

NPA News



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

April to May 2022
£2, free to members



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Front Cover: Lesley Greene, Mouse King riding an elephant
Approx H 26-28cms

Photo: Lesley Greene

Back Cover: Offset Globe

Photo: Eric Moss

Next issue

The copy date for the next issue of NPA News is 23 May 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.

From the Chair

I hope you are as excited as I am to see the weather warm up to enable us all to get out and about. If you are stuck for ideas where to go, just check our diary pages, I am sure there is an exhibition that will interest you. I hope you also share my enthusiasm for organizing an NPA Potters Day again. Some of you might remember that the NPA used to run a 2-day pottery event, but interest waned over time, and it was stopped. But thanks to Kath Stevens we are looking to bring the event back into your calendar. To start with, we are thinking of developing plans for a one-day event in 2023 and the committee has agreed to support, help develop, run and fund this event. We will bring you more information and ways to get involved later this year.



I recently managed to see the Yorkshire Tea Ceremony exhibition at The Centre of Ceramic Art (CoCA) in York which shows over 200 pieces from the William Alfred Ismay collection. It was great to be out and I thought the pieces were presented rather well. The exhibition will close at the end of April, so hurry if you haven't been yet. If you are running events and would like us to help spread the word via our social media channels, please get in touch! Either email or just DM us @ [northernpottersassociation](https://www.instagram.com/northernpottersassociation).

Also, just a quick reminder that our website is here for you, and it's free! If you are running ceramic courses and would like to advertise them in our course section, please get in touch with Dianne at publicity@northern-potters.co.uk. More information on our website can be found later in this magazine.

I am also still on the lookout for a Vice-Chair. As vice-chair you will be in a supporting role, assisting and working with me to ensure the smooth running of the NPA in line with the aims of the constitution. Duties include attending committee meetings, standing in for the chair, including leading meetings when necessary. Timewise, I would say a couple of hours per month but that is completely down to you. I will advertise the role also on our social media channels and am looking forward to your application by 31st April 2022.

Last but not least here is another date for your diary: Our 2022 AGM will be held at the Only Clay exhibition on Sunday, 25th September 2022 in Sheffield. You are all invited and I am looking forward to seeing many of you there.

Best wishes

Nadine

Your Committee

Chair	Nadine Blakemore chair@northern-potters.co.uk Ilkley
Vice Chair	Vacant vice-chair@northern-potters.co.uk ?
Secretary	Sally Streuli secretary@northern-potters.co.uk 01619 287184 Altrincham, Cheshire
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Website events/courses	Dianne Cross publicity@northern-potters.co.uk
Gerry Grant	York
Lynn Grant	York
Carol Newmarch	Middlesbrough
Bev Seth	Sheffield
Kathryn Stevens	Barrow in Furness
Nina Wright	Otley

Diary

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

25 March to 19 April	Glorious Clay The Coach House Gallery, Astley Hall, Chorley NPA Exhibition
2 & 3 April	Sheffield Ceramics Festival Kelham Island Museum, Sheffield NPA members will be showing
3 - 5 June	Potfest in the Pens Auction Mart, Penrith NPA members will be showing
10 - 12 June	Potfest Scotland Scone Palace, Perth NPA members will be showing
2 & 3 July	NW Region Summer Exhibition
2 & 3 July	Public Raku Party Hare Hill Barn, Cartmel Fell
29 - 31 July	Potfest in the Park Hutton-in-the-Forrest NPA members will be showing
21 August	Pop-Up 2 Pottery Fox Valley Retail Centre, Stocksbridge Up to 28 potters



MAKERS WANTED



CONTACT

HELEN@LYTHAMCERAMICS.COM

UKRAINE EMERGENCY

Here is a link to an article in Ceramics Now. It is an appeal for help for refugee ceramicists from Ukraine, and there is a link to an online form to fill in for anyone who has a room or studio space to offer.

<https://www.ceramicsnow.org/news/how-to-support-ukrainian-ceramic-artists/>

The potter who is trying to organise this is Yuliya Makliuk - y.makliuk@gmail.com

If you are considering signing up to the Homes For Refugees scheme, the link above may find you the named individual which the Home Office seems to require.

Should refugees be given permission to come, then the government will give hosts £350 a month to be a host and local councils will be given a budget to support refugees' food & living expenses. They are looking for direct connection with friends and family, so it would help in individual cases to have potters supporting other potters in friendship through our organisation.

Announcements

Your Association needs your input in many ways to thrive.

At the moment there are posts to be filled on the committee.

Vice Chair (currently vacant) and Secretary (vacant from August).

For more information and job descriptions please email our secretary, Sally Strueli

secretary@northern-potters.co.uk

The 3 members selected to share the NPA stand at Only Clay 2022 are:

Kate Buckley
Julie Cole
Kate Cooke

Sedgefield Pottery Supplies are pleased to offer a 5% discount to current members of the Northern Potters Association on tools and materials and a 10% discount on clay collection Wednesday to Saturday.

(discount is not available on equipment, kilns, and wheels) The business has now moved premises to Business Park, Unit 28, Flexspace, Lingfield Way, Darlington DL1 4QZ. 07502 613 162

New Artists to the Website



Richard Pearson



Amanda Crump



Pascal Nichols



Aileen Burgess

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 100 words, email address, phone number, plus any website, Facebook and Instagram links. Email John Cook with the details and updates website@northern-potters.co.uk



Techniques and processes – Eric Moss



Nested Pair, Gladiator

Although I'd been making pots for fun for over 35 years, I only began potting commercially, and in raku, around 2005/6, following a revelatory fortnight summer school at my local FE college in Harrogate. Most raku clays available then seemed very off-white and I sought a strong black and white contrast in my surfaces. So I chose an unsuitable white stoneware with minimal grog which gave the finish I sought but with uneconomic losses – typically, I would lose 4 out of every 10 pots to thermal shock i.e. at the very end of the process. After 2 years I switched to Scarva's 'Ashraff Hanna Super White Raku' clay, developed with optical brightness, remaining porous in higher bisque firing and with great thermal shock resistance. Although nearly twice the price, the extra cost more than paid for itself as this clay reduced my losses to under 5%! And higher firing means finished work is also much more durable than traditional raku.

