

NPA News

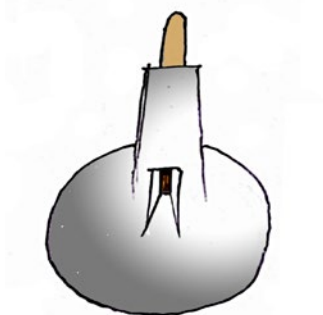


The kitchen in Ismay's small, terraced house was the heart of his home, and the kitchen table was where he spent much of his time. It was almost entirely inhabited by pots, apart from a strip at one end which was covered by a tablecloth. This was where Ismay ate his meals and placed his typewriter to keep up with correspondence.

Why not take the opportunity to type a comment about Ismay, ceramics or collecting whilst you are here?

Northern Potters Association
www.northern-potters.co.uk

December 2021 to January 2022
£2, free to members



In this issue

- 3 From the Chair
- 3 Your Committee
- 4 Diary
- 5 New Artists to the Website
- 6 The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony – Chris Barnes
- 8 Roger Bell
- 9 Joan Hardie
- 10 Silicone Moulds – Graham Hough
- 12 My Favourite Pots – Isa K-J Denyer
- 14 Members' Gallery
- 16 Sixty Degrees North – Gill Owen
- 18 Book Review – Chris Barnes
- 21 Welcome to new members
- 22 From the Membership Secretary
- 24 Regional News
- 26 Back Page: Tips & Tricks

Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 17 January 2022

Articles should be between 200 and 1000 words saved as text files or written in an email.

Images need to be high quality for printing, saved as .jpg files. 1MB is a suitable sized file.

Please send text and images as separate email attachments – do not embed images in documents.

Send them to npanews@northern-potters.co.uk
Email or phone the editor if you have any queries or need help.

Request for help

Following the death of Roger Bell, who steadfastly contributed the book reviews to this newsletter for many years, the editor is looking for someone to review books for our regular Book Reviews page. Please email npanews@northern-potters.co.uk or phone the editor if you would like to ask questions about this.

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.

No part may be reproduced without the permission of the editor.

Front Cover: New exhibition 'The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony' at York Art Gallery.

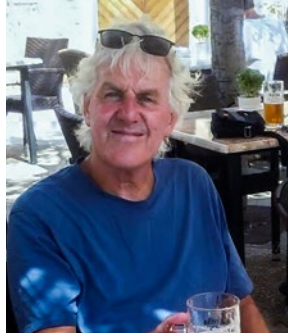
Photo: Anthony Chappel-Ross

Back Cover: Printed pot, designed and made by Joan Hardie.

Photo: Jack Hardie

From the Chair

After a number of false starts and delays I managed to visit the *Grayson Perry's Art Club* exhibition in Manchester. Although it was a ticketed admission the gallery was crowded and noisy. I am no snob but I guess the majority of people there would not normally visit a fine arts exhibition but they had watched the TV programmes broadcast in the first lock-down. However it was good to see my friends work. I am unsure whether some of Grayson's surface decorations went down all that well with some of the visitors.



A more interesting visit was to Water Street Gallery in Todmorden to see the *A Modern Bestiary* exhibition. A number of NPA members have taken the opportunity to exhibit their work in this mixed exhibition of fine art prints, paintings and sculpture which runs into the New Year. Well worth a visit with over 140 pieces on display.

It was interesting to read about another TV production company looking for aspiring potters. Flabbergast are looking for amateur potters who want to take their hobby into a full time job.

This got me thinking about those members who have applied for such programmes. It would be interesting to read about their experiences in the interview and the selection process.

Congratulations to the S/W region and their Pop Up Shop. I know how much effort is required to get these projects off the ground.

The NPA News continues the high standards that have been set by previous editors. The last two cover photos of the News have been outstanding and unusual and illustrate clearly the diversity of the work of the NPA.

I was sad to hear the news that both Roger Bell and Joan Hardie have passed away. In both cases the NPA has been in contact with family members to offer our condolences. Roger was the longest contributor to the News with his book reviews and will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Joan was both energetic and thoughtful in her many wide ranging contributions to the NPA. Short articles about them both are printed in this edition.

My term as chair is now coming to an end. It has been an interesting experience and we find ourselves in such a strong financial situation and with a membership of 700. I wish your committee all the very best for the future.

John Cook

Your Committee

Chair	John Cook chair@northern-potters.co.uk 01282 695886 Burnley, Lancs
Vice Chair	Nadine Blakemore vice-chair@northern-potters.co.uk Ilkley
Secretary	Sally Streuli secretary@northern-potters.co.uk 01619 287184 Altrincham, Cheshire
Treasurer	Michelle Park treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk Low Bentham, Lancs
Membership	Ann Davis anninhercastle@gmail.com 07855 242226 Macclesfield, Cheshire
Newsletter	Chris Barnes npanews@northern-potters.co.uk 01768 896421 Ainstable, Cumbria
Publicity	Dianne Cross publicity@northern-potters.co.uk Keighley, West Yorks
Website Coordinator	John Cook website@northern-potters.co.uk Burnley, Lancs
Website events/courses	Dianne Cross publicity@northern-potters.co.uk
Gerry Grant	York
Lynn Grant	York
Carol Newmarch	Middlesborough
Bev Seth	Sheffield
Kathryn Stevens	Barrow in Furness
Nina Wright	Otley

Diary

In the current circumstances, you should check with the organisers before travelling to events.

To add your events to the diary and website, email Dianne Cross publicity@northern-potters.co.uk

Until 31 Jan 2022	<i>A Modern Bestiary</i> Water Street Gallery, Todmorden some NPA members are represented
24 Jan to 26 March 2022	<i>Connecting Crafts</i> Platform Gallery, Clitheroe NPA exhibition
23 March to 19 April	<i>Glorious Clay</i> The Coach House Gallery, Astley Hall, Chorley NPA Exhibition
2 & 3 April	<i>Sheffield Ceramics Festival</i> Kelham Island Museum, Sheffield

The Sheffield Ceramics Festival

2nd and 3rd APRIL 2022- set up on the 1st.

Please e-mail sheffieldceramicsfestival@gmail.com for an application form and application details.

The deadline for applications is the 31st January. April will be our regular annual show- Covid permitting. The first ceramics show of the year.



New Courses

Ceramics Making and Decorating course

8-13th of August 2021

Glaze and Surface Treatments course

12-17th of September.

These week-long courses give a chance for in depth development of skills and knowledge. Materials, firings and sociable lunch and evening meals are included.

