponge back.



17. For the sky, brush the slip on then sponge it to blend and soften.



18. Fire to Cone 8 (1280 C), soaked for 45 minutes.



Pete also described his collagraph printmaking techniques. The printing plates are made from 2mm ply, textured with tile cement, white acrylic containing molochite, PVA and carborundum. The surface is then sealed, before applying oil based inks. Black is applied first then wiped back, as with the pots. Other colours are applied with hard and soft rollers.

Thanks to Pete for enriching the AGM day. [Ed]

## A Potter's Moll Writes



*Earth and Fire* at Rufford was a great success for us this year and by the end of Sunday what pots we had left were spread embarrassingly thinly across the stall. It's bizarre how sales can vary from year to year – perhaps depending on position, or even luck.

I'm going to stir things a bit now: a young potter told me that he thinks that some of the older potters believe that the pots sell themselves and stand impassively behind their wares, while the younger ones are more anxious to talk and make their customers feel they have had a completely pleasant experience. This was borne out by a customer who told us that she said to a (well-known) potter 'Smile, be nice, discuss.' He didn't, she didn't, so she came to smiley friendly Jim and bought mega.

I made a point of watching one of the demonstrations this year and enjoyed seeing the skill with which Stephen Plumstead put together a tall cylinder, thrown in sections. His accompanying patter was entertaining and informative, though the MC was rather intrusive and distracting. Jim enjoyed watching Eddie Curtis demonstrate his methods of using stretched slabs.

It is always a pleasure to meet friends and acquaintances and this year it was a great thrill to see Sally Shrimpton and family, who now live in France. She and Jim were founder members of Northern Potters in the 1970's and we reminisced about the early potters' camps at Bretton Hall College, next to what is now the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. It is fun to see old students and customers, and of course potential new students

I enjoyed Peter Hayes's beautiful exhibition in the Gallery – another reason I love the venue at Rufford. It was disappointing however, not to see an exhibition in the Orangery this year. When Jim had a show there two years ago, the garden pots and furniture looked great in the outdoor setting with the pots planted up and the water features running. It is also disappointing that in the big changes taking place at Rufford their collection of ceramics has been sidelined and crammed into the Apical Gallery.



**Eddie Curtis demonstrates his stretched slab construction method at the Rufford Earth and Fire festival**



**Nigel Edmondson:  
fissure pot**

On the whole the weather was kind but there was a *huge* downpour on Sunday afternoon – during which people sheltering under our awning bought the biggest dish we had! We used Rufford as a means to deliver pots to Stuart Dickens of the Bevere Gallery, to collect pots from Nigel Edmondson for our summer show. Long time patron, David Naag, collected a pot he had earmarked earlier in our gallery, and Alan Ault of Valentine's Clays took delivery of a ceramic clock he had asked Jim to make. Rufford is a true market place.

Then it was back home and straight into Holmfirth *ArtWeek* where our gallery is a fringe venue. This year our featured artists are Nigel and Libby Edmondson. Nigel's garden and patio pieces have sold well. Many have holes and crevices in them planted with houseleeks. (Jim, who is no gardener, told me in a puzzled tone that the plants were called 'roof leaks'.) Libby's work consists of paintings and prints, mostly of landscapes and gardens. She has a subtle attractive palette and uses bold outlines.

The amount of energy that many potters expend often amazes me and never more so than when I heard that Nigel Edmondson, Wendy Lawrence and Peter Beard were taking a stand at the RHS flower show at Hampton Court. Several days are set aside to build the stand and display, then there's nearly a week of manning it and then it's all to take down again. I certainly hope it was a great success for them.

Pricing is always a difficult concept and I often wonder how potters arrive at their prices because there is such a wide spectrum. A young ceramicist of our acquaintance was recently advised by an



**Libby Edmondson:  
painting of Holy Island, Lindisfarne**

internationally known potter to double his prices, whereas Jim advised him to halve them – and *sell* them!

Food for the soul recently came in the form of a visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park to see the Sophie Ryder sculptures – magnificent pieces set in beautiful parkland. The bronze Lady Hares have items embedded in the original clay and in bending down to examine these details I managed to bang my head on the Lady Hare's chin – twice. By coincidence I heard Sophie Ryder talking about the work on Women's' Hour the next day.

Two week long courses in the studio begin next – five of the eight students next week have been at least once before, so that's a good start, and we have such fun over mealtimes. Then it's off to British Columbia for the Kelona Ceramics festival where Jim is conducting some hands on workshops, (an invitation that arose from a contact made at Aberystwyth last year.) Then some holiday for us in an area of Canada we are told is wonderful.