However, thermal shock was still an issue with the favourite theme of my work – Ceramicano. Inspiration came from a seed and pod akin to the humble conker, a segmented seedcase with a sort-of-spherical kernel. The first pieces were wheel thrown, then cut apart and slip-jointed together but the resulting complex mix of curve and straight joints would frequently pass bisque firing but still fail in raku. My solution was to sidestep the issue and I created plaster moulds of the flanged segments I sought to create. Press-moulding forms as a single piece meant that although my shapes were

complex and stress might ensue, there were no joints to fail. This was fine for single segments, as used for my 'orbaler' sculpture, but how to create work with multiple segments without introducing slipped joints? The obvious answer to me was to bolt them together, with foam washers between the segments to ensure no clay-on-clay tension.



early prototype (2007)

Bolting the segments was all very well but when fitted flange-to-flange a great deal of potentially interesting surface remained hidden and this saw a further evolution beyond my initial natural inspiration. Wheel-thrown 'bobbin' spaces between the segments not only revealed surface flange detail but added an extra dynamic sculptural aspect to what I began to call 'assemblies'. Some customers reticent at spending on purely decorative sculptural pieces were sometimes won round by the addition of off-the-peg glass globe lamps which nested in the heart like a kernel. Integral illumination added yet further variety to the theme – many pieces entitled 'dancing sharks' got their name from the shape of shadow-play around the lit work.

My first moulds were based on wheel-thrown 'master' forms and were around 24cm in diameter. So, when galleries asked if I could scale up, the size of a fishing float dictated the larger size of my next set of plaster press-moulds. In mould-making I'd created a holed, hinged 'former' from MDF that I could place over the spherical float and box around to cast all 4 different segment angles (60, 72, 90 and 120



My adjustable mouldmaking contraption

degrees, or sixths, fifths, quarters and thirds of a sphere). Serendipity stepped in again and I realised that the bowl diameter of my larger moulds would just fit the outer diameter of my first (medium) pieces so that they could be 'nested' one within the other.



1st stage making an 'Orbalancer' bowl

Subsequently, I made a third, smaller set of moulds specifically sized so the finished pieces could 'nest' within the medium. The combination of 4 segment types and three 'nestable' sizes gave me almost infinite variation opportunities and, combined with the bolt-together nature of the sculpture the name: 'Ceramicano' arose.

Added to the variety offered by my component system, I've also been able to get around a difficulty in shipping, particularly the large, complex assemblies as they can be disassembled and transported 'flat-pack'!

I have a very short attention span which is a driver for the evolution of my work, and I like the idea that every piece I make can be unique. The work's evolution in form and scale lends itself to inviting my customers to specify (or even build) their own 'nested collection' of my Ceramicano either in a single buying frenzy, or over a number of years. I like to make new pieces for each exhibition and I hope visitors will find them as exciting and mysterious as I do.



Process_BoltingTogetherALargeAssembly

I am very grateful to the Northern Potters Association as it was instrumental in helping my practice become established in its early years: I was encouraged to join the Association by Member Isabel Denyer when we first met at York Open Studios in 2006. The human dynamo that is Barbara Wood, as NPA Exhibitions Officer, newsletter editor and Chair of the NPA for a number of years, masterminded a concerted series of exhibitions for Association members both at municipal and private galleries around the north east and I was fortunate to be selected for many and retained as a gallery artist following the exhibitions. Alongside this I clambered my way up the slippery pole of Ceramic Fairs, beginning as many do at Potfest in the Pens in 2006, progressing to Potfests in the Park, Earth and Fire and latterly Art in Clay in 2015. In 2015 I finally gave up my full time job and was able to concentrate on purely on my ceramics and I was pleased to be made a Selected Member of the Craft Potters Association in January 2020.



Process - Rudimentary Raku Firing Setup

Moulds 2 – Graham Hough

With all my work I am more interested in recreating the images in my head than I am in the way they are created. If there are methods of aiding the process of making then I am keen to pursue them. When making my series of 'Bishops' I first made a clay tubes for each one, fixed on flat bases to literally form the backbone of my figures. Everything else was hung on to these dry tubes. For my series of 'Fallen Angels' I developed the use of silicone moulds to reproduce lots of hands and feet. These methods could only be achieved by using paper-clay, in my case porcelain paper-clay which allows wet clay to be added to dry clay structures.



Madonna mould.

My next project is to explore the bizarre relationship between the Catholic Church and their icons. Portraying, in my own way, the grotesque figures displayed in shrines and churches throughout the Catholic world beginning with the Virgin Mary. Most images of the Virgin Mary show a tall simple gherkin shape with out-turned palms. To me this required a large mould to this shape to which I could add robes, head, hands and a bleeding heart.

I built a mould core 600mm high using a 120mm diameter aluminium tube screwed to an oval wooden base. Around this spine I built up recycled foam padding, rubble sacks and cheap gaffa tape, all covered in a layer of cling film.



Madonna mould interior

I took this mould core to the front of all my knowledge the ArtsLab in UCLAN, Preston. The ArtsLab is a group of talented potters who use the extensive facilities and interact with each other under the professional guidance of our mentor Cath Criscenti. Initially we discussed making a standard plaster mould but it was pointed out that would both be expensive and heavy. A fellow potter, Jayne Frodsham, suggested 'modrock' as an alternative and this has proved to be an excellent idea. A classic example of how a group of people working together co-operate in the exchange of ideas (and jokes).

