



Jan's Wood fired Platter

EDITORIAL

This editorial is being written while visiting relatives in the North Island. We have been drinking cups of coffee and tea at regular intervals and I have been very aware of the different and varied mugs and cups in which these are served. Two days before we left Richmond, Sue gave the Wednesday Class a talk on the ergonomics of mugs and cups and we looked at and discussed the merits of many in the gallery. Shapes and sizes, handles and their position on the mug, the feel of the mug in the mouth and the weight and

comfort in the hand. It was time well spent and very thorough as well as thought provoking and has had me looking at every cup of coffee with new eyes.

In my daughters' homes where nearly all of these are hand crafted pottery ones, some of my own making, I have given very little thought to them. In other places however it has been self evident that the mugs are not always pleasant to use.

At "The Brass Monkey" in Island Bay by the beach where we had a leisurely lunch we were served lattes in small, thick, shallow, heavy mugs that would have stood for the railway mugs of the Taumaranui Station Cafe.

In another home where we stayed there was not the feeling for pottery and the cupboards were filled with a variety of mugs of the 'Warehouse' type.

Large and heavy, geometric shapes with angular handles, handles too low down so you spilled your coffee in your lap in a moment of distraction. Some had handles that would take a whole hand, some only one finger.

The patterns were in some cases incredibly crudely designed and painted.

Just as I was telling myself that there was a shrinking market for hand crafted pottery I have discovered there is a real need for the sort of vessel we like to drink out of. Most of us in the pottery world have a favourite at home which is the only one we are comfortable with, the right size, the right shape and the right weight. It feels good and we enjoy the drink more because of it.

At the polytechs they have ergonomics and design classes. The designers for the ceramic producers appear not to have attended them. I remember seeing domestic ware that had the appearance of hand crafted work and being told it was designed by a well known New Zealand potter. There is the chicken and the egg syndrome around the design of the ware used in the home. Which comes first? The crafted product or the manufactured? We have a standard to uphold. Not to be taken lightly.

I would like to see us all take more interest in this aspect of the article we use in our homes more than any other. *The humble mug.*



Alan Ballards Pot

do this. Any ideas will be presented to members at the Annual General Meeting on June 22nd.

Mop

Cathy had suggested buying a good mop for cleaning the concrete floors and advised that this will cost approx. \$120. This purchase was approved.

Future Workshops

Kaye Lunn suggested we have a tile workshop and offered to organise this in the near future. Hanne suggested we have a “debriefing” meeting after any workshop to see what went well or was wrong with the workshop and to learn from the experience.

Bob suggested a workshop that will teach proper use of various equipment, i.e. slab roller, pugmills, moulds etc.

COMMITTEE NOTES

New Members:

We welcome two new Associate Members
Paul Winspear, and Renate von Petersdorff .

New Zealand Potters Convention in 2003

A decision must be made at the Annual General Meeting as to how much financial support Craft Potters is prepared to give to this event in terms of a loan or a donation. Only every few years does this convention occur in Nelson. All those of us interested in the pottery scene would be advised to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity. Meet with potters from all over the country and attend if possible the wealth of demonstrations and other activities available.

Suggestion Box

Betty suggested we purchase more boards for drying shelves. Joy and Tania offered to donate boards. Shelves will also be put under the wall benches to accommodate the moulds, and other equipment. Rodger will organise this.

School

Sarah has agreed to have a sculpture school and Richard will organise this.

Date: Sunday 21st July 10 am. \$10 per person.

Those interested may put their name on a sheet provided on the notice board.

This could be very worthwhile for those skilled in handwork .

Yellow Pages

It was advised that this year we will have an advertisement in the “Yellow Pages”. Derek kindly designed an outlay which he e-mailed including our logo. As there was a final date to be met, in consultation with Hanne, Lynda and Rodger the wording was reviewed and it was decided to put in the words, “Pottery Shed” in addition to our full name, address and other information.

Building

There was a suggestion that C.P.N. could improve the front of the building and a sub-committee was set up to investigate and make suggestions.

Lynda, Anneke and Hanne offered to

WOODFIRING SATURDAY MAY 11, WHAT A DAY!!



The Gang

bits of wood, it showed its appreciation by belching out impressive amounts of smoke from the chimney.

It reduced when asked, and behaved immaculately, --just as you could expect a Bob-Built kiln to do. So Bob, here is a huge special THANK YOU to just you, for all the work and foresight you put into making this kiln happen.