Jim and Ian Marsh are beginning work on a handbook for A & C Black publishers on hand building with slabs. When the editor came for a consultation, we had fun discussing how one comes up with a suitable title as it has to convey the subject matter adequately. 'Slab World' or 'Slab Solutions' are both facetious, I know, but 'Slabs' is too vague as it might attract fishmongers or undertakers as well.

**Liz Robison**

## Two metre high pot purchased by York Art Gallery - Helen Walsh

A two metre high pot made by one of the country's leading contemporary ceramicists has been acquired by York Art Gallery. The striking porcelain work *Hua De Tu An, Flower Pictures II* by Felicity Aylieff was unveiled in the newly refurbished South Gallery on Friday (July 25).

The pot, which draws on Chinese traditions as well as modern Western styles, was purchased with the help of grants from the Museums Libraries and Archives/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and the Art Fund. Helen Walsh, assistant curator of decorative arts at the gallery, said: "The gallery has a very large collection of ceramics but none by Aylieff and very few in a contemporary Chinese style. We are delighted to now have such an impressive work by such a prominent artist.

"This piece is truly show stopping and is a great addition to our permanent collection, It will go on display immediately in our new display in the recently refurbished South Gallery – *Around the World in 80 Pots.*"

The pot was made in 2007 after Aylieff returned from studying with "bigware" potters in Jingdezhen, China, who are well known for producing ceramics on a monumental scale. This particular piece is 200cm high, 60cm wide and weighs around 250KG. It was made using a technique where the pots are thrown on the wheel and joined section by section. The throwing is done by two people at once sitting opposite each other, one providing support and stability to the other.

Felicity Aylieff (born 1954, Bedfordshire) is one of the UK's leading contemporary ceramicist's. She currently teaches and researches at the Royal College of Art alongside making and exhibiting her own work. Her work is very exploratory, with a lot of thought behind it.

York Art Gallery were given £5,000 by the Art fund and £6,500 by the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund.



### Visitor information-

York Art Gallery, Exhibition Square, York, YO1 7EW, is open every day between 10am and 5pm.  
Telephone 01904 687 687 Website [www.yorkartgallery.org.uk](http://www.yorkartgallery.org.uk)

## Advert

### Ceramics show at Gallery Oldham:

**Life Forms: Ceramics and the Natural World**

**26 April - 30 August**

This exhibition explores many different elements of the natural world through the work of a wide range of potters and ceramic artists. It includes work by, among others, the Martin Brothers, Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie, James Tower, Mary Rogers, Walter Keeler, Kate Malone and Catrin Mostyn Jones. It brings together work from Gallery Oldham's collections, loans from regional collections and from a number of contemporary makers. There will be opportunities to handle work in the exhibition.

If you would like more information about exhibitions or the collections please get in touch with me on 0161 770 4653 or [dinah.winch@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:dinah.winch@oldham.gov.uk)

# TONY MOORE: PAINTING WITH FIRE

Wood-fired ceramics are an ancient art. Fire has been used for millennia throughout the world and in almost every culture to harden clay in to utilitarian vessels and culturally significant objects. Often the objects have been used in ritualistic or spiritual ways to embody the beliefs of a culture. Its makers, though representing traditional archetypes, have often incorporated their own personal or idiosyncratic iconography in to the objects they make. Each maker's characteristic hand or tool-mark is present, whether made by an individual, collective group or machine. Clay, a seemingly elemental material, continues in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to be used for increasingly sophisticated ends.



**He 2004**  
13 ½" x 15 ¾" x 15 ½"  
ceramic, stone aggregate  
wood-fired 6 days to cone 10

In wood-firing, I endeavor to use different types of clay-bodies and firing processes for creative needs. Clay is the material, the kiln is the tool, and fire and heat is the vehicle for its transformation in to a unique object --- for in wood-firing, no two objects can be the same.

Wood-firing is both an elemental and yet incredibly complex process of using different clay-bodies, different types of kilns, temperatures, firing processes and even different types of wood to achieve different effects. Think of the kiln as a crucible where chemical changes take place. Think of the clay as both the material and the ground were the fire and molten wood ash, drawn through the kiln, is painted on to its surface --- - then one might think of the wood-fire process as "Painting with Fire".

## PERSONAL HISTORY

More than forty years ago (while in high school at Herbert Strutt's Grammar School, Belper, Derbyshire) I was absorbed by the sensuous nature of clay passing through my finger tips on a potter's wheel. I was also intrigued by the apparent meditative nature of its cyclical rotation. One was not only centering a lump of "mud/earth" and bringing it to life through its forming, but one was also centering and creating one's self. I painted, sculpted and formed clay, but clay was preeminent.