I used 12 rolls of Modrock 150mm wide by 3.5m long. Cost about £20. I wrapped the modrock around the mould core producing about five/six layers. I reinforced the mould with split bamboo canes. I smoothed each layer with a water loaded paint brush which may have been a mistake because some small sections de-laminated as they dried, I may have washed out too much plaster. Next time I will just dip the modrock in a bowl of warm water quickly, in and

out, and smooth the damp modrock with my hands. (Unless you know better). The whole mould took three days to dry in a warm room.

When it was dry and hard I sawed into two halves and reinforced the edges with hole filler (Poly-filler). For more elaborate shaped cores you may need to make more divisions.

Each half of the mould was lined cling film and then lined with rolled out sheets, about 3mm thick, of porcelain paper-clay, merging the edges as I added more pieces. When both halves were clay lined I joined them together with cable ties and put my hand in to the mould to join the two halves of clay. I used a hot air gun to blow-dry the clay until it was self supporting and ready to be dropped out the mould on to a simple clay disc base.



Mould core

Having ensured all the joints and inevitable gaps were filled with fresh clay I started to build my Madonna using slip soaked cotton sheets.

As with all my suggested methods of making work there are many improvements that can be made and perhaps this will encourage you to copy or develop your own 'short cuts'.

I hope the illustrations give clarity to my description.

Well one Virgin Mary made and at least five more to go. Anyone who knows my work will not be surprised to know my grotesque portraits will concentrate more on the evil nature, in some areas, of the Catholic Church and on such subjects as the killing of babies in the Catholic run mother and baby homes in Ireland between 1922 and 1998.



Madonna V1

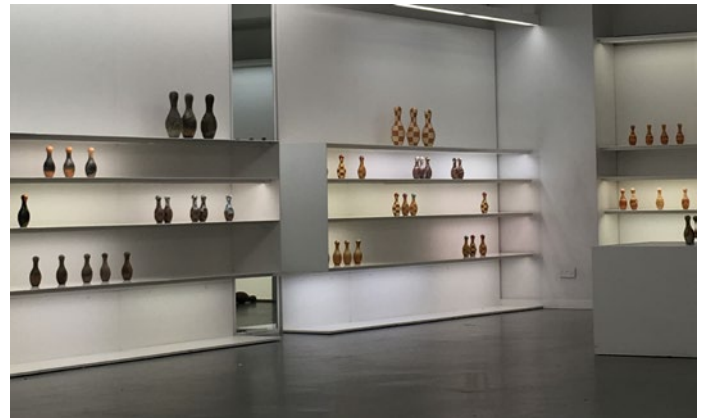
Chris Suttie: Travel and Clay – Carol Newmarch



The words 'Travel and Clay,' as well as being the name of his Instagram account, also sum up Chris Suttie's arts practice and his eclectic attitude towards making ceramics. An experimental slip caster and artist, Chris has travelled extensively. He lived and worked in Australia for ten years, and it was there that he discovered his passion for ceramics.

Returning to the UK last year, Chris Suttie now lives and works in the Tees Valley, the area in which he grew up in the '90s. He set up a workshop in Middlesbrough, finding his feet in a very changed and changing locality, and with support from Arts Council England, he's reaching out to engage other people in the methods of making and firing in which he delights. In December we joined forces to pitfire our work in the context of a wonderful social event with all the elemental excitement that is so infectious.

Some of those recently pitfired pieces were shown recently in Chris's exhibition at WTD in Middlesbrough.



'Surfaces, Liquid and Stories Contained: The Craft of Casting slips' reflects his journeying not only through other countries, but also through his ongoing dedicated experimentation with materials and techniques. Visiting the exhibition space, we stepped into a world of forms made from clays and materials he has gleaned and refined from Sydney, Australia, and Comondale in Yorkshire, with strong influences from other places, particularly Japan. Australia's ceramic scene is very much influenced by Japanese ceramic culture and aesthetic and spiritual principals.

Chris's repeated and regular forms, are slipcast in what is essentially an industrial process, but then

the surfaces are treated in a range of ways before being relinquished to the flames and heat. This includes firing some pieces in Anagama kilns, which take several days and a team of stokers to bring to required temperatures. Each clay presents their own colours and characteristics when fired. The finished forms are therefore serendipitous, sometimes amazing, sometimes disappointing at first glance - but a closer look can reveal hidden secrets. Some are fired several times until the potential of the material makes itself visible.

It was an exhibition which invited you to look, really look, at surfaces.

Chris was in situ in the exhibition space throughout the three weeks, making ceramic work and engaging in discourse with the public about his ceramics and his experiences and influences. His enthusiasm is infectious and his knowledge is broad.

An interesting NPA event on the 29th January gave our members a chance to meet together and share that enthusiasm. The group were given a demonstration of Chris's making techniques and a talk about his travels and his work.



A Craft of casting slips

Chris Suttie collects clay and other materials to be refined and transformed into casting slips and terra sigillatas. Creating casting slips involves working the refined powdered material into a semi-liquid referred to as a 'Non Newtonian' liquid which can then be poured.

The dry material is mixed with small amounts of water while adding de-flocculants, which keep all the particles in suspension. These varied casting slips are decanted into plaster moulds and the moulds give shape to the liquid.

The master objects Chris uses, from which to make his moulds, are chosen for the design qualities of repetition of a standard shape, size and form and mass-production. Originally these objects are made in their thousands and all meet a particular set of standards.

The studio based products Chris makes are more limited and have been fired in kilns of different environments from 6 hours in an electric kiln, a gas kiln up to 9 hours and a wood-fired kiln where the work is fired for up to 5 days, allowing for colours and subtleties to develop within the clay



Combining philosophical theories and real life thinking through the craft of casting slips and developing ceramic objects, it is this juxtaposition between industrial processes and craft based treatments which is so interesting.

