



**Ellen Nisbet with  
"Mourning for the Rain Forest".  
South Street Gallery Award winner**

MAIL PHOTO / MARION VAN DIJK

## EDITORIAL

December issue, the end of this year and like everyone else I am hoping for good weather in the next few weeks. As we survey the year behind us there are a few sad reflections one of which is the loss from our club of an old and loyal member namely Pat Christmas. Pat has been a member for many years and given faithful service and support to the group for most of that time. There are many members myself included who are reaching the age when we wonder how much longer we can carry on. Pat has regrettably resigned and I for one though sad to see her leave our ranks, understand and can only say thank you for your

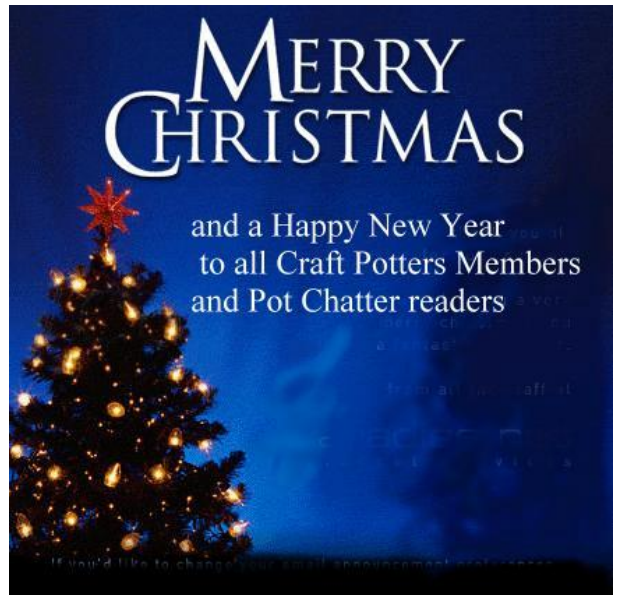
devotion and hard work through all the times at Zenith when with many others we were getting Craft Potters established. Pat was not alone, but there are only a few members from those days still holding full membership, Gordon and Thelma Levy, Jan Moresby, Uta Calver, Amy Meikle and Bob Heatherbell who are all still gainfully employed, Coila Duffy and Ellen Nisbet.

Ellen, now 85 years old was always a member with great enthusiasm for the medium of clay and brought her own individual style to everything she attempted. Her relationship with members in the classes she attended were of encouragement and helpfulness. She began her life in Invercargill, spent some time in a solicitor's office before going to Dunedin Teachers College and became a teacher spending her probationary year at Waikiwi. From there she taught at a small school of 11 children in a gold mining settlement at Nokomai, populated by many Chinese and then went to live at Nightcaps where she continued to teach and married Bob Nisbet. The children under her tuition would have gained greatly from her creative abilities and the generosity of spirit she brought with her. At Craft Potters her constant complaint was that her ideas were always outreaching the time she had available. However it was her sharing and unselfish attitude that became the norm for many of us and brought a companionship that went beyond the boundaries of a common interest. For those of us in this small group, Marvel's wingèd chariot is all too close, but I for one take comfort from having met the famous Beatrice Wood in California who at 97 was firing her kiln and excused herself from talking to me to check on the temperature.

If health and situation permit, what an example to follow!

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi everybody, it seems we've just had Christmas and it's here again. I'm not sure where the year has gone. I would like to say a big thank you for everybody's co-operation and help. Special thanks to the kids group helpers. Christmas dinner coming up soon "Yum". 2<sup>nd</sup> January, Have a go Day, we need "HELP!" Volunteers for throwing and hand work, please phone me. The 'pillar' and 'tile' firing has started, this will take many firings. Nice to see some of the newer members so keen. Please, new members introduce yourselves and don't be scared to ask for help, the same goes for our older members, please offer help when you see someone struggling. I know a lot already do help, so thanks for that. We are a diverse bunch and I am sure we have members with talents that could benefit the club, so don't be afraid to let them be known. That's enough from me. The main thing is to have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Keep well and Happy Potting. All the best to young and old. *Rodger Fowler.*



## Donated

Keith Smith has recently donated many pottery materials and tools to C.P.N. these have been picked up by members and payments made towards our funds. There is also a banding wheel and some other equipment Keith has given to the group. Many thanks Keith and hey! We miss you.

