



Pot Chatter

Craft Potters Nelson Inc.

PO Box 3149 Richmond, Nelson, NZ Phone: (03) 544-5172

APRIL 2002



Our Easter display

EDITORIAL

I write this editorial only a few days before Easter and for myself coming from the Northern Hemisphere it never feels quite right. I grew up celebrating Easter in the spring with all the connotations of new beginnings for the Christian and the agnostic who looked forward to the promised improvement in the weather and the coming of summer. Our promise here is more sombre as autumn approaches, we stack the woodpile for the winter fires and those who still fill their store cupboards count the jars of preserves and tomato soup.

There is more time for Craft Potters members who settle down to depleted stocks of pots after a season of sales and some of us will possibly have plans for new ceramic adventures in addition to replacing the pots that have been sold. The newer members of the classes have the opportunity to socialise with those who 'know the ropes' and form new friendships getting help and assistance from the group. There is a lot to learn but it pays to 'make haste slowly' and absorb the information before moving on. Those of us with more experience need to look at the arrival of new materials and procedures and try to understand their merit or lack of it. We continue to look for improvement, nothing is ever final. In the last ten years or more the pottery world has changed enormously and some of us may find it hard to keep up. Much that we learned years ago however is still very relevant, we should continue to decide what is good and what is not. This Easter brings us to a new beginning. May we all move forward.

COMMITTEE NOTES

Two schools are planned for the next two months, which will I am sure, be very popular. The first will be in April and will be a workshop tutored by Paul Winspear. Paul held a workshop in 1996 and it was attended with a great deal of enthusiasm. Paul teaches the skills required to make really large pots and many of us achieved new heights in terms of the amount of clay we could manage at one time. Even newer members will gain skill from this so do not be put off or think it is too advanced for you. An exciting prospect for all of us.

Dates -- APRIL 20TH AND 21ST. Ring Tania 544 0124 to register. Fee \$30.

A month later on May 19th a school will be held by **Katie Gold**. Katie is a potter who learned her craft in Nelson and we are always fond of the local potter who makes good. Katie has a firm place in the Nelson Pottery scene, this too will be a popular school and we encourage as many as can to sign up. Her style appeals to the proponents of colour who have come to the fore since stains became available. *The register for this is filling fast.*

Date -- MAY 19TH Fee \$20 Ring Lynda Lines 543 2791.

MOULDS

Several of these are missing at this point in time at least 14. Moulds should only be kept at home long enough for the piece to be removed and then they should be returned. When borrowed the number of the mould must be written in the book provided so we know who has it in their possession.

KILN SUPERVISOR

Amy Meikle has decided that she will cease the supervising of the kilns and teaching members who wish to obtain their certificate for firing. Amy has given loyal and faithful service to the group in general and to this work in particular. Many members have remarked to me how patient she has been (and long suffering I suspect) as for some, the technicalities of learning to fire the electric kilns have not been absorbed easily. Lessons learned with her have put members in good standing and probably saved us money by avoiding some of the gross misuse there was in the earlier days. As the president who asked Amy to take on this job many years ago, I have to say a very sincere "Thank You" for a job well done. WE NEED A NEW SUPERVISOR!!!

NEW MEMBERS

Maureen Urwin is welcomed as a new member.

We hope you enjoy your pottery Maureen.

There is some concern regarding enquiries from prospective members.

The committee wishes to remind members who are on gallery duty, when answering queries to be positive and not "put people off" from joining the group.

New applicants for membership wishing to learn pottery are asked to come along on a Wednesday morning to observe a class, talk to people, read the rules etc and then decide whether they are still interested in joining.

EXHIBITION

As no one has come forward regarding the exhibition this year, a decision has been made to have an exhibition in 2003. A Convenor has still to be appointed and suggestions or volunteers are requested for the post. There is agreement in the committee that the exhibition should have another format.



Keep that duster going

GALLERY

Kelvin Black has produced some plans whereby the gallery can be enlarged without losing any workshop space. The gallery wall would be extended towards the workshop and the drying racks placed behind it. This will actually give more useable space to the workshop. We should have a plan made available for members to study and the opportunity to discuss it at the

Annual General Meeting, which will be held in June.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Several members have expressed the feeling that there are things they would like to discuss at this meeting. There have been few General Meetings over the last two years, usually because they are not very well attended and some members realise that as a result they do not have a forum in which to express their ideas.

The following proposals have been put forward, and members may wish to give consideration to them before the meeting itself.

1. That we paint the front of the building and give the place a "facelift".
2. That for advertising purposes we call it "The Pottery Shed" or perhaps "The Pottery Shop" part of "Craft Potters Nelson". Give some thought to this.
3. There has been a great deal of discussion among members whether we need to have a separate gallery committee, bearing in mind how difficult it is to get volunteers for 2 committees. Provided it is legal we could have a supervisor for the gallery as part of the CPN committee (as landlords) and that the CPN committee make the decisions necessary for improvements or supplies needed for running the gallery.

The gallery account would still be under the control of the sellers.

