



Peter Stewart at play



EDITORIAL

The Raku Day held at Peter Stewart's Pottery was a day to be remembered. There was an air of enthusiasm as each pot emerged from its firing to be dealt with in the appropriate way. This method of firing demands a technique requiring the potter to have a real knowledge of the action of flame and air on the glazes. Here is where you learn what reduction is all about. It was obvious that copper is the most popular oxide as the bright coppery sheen that develops can only be achieved by reducing.

Those who have not experienced this way of firing before will have had the thrill of seeing their pot emerge after only a few minutes in the kiln often with breath taking results. In Canada and America, Raku has long been popular as a regular method of firing especially for pots of artistic merit.

Peter Stewart is a hands on, ready to help everybody sort of person, his personality came into play and it was a very happy group that joined in the fun and it was fun!

Peter has a sense of humor that is irrepressible, he encouraged the potters with teasing and a sort of joyous abandon to get in there and look after their pots as they were lifted



from the flames. We owe a very big thank you to Peter for giving so generously the use of his pottery, kiln and equipment. In addition, his cheerful and cheeky way of treating everyone the same. I for one came away feeling happier and dare I say it younger.

Ellen Nisbet Betty Dick Judy Ross Joan Maggs

This Raku Day could not have been organized without the efforts of Betty Dick who worked unremittingly during the whole day. She ensured everyone was provided with a pot to fire if they had not brought one, cups of tea or coffee when required and a lunch that was brought by the potters to be shared. Craft Potters at its best.

Betty represents a long line of hard working members who over a period of over twenty years have consistently given us experiences of this kind.

The work goes on and long may it do so.

It was a great day and the weather was kind to us, warm and sunny and after the winter of unpredictability we have had that itself was enough to make it a success.

It was also pleasing to see potters from another group, familiar faces we never see often enough. At this point I must say a few words about Peter's gallery, his sculptures of piscine creatures are something to see and his gallery reflects a totally different style of pottery. It is a credit to him that he has come such a long way in the pottery field as Peter is very much his own man, having the courage to leave his job and just get on with becoming a potter. Good on you! Once more thank you Peter, your gallery reflects your enthusiasm and a talent that is pure YOU. A great guy and a great potter, keep it up, we will always be behind you.



Some of the days out put

COMMITTEE NOTES

A & P SHOW on 23rd and 24th November

Due to the sometimes erratic weather that November can often land us with, it has been decided to go for an inside site in a tent. This also means that we will be able to safely leave our equipment etc. here overnight. Security guards will be patrolling the area. Arrangements are going well with an enthusiastic bunch supporting Betty. We will be having wheel demonstrations 3 times a day { 11am, 1pm and 3pm}. As well, we will have a display of pottery for sale, and we will also be selling our lucky dips. We intend to hand out leaflets and our aim is to let as many people as possible know where we are, who we are, and how they can benefit from visiting us or joining our group. There will be no 'have a go' for the public. Instead, they can be encouraged to attend our Open Day in Jan, where they will be able to try their hand with the clay. We plan to sell small bags of clay to the children for \$1. This should help to offset any costs we have in setting the site up. We need YOUR HELP with making Lucky Dip Pots, and we would also appreciate more volunteers. Please ring Betty Ph 544-1193, or Lindy ph 547-8495.

Lyn Packer

Pot making Day

Monday 7th October starting at 10.00 a.m. To make lucky dips for the A & P Show. These will sell for \$3.00 or \$5.00. Clay will be provided

CLAY

Since the classes have finished and there is no Exhibition this year, the clay kept under the large centre bench should be cleaned out. If you still work in the workshop for yourself, it is alright to leave the clay there but if you do not it would be better if you take it home till next year or to use at home. Any clay not wanted will be gratefully accepted by the club for use in lucky dips and club pots.

GARDEN

The garden in the front of the building is a little bare at the moment but there are plans to replant and if we look at the representation made by Sarah Hutt with grasses and native plants it will be 'looking good'. Diana Dumont has accepted responsibility for this and we will need members prepared to help her to set out the plants when they have been chosen. Betty Dick will be looking after the rest of the garden and with better weather things should improve.

NEW MEMBERS

Additional members approved by the committee are

Jo Bain of 16 Shearer Terrace Richmond Phone 544 2384

Lois Mills of Main Road Spring Grove RD1 Wakefield phone 541 8881

and Owen and Doreen Bateup have now resumed full membership.

