

NEWSLETTER

August/September 2014

www.southernceramicgroup.co.uk/

Email : info@southernceramicgroup.co.uk

Contents

- **Bishop's Kitchen**
- **What's On**
- **Members Profile**
- **Technical**
- **Demonstrations**
- **Glaze Group**
- **Members News**
- **SCG Committee**

Editorial

As we can read below the big event for the summer is not football, tennis or athletics related but the SCG Bishops Kitchen Exhibition.

The work on display in Chichester is testament to the wide ranging ceramic interests embraced within the group. This fact was brought home to me even further when whilst stewarding I was extolling the virtues of the group to an interested visitor who was amazed by the quality and beauty of the exhibits. I would like to echo Jan Griffiths comments by thanking all those that took part and also the many that helped to organize such a terrific event.

Keith Menear

2014 Summer Exhibition at the Bishop's Kitchen

The Summer Exhibition at the Bishop's Kitchen in Chichester is now well underway with the members and friends evening being very well attended resulting in lots of sales.

The Show continues to run daily from 10am to 5pm and will end on Sunday 10th August. Once again the range and quality of the work submitted is superb and it's lovely to see so many `new comers` to the show, so do come along to this wonderful venue and be inspired. Whilst you are there, I can recommend a visit into the Cathedral itself to see the lustrous work of Jonathan Chiswell-Jones displayed in the Treasury along with all the silver and gold.



Many thanks to all those of you who have helped in organising this event and especially to John Evans for his pivotal leadership.

Event Manager

Jan Griffiths

2014 Summer Exhibition at the Bishop's Kitchen : Gallery



What's On

The Creative Gallery, St John's Hill, Wareham BH20 4NB Open 10am-5pm daily
01929 551700

[Www.creativeagllerywareham.co.uk](http://www.creativeagllerywareham.co.uk) (please click on the Facebook icon and like our pages)

1st-31st August **David Walker**, "Impressions of Fire II" Naked Raku Pots
1st-30th September: **Ian Harris**, "Ruptured Earth" Sculptural Vessels

Ceramics of Rosemarie James, Shairose Jetha and Fiona Kelly always on show, along with paintings, photography glass and jewellery.

Fiona

Studio visits arranged by the CPA – open to all

The following two visits have been organised by the MAAC committee of the CPA. The cost of each visit is £15 for CPA members and £17.50 for non-members.

A visit to **Richard Godfrey** at his studio at Battisborough Cross in South Devon on Saturday 27th September (10.30 to 15.30). Richard will show his hand building, throwing and glazing techniques and talk about electric and gas kilns. For further details please contact Joy Bosworth on 07779 221678 or by e-mail to info@joybosworthceramics.co.uk

Kevin Akhurst

Jan Griffiths is taking part in the Hampshire Open Studio event from 16th to 25th August at her own studio in North Boarhunt along with Dee McNamara - contemporary glass, April Stephenson - smoke-fired ceramics and Adrian Mundy - bookbinding. All welcome.

The Studio, Evergreen, Trampers Lane, North Boarhunt, Hampshire, PO17 6BU. 01329 833124

Jan Griffiths



See Lisa Hammond & Jeff Shapiro Live at the Ashmolean Thursday 10 July

For more information visit www.oxfordceramics.com/events
For tickets visit www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford
Telephone: 01865 305 305

Click here to buy tickets  **ClayLive** ASHMolean

LISA HAMMOND
JEFF SHAPIRO
Exhibition 10 July - 3 August 2014
Private View 10 July 4-6.00pm

OXFORD
CERAMICS
GALLERY

29 Walton Street / Oxford / OX2 6AA
t:+44(0)1865 512320 www.oxfordceramics.com

Oxford Ceramics Gallery

Jeff and Lisa will be exhibiting their works at the gallery this July. The exhibition is partnered with a one day 'Clay Live' event at the Ashmolean museum

Exhibition runs 10th July to 3rd August 2014
Private view Thursday 10th July 2014, 4pm - 6pm

Clay Live with Lisa Hammond and Jeff Shapiro will be on Thursday 10th July from 10:30am - 3:30pm.

Tickets can be purchased from Oxford Playhouse from Friday 25th June onwards. You can also purchase tickets by phoning the box office on +44 (0)1865 305305 <http://www.oxfordceramics.com/exhibitions/jeff-shapiro-and-lisa-hammond>

What's On



Earth, Fire, Gold: Elemental Beauty by Jonathan Chiswell-Jones

An Exhibition of Lustreware Pottery at Chichester Cathedral: 12 July to 14 September 2014

In Chichester Cathedral's Treasury, located next to the North Transept, Open daily with free entry: all are welcome

From 12th July to 14th September Chichester Cathedral is delighted to exhibit lustreware pottery by the acclaimed East Sussex potter Jonathan Chiswell-Jones.