## ART SCHOOL, YALE, NEW YORK CITY.

In the UK, my native home (Duffield, Derbyshire), I spent four years after high school at a progressive Art College (first Derby College of Art, 1966-67 and then Cardiff College of Art, 1967-70) where I investigated the creative technology of utilizing many tools, materials and creative processes. Large assembled and fabricated sculptures dealing with phenomenological cycles of nature became my modus operandi. My interest in one's relationship to the object, whether physical, psychological, or perhaps spiritual (ritualistic) became apparent.

At Yale graduate school (1971-73) I built many environments that investigated interior and exterior relationships of the self, space and others. Eventually, walls, doors, mirrors and passages of transition were broken down in to objects and surfaces resembling stage flats, existing in three dimensional space like sculptures, or against the wall as paintings. Often one's perceptual thoughts moved back and forth between tangible material forms and fictional illusionistic space. Titles such as "Theory Landscape: The Relationship of Man and God" epitomized worldly and philosophical concerns. The cyclical perception of the viewer to the object, to the space, the projection of one's self in to and beyond the space --- and back again --- perhaps had its perceptual roots in my meditative perceptions of the turning potter's wheel.

After Yale I lived in NYC for twenty five years. I had made sculpture for about fifteen years and then painted for another fifteen before returning --- through circuitous means --- to my humble beginnings, sliding wet clay between my fingers on a potter's wheel. The elemental self coupled with the humble and seemingly elemental clay suggested new beginnings, just as transitioning from sculpture (tangible space) to painting (intangible, fictional space) had created an impetus for renewal



**Shrine 2004**  
16" x 21 ¾" x 4 ¾"  
ceramic, slip, stone aggregate  
wood-fired 6 days to cone 10



**Castle Cross, (Two) 2005**  
17" x 17" x 5 ¾"  
ceramic  
wood-fired 6 days to cone 10

and regeneration. Making a transition in a physical way often moves one's perceptual level of understanding to new heights. One could say, "It's invigorating".

### **CLAY (EARTH), FIRE AND SPIRIT.**

With my renewed involvement with clay came a love relationship with my life-partner and future wife. In 1998 we moved to the Hudson Valley where on a mountaintop property I built a studio and wood-fire kiln. Since my re-introduction to clay I had avidly explored new processes, first with my friend, the potter Ragnar Naess at the 92<sup>nd</sup> St. Y in NYC and then with Pascal Chmelar via his Anagama wood-fire kiln in the Catskills. Those experiences invigorated me to investigate and learn from many of the established wood-fire ceramic artists who are operative in the Tri-State region and beyond, including Jeff Shapiro, Peter Callas, Joy Brown, Tim Rowan, Roger Baumann, Jane Herold, Paul Chaleff, Jack Troy and others. My relationship with Kenton Baker and Beverly Fisher of Lancaster, PA was particularly fruitful.

I fired with Ken and Bev for several years until I could build my own kiln. This was designed by them to meet my specifications which were based on several innovative kilns they had previously built. (See Kenton Baker/ Beverly Fisher's informative web site at [www.woodfiring.com](http://www.woodfiring.com) ).

### **THE KILN AND ARTMAKING**

In 2003 the 18ft long hybrid Anagama-Noborigama Japanese style kiln was completed.

While this double chambered cross-draft kiln is likened to traditional Asian kilns it has many unique and innovative properties. To mention a few:

My pre-requisites were that the kiln not be too large to fill with work on a regular basis, but large enough to also incorporate the works of participants and artist/potters from the community ---- for one can not fire a kiln such as this on one's own. It requires a team of participants ---- a community of friends --- to help prepare wood, to load/unload and to fire the kiln.

The very idea of "community" and "tradition" is in fact a significant aspect of the ceramic world and particularly wood-firing that I enjoy. Unlike the "art world" of which I had been an active member for many years, the world of ceramics instilled in me a sense of the collective community. There is an indebtedness to others in that what one knows and has learned is passed on from generation to generation. There is a sense that one does not own knowledge, but willingly passes it on. The idea of "community" is therefore not just pragmatic, but timeless. Socially and philosophically it enriches one's feeling of being an integrated part of the continuum. The fine art world and the Avant-garde tradition, in contrast, often strives to break with the past

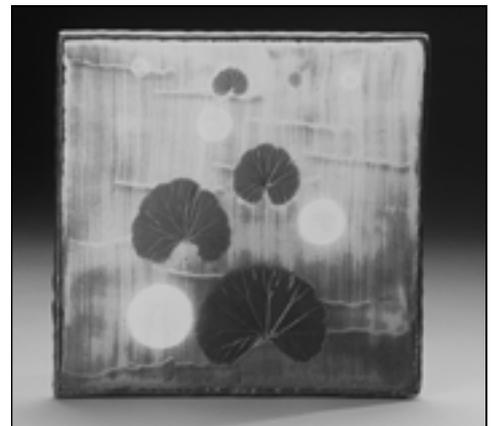
I have my feet, so to speak, in both camps. I am an artist currently working with clay (a traditional medium) and using wood-firing (an ancient technique) to address contemporary, yet timeless issues of the human condition. Most recently these have been concerned with socio-political events and the Iraq War.