Details <https://www.jimrobison.co.uk/new-courses-details/>

Email Jim Robison at jim@jimrobison.co.uk.

Started in 1975, the Studio is entering its 47th year!

GLORIOUS CLAY

NPA EXHIBITION OPEN TO ALL NPA MEMBERS

THE COACH HOUSE GALLERY,

ASTLEY HALL, CHORLEY, LANCASHIRE

23RD MARCH TO 19TH APRIL 2022

(provisional dates)

This is a major opportunity to exhibit in this relatively new gallery.

Chorley has invested massively in Astley Hall Park.

The Hall itself is being extensively restored alongside the wall gardens and the former coach house buildings which now house Ambio Café, Barracia Wines offering locally sourced artisan foods, an information shop, conference room and the Coach House Gallery. As a result Astley Park is a popular visitor venue.

Further information about the park:

astleypark.co.uk

Application forms will be available in the near future.

Further information from Graham Hough

graham@redspr.com

Empty Bowls Project

The Clay Team in Jarrow are organising an Empty Bowls project for Spring 2022 and would like potters to get involved. The idea is that potters donate a bowl, people pay to choose a bowl and they get it filled with food. We then wash the bowls out and they take them home with them to keep. All money raised goes to food charities in the north east. Previous events have raised over £4000 and have been enjoyed by hundreds of people. It would be great to get lots of potters involved in our next one. Email Diane Nicholson at theclayteam@hotmail.com for more info or to donate a bowl.

Stay Connected



@northernpottersassociation



Northern Potters Association



@NorthernPotters

New Artists to the Website



Chris Hughes



Katie Harrison



Alastair Gittens, earthenware tripod vessel

NPA Website – Artists Pages

As an NPA member you can have a page on the NPA website to display and promote your work.

You will need to provide up to four photos of your work, an artist's statement of about 100 words, email address, phone number, plus any website, Facebook and Instagram links. Contact John Cook with the details and updates.

website@northern-potters.co.uk



The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony – Chris Barnes

A conversation with Dr Helen Walsh, curator of ceramics at York Art Gallery

The latest exhibition at the Centre of Ceramic Art (CoCA) in York, is of over 200 pieces from the vast hoard of contemporary British pottery collected by William Alfred Ismay MBE over his lifetime. I asked Dr Helen Walsh what the title of the exhibition, *The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony*, signified.



Colin Pearson, Group of works, 1985-95. Image courtesy of York Museums Trust

She explained that *The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony* was only ever experienced by the relatively few people who were shown round W.A. Ismay's pottery collection, housed in the tiny terraced house in Wakefield where he lived for his whole life. Ismay had no telephone so visits were arranged after type written correspondence by letter, and given that the collection was kept at his home and that he was a private man by nature, you would be lucky to be invited if your contact had not come through someone he knew. If



Jane Hamlyn, 'Blue Curly Teapot', 1996-98. Photo: Philip Sayer

you were fortunate enough to find yourself inside the house with the collector showing you round, you were in for a treat. Visits could last for hours with Ismay pressing you for your thoughts on particular pieces and encouraging you to pick things up for closer inspection. He was a generous man and he wanted to

share what he had. At the end of your visit you would be asked to choose a piece from his collection to use for taking tea with him, a practice which became known as *The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony*.

W.A. Ismay lived from 1911 to 2001 and is still regarded as the UK's most prolific collector of post-war British studio pottery. He supported this all consuming passion for pots while working all his life as a librarian. He started collecting in 1955, initially restricting

himself to work being made locally in Yorkshire by potters like Barbara Cass and Joan Hotchin. When his mother died in 1956, leaving him a substantial inheritance, he was able to supplement his spending power. He promptly went down to London to see what was being made there and came back with work by Lucy Rie and the still largely ignored Hans Coper. To some extent he saw his role as supporting makers who might otherwise not find a market. When he first bought from Hans Coper he was one of just two people who did so. He was open minded in his approach, saying that he was interested in anything made from clay, but his collection shows a bias towards functional work.

Helen told me that W.A. Ismay had very strong connections with the NPA, he was a member and attended meetings, in fact he was at the first ever meeting of the NPA at Barnards Castle in 1977 and he went to NPA potters camps. This connection continued and when he was encouraged to consider what should happen to all his pots after his death, by his friend Jim Robison - who was NPA Chair at the time - Ismay provisionally entrusted the care of his collection to the NPA, while he continued to seek a permanent home for it in a museum.

The NPA was also instrumental in helping Helen to get a commemorative Blue Plaque installed at Ismay's



Peter Meanley, 'W.A. Ismay The Potters' Friend', 2015. Image courtesy of York Museums Trust.

QR code link to the York Art Gallery website.



house in Wakefield in 2014 - see NPA News Jan/ Feb 2014. The PDF of this edition is accessible via the **Newsletters section of the website** along with almost all other editions of NPA News.



Dr Helen Walsh pictured with work by Hans Coper, currently on show in the exhibition *The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony* at York Art Gallery. Photo: Anthony Chappel-Ross.

Dr Helen Walsh has written on the **York Art Gallery website**, "Ismy was passionate about supporting potters through their careers, and never saw himself as the owner of his collection, more as a temporary custodian. He loved the social side of collecting and was keen to share his family of pots with others. It seems fitting that, to mark the 20 years since the collection arrived in York, the key works from his collection can be displayed together for all to see and enjoy in this free-to-visit exhibition."

Since arriving at York Art Gallery in 2004, Helen has spent seventeen years meticulously cataloguing the Ismay collection. This has been the basis of her PhD, the exhibition is the culmination of the project, presenting significant pieces to the public in a way that shows them off to their best advantage.

Her new book *The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony* coincides with the event. She told me that the book condenses the work which went into her PhD and makes it readable and more accessible for ceramics enthusiasts and everyone else.



Rosemary Wren, Group of works, 1971-84. © The Estate of Rosemary Wren. Image courtesy of York Museum Trust

Ismy was very appreciative of the Leach tradition, buying work from Bernard and David Leach, Michael Cardew, and their followers who trained at St Ives and Wenford Bridge. Interestingly, when he looked back over the accumulation of pots in later life, he found the maker whose work he most frequently acquired was Jim Malone, a fellow Yorkshireman. His slightly obsessive side was revealed when, reviewing the history of his acquisitions, he realised he was buying on average one piece a week. He then made it an objective to add one

piece a week to the collection and if he did not he would feel he was letting things slip. In 2001 the last pot he ever bought was a vase made by Jim Malone. Helen said that his favourite potter though, was probably Michael Cardew.



