

newsletter

March 2015

monthly newsletter & journal



Pottery Programme for 2015

Regular events

- Classes
- Tuesday shared lunch – every Tues. Just come along and bring something to share!
- Friday club night for making bowls

March

- Bruce Walford – Drape mould/Paper clay/Decorative glazing – 21/22 March, 9.30am-4pm-ish
- Raku 5th 12 pm with Maurice Bennett maurice.bennett@xtra.co.nz 021 721 720

April

- Raku firing (probably 4th or 5th)
- Gloria Young – Majolica workshop 11th/12th

May

- Craig Williams – Drape mould making workshop (to replenish club moulds)
- Anneke Borren – Throwing workshop. 9th/10th May

June

- Anthea Grob – Slip decoration weekend workshop
- Mid-winter xmas – 20th

July

- Di Conway – Hollow form sculpture weekend workshop – 11th/12th July

August

- Launch of Empty Bowls: 1 August
- 'Soup Day' at WPA for Empty Bowls: 15 and 16 August
- Raku 29th or 30th August
- Possible pit firing (or in September)

September

- Anagama – Loading probably first week of Sept, with firing mid-Sept.
- Possible Pit firing

October

- Ceramicus annual exhibition
- Aaron Scythe – Weekend workshop on tea bowls and soft-clay turning

November

- Anthea Grob – Four half-day glazing workshops – Sunday mornings. Slip decoration weekend workshop.

Plus

- Some regular workshops for beginners on how to glaze.
- Electric kiln firing workshop.

This is an indicative programme of events for 2015 – more detail on each will be provided closer to the event. If you have any suggestions please contact the WPA club.

Notices

Friday Empty Bowl Making Nights: Club Night

It's Friday Night Bowl Making at the WPA from Friday 6 March with the last being held Friday 29 May – 5:00pm onwards. COME & PLAY! (Bring Wine & Food if you wish)

Join in with everyone in a series of free Throwing and Hand Building classes where you'll have free

clay and expert Throwers & Hand Builders available to help you make the bowls for the chosen Charity. Spaces may be limited for Throwers, so book your seat now. Get in touch with Vivian Rodriguez Vivian.rodriguez@clear.net.nz and let her know your preferred nights now!

Tuesday shared lunch

Come along to the rooms on Tuesdays and enjoy a shared lunch. All you have to do is bring something to share. The only rules are: no bread; no chips. Easy!

You'll get to meet some of the rooms regulars. And you can even hang around and make a few pots. Try some bowls for Empty Bowls.

Any keen writers out there?

Enjoy putting pen to paper? If so, how about doing a bit of writing for the newsletter? We're always in search of people to contribute, either on a regular basis or occasionally.

Some things that might go down well:

- practical tips (like old regular column Hannibal Hornblower's Handy Hints)
- exhibition reviews (ceramics or whatever seems interesting)
- book reviews
- potter profiles
- political opinion pieces on pottery
- poems on pots
- historical pieces on pots
- even letters to the editor!

If keen, just send Julie something for next month and any month after that.

Facebook

Anyone keen on helping maintain the WPA Facebook page? Let Gwyn know (gwynwilliams@gmx.com) and he'll make you an administrator (if you are trusty worthy, upstanding and reliable).

Raku Firing

Maurice Bennett will be raku firing outside the clubrooms on Thursday 5 March at 12pm - if you'd like to be involved contact Maurice on 021 721 720 or Maurice.bennett@xtra.co.nz

Open Day at Thorndon Tennis Club - great for pottery sales

Open Day at the Thorndon Tennis and Squash Club on Sunday the 8th of March from 12pm. If you are interesting in having a stall contact Chris Dunn by email cdunn@ihug.co.nz or phone 021 1388472 ASAP. The community is invited and they'll have a concert on the grass courts in the afternoon.

Pottery Wheel wanted

I am a new member of the club. My name is Dayanand Deshpande. I am interested to buy an electrical pottery wheel to use at home. Do you know if any member is interested in selling a used - in good condition wheel? Kind regards, Dayanand Deshpande 021 1542501

Jane Van Atta

Jane Van Atta (Matthew's mother) is willing to give a special presentation to the potting community. She works mostly with strands of salvaged copper wire but her work may be inspirational to all artists. Starting at 7 pm on Wednesday, March 4th at the WPA rooms (if someone could bring the projector and computer to connect to it that would be very good!) Matthew Van Atta
mnvanatta@alaska.edu



Jane Van Atta
visiting from Alaska is giving an artist presentation about her journey with wire
Wellington Potters Association Rooms
Wednesday, 4 March 2015, 7 pm

Bruce Walford workshop 21 – 22 March



Having problems with your handbuilt pieces cracking, or being able to translate your innovative ideas into a form that will remain stable as its drying or in the kiln? Want to be able to construct pieces continuously instead of having to constantly stop and wait for the clay to get firm enough to continue? Want to cut down on the weight of your pieces and save on firing costs too? You need some expert help to find out what the possibilities are of paper clay. Find out how you can assemble large and complex pieces that exploit the extraordinary joinability and wet strength of paper clay and be inspired to greatly expand your making potential.