It is particularly in the context of the relationships with people and place that Chris takes inspiration from and which impacts on his work. The story within these objects comes from the clay used, from the country it's from and the local people who have particular relationships with the land they identify with.



The technical research Chris Suttie is conducting and the presentation of the resulting art as part of the ACE funded project will inform further future projects with materials relating to a sense of location and industrial heritage in the Tees Valley and North East area.

Surfaces, Liquid and Stories Contained: The Craft of Casting slips

17 Jan - 2 Feb 2022 (NPA NE Artists' Talk event 29th January 2022)

WDT, Hill Street Shopping Centre, Middlesbrough

Images: © Paul Dunn and © Carol Newmarch

https://www.instagram.com/travel_and_clay/

Shelf Life – John Hudson



Isaac Button, Earthenware puzzle jug
13-2-1933



Isaac Button,
Earthenware puzzle
jug, 1925



Pots from my collection

Puzzle Jugs by my all time favourite potter Isaac Button, last of the Halifax potters. I bought them at John Walsh's auctioneers, Horbury, in 1994 and 1995. The one dated 1925 is to mark the end of his apprenticeship in that year and cost £340 out bidding the curator of Shibden Hall museum. I would have gone on much longer to buy such an important piece. It stands on my collection shelves along with other Button pieces and original C15/C16 cooking pots (posnets, copies of which along with other pots of the period will soon be on display in Gainsborough Old Hall in Lincs.) as well as one of Graham Northing "Nog's" small jars.

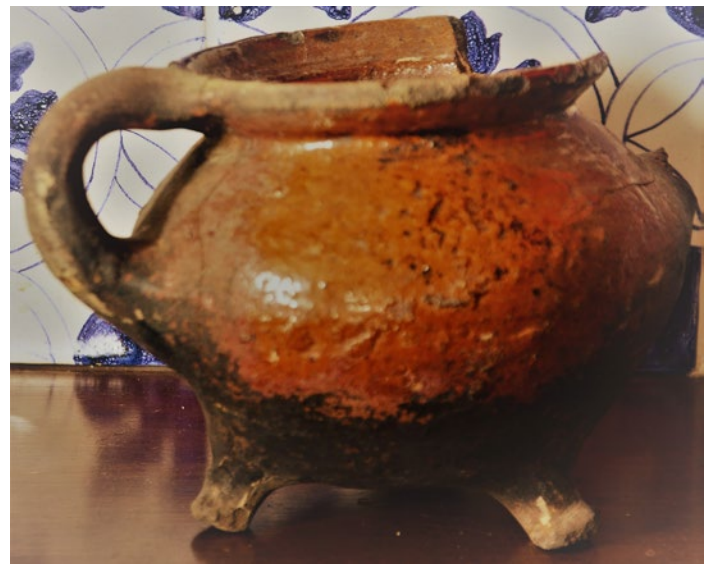
I feel that everyone in SENPA, the NPA and other potters' associations should look at the Button film by John Anderson and Robert Fournier (what an apposite name for a potter), muse on what they see, and if they think they are good, then think again.

These pictures are of such historically important pieces by one of this country's foremost, unassuming, former "living treasures".

Soil Hill Pottery still exists but, as far as I know has been converted into flats, and stands on Coal Lane off the Halifax Keighley road a couple of miles out of the town.



A tall Rhenish salt-glazed
Jackobekanne bought as
above for £300



A C15 Belgian posnet from Robson's antiques.
Barnard Castle price £30.



Two pieces of C15 Rhenish salt-glazed stoneware bought from the "Pink Antiques" shop in York for around £150 each. The salt-glazed pieces being vitreous, apart from a few small knocks, are in almost as new condition. The posnet has been much used as the burnt on food



A large Scottish salt-kit from "Cellar Antiques" in Hawes.

remains show and in spite of missing a handle I think can be termed "a little Bobby Dazzler".

The bird whistle demonstrates the skill of the thrower and as on all slipped Rumanian pots the superb control of the slip-trailer. These pots were sent over here in the 60's and 70's to earn Western currency and should be not regarded with disdain, but as the superb pieces of ceramic art they are, even though the potters remain unfortunately anonymous. I often wonder if they set up their own workshops when "The Wall" came down ; hopefully so.

The person I bought the whistle from thought it some sort of oil or vinegar bottle and was very surprised when I blew it and made it whistle.

The salt-kit , as the whistle, is a tremendous demonstration of the art of slip-trailing, and being early C20, no rubber-bulb trailers would have been used, making the skill even more amazing.

Yours,

John Hudson , Clay-potter.



A modern Rumanian bird whistle from a car-boot sale in County Durham for 25 pence

Members' Gallery

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



Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg, large gull pot 2



Pete Singer, bowls, stoneware, fired in oxidation to 1250, with a glaze with cobalt added



Pete Singer, teapot and mug, stoneware, fired in oxidation to 1250, with a glaze with cobalt added



Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg, Saltaire animals condiment set no 2



Lesley Greene, Eden Approx H 40cms

Lesley Greene is showing at British Craft Trade fair bctf.co.uk this April 10th -12th with a range of her hand built works on display.

Galea Belinscaia has work in the *Janus Revisited* exhibition at Cupola Contemporary Art Gallery in Sheffield. The exhibition is open until Saturday 23rd April 2022.

Pete Singer will be exhibiting his work at the Sheffield Ceramics Festival, 2-3 April.

Kate Buckley, Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg, Judith Glover, Francesca King, Anna-Marie Magson, Philip Magson and Pamela Thorby are all involved in York Open Studios in April (2/3 and 9/10). Details are on the York Open Studios Website.

<https://www.yorkopenstudios.co.uk/>



Galea Belinscaia, Hecate



Galea Belinscaia, Aphrodite

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 to give short **details about the piece including its title, size, material and key firing information.** Email to npanews@northern-potters.co.uk

Words on a potter's happy retirement and a crimson clay – Sally Smith



Clay as it arrived, a thrown form in its raw state and a finished piece

The best thing about retirement is that it gives us choices - we have more time, hopefully, to do the things we want to do in a way that suits us. One of my choices was to continue potting. I've gradually fallen into a more relaxed modus. Gone are the days of working to the clock or of 'having to'!!