While a thesis could be written about the functioning of this kiln, there are several noted features. The kiln is a cross-draft ---- that is, the draft, fire and air, cross the interior length of the kiln from the front air intakes (ports) to the base of the chimney, exiting vertically through the stack. On its way, the kiln is played like a musical instrument.

If one were to use the analogy of a trumpet with wind blown in to one end, with valves opening and closing and air/sound expelled at the other end, one might get an idea of how a kiln might be fired. It's the amount of air (oxygen), or lack of oxygen that is drawn in to the kiln through the front and side air ports, the opening or closing of these ports and dampers (like valves) coupled with the combustion of fuel (wood) by the fire that creates the end result.



**Who Knows Why? (& detail) 2006**  
150 body-cast human heads  
84" x 300 sq.ft. size variable  
steel, architectural stoneware, barium  
glaze  
wood-fired 5 days to cone 12



**Fire Painting 2004**  
10 3/4" x 10 3/4" x 1/2"  
stoneware, slip,  
wood-fired 6 days to cone 10  
Private collection

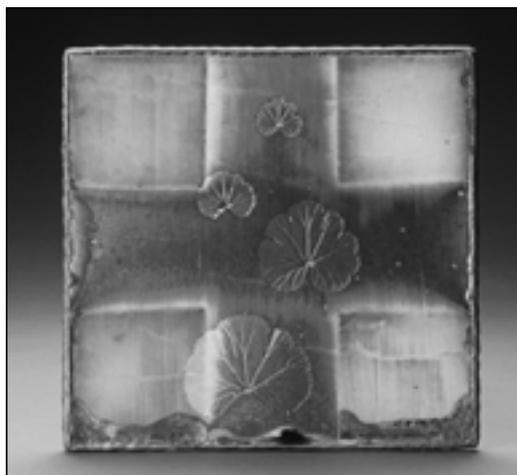
The fire within a kiln can also be likened to the turbulence of a raging stream or the languid flow of a meandering river. The former analogy suggests rapidly moving white water as it flows around and between rocks and boulders in a stream. In a similar way, when the kiln is firing at full speed (high temperature/+ or - 2400 F.), with the rapid introduction and combustion of fuel and air/oxygen, then the fire is in full turbulence moving around and between the objects in the kiln. As the fire moves it not only interacts with the chemical composition of the clay, but deposits on its surfaces the fluxed/melted particles of ash drawn by the draft racing through the kiln. Therefore, how one loads the kiln and where objects are placed is of particular relevance to the imparting of ash and "fire-color" on to their surfaces. Likewise, a slow eddy of fire and ash might give visually calmer/softer results.

### **THE END PRODUCT, OR WHERE DID WE COME FROM, WHERE ARE WE GOING AND WHY?**

I am often asked whether wood-fired results are arbitrary or made by chance. My answer is at least twofold. The first is that wood-firing is an organic and elemental process in the sense of it using the base elements of clay (earth/water), air (oxygen), wood (fuel) and fire (combustion/energy) interacting within the kiln. The interrelationship of these elements and how one manipulates them is crucial to the end result. One uses knowledge and intuition based on past results. It is also rather like the artist Jackson Pollock dripping paint. While Salvador Dali might have used a small brush, surely the parameters of control are only a matter of degrees. Whether driving a VW Bug or a Mack truck they are both steered toward one's destination.

Through wood-firing I intend to dust the surfaces of my sculptures with ash and impart fire-color to their forms. The rest is history.

[Photography: Tony Moore]



**Fire Painting 2006**

10 3/4" x 10 3/4" x 1/2"

stoneware, slip,

wood-fired 5 days to cone 12

Private collection

## **Adverts**

**Ceramics classes commencing in September at Nature's World, Middlesbrough** - Tutor Claude Frere-Smith.

RAKU and SMOKE FIRING WORKSHOPS throughout the year held on the last Saturday in each month

Also FOR SALE Slab Roller £175

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### **HOST of potters to go on show**

**20/21 September and 27/28 September**

POTTERS will join scores of artists in one of the country's leading open studio trails this summer, hoping for record-breaking visitor and sales figures. A total of 22 studios and workshops including attics and converted stables will throw open their doors to the public for FREE.