## Sweets

An organisation was given permission to leave sweets in the club for fund raising for a rescue operation on an honesty basis. These sweets are being taken without payment and for some reason the club is paying out the amount missing. This is not good enough and the committee will ask for them to be removed if it happens again. Anyone know how this came about and why are we responsible?

## COMMITTEE NOTES {19<sup>th</sup> November}

Some items of interest from our latest committee meeting:

The most important event of your social calendar for the year, and definitely not to be missed, is:

**The Christmas Party/BBQ – December 15<sup>th</sup> @4pm @ the shed.**

**All you need to bring is; yourself, your family, a salad, a competition winning dessert and your eating utensils, plus anything else that you need for your comfort. If you are able to bring a BBQ, give a committee member or Rodger, a phone call. CPN will supply sausages & juice.**

**Don't forget that we will be holding 2 competitions; one for the tastiest dessert {to be voted on by you}, and another – this one's hush hush. You need to be there. But both winners will receive great prizes.**

## **T.D.C. GRANT**



– Recently we received a \$2000 grant from the T.D.C. which we were able to use to rejuvenate the large kiln. Thanks to Justin’s expertise we now have a virtually new kiln. The small kiln will also get its share of work done on it, and also the mini kiln will receive new elements. We are very grateful to the T.D.C. for their generosity. We also plan to purchase a digital controller. This will be connected up to the large kiln.

Once it has been connected, all of you who have certificates to use these kilns already, will need to resit your test in order to use the new controller. Your old certificates will no longer be valid. We’ll let you know when this is going to happen.

**BUDDY LIST** – We would like members who have been around for a while, know a bit about pottery and the running of the club, to write their names up on our list so that new members can look at the names and if they would like a bit of help, know that they can come out to the club when you are on duty, and know that they will be able to get the help that you can offer them. It can be a comfort to them if they are feeling a bit lost, as we all did when we first joined the group. The list has been pinned to the notice board.

## **CLASSES**

Classes for next year will commence on February 5th at 10.00 a.m. with Sue Newitt as our tutor. Any more information available nearer to that date.

**CLASS SECRETARY** – We are looking for applications for class secretary for next year. Your duties will be to look after our tutor, making sure she has the clay she needs, a nice hot cup of tea/coffee, give out any relevant info, teach new members the runnings of the club and also show them things like, what to do with their slops, plus load and fire class kilns. If you don’t have your kiln certificate, you have plenty of time to sit it before Feb {Amy Meikle is in charge of the kilns and you can contact her}. Your remuneration for this ‘job’ will be a reduction of YOUR class fees – down to \$10 for the year. You can contact Uta Calver ph 54-18953 if you are interested.

**SHED CLEAN UP** – We would like you to take home any clay that is currently being stored under the table that belongs to you, plus any pots of yours that are sitting on the shelves. Some have been there for an eternity. The clay and pots need to be removed by the 20<sup>th</sup> of December. Unfortunately if they are still there after this date, they will be assigned to the rubbish bin. If you are planning to definitely have a firing in the very near future, then let a committee member know. In future you will need to take all your clay and also slops home with you in your own bucket or other container. Your new pots may stay in the shed until they are finished {still in the raw state}. If you are not planning a firing fairly soon after the making of them, then they will need to be transported home until you are ready to bring them back for firing.

**OPEN DAY** – This is happening on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2003. For new member’s info, this is a day when we invite the public to have a ‘go’ at throwing or they can do handwork. We also sell any seconds or ‘tired’ pots at heavily reduced prices. It is a lot of fun for those who wish to participate. We open at 9am and usually finish at 4pm, or when we can get the last of the wannabee potters to go home. We normally get crowds of people visiting. If you would like to help, give Joy Brown ph 544-2766 or Jeannine Price ph 542-3033 a phone call, or you can just come out and savour the atmosphere. We would love to see you there, and we guarantee that you will enjoy yourself.