By the end of his life the small house in Wakefield had every possible surface decked with ceramics. The kitchen table was laden with pots, with just a strip at one end where a table cloth reserved a place for Ismay to take his meals and write at his typewriter.

Jim Malone, 'Tea Caddy', 1976. Photo by Philip Sayer

The exhibition runs for eighteen months, but don't put off a visit! We should not pass up the chance to see this life's work, which was consciously conserved with future generations in mind.

My thanks go to Dr Helen Walsh for generously sharing her time and expertise.

The book *The Yorkshire Tea Ceremony* is published by Holberton and is available through the CoCA shop and all good booksellers.

Roger Bell



Roger Bell, Love On A Pole, ceramic sculpture

It is with deep regret that we share news with members the passing of our friend Roger Bell in October. Roger was a long standing member of the NPA and one of the first Regional Coordinators when the Association was aligned to the current six regions. He also contributed his expertise through his book reviews for a number of pottery organisations within the UK. A member of local art groups including Cumbria Sculptors and Green Door Artists, he moved to Cumbria from Surrey in the late 1980s. He and his wife, Gillean, shared a love of clay and supported each other by attending adult education classes in Sutton, Surrey. Inspired by Gillean's brother, ceramicist Neil MacDonell, they ran a gallery in Sutton and then in Ambleside for over 20 years in total. A keen cross country runner at university, after graduating his love of sport continued by playing tennis, golf and squash. Later in life he would become British Champion at fell running. Since moving to Cumbria over 30 years ago they have made many friends through running their shop and gallery.

Gordon Baddeley, Chair of Cumbria Sculptors said "Roger was a positive man. He knew what he liked and he knew what he liked to do. His work was always highly individual, and he both pursued his own ideas and welcomed people's views and comments. He read widely about design, and loved to discuss with others the directions and processes they were undertaking. He was constantly checking out exhibitions of work and arranging visits. Above all, however, Roger was a man who loved people, loved to engage with them, sometimes challenge them, and always simply to enjoy their company. He was a kind and loyal friend, and there is an unfillable hole in my life where he once stood."

Gillean and their son and daughter are hoping to organise a get together next spring to celebrate Roger's life.

Kathryn Stevens

Joan Hardie

It's with great sadness that we have to inform the NPA of the passing of Joan Hardie, the wife of Jack, after a short illness on Monday the 8th of November 2021.

Joan was an NPA committee member for many years and took on the role of Chair 6 years ago when we were finding it difficult to recruit volunteers. Joan single-handedly dragged us all along and kept the NPA functioning as an organisation.

Joan administered the NPA's compliance to the Data Protection Act, organised the 40th Anniversary Digital Ceramics Competition with an interactive website, helped to develop the new WordPress website and introduced an Archive section, and if that was not enough organised the Membership Survey. Whilst doing all this she was also Chair and News Editor and also recruited a Treasurer and Membership Secretary during her tenure.

Joan stepped down from the NPA committee at the AGM in 2021 but not before securing the services of another News Editor. An NPA committee meeting in Sheffield for Joan must have been a 12-hour day as she travelled from Cockermouth. This was volunteering on a nuclear scale.

For all who knew Joan as a potter and exhibitor, volunteer and friend she will be sadly missed, but her legacy to the NPA is immense. We find ourselves in a very healthy financial situation and now with over 700 members. This is in no small part down to Joan and her unselfish herculean efforts.

The NPA has donated £500 to Hospice at Home Cumbria as an expression of our appreciation of Joan's supreme contribution to the association.

John Cook (NPA Chair)



Joan with Jack and her work at Potfest in the Park

Silicone Moulds – Graham Hough



Angel's wings

For many years I have used traditional plaster moulds for my work. My plaster half face mould has been used for my COVID and Clown faces as well as an early commission for a WW1 private memorial.

However looking at alternative methods of making work and avoiding the use of heavy plaster I looked at silicone moulds used widely with resin and plastic clays. I watched a number of videos demonstrating how to make silicone moulds and consulted a forum or two. At first silicone moulds seemed unsuitable for ceramic clay due to its brittle nature when dry.

Obviously large enclosed slip moulds were unpractical because the slip would never dry, or would it?

So in order to experiment with open silicone moulds I bought a ready-made silicone mould from a specialist website and filled it with porcelain paper clay. This mould has a small undercut potentially trapping the clay. After leaving to air dry for 24 hours I tentatively removed the piece folding back the flexible mould to release the undercut area and it worked. So the next stage was to make my own moulds.

All the advice I read and watched described the use of rigid elaborate mould holders, releasing agents and detailed mix recipes.

However I made a hole in the ready-made silicone mould and stuffed a piece of clay in to it and let it dry. The dry clay popped out easily so no need for release agents.

So my method is to make a scrap cardboard box just big enough to contain the piece you want to cast and bind it with tape. Put a small plug of clay into the bottom of the mould to hold your master. Pour in the mixed silicone and let it set. When set remove the cardboard box and slice the silicone mould with a craft knife to release the master. The suitability of silicone becomes clear because you can now slice the mould into as many sections as you need to ensure the new piece can be removed.

I used Polycraft GP3481-F General Purpose RTV Condensation Cure Mould Making Silicone Rubber.

For the items shown in the illustration I used most of a 1.1kg Kit with Red Fast Setting Hardener ratio 1 to 10. As you can see I used a doll's hands and feet as the masters and sliced the mould into four sections so that I could release the dried clay without snapping off toes. I used soft ES600 Porcelain Paper Clay carefully pressed into all the little pockets of the separate sections of the mould and then reassembled them held together with rubber bands. I find that the silicone sections semi-adhere to each other which is useful. Allow to semi-dry over 48 hours and then fold back the flexible mould to release your piece. Trim off the excess clay.

So early days with my experiments with silicone but it seems to have many uses so I would encourage you to try using it and let us know what methods you have developed using silicone rubber moulds.

Graham Hough, October 2021

graham@redspr.com



Silicone moulds

My Favourite Pots – Isa K-J Denyer

My selection of images are of pots made over a range of years by some of my tutors on the Harrow Studio Pottery course. I was there in the late 1960's but sometimes it seems like just yesterday! I treasure those memories because they remind me of that happy, creative and satisfying time in my life. Sadly I do not have any pots by Gwynn Hansen Piggot who taught us repetition throwing at the beginning of our course. She was very exacting and I'm always so grateful for that discipline.



Vic Margrie, Porcelain 'cloud' pot

This was the very first pot that I bought for myself (£25), when I was still a student so it was a very big deal for me and has travelled with me to various parts of the world where I have lived and worked. Vic's output was never great as he was such a perfectionist and it remains one of my favourite pieces.