Renowned ceramicist Jim Robison will join established and up-and-coming potters to showcase in HOST (Huddersfield Open Studio Trail) over two weekends in September. Jim Robison's Booth House Pottery – attached to a gallery with one of the largest displays of ceramics in the country - will be one of the star attractions.

Other eye-catching works will include the ceramic heads and figures in terracotta and stoneware by Sarah McDade, the quirky stoneware animals and birds by Sue Jenkins and the large-scale ceramics produced by James Oughtbridge for public spaces and private collectors. As well as ceramics, HOST will feature chainsaw sculptures, silver and metal works, jewellery, designer crafts and commercial products, painters and printmakers.

Despite its ever-increasing success and workload, the event continues to be led by local working artists, with ceramicist Alison Campbell and textile artist Dionne Swift organising HOST.

HOST's supporters include Arts Council Yorkshire and Kirklees Council.

Full details are available at [www.hoststudios.co.uk](http://www.hoststudios.co.uk)

[We may be able to offer readers of NPA's newsletter a two-for-one offer on the 'VIP' Friends of HOST pass normally costing £20 each]

**For further media information please contact Ian Waugh on 07855 723305 or 0845 603 6421.**

**Email: [ian@andersonwaugh.com](mailto:ian@andersonwaugh.com)**



## Margaret Scorer writes from France

This is my second year of membership. I found details of the NPA on the internet whilst looking for information on ceramics. As I grew up in Halifax, Northern Potters was obviously my choice.

I have for many years been an artist. Just over a year ago, during a very wet dark spell of weather, a friend gave me some clay to "play with", saying "I will fire a few things for you if you wish"! She makes pots, bowls etc., with a wheel. I just loved the feel of the clay, but very quickly she realised that firing pieces for me, was not really an option. My pieces did not fit well in the kiln with her pots. So last June, my husband bought me a kiln, commenting that I was a nicer person potting than painting!

Living where I do however, experience and know how is hard to come by. The people, who could help me, only use a wheel. I want to hand build. In fact, I do not possess a wheel. I have bought various books, but they are only helpful to a degree. I am having to gain experience from my mistakes - even the jargon, I have difficulty with!

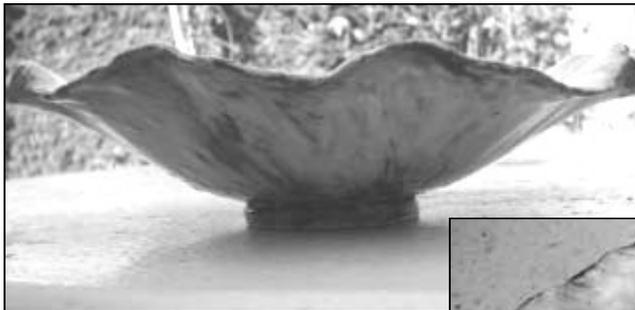
Inspiration - generally it is like my paintings, something I see, usually when we are walking our dogs in our "le bois d'Amour"; along the canal; the lake and trees in Ploermel. My husband plays golf there, so we often have a picnic, then he plays (or practices) golf, whilst I read or walk, or draw - the shapes of trees, and the foliage at different times of the year, the water running over rocks.



**Fluted vase  
height 26cms.**



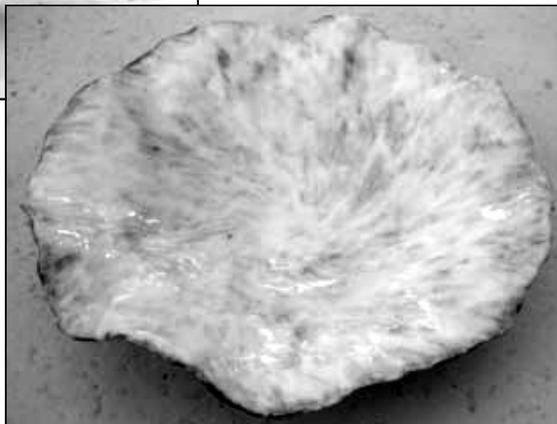
**Leaf decorated vase  
height 18cms.**



**Porcelain dish  
diam. 30cms x height 7cms -  
Black and white**

I really do not have any technique, apart from coiling and slab. I cannot find anyway of studying here within reasonable distance of travel. Also the costs of courses are prohibitive, at least for me. Courses in England pose even more difficulties. I would love to occasionally meet with other potters, and listen to them discussing various

difficulties, like with the art group to which I belong. When I make something, I know that the next time I can probably do it better, and maybe easier. Unfortunately, I like to try something different each time, just to see what will happen.....if. Time, trial and error are the things that will, hopefully, teach me - then again, that is life in a nutshell!