Lots of CPN'ers came for the occasion. Some stayed for the entire firing, others drifted in and out during the day. The brief general meeting was productive, and as usual, the food was truly great. The kiln was unloaded during Wednesday Class time, and the results from the firing were well worth the efforts. From earthy creations, dressed in club glazes, to lovely silky, light coloured pots, just about everything was fired to perfection. So we are 'doing it' again in about a month's time, and hope/plan to get a bit of publicity in the Nelson Paper.

One of the many 'things' Craft Potters is about, is to progress the art of Pottery in the Nelson Region.

There is a possibility that the future of 'clay' could take a path back to a more integrated look, based on glazes and textures rather than decorations, or a combination of the two. With this in mind, our wood kiln could prove to be a valuable exploration tool for all club members, whether hobbyists or semi professionals. I have already, (in my mind) made my next wood-fired piece, based on what I learnt from the pots that came out of this firing. A month seems like a long time for any future masterpiece to work its way from being a vision, through a spin on the wheel, some drying and turning, a bisque firing and a dip in the glaze bucket, --- to being a pot ready for the next wood-firing.

BUT as we all know, time flies, and before long, Bob's Beast will be rumbling again. So if you didn't make it for this first wood-firing, do yourself a favour and get ready for the next.



Kanne

Sue Newitt's Jug

Our Wood-fired Kiln, = **Bob's Beast**, has proved itself to be far more than an ornament in our back yard. Yes, firing this wonderful kiln IS a lot of work, and those that came early and left late and gave their all for the whole day, deserve a great big THANK YOU. With a flue-extension from Alan, Bob's kiln performed to perfection. It rumbled along all day like a happy mountain troll, co-operative and friendly, and whenever someone fed it a few

Comment from Rodger president cum gopher regarding the wood firing.

“The highlight for me was the enthusiasm and help we got with the firing , but most of all, handing Bob Heatherbell the set of cones 8-9-10 , completely flat and stuck to the brick they were on. The grin on his face was priceless, and his reaction was to walk to the front of the kiln and place them in the middle on top of the firebox, and saying ‘this is where they should be, then walking round the side of the kiln , giving a couple of affectionate pats on the side and a comment to the effect that he knew SHE could do it. He was right SHE did well and a very even firing all told.”



LIBRARY

The library will close for the annual stock take and general check of the books. Will members please return all items by 10th June 2002.

Prompt attention to this will be appreciated and then the library need be closed for only a few days.

Please do take special note of this request from Amy. Her job will be much easier if she does not have to ‘chase’ up non returned books or magazines. This service is very valuable and we must all be very careful not to abuse it. PLEASE TRY.

BUS TRIP TO BLENHEIM 5TH MAY.

What great weather for a bus trip - another of Betty's well planned excursions.

After collecting folk at CPN, Stoke, Millers Acre and Havelock (while there we looked at two very different galleries on the main street) we headed for Rapara Road where we visited the Quilters Barn and Olive shop - both full to the brim with lots of goodies. Next to Country Kitchen and Saint Clair Café where we had lunch: Salmon Quiche, Panni bread with smoked chicken, platters (with salami, ham, olives, relish, fruit, cheese) bread and dips, monkey platter (for children) the list goes on - well worth a visit when you are next over that way. After lunch on to the Paua factory and then to Hiromi Stewarts pottery - a lovely lady with a good array of pottery, stoneware, porcelain, lustre and gas fired pieces. We next visited Fran McGuire whose gallery is closed at the moment but Fran was only too happy to pull a few pots from the cupboards and talk colour and techniques. Last but not least a stop at the Ponder Estate. Beautiful paintings - painted using a palette knife and of course Olives, Olives, Olives and all associated with them -oil, plants, soap, pottery etc. Thank you Betty and Renate for organising our day and Wayne for getting us there and back in one piece. On behalf of all that went.

Jeannine

And this from Betty Dick

An enthusiastic group of 24 members and friends enjoyed this trip. Thank you Wayne for keeping the bus under control when it got a mind of its own and thank you to Chris for the back up service so that Wayne could see Fran’s pottery!

Thank you Ellen, Jeannine, Jan and Kaye for donating raffles. The support was so good I refunded all those who paid extra!

If any members have any ideas for our next trip please give me a call. Several suggestions already received include Kaikoura, the West Coast, Byron Bay in New South Wales Australia and Martinborough Fair .

Trips like these need plenty of planning in advance, so I need to know early.