I am lucky enough to have a pottery in a beautiful garden with views across to the Hambleton Hills – around 20 miles distant. An added plus is that I feel I'm doing my best work. I have time to explore and experiment, to develop glazes and play with form. Though I have always made domestic ware and I am chiefly a thrower I now work on more sculptural pieces too.

The reason I felt moved to write to N.P.A. is because of a small deposit of local clay: a single handful was given to me as a surprise present. It was dug up as foundations were being excavated for an outbuilding

next to a nearby farmhouse. It didn't look promising: ochre in colour and containing more than enough sand and gravel for potting. Not surprisingly there are deposits of sandstone around that area.

In more normal times I would have said 'thanks' and put the lump to one side with a view to throwing it away when I was having a clearout. However on this occasion I wired off a thin slice and in due course biscuit fired it – interestingly it fired well, seemed quite strong and though still an ochre colour didn't strike me as just plant pot material. I fired it again (1260 degrees Centigrade) – it became a fascination because again it fired well.

I was supplied with a large tubful and the hard work began: drying out, breaking up, washing, sieving and drying out again..... it was very messy, very sticky (it looks like something you would rather not walk in and stuck like that too!) but oh how wonderful

to wedge. I think it is the most plastic clay I have ever worked with. Starting carefully I threw a few small tea bowls (10 to 12 ounces in weight) and treated it like earthenware ie more chunky than the stoneware vessels I am more used to making. I biscuit fired to 1000°C without mishap expecting imperfections to appear, nothing spoilt.

Carrying on I glazed the odd piece inside and over the rim. For some reason I used my stoneware glazes without a second thought. The results were stunning, the clay body fired to 1260°C, became a deep crimson and showed off the glazes to perfection.

I am not a geologist or a chemist but I have a working knowledge through the development of my glazes and I surmise that this clay fires to stoneware temperatures due to the high silica content.

This is not something that I would have even attempted a few years ago – it is far too labour



Three bowls

intensive and therefore time consuming but it has been deeply satisfying.

Demand exceeds supply: the pots are very attractive, immensely fit for purpose, durable and of course have a local connection. It is such a shame that there's a limited supply of energy as well as raw material.



Three drinking vessels

Sally Smith

www.southparkpottery.co.uk

March 2022

Book Review – Chris Barnes

Science For Potters

Linda Bloomfield BSc, PhD

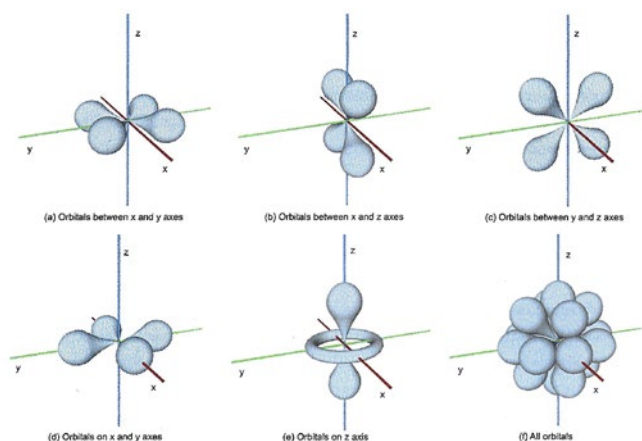
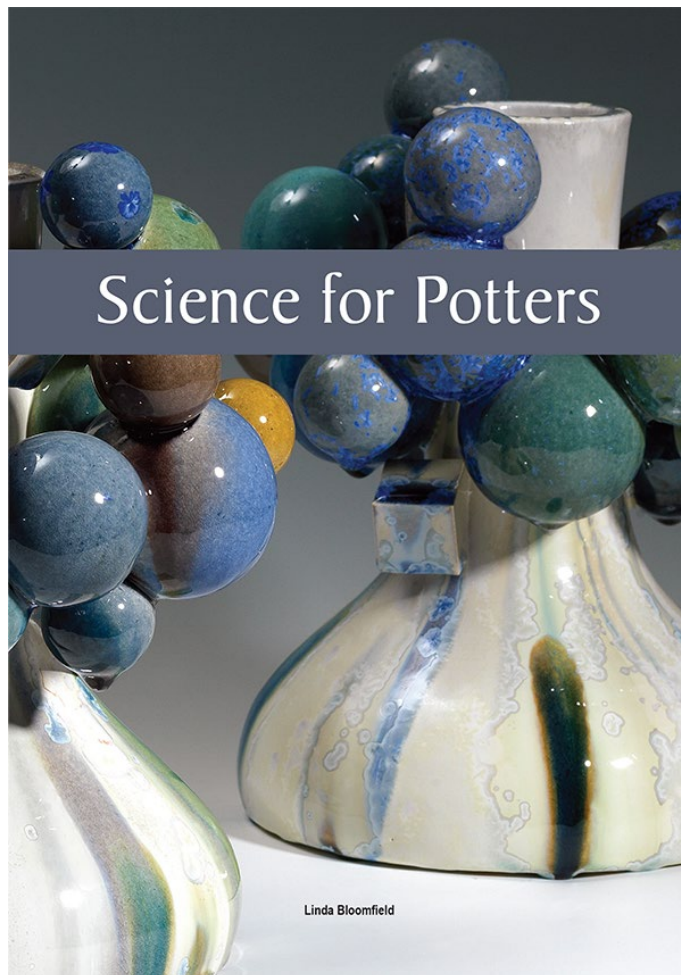
Published by The American Ceramic Society, 2018

This is not a new book but it is worth reviewing as it is useful and interesting. Linda Bloomfield has put together this reference book to give potters more insight into what goes on in their kilns. Coming from a materials science background and having made pots for many years, Linda is in a good position to elucidate on the current scientific understanding of ceramic materials. The book clarifies complex ideas about the nature of clays and glaze materials and how they interact, and presents to us information we can use.