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### **People Watching - 19<sup>th</sup> July to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

This exhibition brings together the work of 16 artists from across the UK who are fascinated by human beings. Their work explores the little things that make us unique and human. All work will be for sale and the gallery operates the OWN ART purchasing scheme.

**Ceramics** - Helen Beard, Sarah McDade, Craig Mitchell, Annie Peaker, Guy Routledge, Hannah Yeadon.

**Textiles** - Claire Louise Butler, Lou Gardiner, Rachael Howard, Laura McCafferty, Linda Miller, Liliane Taylor

**Metal / Mixed media** - Lucy Casson, Lynn Walters. **Wood** - Lynn Muir **Glass** - Emelye Davis

**Gallery open Monday – Saturday 10am – 4.30pm. Closed bank holidays.**

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### Jim Robison

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Tel: 01484 685270 E-mail: jim.robison@virgin.net  
Website: www.jimrobison.co.uk

### Beginners Pottery Classes with Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg

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Tel: 01904 701841 or E-mail: willardwhitelegg@aol.com

### Annie Peaker Pottery Courses 2008

10 – 15 Aug **5 Day Summer School: Hand built Figurative Ceramics – Approaches & Techniques** £325

6 & 7 Sept **Weekend Course: Modelling the Human Figure in Clay** £150

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For more information and booking please contact:

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Lazonby, Penrith,  
Cumbria  
CA10 1BL

Tel: 01768 870492

email:

annie.peaker@virgin.net

www.anniepeaker.co.uk

### Studio space is available for rent

in an established pottery workshop in the Artists' Courtyard, 101 Lake Rd, Ambleside. (Under the archway between the Football Shop and Youngs Furnishings).

Another ceramicist would be ideal but the space could potentially suit a painter or jewellery maker. It would not be suitable for a clean craft such as textiles.

There are work surfaces and shelving provided, with shared use of a computer, phone, internet, and card machine. Shared use of an electric and a gas kiln is also available if desired.

There is a small gallery space enabling direct selling to the public, with another artist's studio/gallery and a bookshop/café in the same courtyard.

For further details please contact the studio  
015394 34120 or  
Clare on 07761 865379 leaving your name and a number I can get back to you on.

# Regions

## Cumbria

A raku day was held at Mary Chapplehow's pottery in July. It was an enjoyable day at a lovely old property, Warcop Hall. It was back to the drawing board for 'draw through', but the copper matte was very successful.

No other regional activities took place except the sharing of transport for the delivery and collection of work for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary show at Preston which looked really good.

Members outside Cumbria who would like to be kept in touch should email me.  
Roger Bell. [bell.roger@btinternet.com](mailto:bell.roger@btinternet.com) 015394 32730

## North East

**Raku at Nature's World**, Ladgate Lane, Acklam, Middlesbrough, TS5 7YN on Saturday 26th July 2008

On an exceptionally hot day in late July the NENPA Group raku firing took place with Claude Frere-Smith doing a sterling job directing the proceedings.



Glazes - Kiln -  
Smoke - Results!



Please register your interest in these possible future NENPA events currently under exploration:

Window space at Bedale Sept-Nov [Contact Carol Metcalfe 01748 811069 or [carol.metcalfe@tesco.net](mailto:carol.metcalfe@tesco.net)]

Slideshow & talk on Linthorpe Pottery Collection in Sept [Contact Carolyn Corfield [ccsculptor@btinternet.com](mailto:ccsculptor@btinternet.com)]

## Yorkshire

**Caroline Lee reports:**

### **A wet day in York, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July -**

We had heard that there would be rain but nothing could have prepared us for the deluge which was to follow. We set from Rotherham for York on our second selling opportunity at the Open Art exhibition in Parliament Street. A car full of ceramics, we unloaded and set up in still, dry conditions and began trading. It wasn't long before our first 'shower'. During heavier outbursts (of which there were many!), as anyone who has traded on a wet day will know, many potential customers had their heads bowed down under their umbrellas and rushed straight on by without looking.

The very slight incline which we were on turned into a stream and any cardboard down there got wet and collapsed. Price cards started to float around and any paper which was not laminated became unreadable. It was hard to wrap up work for customers and difficult to use sellotape. We tipped the water out of our pieces every half hour or so and a bird bath I had for sale quickly became fully functional and a talking point for anyone that

stopped to look! My husband said we ought to have been selling umbrellas that day! We had the odd sunny spell but it quickly got dark again.

One thing I noticed however: in view of the inclement weather we were given permission by York City Centre Council to leave earlier than 5pm, but, despite having no overhead canopies, most people stayed right until the end by which time we had *also* had a thunderstorm: judging by the way everyone jumped I think it was fairly close overhead! The street cleared then as everyone jostled for shelter space in shops.