All are welcome at this exhibition which is free to enter. Jonathan's pottery will be available to purchase and proceeds will support the Cathedral.

Carolyn Atkinson

Anne Lovejoy's Pitfire & Raku Day

Sunday 7th September 2014 9am to 5 pm

'The Tree House', Honey Lane, Angmering, W Sussex, BN16 4AB –

Once again Anne Lovejoy will be holding her annual Pit Firing and Raku day at her home in Angmering, on Sunday 7th September. She has asked if SCG members would like to join this event along with others. To book a place, and for further details please visit : <http://pitfire.nakedraku.co.uk>

Jan Griffiths & John Evans

Annual Ceramic Award 2014

The Annual Ceramic Award is open to all potters and ceramists and is not restricted to associates, members or fellows of the CPA.

The Annual Ceramic Award is funded through various sources and the money raised from the Tombola at this year's Earth & Fire at Rufford will be used to assist recent ceramics graduates. The Trust would like to express its gratitude to all the potters who make the Tombola possible through their generous donations of work.

Guidelines for applicants are available e mail johnceramics@aol.com johnhigginsceramics@gmail.com or send a stamped addressed envelope to:

John Higgins
Secretary to the Craft Pottery Charitable Trust
32 Seaman Close
Park Street
St, Albans
Hertfordshire AL2 2NX

The closing date for applications is 15th December 2014

Members Profile

Bekky May

I was born in Geneva, Switzerland where I lived until the age of 18. I left Art College at that point and picked up my backpack to go and explore the world. The next ten years were spent travelling, living and working all over Europe, the Middle East, Africa and South America. London became my base between trips, where I would work as a landscape gardener while saving up and planning my next journey.

In 2006 while living in Brighton, I joined an evening class in photography. This spurred me to sign up for an Art and Design Access course (adult education for those who didn't quite finish their studies first time round). During this yearlong course in Hertfordshire, I spent most of my time in the ceramic studio and completely connected with the world of clay.

Moving back to East Sussex the following year, I completed my three-year degree course as a mature student at the University of Brighton, Hastings campus. I was very lucky to study with some fantastic artists for tutors.



Soon after graduating in 2010, I became self-employed, bought a small kiln and turned the spare room at home into my studio. I started taking part in local craft fairs where I sold my work for the first time. Fairs are fantastic places for networking, meeting other makers, experimenting with designs and getting feedback.

Last summer I set up my online shop with Etsy. This was a very exciting time as I was suddenly selling my work to the four corners of the globe. Then in the Autumn I was commissioned to make 125 pieces for a shop opening in Hollywood, California. Four months of very hard work later, 90kg of mugs, bowls and jugs arrived safely in America.

When I came back down to earth, I moved into my new studio: an old recycled portacabin in the garden. But I felt as heavy as the heavily grogged clay I'd been using for the last few years. I needed something new, fresh and light. I bought a few bags of different clays and had a wonderful time experimenting with them. I did a lot of sketchbook work and allowed ideas to flow.



Members Profile

And then I discovered porcelain! Porcelain has taught me a lot in the last few months; it behaves very differently to any other clay I have ever used. It is gorgeous to work with but it definitely has a mind of its own. I am still learning to work with it rather than trying to force it to be something it can't or doesn't want to be.

My work is deliberately simple and minimalistic, the forms are uncomplicated and I find this very refreshing. So much of life is loud, fast paced, complicated, intense and sometimes rather difficult. Learning to work with porcelain has taught me a lot about gentleness and allowing things to be – a bit like meditation. The making process is a beautifully flowing, calm and peaceful time. Discovering the warping that happens during the firing is something I find fascinating and I embrace it as the dance of the clay. I welcome these elements in my work because I feel that the clay and I are working together. This is very grounding. And I love the wobbles and imperfections, as they are a part of the story of a piece of ceramics, a part of its journey.

And so my own journey as a ceramicist continues, presenting me with challenges and rewards on a daily basis. But above all, I feel very lucky to have discovered this beautiful and enriching material that is clay.

Bekky May



Techniques

Reduction Firing and Saving Fuel

When starting to explore kilns and glazing techniques, one of the most dramatic photographs I'd seen was of a small kiln with a huge flame shooting out of the flue hole. Having always loved bonfires, that looked like **GOOD FUN!**

But when I started trying reduction firing in my gas fired ceramic fibre box kiln, I suddenly realised that I was burning a heck of a lot of gas outside the kiln, not inside it. Yes, the required reduction was taking place - the resulting pots proved it, but at what cost? What I also found, both in research on the web and in practice, was that the higher the reducing atmosphere created by restricting the amount of air and oxygen drawn in at the burner port, the less efficient the flame became, and the kiln temperature would drop, especially when I was struggling to get it up to 1260 C.