Mick Casson, Salt glazed stoneware lidded pot

This pot, bottom left, has such presence and in it I keep an ostrich egg that I found in the field of farming relatives whilst visiting them in Australia! I kept in touch with Mick up to the time of his death and he was an enormous influence on me as well as a friend and mentor. He was always so welcoming and I used to visit Wobbage regularly and soak up the tremendous and welcoming atmosphere there. Indeed, it still is warm and welcoming!



Walter Keeler, Jug, Salt stoneware and salt fired

Wally taught us kiln building and was (and is) a tremendous fund of generous knowledge and sharing of ideas. His jugs to me are iconic and have such attitude and humour.



Colin Pearson, Porcelain 'winged' vessel

This gorgeous piece was bought from Maggie Barnes at European Ceramics and I think it was after his death that I bought it. I had asked Colin if I could be an apprentice just after leaving Harrow but he was reluctant to have women working for him because, as he said, "I can't fart as freely as I would like"!

Mo was fascinated by all things Roman and there were always such interesting conversations going on when he was around. He was so good at stretching one's thoughts and pushing with what we could do with clay. It was also about the time that he started to develop his helmet theme and it was so interesting to subsequently see that all emerging.



Mo Jupp, Standing form

Members' Gallery

All NPA members are invited to send images of their work to the editor for inclusion in the gallery.



David Howson, Tapered yunomi - buff stoneware clay with black and pink glaze interior, fired in oxidation to 1205°C



David Howson, Jar - dark stoneware clay with porcelain slip and dry matte pink glaze, fired in oxidation to 1280°C



David Howson, Fluted yunomi - dark stoneware clay with cream matte glaze, fired in oxidation to 1205°C



Chris Barnes: Stoneware jar, shino and celadon glazes with copper red band decoration, fired in reduction



Charles Brown, Birds Gathering over the Bones of a Medieval Saint, Slipware from gas fired kiln. L 20cm W 10cm H 22cm, terracotta body, cream glaze over white slip and mottled with manganese and copper oxide. **On show in "A Modern Bestiary" until 31st January at Water Street Gallery, Todmorden**



Alastair Gittens: Selection of earthenware tripod pots, painted with underglaze colours and transparent glaze



Alastair Gittens: Burnished pot with burned on feather decoration



Alastair Gittens: Earthenware lidded jars, painted with underglaze colours and transparent glaze

When sending images for the Gallery, please provide a print quality jpg file of about 1MB or more, sent as an email attachment.

It is helpful to readers if you give short details about the piece including its title, size, material and key firing information. Email to npanews@northern-potters.co.uk

Sixty Degrees North – Gill Owen

A trip to source natural materials from the Shetland Isles, part funded by a NPA bursary.

It was just over three years ago I convinced my then boss to let me attend a ceramics course at Harrogate College. By the end of the 32 weeks, I was hooked and also had been offered a place on the research Masters Degree in Creative Practice as I had been developing my own glazes from Wood ash. Whilst on holiday on the Shetland Islands I decided to give up my job and do the course.



Sample of test tiles



Processing wild clay

My primary research was to focus on developing my own glazes using the waste materials of my friend and master basket maker Phil Bradley, this was all going well, with test tiles galore being produced when the college was closed and no access to all the resources due to the pandemic.

My friend began landscaping her garden so offered me the wild clay that was unearthed and I began to process this. I also found some iron ochres at the nearby stream and began drying them in preparation for the resumption of the course.

I began researching and testing other local clays once restrictions eased a bit and also people began providing me with quantities of clay from their own locations. I wondered if I could extend the areas of clay and materials I could gather and especially how far north I could find them.

Prior to the initial lock down I had again been to the Shetland Isles and met with John Jacobs at Vidlin Pottery, he had shown me the pottery and the materials he had collected from the islands, in particular the iron ochre.

On a very sunny September morning I arrived in my camper van at Aberdeen and boarded the ferry for the twelve hour crossing. I was to be on Shetland for two weeks and hoped to find some really interesting materials to bring back and test.

During the first week of my stay I visited the Bonhoga Gallery in Weisdale where I read about a local potter Sharon McGeady, using materials she found in the old croft houses in her work.



Examples of Sharon's work on display at the Mareel, Lerwick

I was given her contact details but told that the WiFi in the North was not great, so also text and phone her.

All of which I did but as the storms that would rage for the next two days hit, there was no reply. I decided to go up on the off chance she would be there.



The Pottery outbuildings

As I arrived Sharon and her husband were just walking down the hill with the dogs. Introductions were made and I was welcomed and ushered inside and offered a seat by the fire and a cuppa.



Kiln room

Sharron is originally one of the Anglian Potters Association and had moved to Shetland a decade ago. We talked for a good couple of hours about Sharon's work and her interest in the materials that people leave behind when the crofts and houses are left empty, either through relocation, death, clearances etc that have impacted on the island peoples lives. She then incorporates the patterns and textures into her hand built pieces and glazes them sympathetically.

Sharron then took me around the pottery, the byre had been set up as her gallery and several out buildings served as her glaze room and kiln room.



Glazing room

Then we were off up the hill to see the wild clay seam that had been exposed with the installation of a mobile phone mast. The seam ran all the way down to the beach and she told me where I could gather it and some iron ochre also.

We discussed the clay and as she has not yet had time to test it herself, I said I would take some back and process it and let her know what results I got from the firings. She has offered me a return visit so that we could do some collaborative work next year. Which would be a wonderful opportunity once I finish my course in March 2022.

I came back from my trip with the van loaded with two different wild clay samples and iron ochre to process, sea shells and seaweed, peat ash and driftwood and other beach treasure.

The clay and iron will be tested at different firing temperatures once hand processed. These will I hope form part of my final Master Exhibition which will be held at Hopewell Studios, near Knaresborough in February 2022.

I am really grateful to everyone I have met on the Shetland Islands for their help and information, especially Sharron and her husband and to the Northern Potters Association for the financial contribution towards the travel costs that made it possible to head off to collect the materials to research.



Above and below, clay deposits and iron ochre at the beach



Book Review – Chris Barnes

Mastering Kilns & Firing, Lindsay Oesterritter

Published by Quarry at £24.99

This book came out in 2020 and it is worth reading if you want to know about building kilns, wood firing plus pit and barrel firing and raku with gas. It is very well illustrated and has a readable style. The information is based on the author's own extensive experience of teaching, kiln building and ceramic practice.