Welcome back!

It has been very encouraging to see some of our members from Zenith days returning to the fold so to speak. We hope to see your pots soon. Keep up the good work.

RAKU

There will be a club Raku on 5th October from 12.00 to 4.00.p.m. Bring your lunch etc. and enjoy the day. Jeannine, Rita, Betty and Rodger will be there to help anyone needing to learn the ropes of this exciting and instant form of firing pots.

There will be a bisque firing on the Wednesday the 2nd. Pots to be there before loading at 9.30a.m.

CONDOLENCES

It is with some sadness that we offer condolences to Ellen Nisbet and Joy Brown who have both lost loved relatives this month. Ellen's husband Bob was a visitor to the club while Ellen was actively participating in the group and we saw him at many of our functions.

Joy has been for many years visiting her elder sister in New Plymouth. Those of us in that older age bracket know the sense of loss that comes to us when we lose someone who is close to us. May you both find comfort at this time.

ADVERTISING OF CPN MEMBERS

Members who have their own galleries have been invited to display cards advertising their own pottery in our gallery with their pots and we invite them to reciprocate.

A mutually beneficial form of advertising.

ISEL IN BLOOM

Betty Dick once more has a stall at Isel Park on 6th October from 10.00 a.m. till 4.00p.m. She will be selling pots and any member who wishes to join her to sell both club pots and their own is welcome, sharing the cost of the stall between them. The total cost of the stall \$10.00 so it is a small amount to pay.

Ring Betty for any more information Phone 544 1193

SLAB ROLLER

With several new members in the group there have been some reservations expressed about the use and care of the slab roller. This equipment which is fairly costly can be very easily damaged if mistreated. For those who would like to get help with this, especially since the Wednesday classes have finished, if they go along on Saturday morning Rodger is still taking his group and would be able to assist you and show how it should be used. If any 'oldies' feel they have forgotten feel free to join in.

SOUTH STREET GALLERY AWARDS

The South Street Gallery awards evening was not as well attended as usual but there was a standard of creativity we have not had before. Those who missed the evening would be well advised to go down and look at the pots and judge their merits for themselves. Peter Gibbs said it was a tough choice at times choosing the winners and admired the quirkiness of some of the pots.

Lindy Tarrant's win for her section would have been more interesting with a glaze that picked up the surface treatment. One of the main difficulties is the transition from the base to the walls of a pot, there should be an even flow both visually and physically and this winner handled this aspect best.

Overall the pieces that stood out had bold treatment in form and glaze.

In the raku section what is appropriate becomes an issue. Many of the entries were fine but may have worked better with other firing techniques.

The display is open until September the 30th.

Sarah Hutt Jeannine Price Peter Gibbs

To Mike and Barbara for the Awards they give to us each year as the French would say "Merci mille fois" in other words "Thank you a thousand times".



ORIGIN PACIFIC TICKETS

The raffle for these tickets which were donated to us by Origin Pacific in celebration of their Fifth Anniversary was won by Diana Dumont. Diana came from Canada about a year ago and we trust she will be able to see a bit more of our country on the strength of these tickets.

“GIVE IT A GO FOR YOUTH”

Rodger Fowler holds regular sessions in which groups of young people are given demonstrations and allowed to try their hands at making their own ceramic creations. These sessions are very popular indeed and the number and attendance is growing. This last month Craft Potters entertained Henley Brownies who made owls of course and made a combined pot which they all helped with. On 24th T.D.C. had an organized Boredom Busters which is an ongoing activity at Craft. 28th September saw two groups of Guides calling themselves “Artiskly Nelson” in both the morning and afternoon doing claywork. September 30th Boredom Busters again.

Rodger is giving service to the district’s young people in a very positive and practical way, those of us who are potters know all too well the pleasure and relaxation from working in this medium. Up to now Rodger has had help from Pauline Cohen and Diana Dumont but any assistance is welcomed with open arms so if you feel you would like to join in the fun ring Rodger, 544- 4755.

QUALITY CONTROL AND HOW IT WORKS

Member’s works that are submitted to be sold in the Gallery first need to be checked for suitability and quality before they can be displayed for sale. The maker will of course first check them before they are brought out to the club, but it is a double 'insurance' for the seller to have someone else look them over as well. I look for all sorts of things e.g. pinholing, crazing, cracks, chips etc. If there is a defect and it is pretty minor, then a 2nd sticker can be attached to the pot and a reduced price applied to it. The pot also has to be able to do the job that it has been made for.