Betty Dick Phone 544 1193

Well done Betty! I know Betty puts in a great deal of time organizing and gives members an inexpensive and enjoyable time. Part of the social life of Craft Potters **Editor**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The date for the A G M has been set for Saturday 22nd June at 4.00 p.m, in the Richmond Town Hall. Last year proved that this was a popular venue from the point of view of comfort and warmth and we hope that members will be encouraged to come along and take their part in planning what course we take next year. We also have to choose the members who will do the organising of many of the events which are so important for the life of the group.

A nomination form is included with this Pot Chatter and we encourage everyone to take this seriously and if you are unable to stand for the committee yourself at least talk to your friends in the group and give support to those who are willing to stand.

Being in a position where you can assist the group to venture into new fields and bring about improvements in the way we run Craft Potters can be very satisfying.

KATIE GOLD WORKSHOP

Sunday 19th May, 20 potters enjoyed a workshop with Katie Gold.

Katie started the morning showing us slides focusing on where we can gain inspiration for both ideas and glazes.

Katie then showed us how to make paperclay before we attempted to make our own. What a mess. We only wrecked one bucket but most of us can now control the power drill.

Lunch once again was wonderful with everyone contributing but a special thanks to Kaye for making a huge pot of soup at the club which was really appreciated on such a cold day and Cathy's chocolate cake was divine.

In the afternoon we made handles, feet and adornments for our pots and opened our minds to new materials for use as texture.

We gained a new associate member in Renate von Petersdorff from Havelock and would like to welcome her to our club.

Thanks again Katie, we all had an enjoyable and productive day.

Contributed by *Lynda Lines*

DEMONSTRATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

One of the purposes of Craft Potters is to promote pottery in the Nelson district and to this end there are continuing arrangements for children and others to visit and try their hands in the clay. Rodger has done tremendous work organising and providing for these visits and in May we had a record number.

May 3rd - Wakefield Kindergarten, demonstration and hands on experience.

May 6th – Hampden St School. Whole day hands on and demonstration wheel work.

May 13th –Hampden St School. Similar two classes

May 17th – Whareama Home demonstrations, Jan Moresby assisted by Rodger

May 20th -- Hampden St School again. Morning only

Pots were fired by Rodger from all these visits and donations totalled \$461.00

“Some members do not realise what we get out of these school demonstrations. Yes it is hard work but rewarding. Our Constitution is to teach and promote pottery. Children are accompanied by their parents and teachers who sometimes are visiting us for the first time, often surprised to find what we do and that we have a sales gallery. Parents and children become acquainted with the craft of pottery and some return to join us. It is a way too of fund raising for the group.” *Rodger*

Rodger has worked hard on these projects and would most likely appreciate a bit of help from members from time to time.. Anyone interested would be welcome to join him I am sure, especially those who like working with children. Edt.

NEXT WOODFIRING

Will be on WEDNESDAY the 19th June loading Tuesday 18th.

This will be a class project with some tuition from Sue Newitt regarding firing reduction in the wood kiln. All members are welcome and any requests to fire or enquiries should be addressed to :- *Jan Moresby*. phone 544 7059.



MOLD MAKING WORKSHOP

Bob will start with an in-house mold making workshop on Sunday, 16 June from 10am-3pm. This workshop should prove to be very interesting.

REQUIREMENTS (What you need to bring)

1. Plaster of Paris. Make sure it's *Castings Plaster*. It's \$11.00 a 20Kg bag. (South Street Gallery). Will

probably need half a bag. Suggest two people go halves in a bag.

2. Clay. The clay that you use in this process will go to waste afterwards. Suggest that you use less expensive clay i.e. modelling clay. You'll need up to half a bag.

3. A Base Board to work on. (So you can move your model around).

4. Newspaper.

5. Material to make a Cottle. A *cottle* is the wall you construct to contain the model you wish to make a casting of, and the liquid plaster that you pour over it. A strip of linoleum or Vinyl is best.

6. String to secure the cottle.

7. Separating Medium. This is to make sure the plaster doesn't stick. You can probably get the Proper stuff, but soft soap or detergent would do.

8. A soft brush to brush on the separating medium.

9. Buckets. At least 3 good-sized buckets. For mixing in, for water, and to put the waste in.

10. Rubbish Bags for the waste. One for inside a bucket.

11. A coarse sieve to sprinkle the plaster into the water. Like a flour sieve?

12. Bring along something that you would like to make a casting of, and we'll see if it's possible.

GLAZING FOR BEGINNERS. 9.