For kiln builders this book is comprehensive enough to be a useful companion, there is very good practical advice on both building kilns and firing them. Enough technical information is provided without being overwhelming, the author sticks to very practical and useful pointers rather than bombarding the reader with jargon and numbers, which is a sign, I think, that she has gained her knowledge through the experience of doing it. Indeed many of the photographs which illustrate the kilns and their use are of kilns which Lindsay Oesterritter has designed and built for herself or other potters.

Unusually for a practical guide, the book doubles as a pottery reference which has you just admiring the beautiful work as well. This is helped by the inclusion of work from several makers who use wood firing in other ways and also work from raku potters. Having said this, the book is fundamentally about wood firing because this is what the author knows best. Here is a list of the chapters with a summary of content:

1. Getting Started

Covering safety, clay, cone packs, cleaning and wood storage and sourcing.

2. Kiln Fundamentals

Including kiln anatomy, kiln material considerations, flame path, personal considerations.

3. Raku

Including making work for raku, preparing work for raku, the reduction chamber and combustibles, kiln design & firing techniques, firing, Gallery Pages.

4. Pit & Barrel

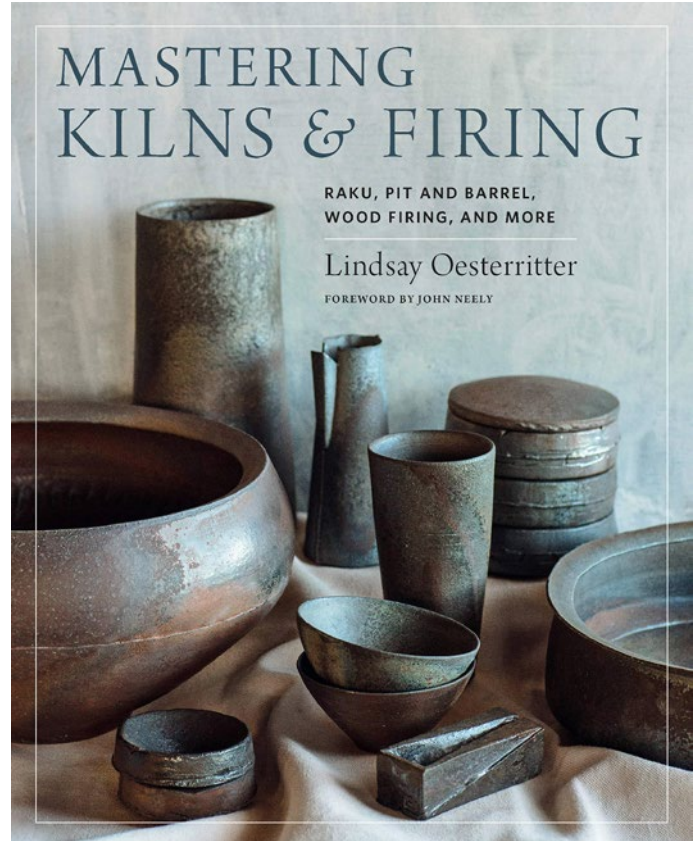
Including making work for pit firing, preparing work, loading the kiln, kiln design, firing, Gallery Pages.

5. Wood Firing

Including making work for wood firing, wadding, loading a kiln, firing, common questions & concerns, unloading & evaluating, Gallery Pages.

6. Further Explorations

Including fuel sources, framework, firing variations, fire as performance and Gallery Pages.



Lindsay Oesterritter

Everything is gone into with clarity and attention to detail.

I find this book throws a light on small but telling differences in the approach to pottery making in the USA, compared to a view from here in the UK, which are interesting. There is an obvious difference in scale in the USA but also a freedom from old world conventions which can propel new work forwards.

From **mud** to
work of art

...and everything in
between



OUR
FUTURE

IS IN THE
MAKING



John Cook

June Roddam



Judith Roberts



5% member discount proof required

POTCLAYS.co.uk
LIMITED
Est. 1932 | 85 years



If you use Clay - You need CTM Potters Supplies

Mail Order and Collection of a wide range of tools, materials, equipment, clays and glazes etc etc
5% Potters Association Discount on all items, excluding Wheels, Kilns, Machinery and Direct Delivered Clay



Low Interest Rate Subsidised Retail Finance
available on Potters Wheels, Kittec and Rohde Kilns



We aim to provide the most cost-effective ranges of clay, tools, glazes, materials and equipment for potters in the UK. You can visit us, see test tiles and browse, or order over the phone or email - please see www.ctmpotterssupplies.co.uk

NOW STOCKING KITTEC & ROHDE KILNS



Unit 7/8, Broomhouse Lane Ind Estate, Doncaster, DN12 1EQ
or Unit 19, Hogsbrook Units, Greendale East Ind Estate, Exeter, EX5 1PY

01709 770801
01395 233077

check for opening times
on the website

Simba Materials Limited acts as a credit intermediary and offer credit products provided only by Klarna Retail Finance. A trading name of Klarna Bank. Klarna Bank is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority. Finance is only available to UK residents over 18, subject to status, terms and conditions apply.

POTTERYCRAFTS LIMITED

AMACO® glazes: Magic Flow,
Textured Alligator, Artist's Choice,
and Stone Texture

**For the beginner and expert
in ceramics & pottery**

Front & Top Loading Kilns manufactured
in Stoke-on-Trent

Extensive Range of Clays

Pottery Wheels

Slab Rollers

Glazes

Tools & Brushes

Raw Materials

Moulds

Bisque

Helpful & Friendly Advice

Everything a Potter needs



Tel: 01782 745000
Fax: 01782 746000



www.potterycrafts.co.uk
sales@potterycrafts.co.uk

Sedgefield Pottery Supplies Ltd

- **Valentine Clays, Potclays, Commercial Clays & Spencroft**
- **Wide range of colours - glazes, underglazes & lustres**
- **New German kilns - Kittec, Rohde & Nabertherm**
- **Kiln repairs & refurbished kilns**



The Old Smithy, Cross Street, Sedgefield, Co. Durham TS21 2AH
01740 621998 bill@sedgefieldpottery.co.uk
www.sedgefieldpottery.co.uk

Welcome to new members

A warm welcome is extended to all our new members.

We look forward to seeing you at events and images of your work in our gallery.