Last October Bruce ran a very successful workshop on using drape moulds using slabs of paper clay with easy and effective decoration techniques for making lovely platters and dishes.

This time Bruce is going to show the work he is currently developing: making sculptural pieces from paper clay slabs and assembling them. The technique is quite simple and easy to master once shown. It's a lot of fun and no moulds are required this time. However Bruce is intending to show how to make a simple plaster mould as he didn't get this covered in his last workshop last October. Those of you who are already using paper clay and/or moulds should bring along your questions that Bruce can lend his expertise to.

The cost of this workshop \$95 for members, and it includes one 10kg bag of Primo Paper clay (usually \$28, discounted to \$25 for this workshop) and \$105 for non-members. There will be enough bags for people to buy as second bag at this price if they want, and any bags left over will be for sale in the storeroom. Bring your handbuilding tools, your notebooks and cameras and lunch to share. Book with Kate at (wellingtonpotters@gmx.com).

Gloria Young's Majolica Workshop April 11th 12th

Gloria is a renowned potter working in Wellington since 1980. She has run a couple of her own galleries in Wellington and has exhibited extensively in NZ exhibitions for over 3 decades. She has kindly offered to take a workshop for WPA to pass on her Majolica painting and slab building skills. This workshop will also include slide presentations on the history of Majolica and Gloria will provide tiles for participants to have a go. This is a once only opportunity! Put it in your diary now and Contact Kate on wellingtonpotters@gmx.com



Pottery Classes

Mondays with Nicola Dench: Kids' class 3.30pm – 5pm running for 8 weeks during school terms aimed at 8-12 year olds. \$200 per course all costs included. Contact Nicola Dench on 938-3356 or email theclaypenguin@hotmail.com

Monday 5.30 -7.30pm: Community Education Centre courses - <http://www.cecwellington.ac.nz/courses/914-pottery-handbuilding-and-throwing> . Basic to intermediate 8 week course \$245. Enrol for Monday courses online through the Community Education Centre. Next courses start in 2015.

Tuesday 7.30pm: Community Education Centre courses - <http://www.cecwellington.ac.nz/courses/915-pottery-throwing-all-levels>. Basic to intermediate 8 week course \$245. Enrol for Tuesday courses online through the Community Education Centre.

Wednesday: Shige – Throwing teabowls – starts April

Thursday 6 or 7 – 9pm: administration and bookings can be found at www.chalkle.com and looking under "Matthew Van Atta's Classes" in the provider list. Classes include both wheel and hand building options. Note: wheel classes start at 6 pm. The teaching portion lasts an hour but students can stay until 9 pm at night. (Joining WPA and coming other nights is encouraged). Hand building classes start at 7 pm and go until 9 pm as well. All materials and firings costs are included.

Saturdays 9.45-11.45am: Anthea Grob - Introductory and intermediate class in hand building and wheel throwing. 6-week courses run continuously. \$138 per course, plus clay and firing costs. Contact Anthea to enrol (grobanthea@gmail.com) or phone 9726672. Next course starts soon.

For further information on all courses, please email Wellington Potters Association (wellingtonpotters@gmx.com)

The mystery of shrinking clay

S cracks, teapot spouts and the mysterious shrinking properties of clay

(... something from a newsletter a few years back)

To avoid S cracks when throwing, you always get told to compress the base of your pot when you open it out. True. But here's something else that might help, especially if your pot is wide in the bottom. Wedge your clay well and then make sure that the surface of the clay that you have been pressing into the table is the same surface that you place on the wheel. If you wedge ram's horn style, don't use the ends of the bit of clay you have wedged - you know, the side bits on the right and the left - as your base. If you cut your lump of clay up into smaller lumps, make sure you know which way should be the downside when you pat them into balls. Keep them oriented bum down, so to speak, in your hands, and keep them that way when you put them down on the table and onto the wheel head.