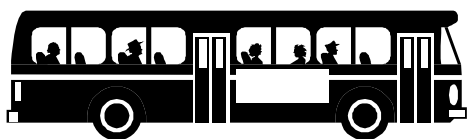
4. Members should be thinking now about the committee for next year. We have to elect a new President. The President can only hold office for two years. This is in the Constitution and a safeguard against too much control being in the hands of one person. We are a lazy lot on the whole and I frequently think there is an attitude of "As long as they don't choose me".

Being a part of the committee ensures the Group continues to provide the facilities, the activities and social events that members would like to have.

New members must not feel they do not have the right to be included in this part of the organisation. I am very sure there are talented people hiding their light under a bushel and undiscovered.

DON'T BE SHY. We need you to pick up where those of us who have done our time have reached a pottery twilight. Give us all a break and take up the slack. We have a wonderful group and may it long continue. Each member should accept at least one job in the club.

If I may misquote John Kennedy "Ask not what Craft Potters can do for you etc."



BLenheim TRIP Betty Dick – Tour Operator.
Phone 544 1193

Once again I have organised a trip to visit potters and see the way they do things. This one is to Blenheim. The bus is booked and 18 people are needed to fill it, which will make it the most economical. Wayne Price is ready to take the party away. Cost if staying at Renate's, one of the potters included in the itinerary will be \$41 including the bus fare. Each person required to bring sheet or sleeping bag, towel and breakfast food.

"The Traveller's Retreat" is within minutes of Renate's and is \$26 per person for bed and breakfast. There are other advantages, which may be seen in the brochure.

PLEASE get your name in NOW and pay the \$5 deposit as soon as possible.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a potter to join this trip. First come first served. Community Potters have been invited; there will be new potters to get to know from Nelson.

Raffles are good fun on the journey, two prizes at present. If you can donate one please do so, it will be welcome.

Planned by Renate and myself, this will be a fun weekend with many places to go and things to see. An easy walk for the energetic ones at Havelock.

BLenheim WEEKEND TRIP 4TH and 5TH of MAY



RAKU FIRING – BETTY DICK

A Raku was held recently with several new members taking part. Maureen Irwin, Lindy Tarrant, Bill Campbell and Lyn Packer fired their pots under the guidance of Jeanine Price and myself. Long sleeves, sneakers were the order of the day and it was a successful firing with some startling results using apple crackle and copper glazes. Participants were happy with the results.

Rodger managed to get the temperature gauge working properly (previously somewhat erratic). Thank you Rodger for your help. We hope other members will take part in future Raku firings and enjoy the Raku experience. Betty

RAKU firing Photo from Bill Campbell

‘Editor’s Note’

Raku like instant coffee gives you the results immediately and is exciting and at times nerve racking. But I would advise stout shoes rather than sneakers and only wool garments or heavy cotton, definitely no synthetic fabrics, they are dangerous if they catch alight. Safety in all things

DISPLAY =====

If anyone has Plates or Wall Hangings they would like displayed at the Leisure Lodge (Nelson) or anything artistic like masks, decorative tiles or plaques which can be hung on the wall, please contact:- **Sarah Hutt** Phone 547 2000 For more information.

CLASS OF 2002 – THE FIRST TERM

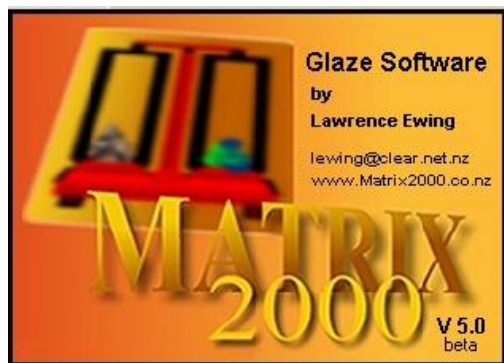
Around 20 people have been coming along to the Wednesday morning class at Craft Potters.

The class is a great mixture of experience and beginners, which provides a really positive environment for everyone, there is always something new happening, and interesting things going on. I have also been very pleased to see how supportive everyone is, and it is a credit to Craft Potters that they have such a great group of people willing to share ideas and help each other out.

I have found it challenging and rewarding to have so many in the class, and hope I can pass on some of the skills I have learnt over the years. I also hope people go away from class knowing they have learnt some new skill, or a new way of looking at a problem.

So hopefully next term we can get stuck into our individual projects, learn some more skills, and have some fun as well. **Sue Newitt.**

MATRIX



This month has seen several updates of the Matrix glaze calculation programme. The programme has an improvement in the way it works and one of the recent additions has been the side by side placing of the recipes on the screen in order to facilitate the adjustment of a known glaze to improve its fit for the clay or get the glaze nearer to the Seger formula.

Derek and I have both found it vastly better and two new glaze tests are in the kiln as I type. One of them is a clear for cone 9 to 10 and has already survived the freeze- boil test.

The only thing lacking in my case is more time to play around and see what Matrix can do for me. If you are making your own glaze recipes and need technical assistance Matrix is well worth looking at.