Chris Hughes	Southport	Merseyside
Thirza Dixon	Market Rasen	Lincolnshire
Helen Plant	Hebden Bridge	West Yorks
Stella Crowson	Ripon	North Yorks
Martin Upton	Keighley	West Yorks
Liz McKernan	Warrington	Cheshire
Trevor Pollard	Sheffield	South Yorks
Deborah Land	Keswick	Cumbria
Heather Elvidge	York	North Yorks
Gillian Wigley	York	North Yorks
Helen Pemberton	Lytham St Annes	Lancashire
Beverley Foster	York	North Yorks
Emma Barradell	Sheffield	South Yorks
Mahmoona Shah	Bradford	West Yorks
Louise Watson	Buxton	Derbyshire
Deirdre Warren	Cumberworth	North Yorks
Jane & Simon Cordingley	Todmorden	West Yorks
Peter Lowles	Huddersfield	West Yorks
Pascal Nichols	Stockport	Cheshire

Equality & Diversity

The NPA is an inclusive, not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers which welcomes and values diversity (of age, ethnicity, race, religion, disability, belief or non-belief, sex or sexual orientation) within its membership. Our aim is to ensure that all our members are treated with dignity and respect.

Advertising in NPA News

Per issue prices

Small ads (30 words)	Free to members		
Boxed adverts			
colour	1/2 pp £30	1/4 pp £18	1/8 pp £10
B&W	1/2 pp £20	1/4 pp £15	1/8 pp £8
Size	176Wx106H	86Wx106H	86Wx53H

Ann Davis

Membership Secretary

Visit northern-potters.co.uk for membership forms and subscription rates.



NPA Bursary Scheme

The NPA is offering bursaries to members needing support to develop their work by attending courses, workshops or otherwise exploring new directions. The maximum award is £250, from a fund of £1000 for 2020/21.

All you need to do is get an application form from treasurer@northern-potters.co.uk and complete it, outlining how and when the money will be used to benefit your practice. The committee will consider your application and let you know if you have been successful. Applicants must have been NPA members for at least one a year.

The final step is to write a short, illustrated article about your experience for NPA News.

Small ads

Kiln - Pottery P5976 (40 amp 3 phase supply) roughly dating to 2003. According to information available the whole unit weighs 90 kg. Price negotiable, buyer must collect. Similar items on eBay £2-400. The kiln is in Euxton PR76PP. Contact Anne Stafford, Simon Wallis 01257 268946

9 cu.ft. Laser gas kiln complete with digital pyrometer and thermocouple, kiln furniture, new regulator and all hoses for bottled LPG supply etc. Price negotiable, buyer must collect. Further details from Paul Muchan. Telephone 07889 682655.

JANEELIZABETHCERAMICS

Courses: Build by hand, pinch, coil, slab and model. One off taster/experiences, date nights, family sessions, tailored tuition, home education sessions, weekly classes available.

Contact janeelizabethceramics@yahoo.com

Hard copies of Ceramic Review going back to 1977. Very happy to give them away if they can be collected from Roundhay, Leeds.

Contact Anne Chamberlain

Email is m.a.chamberlain@leeds.ac.uk

Mobile 07850542 027

From the Membership Secretary

Digital Newsletter now available

You can now choose to receive your NPA Newsletter as a PDF by email instead of the paper edition in the post. If you would like to give it a try, send an email to membership@northern-potters.co.uk requesting this. Send it from the email address you want to receive the PDF at, and please make the subject PDF Newsletter. You will be able to change your choice back to a postal copy at any time.

No action is required by members wishing to continue receiving a printed copy by post.

Other reminders:

Don't forget to let membership@northern-potters.co.uk know if you have changed any of your contact details so that you don't miss out on any events and/or information.

Also, please remember that we don't send out membership renewal reminders - you're in charge of your membership.

If you have any queries don't hesitate to contact me at membership@northern-potters.co.uk

Ann Davis

From Geoff Cox

In the distant past there were NPA summer camps where members of the association came together over a weekend; sometimes to watch demonstrations and at others to take part in hands-on making events. In recent years there have been attempts to resurrect the idea with little apparent enthusiasm from the membership. To my thinking the problem has always been the complexity of putting a major event together – who's going to organise it and how much would it cost [in time as well as money]? I think it pointless to try to replicate the biannual International Ceramics Festival at Aberystwyth without their infrastructure. NPA doesn't have their resources, financially or in paid manpower. However regional groups have proved that when creative people come together small events like Raku days and pit firing can be quite successful and very enjoyable. It depends on who's taking part and their input in it as much as the physical organising of the day. There will of course be people who prefer to be entertained but I think most potters would rather be playing together in the sand pit than watching others having fun. So this in part is a bit of research.

For some time now I've been thinking about a playtime event and how to make it happen. The first attempt was a few years ago at Potfest when members of regional groups were invited to compete

in making the largest structure from a bag of clay over a morning or afternoon. It didn't really achieve what I'd hoped for various reasons though I think some potters enjoyed it. Being part of Potfest there were too many distractions - it was in the wrong place; several people working on the same piece probably created a tension in the group that might have made the experience less enjoyable for some: the whole concept was rather vague and fizzled out a bit as the show came to an end and the general chaos of exhibitors packing up. Still, you have to give these things a go if you're going to understand the problems and try to resolve them in the future." Implement and Improve" is a watchword of a friend of mine.

And so we come to Potters' Playtime [on facebook] – a group of around 80 potters from all parts of the UK already committed to come together for a weekend to take part in a hands on project. Everyone in the same place, working as individuals each one tasked to make a single piece from several bags of clay. It isn't a competition, none of them will have tried this before, everyone out of their comfort zone sharing the same experience. No judges, failures inevitable, the only audience each other, probably the biggest potters' party ever. The event will work because everyone taking part wants it to and will make it work. What would members of NPA think about doing something similar?

There are now around 700 members of NPA. Taking into account the usual apathy if only 10% were up for giving it a go 70 potters playing together over a couple of days could be a very exciting prospect. Cost would be minimal - £30 each would buy several tonnes of cheap clay [probably terracotta] delivered to site, and everyone would take their clay home for reclaim. So what do you think? Who'd be up for it?

Geoff Cox

If you are interested in getting involved with this initiative for an event which is open exclusively to NPA members, please contact Geoff Cox by email by 14 January 2022 - geoff@potfest.co.uk

Thank you from the Editor

The newsletter would not get to print without the support of regional co-ordinators and the team who keep me updated with NPA developments. I would also like to thank all the contributors to the newsletter for their support, NPA News would not exist without you. It is great to be able to share your thoughts, articles and photographs with NPA members. Please do continue to email items to me at: npanews@northern-potters.co.uk

Meanwhile, have fun being creative with clay and best wishes to you all for 2022. Chris Barnes



Serving talented people Nationwide

www.northernkilns.com



WWW.KILNLININGS.CO.UK

10% Discount for NPA members

(Please Email us for details)

*All refractory materials sold for Kilns, Furnaces and Forges
(And other heat applications)*

Insulation Bricks, Firebricks and High Alumina Bricks

Ceramic Fibre products

Castable Refractory Products

Insulation Materials/Boards/Blankets

High Temperature Cement's and Adhesives

Burners, Miniature Hobby Kilns

Fireclay and Vermiculite

Made to measure Moulds and other products cut to size/shape

KILNLININGS

WWW.KILNLININGS.CO.UK

Email us: info@kilnlinings.co.uk

Tel: 07958 615187

Regional News

Regional groups were set up to help members communicate with others local to them and arrange events in their area.