During the day however, customers commented on the great variety of styles between the sellers and praised our dedication for sticking it out. I was pleased to have made more sales than I had done previously on a sunny day in York: bizarre! One customer had joked to me earlier in the day "Think about it this way.....if it *had* been sunny, I would have been at home doing the washing, not here making purchases". I was thankful for that.

I got through 2 coats that day but made many more friends as we chatted in high spirits and exchanged information. Some brave souls were booked in to sell on the Sunday too, when it was forecast to be worse. To say that I was soaked to the skin would be an understatement. The rain was bad, very, very bad but it didn't spoil my day. In the words of the Jake Thakray song *The Lodger*: "I'm British so my upper lip was stiff."



**North West**

**Contacts:**

Dave Harper: DPHarper@uclan.ac.uk  
 Geoff Wilcock: ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk  
 Babs Taylor: babs@babstaylor.co.uk

**New Books - Roger Bell**

The Basics Of Throwing	David Cohen	16.99	BI
The Ceramics Book (2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed)		9.95	CPA
The Electric Kiln (2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed)	Harry Fraser	15.99	BI
Impressed & Incised Ceramics (rev reprint)	Coll Minogue	14.99	BI
Italian Renaissance Ceramics (British Museum)	Thornton & Wilson	175.00	BM
Kiln Building (rev. reprint)	Ian Gregory	15.99	BI
Throwing Pots (rev reprint)	Phil Rogers	15.99	BI

**Book Review - Roger Bell**

**SLAB-BUILT CERAMICS**

Coll Minogue

Publ: Crowood

£14.99

As a maker who uses rolled slabs of clay as the start point for most my work, I was delighted to see the publication of this book. Many of you will know the author, Coll Minogue, from the time she spent living and working in Scotland.

The format of the book has become something of a standard these days: an introductory chapters setting the historical scene and with basic information on the techniques involved, followed by sections devoted to practitioners with more detail on some of the methods utilized. As such it is aimed at those with at least some knowledge of how clay can be manipulated. Collectors will also find it informative.

The connections between some of the ancient work and the contemporary is often quite striking. The link between the Cypriot 'plank' figures and the work of John Maltby and others is very obvious. The cover illustration of 'Standing Box' by Randy Johnston could pass as several millennia old.

The potters selected under headings 'Sculpture' and 'Vessels', are a mixture of those familiar to the UK ceramics makers – Regina Heinz, Nina Hole (from Denmark), the late David Miller, Jim Robison & Petra Reynolds and others new to me from USA, Canada, Australia and UK. The short concluding chapter looks at the use of large impressed clay slabs to produce murals.

Also received is the second edition of a new craft magazine '**The Journal of Modern Craft**'.

There are three issues a year, with the subscription £25 per annum (three issues). It is a quite an academic production, edited by Glenn Adamson, Tanya Harrod and Edward S. Cooke Jr, and with an international advisory board. No ceramics articles in the issue I was given, but there is a fascinating article on Quilts from Alabama with lovely photographs.

## NPA Membership

### Subscription Rates:

Individual £22 (if paid by standing order)  
£25 (if paid by cheque or Postal Order)

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### Contact the membership secretary:

Margaret Lawrenson  
'Seven Firs', Kemp Rd,  
Swanland,  
E.Yorks HU14 3LZ  
Tel: 01482 634784  
E-mail: Margaret@sevenfirs.karoo.co.uk



## Standing Orders:

**Request from the treasurer and membership secretary:**  
**Please could members check their bank account name on their standing order is the same as the name and address the newsletter is sent to. Some standing orders come through with only the business name and not necessarily the name of the potter. It could result in you not receiving your newsletter!**

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.

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## Welcome To New Members

Name	Address	Tel. No.	E-mail
Smith, P.	21, White Rose Avenue, New Earswick, York, N. Yorks, YO32 4AG	01904 763790	-
Moon, Jan	Newhaven, Cage Lane, Whitestake, New Longton, Preston, Lancs, PR4 4JP	07753 410808	janetmoon63@hotmail.com
Foxcroft, Debie	26, Shuttleworth Road, Preston, Lancs, PR1 6DB	07908 113757	DAWright@uclan.ac.uk
Bonney, Alice	44 Walton Avenue, Penwortham, Preston, Lancs, PR1 0XR	07528591736	akbonney@googlemail.com
Murfin, Anna	5, Annis Street, Preston, Lancs, PR1 4XU	07958 696085	almurfin@uclan.ac.uk
Lindley, Jennifer	5, Annis Street, Preston, Lancs, PR14XU	07739 836848	JennyLindley@hotmail.co.uk
Laws, Mark	14, Lyndon Close, Bramham, Wetherby, N. Yorks, LS23 6SR	01937 541012	mandwlaws@talktalk.net
Ayres, Gaynor	Holly Cottage, Briar Hill, Danby, Whitby, YO21 2LZ	01287 660934	gaynorayres@tiscali.co.uk