*Lyn Packer*

## **Further Information from the Committee**

### **CONSTITUTION**

The committee has taken on the task of upgrading the constitution. It is almost thirty years since the inception of the group and the first constitution was set up. Obviously things have changed and Bob Heatherbell has put in many hours going through the rules and updating them. The changes were very essential and the committee has approved them. Bob will now finalise the document and a general meeting will be called in the new year where members will be able to discuss the new constitution and accept it.

Paul Le Gros will then complete the legal formalities.

### **MARKETING WEEK**

This will be a first for Craft Potters. Following the Open Day we normally hold on January 2<sup>nd</sup> it is proposed there be a week when all members may have a table of their own to display their pots and be responsible for them for the week. A Sales Week!

The dates will be from the 4<sup>th</sup> of January to the 12<sup>th</sup> January.

Rosters will need to be maintained and may be shared but members are expected to give good support to this project if we go ahead with it.

Potters may wish to share a table and newer potters may join with other “rookies” and have a table together.

Its all in the pipe line and suggestions are welcome. Now is the time to try out your marketing skills and any ideas you may have had in the past may be tried.

If you have advertising such as cards or pamphlets of your pottery or pots feel free to bring these along for your display. Also other crafts of GOOD quality such as woodwork etc may also be entered in this week. In the meantime get busy making pots, get them bisqued and set the dates for the glost firings. It will be good fun!

If you would like to help with the organisation of this project, and have enthusiasm, please let Uta know and she will assist by giving you the names of others ready and willing to help get it off the ground. Members are asked to give their names if they are interested in having one of these tables.

**PLEASE ADVISE Uta Calver NOW.** If this takes off we have to get stuck in and do some advertising and this will be impossible without the support of a good number of potters. This could be a real get together day and could be a great way of getting to know both one another and our public. I think it might be worth putting our best foot forward. How about it?

### **KILN FIRINGS**

A further note about firings. It will be busier for the next few weeks and members should note that they may only book another firing on the day when they fire the 1st booked. No firings other than for C.P.N. may be booked more than one at a time.

### **VISITING GROUPS**

If you get an enquiry for having a group visiting on a specific day please check with Joy Brown, ph. 544-2766 before committing CPN to that date. Take phone no. and name of group. Enquiries for children's groups wanting demonstration/instruction, please phone Rodger Fowler, ph. 544-4755.



## FUTURE EVENTS



We are pleased to announce that Lawrence Ewing will be giving talks on Glaze Technology in the early part of next year in this region. This will be an opportunity we should not miss. Those interested should give their names to Lynda Lines and if there are enough we will definitely be trying to get Lawrence to hold a workshop at Craft Potters. There will be a notice on the notice board and a list for members to enter their names. Watch this space.

## LIBRARY

What are we going to do? For the first time ever we are losing books from the library on a permanent basis. Amy has just told us that the second copy of Glazes from Godzone has disappeared. That means both the first and second editions. These should never have been taken from the library premises. It is quite possible for a recipe to be hand written in Craft Potters without taking the books away.

The inference is ominous and I can only ask the question "What do we do about it?"

This is a group problem and the group should address it.

Perhaps at the next General Meeting the subject will be raised?

---

## ALLAN BALLARD



Alan has recently moved into Craft Habitat. He and Corinna Wanty have established themselves in a new pottery studio. The workshop is spacious and the pots are displayed advantageously, the gallery is well



lit and we see their pots at their best.

Good luck to two potters taking a punt on what looks to be like a good opportunity!

## HINTS AND TIPS

Profiles: If you have any old plastic lenses from sunglasses, try using them as profiles when throwing. Probably work very well on small pots. A good idea from Anna Barnett.

Slip trailers: Old plastic bottles such as those that have had tomato sauce or mustard in them make good containers for glaze on glaze decorating. The small nozzles are often a good size and with stainless ball bearings in them can be shaken to keep the glaze mixed. A watering can for pot plants is also good for glaze on glaze decorating.



### Doggie Poo.

This morning while out at the club, I came across some doggy poo surrounded by blow flies {inside the building}. It was only a little dog - could tell by the size of the poo. Out there somewhere there is a very embarrassed little dog who was desperate to go to the toilet but didn't feel able to tell his mum/dad of his predicament. Please clean up after your pet.

Better still, for their comfort keep them outside.

Lyn P and friends.