We have had a busy few months. Thank you to all who participated in our #7daypotterychallenge on Instagram at the beginning of November. The event has been saved in our highlighted stories on our page if you missed any of the excitement. Patricia Shone did not disappoint in her chat and demo event on zoom towards the end of November, we thank her for providing an insight into her techniques.

On Tuesday 7th December we are holding a quiz night to round the year off. Thora has kindly offered to host a bring and share at her home on Wednesday 15th December. Please check your email for details on both events.

Kathryn Stevens

northernpottersnw@gmail.com



NPAnorthwest



@northernpottersassociationNW

I hope everyone is keeping well and enjoying the fabulous Autumn weather.

Good news! Since the last newsletter the studio at UCLan has re-opened for Ceramic ArtLab sessions every Monday 5pm–9pm. As well as providing excellent facilities it's given us opportunity to plan for future exhibitions. We also have a new technician - Cath Criscenti @cathcriscenticeramics who has set up an Instagram page @uclan_ceramicsartlab which provides a really good overview of the studio and Ceramic ArtLab makers.

Connecting Crafts at the Platform Gallery will be our first exhibition in 2022 January 24th–19 March.

Submissions for Arteria Gallery Summer Exhibition 2022 are likely to be requested by the end February. I'll email everyone once I have the exhibition criteria

Kim Graham

west@northern-potters.co.uk



NPAwest



@northernpottersassociationWest (TBC)

Our Pop Up in Altrincham went with a BANG.

Ten NPA members joined together in October and took over a shop in Altrincham, Manchester for the week. It involved a fair bit of organising but everyone rolled their sleeves up and got involved. With a well attended preview night and six full days our corner of George Street was full of laughter, pottery chat and sales. Thank you to all those that took part, all those that volunteered as extra help and all those NPA members that called in to say hello.

Our sad news is the Simone is stepping down as coordinator with me. I'll really miss her and am very grateful for all that she has done for the SW NPA, as I am sure you all are. If anyone is

Juliet Myers

email@sw-npa.co.uk



NPAsouthwest



@northernpottersassociationSW

We will be organising a coach trip to the Centre of Ceramic Art, York as part of our programme for next year. If there is anything in particular you would like including in 2022 please let me know. Have a lovely Christmas everyone and see you in the new year.



NW

and application form

There are plans for an exhibition at the Coach House Gallery, Astley Hall. See Diary page.

The theme for our Lytham Heritage Centre exhibition is 'Sea-Clay' which is planned for 31 May–19 June 2022. Sixteen makers are confirmed and we have room for a few more, if you're interested please email me.

We're also planning a festive Zoom meet-up, further details will be sent by email.

If anyone is interested in sharing the NPA West coordinator roll please get in touch!

Happy potting!

interested in taking up her role please get in touch.

I would also like to welcome our new members to the SW NPA. Hello. It's lovely having so many new names on the list. I look forward to meeting you.

I am in the process of organising a studio visit to one of our member's studio. It's a real gem. Keep an eye out for the email.

Wishing you all a joyous Christmas,

Juliet



W



SW

Any member can ask to be included in any regional mailing list.
You must have given your consent to receive NPA emails.

Regional News



NE

As it has everywhere, covid has made things difficult to plan for in the NE Region, several events had to be postponed, and we sadly had to cancel the proposed Makers Event and Ceramics Festival which should have been in Darlington around Halloween.

We have been joined in the co-ordinators group by John Scott, Chris Walker and ex NPA Chair Claude Frere-Smith and we aim to increase opportunities in 2022 for exhibitions, selling our work and for simply getting together to learn more and have some pottery fun.

We are in negotiation with several venues in the North and the South of the region, and as soon as we can finalise details we will of course let everyone know, but this includes an exciting opportunity for an exhibition at Newcastle Cathedral, with workshops running alongside the show.

We are of course also always open to ideas and suggestions. Look out for the next NPA NE news email, which will include dates for a regional meetings in the new year.

Carol Newmarch

NE Regional Co-ordinators Group: Carol Newmarch, Wendy Turner, Diane Nicholson, Helen Pickard, Jaime Westwood, Robert Campbell, Chris Walker, John Scott, Claude Frere-Smith
north-east@northern-potters.co.uk  [NorthernPottersAssociationNorthEast](#)  [@northernpottersassociationNE](#)



E

We were all very sad to hear of the recent death of Joan Hardie. NPA East members were quick to respond to the news and described her as 'generous', 'impressive and inspiring', 'enthusiastic', 'kind' and witty. We all wish to pass on our condolences to Jack and her family, she will be missed.

Over the last month there have been a number of sales, exhibitions and open studio events. Mary Brandon, Jackie Maidment, Sheri Scruton and Denise Duncan held a Pop up Pottery Sale in Sheri's studio in Poppleton near York. Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg exhibited at the 'Inspired' event in York.

Avigayil Franklin took part in The Talented Makers Craft Fair in Leeds and Drew Caines took part in an open studio event with the Barkston Ceramic Makers also in Leeds. These events were advertised to the group and I hope other NPA East members were able to support them. Galea Belinscaia has two events over Christmas. She is exhibiting three pieces of animalier clay sculpture at Water Street Gallery, Todmorden, in their Christmas exhibition, "A Modern Bestiary" open now and running until January 31st 2022. She is also at Cupola Contemporary Art Gallery, Sheffield, exhibiting a clay sculpture with the exhibition theme of "Scion", opening November 27th 2021 and running on until January 8th 2022.

Lyn Clarke

enpa.coordinator@gmail.com  [NPAEast](#)

 [@northernpottersassociationEast](#)



SE

It only seems like yesterday we were writing the last newsletter and it's been a relatively quiet time in the south east after the flurry of activities in the summer. The talk on Medieval pottery given by Chris Cumberpatch and John Hudson was very interesting and very well received. Who knew that in the south Pennines pottery was re-introduced by the Normans after

being 'missing' for some 250 years! What did they use? The venue at Clifton Park Museum is a great discovery and we will certainly be using it again. Hopefully next time the weather will be better and we will be able to make use of the lovely walled garden too.