A warm welcome is extended to our new members. We look forward to seeing you and your work at future

## Events Calendar

Ceramics shows at Gallery Oldham in 2008 see page 9  
Exhibitions at Stokoe House Ceramics Gallery see page 5  
'People Watching' at the Platform Gallery, Clitheroe, 19<sup>th</sup> July to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2008  
Potfest in the Pens—Aug 8, 9, 10  
Exhibition opening, Hornseys, the gallery, Ripon 22nd August  
NPA celebrates 30 years, York College- 26<sup>th</sup> August to 12<sup>th</sup> September  
NEST exhibition 6th Sept - 1st Oct see page 5  
Exhibition at Philip Bastow Gallery 13th Sept see page 5  
Potfest Shrewsbury—Sept 19, 20, 21  
HOST Huddersfield Open Studios—Sept 20, 21 and 27,28 www.host07.com see page 12  
NPA celebrates 30 years, Rufford Craft Centre- 22<sup>nd</sup> September to 19<sup>th</sup> October  
Potfest South West—Sept 26,27  
The Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair The Manchester Grammar School 23rd -26th October 2008

**Do you know of any other events, local or national? Let me know and I will include them in future.**

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[www.potclays.co.uk](http://www.potclays.co.uk)

Potclays Ltd Brickkiln Lane Etruria Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7BP  
T: 01782 219816 F: 01782 286506 E: sales@potclays.co.uk

\* 5% discount applies only to orders placed directly with Potclays. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.



## Sedgefield Pottery Supplies

The Old Smithy, Cross Street  
Segefield, Co. Durham, TS21 2AH  
Tel. 01740 621998  
e-mail: wrtodd@tiscali.co.uk

Over 30 Clay Bodies available from stock  
Agents for Valentines, Potclays, Northern Kilns  
New Kilns supplied & fitted - not just delivered  
Kiln elements made to order, kiln repairs  
Old fashioned service

## Advertising in NPA News

Cost of advert for one issue:

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

**Boxed Adverts:** whole page £25  
half page £15  
quarter page £10  
eighth page £7.50

**Repeat Adverts:** Six consecutive inclusions  
for the price of four

# Potfest in the Park 2008

John Kershaw



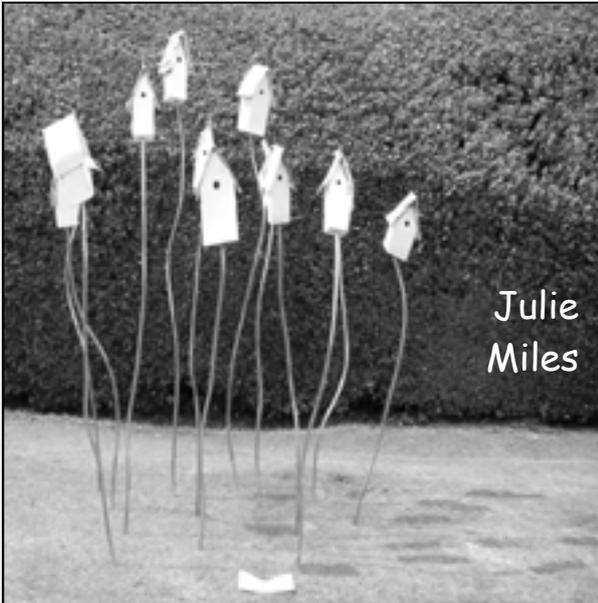
Gwen  
Bainbridge



Nicola  
Cheers



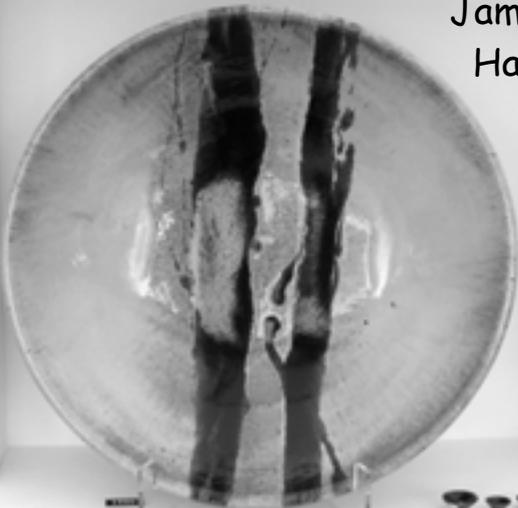
Julie  
Miles



Pollie & Garry Uttley



James  
Hake



Sophie Hamilton