## All Those Pretty Colours.

Yes this article is about Stains. Those of us oldie potters had none of these not so many years ago. We had to rely on our skills with a few oxides like iron, cobalt and copper. These oxides can produce some excellent glazes in a reduced atmosphere, and can be, in my perhaps prejudiced view, superior to what is produced with 'modern' stains and glazes. However in these days the market has the final say and most of the public want bright colours. The advent of the white clays and modern stains have made it fairly easy to fill this demand, and electric firing can be done at a moderate cost. Some of our "potters" don't even make their own pots these days. They just buy the blanks and put a few colours and circles on them. It reminds me of the 'Ceramics Classes' of a few years ago, where you were given a pot to decorate, it was then fired for you, all for a fee of course.

To get back to the stains, there is a wide range of colours available from several manufacturers. Your local supplier of pottery materials will most likely have a good range of colours to choose from. Be aware that many of the colours will not survive high temperatures and will burn out. Some colours though are designed for the extra heat of stoneware. Stains are inert and are comfortable in either oxidation or reduction. Also be aware that a few colours are toxic and must be handled with care.

Stains can be used over glaze or under glaze. The preferred method is usually underglaze, with the decoration applied to the raw pots before being bisque fired. This fires on the colour, making it easier to handle when glazing. The brushwork flows much more easily on the raw surface. It's almost impossible to brush onto the final over glaze, as it is such a powdery surface. Brushwork can be done on the bisqued surface but there is the possibility that some of the material may float off into the glaze.

When it comes to applying the stain, don't just add water to make it liquid. This just makes for a streaky colour on your pot. It is necessary to give the stain some 'body' so you can get a good even spread of colour. To do this you can either make up your own mixture, or go to your supplier and purchase a ready made additive made for the job. A Universal Medium is available to which stain can be added until the desired colour is achieved. Body powder is available, and a material called Sussett can be used that will make brushing easier and help with suspension of the mixture. Or you can make a liquid slip of the clay your pots are being made from. Or again you can make up your own mixture using some fritt for fluxing, and some clay. A mixture of 60% stain, 30% borax fritt, and 10% white ball clay, would give a bright colour. Vary the amount of stain to vary the intensity of the colour. Most stains, except for perhaps blue, need some fluxing. Make sure that clean materials are used and mix thoroughly. Don't use feldspars as a flux—they are too refractory. If mid temperature clays are being used, maybe some glaze powder could be used. After all it's mostly fritt. And don't forget to test what you do. Don't apply the stain colouring too thickly. I've seen some awful crusty consequences from this.

Finally, stains are expensive, so do a lot of experimenting before getting carried away with your brush. Happy decorating from Bob

## **GLAZING WITH COLOUR From Sarah Hutt**

Sarah's work has been much admired so I asked her for a few tips, here they are.

As far as the stain recipe I have always used the recipe that is in the information from Mike Rogers. I use the Medium which is a little bit like wallpaper paste and mix the recipe which is

20 Flux (I use borax frit)

10 Nelson White powder (or the same base as the clay you are using)

70 stain (Some stains work better than others and it is best to test the lighter blues as I have had a few failures with these. I mix mine to a creamy consistency with the medium in a mortar and pestle until it is smooth. Then I mix in water until it is thin enough to use as a paint. As the stains start to thicken over time, I add water to the mix again and just keep playing with them. Also it is a good idea to use more than one colour together and try layering them. I use complimentary colours, like red, green; purple yellow etc this looks good. Also try mixing colours together and get a new colour but test this as it is possible they will react. *Sarah*

### **Toxicity**

There are some materials it is safer for a potter not to use unless they are very experienced and know what they are doing. In the early days lead was a common chemical found in materials. Lead in the body can cause death. The Roman Empire was affected tragically by the lead pipes used by the bath conscious Romans.

Another dangerous chemical is cadmium. Potters may not be aware of this chemical and it is often found in red glazes and stains. Bob had a recent experience of being very uncomfortable for a couple of days after spraying with a red stain. A tacit reminder not to be too casual. "Potters Beware" is on the notice board, all potters should read it.

### **Don't eat the colours!!**

Following is an extract from a paper by Michael Banks given to Craft Potters at an A.G.M. We should all pay attention.