I was particularly interested in the section on *The Chemistry of Colour* which describes how the shape of the electron cloud around transitional metal atoms influences the colour of gemstones and glazes. I must admit that I find it difficult to get my head around this stuff, but as I have concerned myself with trying to get copper red glazes to work for many years it throws a little more light on a subject I am fascinated by.

About half of the book is taken up with sections on Chemistry for Potters and then Geology for Potters. It then goes on to examine in very practical detail; Clay, Glaze, Glaze Formula, Glaze Fit, Glaze Additives and Firing. I find that understanding the scientific basis for the practice makes sense of it for me so that I find it easier to remember and build a way of thinking about it. This book is not the answer for someone who wants to buy bottles of colour and feel safe in the knowledge that they will see everything is under control when they open the kiln. It is a great book for the explorer who wants to use found ingredients in their glaze or develop their own clay or special effect glazes.

Many of the uses for ceramic materials have evolved over centuries by trial and error. One of the strengths of the book is the clear explanation of why things work, which leads us to consider what else we might try. Most potters of the past few thousand years have been devoted to developing better functional wares but in a new world where practitioners of ceramic art are pushing forward boundaries, the direction of travel will change. As well as drawing inspiration from traditional ways of making, the door is open to new possibilities with new materials. *Science for Potters* is the reference book which spans the new and traditional worlds.



An illustration of the orbitals of transition metals. Orbitals are regions in which electrons of particular energy are located around the nucleus of an atom. Transition Metals are elements or ions with an incomplete inner electron shell. The wavelengths of light allowed to pass through fields of these atoms gives us colour - read about it in the book!

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

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Spring Gathering Event – Scottish Potters' Association

Our Scottish counterparts run a weekend event every year at Tulliallan Police College in Kincardine. Due to the pandemic, this year the event went online on March 5th-6th. Normally the gathering is restricted to their own members but they very kindly opened the event to Northern Potter members as the scaled down version would be screened over zoom. Around 120 members attend the Tulliallan event each year so it was wonderful to see approximately 60 people login to this years virtual version, without the support of the members attending events, these gatherings would not be viable to run.

Over the weekend they had two workshops planned by Lesley McKenzie and Carina Piscato, the latter was cancelled sadly due to illness. Lesley demonstrated the making of her raku African wild dog puppy, showing a number of videos taking viewers through her whole process. She makes her own paperclay using either T material or ES40 but for some pieces she uses a crank clay straight from the bag. It was interesting to see how she makes her bigger pieces and the internal supporting structures for installation was particularly informative.

The Northern and Scottish Potters are working together on a collaborative event, details in due course, following previous phone calls regarding the organisation of their spring gathering. As a committee we are looking into the possibility of running our own gathering inviting all members in our six regions to an event filled with demonstrations, talks and workshops in the summer of 2023. One of the Associations objectives is to work more closely with educational institutions, therefore we are looking to work in partnership with a university and stage the event on their campus. We will keep members regularly informed via the newsletter on progress and how you can help make this event viable.

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.

Raya Amir	Stockport	Cheshire
Paula Aziz	South Shields	Tyne and Wear
Nina Barr	Newcastle	Tyne and Wear
Sonia Dixon	Scarborough	N. Yorks
Katie Evans	Hull	E. Yorks
Val Fitzgerald	Newcastle	Tyne and Wear
Janet Harrison	Morpeth	Northumberland
Janet Heath	Mexborough	S. Yorks
Ceri Jones	Wettenhall	Cheshire
Steve Kitchman	Doncaster	S. Yorks
Pauline Lowther	Chorley	Lancs
Gilio Moscardini	Consett	Co Durham
Claire Orange	Carnforth	Lancs
Janet Parratt	Ulverston	Cumbria
Jack Paterson	Darlington	Durham
Carley Pearson	Hartlepool	Durham
Ian Potter	Beverley	E. Yorks
Lesley Rayner	Rowlands Gill	Durham
Sally Riley	Appleton	Cheshire
Nicholas Robinson	Scarborough	N. Yorks
Marie Rollet	Morecambe	Lancs
Mary Sewell	Sheffield	S. Yorks
The Clay Team	Jarrow	Tyne and Wear
Annie Tortora	Worsley	Salford
Giles Walton	Chester	Cheshire
Hannah Way	Wakefield	W. Yorks
Alex Zdankowicz	Deal	Kent

Jennifer Gourley

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

Lemon Studio (Cheshire) is hiring!

Experienced potter needed for part-time tutoring for beginners. Teaching experience not necessary, great opportunity to develop skills as training provided. **Contact: Jeni 07813333235**

New monthly outdoor market in Lytham St Annes at The Blossoms pub, in Ansdell.

There is free parking, refreshments and toilets on site. The pitch fee is £20 and I can provide PL at a small additional charge. You would need to bring your own table and gazebo, although I am trying to source something for those who can't afford their own. **Contact Helen Pemberton:**

helen@lythamceramics.com

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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

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.

From the Membership Secretary

After 3 years as membership secretary I am stepping down - many thanks to all of you for your patience and support - it has been an interesting experience and I feel privileged to have been part of the blossoming organisation. I will continue to be a member and might even make some pots now that I have my own space at home! Many thanks to Jennifer who is taking over and I wish her lots of luck - I am sure you will all offer her the same support that I received.

Ann Davis

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

Jen Donkin Gourley

Committee News

Committee Meeting Highlights March 2022

A blended meeting in person in Sheffield and on Zoom ensured a good attendance and a productive meeting. Jennifer Gourley is now membership secretary, but a vacancy exists for vice chair and a new secretary will be needed in August so we are again asking for volunteers.