We held our second SENPA meeting of the year at Rother Valley Country Park cafe. 15 members joined us for a very lively meeting followed by an excellent buffet. We discussed all the events that we managed to organise during the past year (what worked, and more importantly what didn't) and there were lots of really interesting ideas for future workshops, talks and selling opportunities. Hopefully most of these ideas will bear fruit and we will be in for another busy and interesting year. As ever, we are always on the lookout for venues and ideas to fill them.

Merry Christmas and seasons greeting to all, and may the kiln gods smile on all your endeavours.

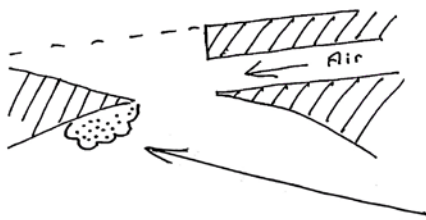
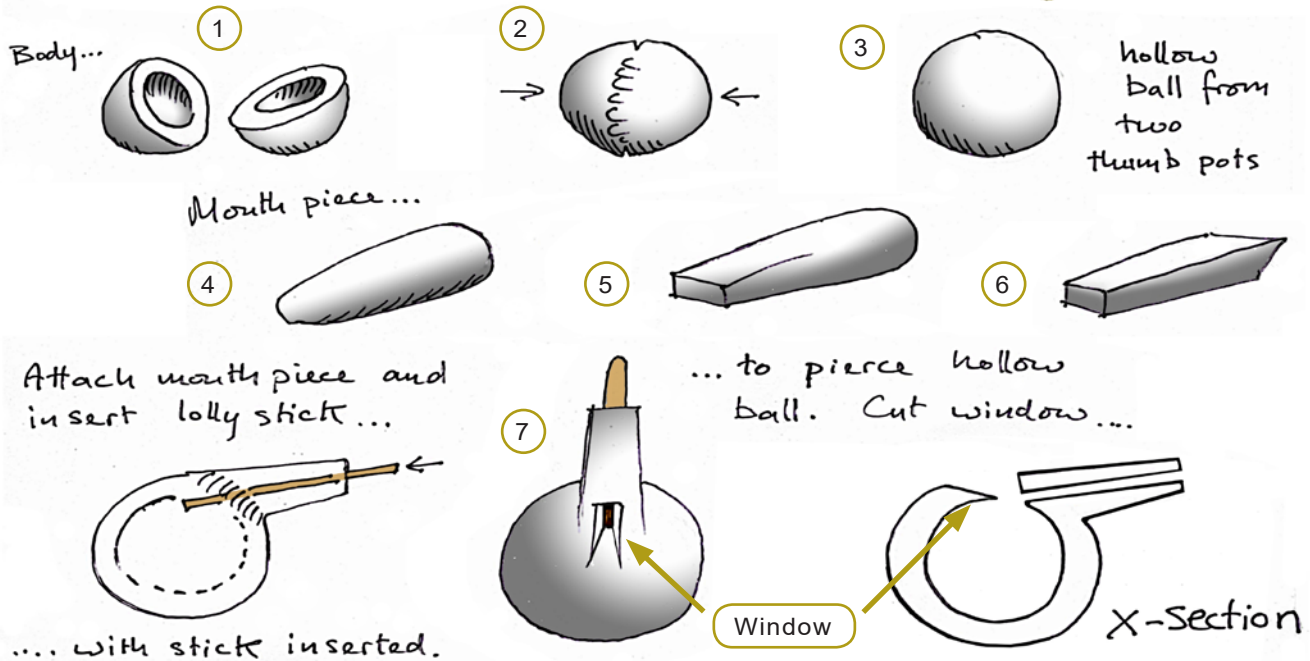
Cheers, Wendy and Nog.

Graham Northing & Wendy Wall

senpacoordinator@outlook.com  [NPAsoutheast](#)

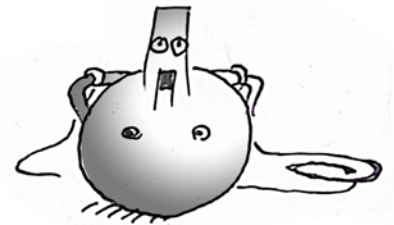
 [@northernpottersassociationSE](#)

Making Clay Whistles



The most common cause of whistle failure is waste clay hidden on underside of window opening.

Other shapes



- Tools needed**
- Lolly stick
 - Potters knife or pen knife
 - Patience

Method

Make two small thumb pots and join them rim to rim, to make a hollow ball.

Make a tapering wad of clay for the mouth piece, shaped so that it can be joined to the hollow ball.

Join the mouth piece to the ball with little or no added moisture so that you can push a hole through it which will not be too soggy.

Use your clean lolly stick to push a hole down the mouth piece right into the hollow ball.

With the lolly stick in place, use your knife to cut a window down to the stick as illustrated. This window should have a sharp edge where the blown air strikes it - like an organ pipe or penny whistle. See diagrams.

Make sure that it is as clean as a whistle before you attempt to blow a note. More notes can be obtained by making small holes in the ball, you can place these holes so that they lie under your fingers when holding the whistle. The notes can be tuned relative to each other by altering the size of the holes.

Submissions for this page are invited from members who have any potters' tips, nifty techniques or full blown project ideas. Please send them to:
npanews@northern-potters.co.uk



CELEBRATING
40 YEARS
 of supporting the
 ceramic community

40 TH ANNIVERSARY
 Valentine
 Clays Ltd
 EST. 1979

t: 01782 721 200 f: 01782 949 715

Email: sales@valentineclays.co.uk
 Web: www.valentineclays.co.uk



SNEYD CERAMICS LIMITED

GLAZE & UNDERGLAZE STAINS
 GLAZES - FOR ALL APPLICATIONS
 PAINTING COLOURS
 RAW MATERIALS
 PRINTING INKS
 COLOURED ENGOBES

ONGLAZE COLOURS
 BRUSH-ON GLAZES
 CERAMIC CAFE COLOURS
 COLOURING OXIDES
 PRINTING MEDIUMS
 BODY STAINS

Below is a small selection of our products

STANDARD COLOURED GLAZES



STONEWARE GLAZES



RAKU & CRAQUELLE GLAZES



Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information

SNEYD CERAMICS LIMITED Sneyd Mills, Leonora Street, Burslem, Stoke on Trent, UK, ST6 3BZ
 TEL: 01782 814167 Email: sales@sneydceramics.co.uk www.sneydceramics.co.uk