If you want to know why the orientation of the clay is important, here's a fairly technical answer. Clay particles are flat and wide and separated by water, which lets them slip past each other. When you work them by wedging or throwing or whatever, they align themselves in the same direction and form themselves into layers. There'll be (roughly speaking, at least) one layer of flat, wide particles all lined up, with another layer on top, and so on (kind of like a wall of very flat bricks held together by water rather than mortar). But because of this, the clay will shrink more in one direction than the other when it dries. Counting from 'top to bottom' of a bit of clay that you have worked on, there will be a greater number of particles than there are from 'side to side' (just as a square bit of wall might be twenty bricks high and ten bricks wide). And there will be a greater number of gaps between the particles, which is where the shrinkage occurs as the water dries. And so if your clay particles aren't nicely aligned in the base of your pot, the more chance you'll have of getting S cracks because of uneven shrinkage. This uneven shrinkage of clay is also why teapot spouts twist even more after you've finished making them and why all sorts of other weird stuff happens in the world of pottery.

Anyway, that's what I was always told. Go read the Potter's Dictionary of Materials and Techniques by Frank and Janet Hamer if you want to get even more technical. Put simply, however, the clay ain't the same this way as it is in that. Just remember which way is up.

Gwyn

Anagama 2015



Above: Herr Interim Loggen-Schplitter
a.k.a. Peter Rumble.

Nourishment for the Anagama kiln is being prepared in anticipation of the next (11th) firing of the kiln in September. Peter Rumble has assumed responsibility for wood splitting on a temporary basis and some firewood has already been stacked in the shelter by Roger Pearce and Mal Sole.

Painting of the shelter roof would have been completed but for an erroneous weather forecast which caused the postponement of a painting working bee. Thanks are due to those who volunteered for the latest working bee namely Ian and Helen Gear, and Rhonda and Frank Edwards. While recognising that clambering around on roofs is not everyone's forte both Peter, who has been overseeing the roof painting, and I have been underwhelmed by the number of members who have volunteered to assist.

Note for your diaries, the timetable for the next firing is:

1. Loading: Tuesday 1 - Sunday 6 September 2015
2. Firing: Wednesday 9 - Sunday 13 September 2015
3. Opening: Sunday 20 September 2015

Alan Ross, Anagama Coordinator

New members

Wellington Potters welcomes new members: online application forms are available at:
http://www.nzpotters.com/Clubs/WellingtonPottersAssociation_Join.cfm

There are also links to the form on this page:
<http://www.nzpotters.com/Clubs/WellingtonPottersAssociation.cfm>

WPA Club welcomes new members: Lisa Murray, Yasmin Khudari, Nicole Gaston, Natasha Wells, Andrew McKaskell, Evelyn Hodowany, Pam Guest, Fina Weight, Jo Watson, Paige Jarman, Keil Caskey, Phillip Chan, and Lynne Newell.

Below: One of our new WPA members, Philip Chan, working on his sculpture...



International potters...

Jingdezhen - the home of porcelain

I recently travelled to Auckland to hear Mike Donaldson speak about traveling to the Chinese City of Jingdezhen. The city is known internationally as the “home of Porcelain”. It was from here that the first porcelain objects were made. Due to the unique characteristics of porcelain the area developed into great ceramic trading centre. Today it is still an important pottery manufacturing centre and is a “Mecca”, to anybody interested in Ceramics.

Mike has travelled to the city, each year for the past five years, to create work at The Potter Workshop. I was therefore hoping for an update on what he does there, and some insider knowledge, from someone who has a lot of personal experience.

He outlined that The Pottery Workshop, hires out space to international potters, provides them with accommodation and meals, and offers them access to materials and expertise, all at a very reasonable price.

The evening started with a short film showing the wonders of Jingdezhen. For those of us who had attended Takeshi Yasuda (last year’s judge of the Portage Ceramic Awards) talk at the Dowse Gallery in Lower Hutt, or the Auckland Society of Potters demonstration, would have recognise many of the places and methods of work. Like the making of the large vases, which are taller than four meters, the manufacture of huge wall tiles that are many meters square, and the fake antiques alley, where the shop owners can make any freshly made pot to look a thousand years old.

Importantly for myself, I learnt from Mike that the best time of the year to travel to Jingdezhen - September- November, when the weather is not too hot or too cold.

I had visited Jingdezhen in late 2012, but only for five days, at which time I used the services of the various craftspeople in the manufacture of a number of porcelain plates, I created a series plates that I referred to as "Trading Plates". Each plate combined traditional Chinese designs with images of Maori sacred objects, both of which had been debased by European trade.