We have been looking for new venues to hold the AGM, alongside Potfest in the Pens, and were pleased to find Steve Booton is able to offer a talks/demonstration room at Only Clay on Sunday 25th September 2022. The Café could provide a small

vegetarian cold buffet which the NPA would pay for. This suggestion was unanimously welcomed by the committee.

Two bursaries applications were submitted this quarter and it was agreed both should be funded, with £100 to Thora Talling as a continuation of her previous application, and £250 to Simone Cobbold for a glaze course at Clay College.

Potters Camp:

Kath Stevens was thanked for her very informative report on how a Potters Camp event could be organised and developed. The main principles coming forward were to develop plans for a single day event in 2023. The committee as a whole were keen to support and help develop and run the event, and a small group will be formed to take the project forwards. It was agreed that funding for the event could be an appropriate use of NPA funds.

Gerry Grant has been discussing the proposed demonstration area at Potfest in the Pens, June 3/4/5 2022 with Matt Cox. NPA funds will be allocated to cover costs such as van hire, clay and other equipment. The event will be reviewed to consider the level of input required and appetite to repeat on an annual basis.

Newsletter

A regular book reviewer is needed to replace Roger Bell, who is sadly missed. It was agreed it would be good to continue with members reviewing the books they know well, as well as notable new publications.

Finance

Up take of the £200 annual grant available to all regions continues to be low. Feedback suggests the amount may not be right, it is difficult to finance a demonstration within the budget and this is a potentially popular event. £500 might be a better amount, this will be talked through at the next Regional Coordinators meeting.

The first meeting between Regional Coordinators and committee representatives has been held and was felt to be very valuable. Further meetings are planned on a monthly basis.

Membership

A community group has asked to join the NPA. The Clay Team seeks to bring ceramics to people who would not otherwise have access and their aims fall within the remit of the NPA. It was agreed not for profit community groups could be a valuable addition and the Clay Team's membership should be approved.

Sally Streuli, Secretary.



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Regional News

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

Thank you to members who attended our first face to face meet up of the year in February and our Show & Tell in March over zoom. It was great to share what we were currently working on and what new and innovative techniques we were exploring. A few of us went away with possible answers to issues we were having with our makes, with many members offering advice, cementing the view that Potters are generous in sharing their tips, tricks and experiences. We also had brief discussions on sustainability, our impact on the environment as well as a chat about the Art/Craft spectrum.

In April we are meeting at the Priest Hole in Ambleside on Sunday 24th, details have already been emailed. If you are not receiving NPA communication please first check your junk/spam folders and secondly that we have your correct current details. British artist Sophie Ryder is currently exhibiting in Halifax which we plan to visit on Saturday 7th May, please get in touch if you wish to attend. Further details are on The Piece Hall website <https://www.thepiecehall.co.uk>.

Kathryn Stevens

northernpottersnw@gmail.com



NPAnorthwest



@northernpottersassociationNW

[co.uk/event/sophie-ryder/](https://www.thepiecehall.co.uk/event/sophie-ryder/)

Please support our members Bob Park, Debbie Robinson, Ruth Charlton and myself by visiting the Gaddum Gallery at the Brockhole, Windermere who are exhibiting with Cumbria Sculptors until 15th May. South Cumbrian ceramicists will host a fringe event at the popular Ulverston's *PrintFEST* 30 April - 1 May, called *Fired Up Furness* at 13 Market Street, Ulverston. If members are taking part in any events please let me know so we can help promote your work in the newsletter and on social media.

We are looking for one of our members to do a demonstration over zoom for our June meeting, any volunteers please get in touch. Please continue to include #npanw in your Instagram postings to help demonstrate the diversity and skills of our members.



NW

Hi Everyone – hope you're keeping well and enjoying the fabulous weather.

Congratulations to everyone who has been selected for the various upcoming exhibitions – Glorious Clay, Platform Craft Open, Arteria summer show – Kaleidoscope, Potfest 2022 and of course Sea-Clay at Lytham Heritage Centre.

Glorious Clay will be the first to open at The Coach House Gallery, Astley Hall, Chorley from 25 March to 19 April – also open on the Bank Holiday Monday 18 April. 24 NPA members will present their work. If you're in the area please pop in, it'll be great to see you.

The Craft Open at Platform Gallery in Clitheroe opens 4 April – 18 June, there'll be a wide range of crafts on display including work from many NPA members. Check out their Instagram @platformgalleryclitheroe.

The Platform Gallery also has a call out to all established artists working across craft disciplines in Lancashire. An exhibition is being planned for the 22/23 programme that

Kim Graham

west@northern-potters.co.uk



NPAwest



@northernpottersassociationWest (TBC)

showcases the very best of Lancashire Craft. Please contact platform.gallery@ribblevalley.gov.uk to register your interest and include an introduction to your work, your whereabouts in the county and images of work or link to your website.

Congratulations to all those who were successful in their applications for 2022-2023 sessions at UCLan Ceramic ArtLab. As well as the Monday night session there is also a Wednesday afternoon session. Contact Cath if you want to find out more CCrescenti@uclan.ac.uk We're planning our NPA West meeting to take place at UCLan in April. Details will be sent to you direct.

The regional coordinators now meet up via zoom on the last Thursday of each month so if there is anything you would like us to raise then please email.

Happy potting!
Helen and Kim



W

Hello to all our regional members and a warm muddy welcome to all our many new members. We are looking forward to meeting you.

Jeni at Lemon Studio generously hosted our regional AGM back in February. It feels to me such a long time ago now! We had a wonderfully productive morning with Jeni Jacques-Williams giving us a tour of her studio first before a great meeting. Thank you to all those that attended. If you didn't receive the minutes and would like to see them then please email us.