#### **Commercial Stains-**

The stains sold to potters are really brightly coloured synthetic minerals concocted by industrial chemists to survive the heat of firing and not dissolve in the molten glaze. If they were to dissolve the colour either disappears (because of dissociation of the ingredients) or becomes diffuse, either of which is no good for the decoration. All stains do however dissociate or dissolve if fired beyond a certain recommended temperature. Unfortunately, often the brightest colours perform least well at higher temperatures. The vast bulk of commercial stains are either equally toxic or less toxic than the common colouring oxides familiar to potters such as the oxides of iron, copper and cobalt. But some contain very toxic elements such as cadmium, selenium, antimony and lead. Cadmium for example once ingested is about 100 times more poisonous than other quite toxic raw materials such as copper oxide and barium carbonate. However stains are generally very insoluble which reduces the direct handling, but I don't advise licking your brushes.



The use the stain is put to by the potter is very important though For example one of the best and brightest orange colours available is a lead-antimony stain. Its firing limit is only 1080 degrees (cone 04) which limits its usefulness. This stain is probably too dangerous to use inside food ware as the lead content can become destabilised by other colourants or even the presence of copper fumes in the kiln. It would of course be O.K. on a vase or other decorative object.

Another stain, or stain group, to be somewhat careful using are the cadmium-selenium reds. These include Pink TX Bordeaux, Intensive Red. Tangerine and the low temperature red and yellow enamels. In this case the stains are perfectly safe used under a clear glaze or in-glaze decoration using opaque glazes on and inside domestic ware. *They are not food safe if the glaze is not completely fused and glossy. The enamels are not safe at all to use inside any form of domestic ware.* Glazes generally form an impervious barrier to the release of cadmium or selenium into foods when they are free from defects and have a shiny surface.

The barrier may be unsafe when crazed, pin-holed, crawled, or not completely glossed over. Dry matted glazes are particularly unsafe.

### Editor's Note

A busy month for potters and the committee was hard pressed to get all the work done. Good for you and may we carry on in this vein. Many thanks and Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Happy Holidays to those of you going away and may we all return refreshed and ready for action.



Maggie Editor

### You might be a Potter

If, at a white tie dinner, you turn your plate over to see who made it. Lily Krakowski

**Deadline** for January will be 21<sup>st</sup> December and all information to Uta Calver who may send it on to us in Wellington.

Views expressed here not necessarily those of Craft Potters Nelson Inc.

### QUOTE

The grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for."

Joseph Addison

**HAVEN COMPUTERS**

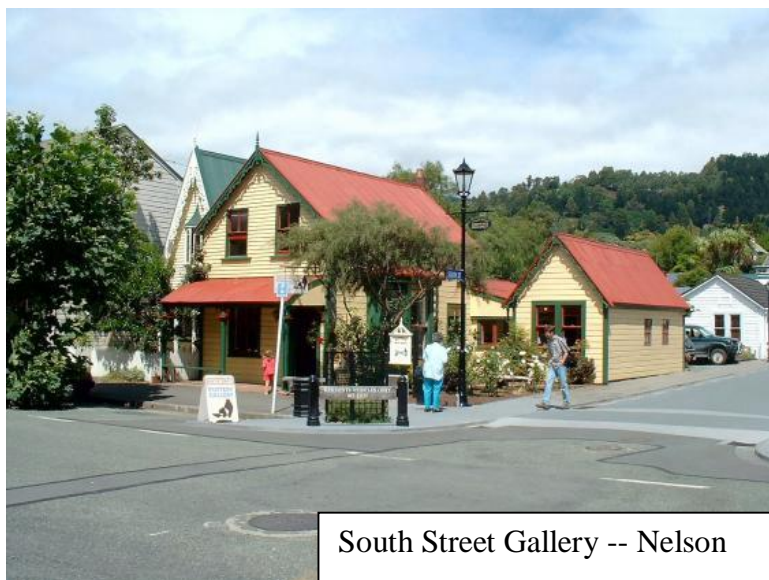


Brian Chapman

265 Queen St  
P.O. Box 3290, Richmond, Nelson

brian@haven.co.nz www.haven.co.nz  
Ph: (03) 544 1777 Fax: (03) 544 7773

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



South Street Gallery -- Nelson



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**