I have been wondering for some time that if I returned to Jingdezhen, and made a quantity of pots, "what would be the cost to get them home"? Mike answered this question by telling us, that sending your finished pots home in a 1m cubic box would cost you \$600-00. I asked this, as I did not want to take it as luggage. This is how I had overcome this problem my last time. However the result of this, was that I lost a number of plates, at least from what some would consider a disasters, I have however some interesting shards to incorporate into further works.



The evening ended with a shared cup of tea, at which we could mingle about and talk to each other and to Mike. A number of those attending expressed an interest to visit Jingdezhen, so we can expect to see some fantastic work in the coming years.

I personally wish to pass on my thanks to Mike Donaldson and to the A.S.P for arranging the evening.

Maurice Bennett,
maurice.bennett@xtra.co.nz
021-721720

Margery Smith.

Members will have been saddened to hear of the death of Margery on 17 February 2015.

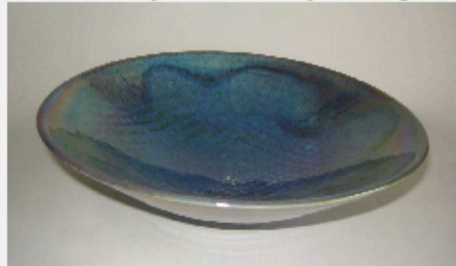
She was a Life Member of Wellington Potters' Association, Vice President in 1987, and President for 3 years after that. Margery was also our NZSP delegate for a number of years. She organised the National NZSP Exhibition as part of the Capital Clay Convention at Te Papa in October 98.

She has been a stalwart of the club for over 35 years. She was a pottery tutor at Wellington High School and a member of Clayshapes cooperative.

She has also run a large number of workshops for the club, mostly glaze but also throwing, usually at no charge, and was always on hand to give help and advice. And she has always been a great supporter of the club social activities.



She worked in porcelain, then specialising in in glaze lustre – difficult to master, but then



Vera Burton

Margery enjoyed the challenge of difficult. If you went to Ceramicus13 you would have seen her beautiful in-glaze reduced lustre work which was Highly Commended. She is represented in our collection by one of her beautiful lustred bowls.

Pottery was but one Margery's interests. Another prominent passion was growing orchids.

Club and committee contacts

FEE PAYING BY Internet:

Wellington Potters Association - Account Number: 02 0568-0024590-00

Clubrooms 130 Grant Road, Thorndon (opposite George Street), Wellington 6011
or PO Box 6686, Te Aro, Wellington 6141 | **Phone** (04) 473 3680 | **Email**
wellingtonpotters@gmx.com

Articles for April newsletter need to be emailed to Julie by 20 March 2015
(jmwatson61@gmail.com)

As a club we try to keep our fees down while still covering costs.
If for financial reasons you feel excluded, please contact the President.

WPA Committee

President/ Volunteer Coordinator	Gwyn Williams	04 905 2586	gwynwilliams@gmx.com
Vice President/ Maintenance	Mauritz Basson	381 6751	mauritz.basson@wellingtonzoo.com
Past President Club Programme	Rosemary O'Hara	233 0003 021 201 6764	roseo@klezmer.co.nz
Secretary Orientation	Kate Ford	473 5356 021 121 6531	kate.ford48@gmail.com
Treasurer Safe/banking	Mike Doyle	021 631 187	mprzdz@hotmail.com
Glazes, Rooms, Orientation, Cubbies	Matthew Van Atta (with Kate Ford) (with Joe Zuccarello)	021 0830 4507	mnvanatta@alaska.edu
Clay, and programme for community groups	Vivian Rodriguez	021 264 5414 972 0811	vivian.rodriguez@clear.net.nz
Forms	Rebecca Flowerday	027 279 9077	rebecca.flowerday@gmail.com
Ceramicus15	Nicci Hulley	027 3056 488	nicola.hulley@gmail.com
Kilns	Chris Dunn	021 138 8472	cdunn@ihug.co.nz

Co-opted members

Anagama co-ordinator	Alan Ross	566 8922	alross@clear.net.nz
NZP delegate	Nicola Dench	938 3356	theclaypenguin@hotmail.com
Membership/ database manager	Vera Burton	938 8207	davee@paradise.net.nz
Library	Elaine Marland	384 4718	marland@xtra.co.nz
Newsletter editor	Julie Watson	478 4020	Jmwatson61@gmail.com