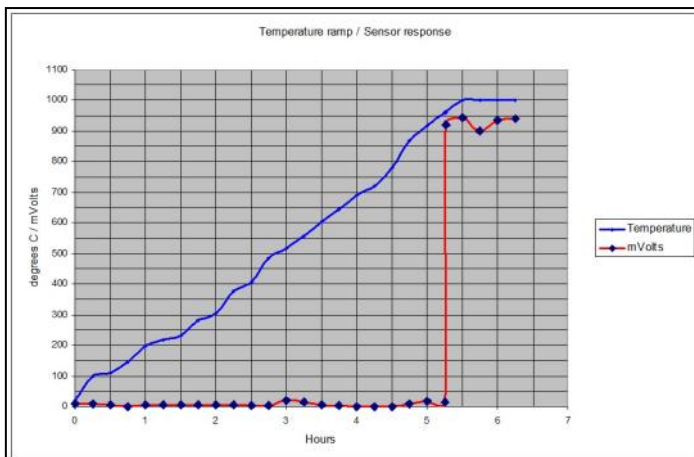
Being a professional engineer all my working life, I started to query just what 'reduction' meant, not only in the chemical sense of grabbing oxygen from the glaze materials, but how much reduction is required to achieve the desired change in glaze colour. Very few glaze recipes that I looked at said anything more than 'reduction fired' other than 'moderate' or 'high', and that's like making pastry and saying 'cook'!

And then I came across an article¹ on the web which described a means of monitoring the level of reduction in a kiln by the use of a device costing in the region of £6.00 on Ebay, whereas a commercially available monitor would be more in the region of £600. The device is an Exhaust Gas Oxygen (EGO) sensor - a fairly standard and cheap item used by engine management systems in modern cars, to control and maintain an optimum and economic fuel/air ratio.

In simple terms, the sensor measures the amount of oxygen in the flue gases - the less oxygen, the higher the voltage generated. In my first test, I let the kiln temperature rise with the burner set back from the kiln at about 1" and with the burner air ports open, allowing a plentiful air supply. When the temperature reached 950°C, I closed the burner primary air ports and blocked off the area surrounding the burner to cut off the free air supply. Flames immediately started coming out of the flue, and the output from the sensor rose dramatically. It was obvious that at this point heavy reduction was taking place.



My sensor mounting, sitting above the flue port. The fire brick on the left is to ensure that the flue gases pass the sensor even if there is a side breeze. The wires are connected to an electrical volt meter.



Techniques

Whilst the vertical section of the red line in the above graph demonstrates the dramatic change that can be measured between an oxidization atmosphere and that of a heavy reduction atmosphere, a second test showed that it is possible, by gradually opening or closing the burner air ports, to vary the level of free oxygen and therefore stabilize the level of reduction taking place at any point on that vertical line, which would be reflected in the value of the sensor output, and thereby, over time, to determine the minimum sensor reading that produces the desired level of reduction for a particular glaze. It would therefore be possible to reproduce that level of reduction from firing to firing, achieving a consistent result with the most economic use of gas.

A second aspect also needs considering. If the sensor only starts to generate an output when a low level of reduction is created, then it is logical to assume that when the output from the sensor is zero, a level of oxidization is present. However, this could mean that the amount of oxygen being drawn into the kiln, either through the burner and/or the surrounding area around the burner itself, may be completely inefficient with far too much air being drawn in and actually causing a cooling effect to that of the flame.

Logic suggests that, as the amount of free air is slowly restricted, a neutral and highly efficient gas/air ratio must exist just prior to the change to a reducing ratio. By monitoring the sensor output whilst adjusting the gas and air being drawn in, it should be possible to determine the point at which reduction is beginning to occur, and then by backing off slightly, it should be possible to achieve the optimum neutral setting for oxidization, and save a fortune in gas.

Watch this space!



My dust-bin kiln, with the sensor mounted above the flue, the burner's air ports closed off, and the kiln's burner port blocked off with two shaped fire bricks. The meter on the far right shows the sensor output, whilst the other gives the current temperature.

*Tony Thompson
Southern Ceramic Group.*

1: "The Kiln Exhaust Sniffer: A Do-it-Yourself Oxygen Probe." Graham, Roger. March 2003

Demonstrations

A Demonstration of ‘Ceramic Printing’

Kay Aplin on 19 October 2014 at Petersfield Community Centre 9.30 for a 10.00 start to finish at 4.30

Kay is an architectural ceramicist with a background in site-specific work for the public realm. She graduated in Public Art and Design from Chelsea College of Art in 1995. Since then, she has had many commissions around the UK and internationally, producing a distinct range of art works that have stood the tests of weather and time.