Hi. This time we'll talk about a couple of materials that are in common use by most potters who mix up their own high temperature glazes.

Firstly Talc. I guess you've all used talc in some shape or form at some time or other. It has a multitude of uses, and is called by a variety of names depending on the use you intend for it. Officially, as far as potters are concerned, it is called Magnesium Silicate and its formula is $3\text{MgO} \cdot 4\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$. It's an insoluble (does not dissolve) material, and is a source of the flux magnesia for use in your glaze.

Why is Talc so useful? As you can see from its formula it contains not just magnesia but also a good half of it is silica. Both of these materials can assist you with crazing problems as they both have a low rate of thermal expansion. Talc is also usually free of minor ingredients such as iron impurities. As talc doesn't begin to melt till around 900°C it is not usually used in lower temperature glazes. Talc is sometimes added to stoneware clay bodies to increase their resistance to thermal shock.

If you decide to use some talc as a flux in your glaze, instead of say calcite, remember that you are also adding silica. This will upset the silica ratio, so you may well have to make several adjustments to your recipe as a consequence. (As an aside, I have vague memories of my mother giving me magnesia when I was a child – milk of magnesia I think it was. I wonder what it was for, and if it did any good?).

Barium Carbonate. Many potters use barium for their matt blue glazes. I hope they use it with great care, as it is very poisonous. It is at it's most dangerous when being handled as a powder – so take special care at this point. Use a mask and gloves. I'd suggest that you never use barium in a glaze that is to go on a pot that may be used for food. If the glaze is not perfectly fitted and fused the baria could leach out of the pot.

Aside from all these warnings, barium is a really useful flux for high temperature glazes maturing above 1175°C. Barium is purchased as Barium Carbonate. BaCO₃. It is prepared from the mineral Witherite. It is generally a reliable and stable material, and insoluble as well. Although it is quite able to be used in oxidation, it is mostly used in reduced conditions. Reduction changes the nature of the baria into crystal forming, and matt and silky surfaces. Barium needs to be used along with other fluxes such as potash and calcium. Up to 20% barium carbonate can be used to achieve some attractive matt glaze effects. There are lots of glaze recipes in various publications.

Remember! Only use barium carbonate on obviously decorative pots. You can never tell what the person who buys your pot will use it for!

Glaze Recipe for June

I would like to print more recipes for Cone 6 but as that is not my forte at the moment I am finding it difficult to find good recipes to print. I have a suggestion to make that we buy the book recently produced by Ron Roy and John Hesselberth. It has had great reviews from potters on Clayart.

The following recipe is from "The Potters Companion" by Tony Birks. I used this extensively in the days of the diesel kiln and with a resurgence of interest in wood and reduction firings members may like to try this again. Not a genuine crackle.

Abrey Crackle	Cone 10	This is a pot made years ago at a John Crawford School at Craft and glazed with Abrey Crackle
Feldspar	40	
Whiting	30	
Clay (body clay)	25	
Ball Clay	25	
Titanium dioxide	05	
Cobalt Oxide	0.25	
Nickel Oxide	0.25	



Colour is a warm mottled tan which gives green grey on the breaks and where applied thickly. More a reduction glaze although some have used it in electric. The nickel gives shades not found with other oxides

I have edited the Pot Chatter for a year now and have found it a stimulating and at times exciting exercise. There have been very few criticisms and a lot of support from members with several trying their hand at the odd contribution.

A big thank you to all of you who have assisted me to produce the writing side of this newsletter with information and reports on activities within the group. The computer has been a godsend and I am the master of 'cut and paste' now. The Pot Chatter would not have the appeal it has though without the photographs and setting up that Derek does. We hope the end product will continue to keep members in touch with what is happening in both Craft Potters and the rest of the pottery world.

Producing The Pot Chatter has been a privilege



Maggie Editor

QUOTE

Remember, people see your actions not your intentions. You may have a heart of gold, but so does a hardboiled egg. Anonymous contributed.

The printed copies of this newsletter are produced by courtesy of and with the co-operation of "Haven Computers", Queen St. Richmond.

The logo for Haven Computers features the word "HAVEN" in a stylized font with blue and red diagonal lines above it, and "COMPUTERS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font to the right.

Linda Young
250 Queen St
P.O. Box 3290, Richmond, Nelson
Ph: (0064-3) 544 1777 Fax: (0064-3) 544 7773
Email: haven@nelson.planet.org.nz