An information sheet for sellers or prospective sellers is available from the club, or from me. This will help you to decide whether the time is right for you to bring your pots into the Gallery. Phone 544 6821 Lyn Packer Quality Controller

UPGRADING OF FRONTAGE

The upgrading of the frontage has continued apace with the entire front being newly painted. Joan Maggs brought down her water blaster but took up Trevor Briggs offer to do the blasting, I suspect with some relief as this was a hard job. Trevor also painted the entire front in the new colour (See the back page of July Pot Chatter and you will see the original idea) Totem poles still to be fired, the work goes on.



Building Progress to date

Many thanks to Trevor for this part of the job for which he volunteered without any pressure I might add.



ClayBiz

Tahuna Function Centre, Nelson

25 - 27 April 2003

The organising committee of *ClayBiz*, invites all Craft Potters members to the NZ Society of Potters National Convention on Anzac Weekend 2003.

Preparations are well underway with a range of demonstrations, including throwing, hand building and decorating, by well known local potters over the weekend. A bus tour of Nelson potteries is planned for Friday and a dinner-dance for the Saturday evening. There will be a variety of other workshops and presentations on both Saturday and Sunday, including an introduction to computer based glaze formulation, so there will plenty to see and do over the weekend.

Craft Potters is supporting *ClayBiz* financially and a number of members have offered to help with the organisation. It would be great to have your support as delegates as well!

The convention is open to anyone with an interest in clay *you do NOT have to be a member of the NZSP to come to ClayBiz*.

Chris Hinkley

BLOWING POTS

These two letters demonstrate a technique that is useful with either thrown or pinch pots at crucial points to give the pot a bit of a lift. It has also been suggested that a straw could be inserted in the opening not everyone likes kissing their pots!

1) "Just before I finish throwing a bottle, and after I've started on the neck, I'll put my mouth over the opening and blow.

This expands the shoulders

nicely. Then I finish throwing the neck. I can't remember where I first saw this done, maybe it was at a Jack Troy workshop a few years back." Tim.-Clayart

2) "I once watched someone stick a small balloon into a handbuilt vase/bottle shape and blow the balloon up slowly and gently to push the sides out and make it nicely rounded. Worked like a charm. If you want to leave a larger opening or are making a larger piece, this would work better than blowing directly into the piece itself." Nancy in Cincinnati - Clayart.



South Street Gallery awards night Linda Jeannine Wayne

ABOUT CLAYS No 13

It seems to me that a few notes about clays would be in order. When I look at the catalogue list of what is available I can well imagine someone new to potting saying, "I wonder which one"? We are really fortunate here in Nelson to have two producers of good clays. Clays are also available from Southern Clays in Dunedin, and imported clays can be found as well.

What you choose will, of course, depend on what you want to use it for. There is certainly a clay available for every purpose. The clays available fall very roughly into three groups according to the temperature that they are designed to fire to.

Low fired: Up to 1150°C.

Mid fired: From 1150 to 1250°C.

High fired: From 1250 up to 1300°C.

The low fired clays, sometimes called earthenware, are nearly all red clays. There is one exception. A useful white clay called UV that can be fired alongside the red clays. The mid fired clays are all white clays made up from prepared minerals. The high fired clays, also called stoneware clays, are almost all made from native (locally mined clay) clay, although some have some white clay content. Native (my term) clays are clays that are dug here in New Zealand, and a lot of our red and stoneware clays are found here in Nelson. Stoneware clays fire to a buff or grey colour because of the varying small amounts of iron in them. The white clays on the other hand are all made from processed minerals, either imported or locally processed. The mid fired white clays have become very popular, probably because of the lower firing costs and the ready access to, and easy use of, commercial stains and glazes.

Below are some of the clays available. It isn't all of them by any means.

In the lower fired group there is:

Mac's Terracotta Red. 1080 to 1150°C.

Potters Clay's Nelson Red. 1050 to 1150°C.

Southern Clays Brick Red. 1050 to 1120°C.

Potters Clay's UV White. 1150°C. maximum. This is the only low fired white clay. It has a fairly narrow firing range.

The mid fired group are almost all white.

Mac's White. 1170 to 1250°C.

Potters Clay Mid Fire White. 1170 to 1250°C.

Southern Clays Abbots White. 1150 to 1200°C.