Written by Lawrence Ewing you can reach him email lewing@clear.net.nz or <http://www.matrix2000.co.nz>



A Note on Slab Work

It is true that rolling slabs unidirectionally creates a linear grain structure which can cause serious problems with warping or cracking. A flat single-slab piece like a platter or bowl can warp badly. A vessel or sculptural form made from multiple slab pieces can literally yank itself apart from the slabs shrinking in different directions. When the slab comes out of the slab roller I just roll it again with a rolling pin at 90 degrees to equalize the grain structure. You do not even have to expand or thin the slab with the rolling pin. If the slab is still stuck to the canvas or mat on which it was rolled initially, it will not expand when you roll it with the rolling pin.

- Vince Pitelka ClayArt

GLAZE APRIL

I have been investigating the types of material to use when working with stains.

I have discovered that every potter has a recipe of some kind which they themselves use and have also found there are a great variety of mediums and materials used for this purpose. The recipe here for this month is a recipe for mixing with stains as given to us by Chris Conroy. There may be better but this has worked well for some of us. Perhaps potters can get together and we can find what really works the best. More room for experimentation.

Chris Conroy Clear Glaze Base/Flux for Stains

Firing Temp. ?

Does not reduce Colour

Chris's Flux

Potash F'Spar		26
China Clay		13
Woolastonite		26
Ball Clay		13
Talc		3
Silica		26

General 1 tsp Stain to 6-7 tsp mix

Specific Stains mixed by volume

Stain	Amount	Chris's Flux	Other	Other
Pink TX	1 Part		2 Grstley Borate	Water
Ink Blue	1 tsp	5 ml		
Black	1 tsp	10 ml		
Mandarin	1 tsp	10 ml		
Yellow	1 tsp	10 ml		
Lime	1 tsp	15 ml		
Ivy	1 tsp	15 ml		
Turquoise	1 tsp	15 ml		
Royal Blue	1 tsp	15 ml		
Green	1 tsp	15 ml		



Beginners please Note

Chris's Flux is a type of glaze therefore if you decorate on green ware, be careful when loading the bisque not to stack your pots in such a way that the decorated areas touch and become stuck together.

Happy Decorating.
Let us know how you find this recipe works for you.

I FEEL A GROUCH COMING ON. by Bob Heatherbell

So here it is! *Does anyone actually read this stuff I write?* There is such a plethora of information out there these days they probably don't need to. Just sometimes there is a need for some feedback whatever it is. Those of you with computers and glaze calculation software will have been propelled into the world of Seger and other formula, as that is how the software works. I've found that using these programs is a great way to learn. You know I've always had the notion that in the making of pots, a working knowledge of how glaze materials function is a great advantage. And it is. But I'm going to have to concede that not everyone of course thinks like this.

The world of mineral chemistry is quite complex. Taking the first step inside looks a bit daunting, but on taking a good look around it is really exciting. 'Now I can see why my glaze didn't mature!' But I'm afraid there are always going to be those who are quite happy to continue dipping into whatever's in the glaze bucket and hoping for the best.

I have just had a thought. I wonder if some people avert their eyes when reading past my article in the newsletter in case an unwelcome formula leaps off the page!

I believe our Group should place more emphasis on teaching glazes and glazing. I'm always happy to help people with their glazes, but I don't agree with giving recipes. They'll never learn anything that way. Anyway I'd better box on, with or without any formula, or I'll have nothing for the newsletter and the editor will be hounding me.

MORE ABOUT GLAZING. (No.8). by Bob Heatherbell

This time we'll talk a little bit about Calcite (CaCO_3). This is a crystalline calcium carbonate that is found in many forms such as Chalk or Marble. When you purchase this material from your favourite supplier, you will probably get a material called Whiting. Whiting is processed and precipitated from Calcium Carbonate, so it's a very pure material.

Apart from the Feldspars, Calcium is probably one of the most used fluxes in higher temperature glazes. Remember when you intend to use it, it also has an opacifying effect, so if you want a really clear glaze, use something else.

Calcium is available in a range of other materials, among which are Wollastonite (CaSiO_3). Dolomite ($\text{CaMg}(\text{CO}_3)_2$). Gerstley Borate.

As you can see Wollastonite contains a lot of Silica, and Dolomite is about half magnesium. Gerstley Borate is a dug material, being named after the owner of the mine. It is a variety of Colemanite, a Boro Calcite, and has some impurities and contains a substantial amount of chemical water. It is a strong flux, and in my opinion should be used only in small amounts and with some caution.

I hope this Pot Chatter has given you all something of worth. We are a bit late getting off the press this month, so by the time you are reading it Easter will be behind us. Trust you had a restful and beneficial break from the toil of the day. Good Potting. May you find inspiration for the next load for the kiln.

Maggie. Editor.



Quote

"It is, perhaps, still necessary to say that the very best glazes cannot conceal badly shaped pots..." David Green, Pottery Glazes

Arts and Craft Fair

This Fair will be in Stoke from 1st to 3rd June which is Queen's Birthday Weekend.

Betty Dick has a stall and would like anyone who is interested to join her. Phone 544 1193



"Mans Work" Picnic Faulkner's Bush 2002