Kay will give an illustrated talk about her work and review ways of transferring images and decorations onto ceramics, including relief techniques, mono printing, and computer generated decal printing.



Hands On

During the afternoon there will be the opportunity for a short hands-on session. For those wishing to take part in this, please bring a small quantity of clay and a board to work on.

Bring a contribution for an “American Supper” type lunch, a cup, plate and knife and fork, etc. Coffee and Tea will be provided



More details about Kay Aplin, BACS payment, and a map of Petersfield Community Centre, are to be found under "Events" on the SCG web site. Any questions to zyg@kruk.co.uk

Please note that this demonstration is open to non-members

Registration Form

Please complete and send with a cheque for £ 20.00 per person, (£25.00 non-members) made payable to Southern Ceramic Group, to Zyg Kruk, 30 Wittering Rd, Hayling Is.Hants, PO11 9SP

Name.....Membership Number.....

Signature E Mail.....Date.....

Zyg Kruk

Glaze Group Meeting

Glaze Group Meeting held on 8 July 2014

The glaze group meets on the second Tuesday of alternate months.

Present. Marigo Harries, Barbie Plastow, Jan Griffiths, Lisa Hughes, Tony Thompson, John Howell and Charles Stileman

Several members had brought along pots, either made by themselves or purchased acquisitions, which were discussed in detail.

Pots on the bottom shelf of one member's top loader kiln had been found to be under fired during a glaze firing. It was suggested that to achieve uniform heating there should be an increase in soak time from 30 to 45 minutes and if necessary to place a kiln shelf on top of the kiln before reaching top temperature.

The group also talked in detail about reduction and oxidation firing. Following her recent time in Japan Jan Griffith showed us lovely celadon glazed porcelain pots she had thrown direct off the hump without any turning.

The meeting finished with a demonstration of handle pulling by Charles Stileman. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of alternative months and anyone is welcome to attend.

Please let Charles Stileman (charles@charlesstileman.plus.com) know if you are coming.

Diana Wren

Members News

New Members

A very warm welcome to new members:

Rosemary Sutcliffe of Bognor Regis
Peter Featherstone of Curdridge, Southampton,
Christine Bell from Bognor Regis
Ian Pike from Fareham

This gives a total of 118 current members

Interested in becoming a member of the Southern Ceramic Group?

Application forms can be found on the group website at:

<http://www.southernceramicgroup.co.uk/Information/SCGMemberApp.pdf>

Next Committee Meeting. The committee meets every few months or so and our next meeting will be on the 11th September 2014. If you have anything you would like to bring to our attention please contact Sandie Dixon 2sandie@tiscali.co.uk or any other member of the committee.

SOUTHERN CERAMIC GROUP COMMITTEE**Chair**

Rolf Hawkins **Tel** : 01962 869117

Email : rolf.hawkins@winchester.anglican.org

**Vice Chair & Marketing**

Jan Griffiths **Tel** : 01329 833124

Email : griffiths.jan@btinternet.com

**Hon Sec**

Sandie Dixon **Tel** : 02380 550064

Email : 2sandie@tiscali.co.uk

**Treasurer**

Liz Gale **Tel** : 02392 632686

Email : lizgale@interalpha.co.uk

**Demonstrations**

Zyg Kruk **Tel** : 02392 469104

Email : zyg@kruk.co.uk

**Membership**

John Howell **Tel** : 02380 618165

Email : john.f.howell@talktalk.net

**Website**

Tony Thompson **Tel** : 01489 572115

Email : apttony@aol.com

**News letter**

Keith Menear **Tel** : 07788908182

Email : keith.menear@hotmail.co.uk

NEXT COPY DEADLINE : 17th September 2014

Please send contributions to : keith.menear@hotmail.co.uk

Next Newsletter due : 1st October 2014

Would you like to advertise in the Southern Ceramic Group Newsletter?

If so please contact Rolf Hawkins

email: rolf.hawkins@winchester.anglican.org

The rates for advertising are:

SCG Members : FREE

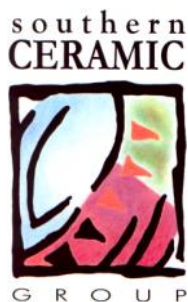
Commercial Advertising Rates: B&W Colour

Full Page £20

Half Page £10

Acknowledgments

Thanks goes to regular contributors to the Newsletter; *Diana Wren, Martin Eastabrook* and for editorial assistance *Marigo Harries*



The **Southern Ceramic Group** grants permission for the browsing of this material as part of the World Wide Web and for the printing of one copy per person for personal reference only. The express permission of the Southern Ceramic Group and the originating artist must be obtained for any other use of this material.