Southern Clays Abbots Red. 1120 to 1200°C. This Red clay fires a bit higher.

There's quite a list of various stoneware clays. They all fire from 1280 to 1300°C.

Mac's Redwood. Mac's Whitestone. Mac's Whitestone T. Has some Talc added.

Mac's Production. A finer mesh size.

Potters Clay SC80. A whitish colour. ***Potters Clay GB2.*** A strong clay. ***Potters Clay***

PCW. A clay similar to Whitestone. ***Potters Clay Nelson White.*** Nelson White is the only white clay that is rated to fire up to 1300°C. It can be fired along with other stoneware clays.

In the clay making process the materials are put through a screen to determine the mesh # (size) of the particles. As you can imagine this makes a profound difference to the nature of the resultant clay. The white clays made from prepared minerals have a very fine mesh size. Consequently they are very plastic, but have very little wet strength. This means that your pot will collapse if you spend too long trying to make it. The stoneware clays are a much coarser mesh in particle size, and are much stronger when it comes to making larger pieces. Mac's Production clay on the other hand has a finer mesh size to make it more suited to smaller domestic ware work. Some clays have a very coarse mesh or are even grogged to make them very strong for building very large work or for sculptural effects.

So there you are. In amongst all these clays there must be a clay that suits the job you have in mind. Talk to your clay supplier. I'm sure they'll be helpful. Get a bag and see what you can do!

Bob Heatherbell.

CANDID COMMENT About Clays and Cones.

Sometimes I need to suppress a wee niggle of irritation when I have to listen to grizzles about this or that clay that is not doing what it should. Needless to say in most cases the complainants are not looking too hard in their own direction. In my view our clay makers are putting out a pretty good product. I was talking about this to a potting friend who learned throwing when I did. And that's a good few years ago now. We agreed that today's clays are far better and easier to use than when we started, and that today's would-be potters have a much easier time when learning to throw. Mind you these new white clays can be pretty soft and soggy if you're not reasonably skilled. They're not the best clay to learn with. If I have any complaints of my own, it's that there are too many different clays out there to choose from.

While I'm having a beef I must include one about cones. And I mean the lack of them. I cannot make out why people refuse to use them. It's real head in the sand stuff. Almost not wanting to know what the kiln is doing to your pots. I guess this attitude arrived with the general use of electric kilns, and the switch it on and go to bed habit, and hope that the kiln will perform a small miracle on your pots while you are asleep. Pyrometers do not tell you the truth about what is happening to your pots. They only tell you the current temperature of the atmosphere in the kiln. Pyrometers are also not accurate, and the higher the temperature the less accurate they become.

The elements in an electric kiln oxidise with age and use. This means that they increasingly resist the electricity flowing through them. This in turn means that the ramp rate of temperature slows, and you may set it at 150° per hour, but it will only achieve 100°, taking longer to fire to your set temperature. This will then give you the equivalent of a very long soak that may drastically over fire your pots. The higher the set temperature the worse this can be. *It is very important to use cones* in your electric kiln from time to time to check the amount of error the controller may have so you can adjust the set temperature to compensate. Cones are a very cheap and easy way to keep an eye on what you kiln is doing, and certainly better than getting out a poor firing. My years of firing pots, in a variety of kilns, has always included the necessity of using cones to keep track of the firing. I still believe they are a necessary part of the process.

Cheers Bob Heatherbell.

Glaze recipe



This month I have cadged a recipe from our raku expert Rita Edgar. We all admire the work Rita does and she has given us this recipe to try, already been proven, lets see what you can do.

Iridescent Crater	
Ferro Frit #4108	80%
Bone Ash	20%
Bentonite	3%
Copper Carbonate	5%
Cobalt Carbonate	3%



FOR SALE

For Sale: 3 only Silicon Carbide Kiln Shelves. 18" X 12". A very good price
A Ball Mill. 20 litre barrel. Also quantity of dolomite for sale. Ring 544 8768 for details.

EDITORS NOTE

A lot of information had to be included in this issue. It has been hard work getting it together but I have had a lot of support from Uta Calver and Bob Heatherbell who have joined Derek and I to become the "staff" of the Pot Chatter. Lyn Packer has also been of great assistance, cutting to the chase and getting information to me quickly. My grateful thanks to you all.



Maggie Editor

QUOTE

"Life is what happens while we're continuously planning what our futures will be..... and before we know it, it's over."



A well deserved rest Betty

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