Our next date to look forward to is Sunday the 15th May when we are having a Raku event. I'll let you know more

Juliet Myers

email@sw-npa.co.uk



NPAsouthwest



@northernpottersassociationSW

about this nearer the time.

I am also looking into finding and booking a Pop Up shop for next October so although still sometime in the future it's one to look out for. We have also discovered that a number of our emails to members are ending up in Spam files. If you haven't heard from us for awhile it might mean that this has happened to you and you'll find our messages there.

Best Wishes, Juliet and Michelle



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

As I write we have just taken down our exhibition at Jarrow Hall in South Tyneside. Form & Function ran for a month and showed the diverse work of 15 NPA members. We had a lovely 'Meet the Makers event, which at last allowed us to meet in person and talk ceramics! Carley Pearson from The Clay Team ran a popular bowl making workshop in the middle of the month.



NE

Our next exhibition *LIGHT* is confirmed for May/June at Newcastle Cathedral, and we have scheduled a selling exhibition in Middlesbrough in the run up to Christmas. All exhibitions are open to anyone to submit, not just NE members.

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

Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg is exhibiting her slipware and clay animals at The Georgian Chapel, Cemetery Road, York YO10 5AJ along with 9 other Artists and Craftspeople on the 16th & 17th July 2022 10am – 5pm. Galea Belinscaia has two sculptural pieces, entitled "Hecate" and "Aphrodite" selected for the forthcoming exhibition *Janus Revisited* at Cupola Contemporary Art Gallery in Sheffield. The exhibition will run from Friday 18th March to Saturday 23rd April 2022. The exhibition asks artists in a wide range of disciplines to



E

We have also negotiated NPA space at *The Festival of Thrift* in September for retail, and workshops. Thrift is a really popular event, over 50,000 visitors last year, which is particularly amazing for a pandemic year. We hope we can establish a presence which can be built upon.

We're holding two sketchbook and handling sessions at the Henry Rothschild Study Centre at Shipley Art Gallery, which houses an excellent ceramics collection. It's another opportunity to meet in person and share inspiration! NE Co-ordinators group would love input from any of our members - please get involved! The more we are, the easier it is to put on events which benefit all of us!

offer their interpretations of ideas associated with the Roman god Janus, who was believed to be able to see the future and the past; a powerful image and an apt one for our times. Kate Buckley, Catherine Boyne-Whitelegg, Judith Glover, Francesca King, Anna-Marie Magson, Philip Magson and Pamela Thorby are all involved in York Open Studios in April (2/3 and 9/10). Details are on the [York Open Studios Website](#).

There are still a number of emails bouncing back, if you are not receiving them please check your junk folder.

Lyn Clarke enpa.coordinator@gmail.com  NPAAEast

 @northernpottersassociationEast

Now that Covid restrictions have been lifted we can get on with organising and holding (carefully) some of our planned events. We have just returned from the first of this year's area meetings; this one at Copper Cogs in Long Eaton. These face-to-face get togethers are so important, it's where most of the event ideas come from, and where members can really help shape forthcoming activities. It was great to see some new faces and some regulars too. We had a very productive meeting; lots of new ideas to pursue and a fabulous lunch.



SE

Our next planned event is a sculpture workshop at Ulley Country Park. This was an idea that came from a previous group meeting, twenty potters are coming along for a day of sculptural skill-sharing and chat. The theme is animals and birds. This event has proved to be so popular that we are planning to hold another one later in the year.

We now have quite a few other events either organised or under planning for the summer from raku to gallery shows and fairs so all is looking very good and busy at the moment, there should be something for everyone.

Graham Northing & Wendy Wall senpacoordinator@outlook.com  NPAsoutheast  @northernpottersassociationSE

Back Page: Everyday Tools – Gerry Grant

I have been making pots for the last forty five years, all of them on the wheel. These are the tools that I use every day to throw and finish my wheel thrown pots. Most of them cost nothing!



1. Callipers. I had to buy these, but they must be at least 30 years old. A must for any lid.

2. Hole cutter for money box stoppers. An old metal vacuum cleaner tube, luckily, just the right size!

3. Mould makers rasp, again, bought, but probably 40 years old. Can be re-sharpened with a file. Essential for roughing up the clay when sticking on spouts, handles, etc.

4. Hole cutter, again bought. Needed for teapot making. You could use a drill bit instead, but this produces a much neater finish. This one is actually listed in catalogues as a salt and pepper cutter.

5. Potters knife! Thank goodness they are cheap. I've lost more than I care to think about!

6. Turning tool. My own design. Made from a short strip of steel pallet strap bound onto a bit of wood with fishing line. The steel straps are best, as I have tried old hacksaw blades which snap, and old jubilee clips which are too blunt. I have had a piece of pallet strap all my potting life, and there is still plenty left! I have to replace the pallet strap on the tool about every 2

years. You can buy these, but they are the wrong shape for me, and they are too pricey!

7. Finishing tool for tidying up joints, spouts, handles, etc. Made from a bit of hardwood I found lying around. Sanded down to the right shape for me. I'm sure that it would look more beautiful in Boxwood.....whatever.

8. Trimming tool for the base of thrown pots. Made from a bit of hardwood I found lying around, and sanded down to the shape I want. I used to use a metal one, and now my wheel is dented! You could just as well use plastic.

9. Former for smoothing off throwing rings. Made from a bit of aluminium I found lying around, which I cut to my own design.

10. Old credit card! Are these things ever useful! Scrapers, formers, smoothers, fettlers etc etc. How did we survive without them! Don't ever cut them up!

11. Potters wire, for removing ware from the wheel. Made from a couple of bits of wood that were lying around, and a length of fishing line (20 pound breaking strength). I am now onto my second reel of fishing line, but there is loads left!

You can buy all this stuff, but a lot of it is the wrong shape or size, and always the wrong price.

Save money! Save the planet! Save your sanity!

Happy Potting!

Gerry Grant.

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



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